

7th Global Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

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Breakout Session : Sport for Sustainable and Inclusive Development

As late Nelson Mandela said: “Sports can be a diversion. Sports can be a hobby. And, for a fortunate few, sports can change the world.” Sport has an educational role and imparts strong values. It can bring social and economic changes and therefore is an important enabler for social development. The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development recognizes the “growing contribution of sport to the realization of development and peace in its promotion of tolerance and respect and the contributions it makes to the empowerment of women and of young people, individuals and communities as well as to health, education and social inclusion objectives”.

The positive role sport plays in social inclusion, cohesion and intercultural dialogue through the power of its values was always broadly recognised. Blending sport with culture and education, Olympism as a philosophy of life aimed at building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practised in accordance with the educational value of good example, respect of universal and fundamental ethical principles, and social responsibility.

Sport enables migrants and the host society to interact in a positive way, thus furthering inter-cultural dialogue, understanding, and integration. It is a vehicle for promoting social inclusion of minorities and other vulnerable groups, and contributes to sustainable peace and reconciliation, including in post-conflict regions. Violent extremism can also be significantly countered where respect, fundamental human values and opportunities are promoted, and where communities and youth are empowered through its values, such as respect, responsibility and team spirit.

How can sport be of support to migrants and refugees? What are the good examples of such experiences? Would it be possible to share good practices on how sport served as a tool for social inclusion and development?

How can we promote the values and dreams imparted by sport to counter the narratives of hatred and mistrust?

How to transfer the values of respect, ethics and social responsibility vehicled by sport to other social activities?

The main objective of the session is to raise awareness about the role of sport in intercultural dialogue and to develop the untapped potential of sport for promoting sustainability and inclusiveness. Through their experiences, people from different cultural, social, and religious backgrounds will explain how they use sport to empower youth and actively contribute to sustainable and inclusive development. We will explore how sportmen, athletes, and sport organisations contribute to social inclusion and development through sports, but also how novices found in sport the best tool for education, empowerment and reconciliation. The session will also offer concrete opportunities for cooperation on sport related activities amongst the participants of the 7th Global Forum of the UNAOC.