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Commission 3
Expert Speaker

Good Morning Excellencies, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be here as the Expert Speaker on preserving the integrity of sport. I am also humbled given those who I am representing.

But I am not here trying to convince you of anything, only to propose a focus for your deliberations on this critical subject.

Over the past 12 months a group of sport integrity experts have been deliberating over several meetings and via the Internet. Several documents resulted from these exchanges, and these are before you through your Secretariat.

We culminated with an Expert Forum immediately before your meeting on Tuesday this week, during which several adjustments to the texts were suggested by some parties. They are with the MINEPS Secretariat.

However the principle themes expressed on Tuesday were to congratulate MINEPS IV for its creation of WADA and to recognize the global benefits that flowed from that, and to expand the horizons of today's considerations internationally rather than fix our sights only nationally.

I will address the general issues as they were discussed and on which there is consensus.

Given the nature and membership of this eminent body, there is no need for me to detail either the fundamental necessity of integrity within the administration of sport or in the outcome of sport competitions. This a universally acknowledged truth.

Equally, given the alarming number of police and other investigations of corrupted sport competitions around the world today, and the grave warnings from leaders of such sport bodies as UEFA, FIFA, the IOC and the ICC, to mention but a few, there is no need for me outline the seriously dangerous state of affairs international sport finds itself in today.

In summary however, and right across the world today, there is a collision between three international economic giants that is manifesting

a perfect storm of damage to international sport, and it seems that only leadership from world governments can contain it.

These colliding global economies are of course:

1. International sport;
2. International betting on sport; and
3. International organized crime.

What results from this still unfolding collision will surely determine the social future of some sports, as promoters, sponsors and fans vote with their feet. Unfortunately in some countries many have already done this.

But what are the real circumstances that have created this perfect storm of damage to international sport?

First. Sport is increasingly a medium that vast numbers of people around the world wish to gamble on, seemingly regardless of whether their government permits it or not. This will not change. Indeed all forecasts are that it will continue to regularly expand and perhaps even exponentially;

Second. Internationally sport is being manipulated, corrupted if you prefer, by criminals for the purpose of committing betting fraud. This is now universally acknowledged as a massive problem at the global level;

Third. Many individual governments and national regulators around the world are closely looking at how to protect sport. However, this effort is uneven across jurisdictions. A collective global strategy led by world governments seems to be not only necessary, but urgently so;

Fourth. Overall the global betting industry invests very little in the protection of sport compared to its global financial throughputs on sport;

Fifth. The sport betting industry is vastly more divided than it is united. There is no single voice for global sport betting. They have a market driven morality. In fact the majority of gambling on sport, in a world context, is either illegal or under-regulated. Significantly there is little hope for a united global gambling industry approach to the anti-match-fixing effort, in the absence of a collective global government intervention and a collective global strategy;

Sixth. Only governments have the mandate and the resources to combat transnational organized crime;

And the last circumstance that has created this perfect storm of damage to sport is, that unlike sport betting, sport bodies and governments can unite in a common effort. The basis for differences and disguised intent is vastly less than it is with global gambling, which as I said has a competitive market driven morality. But as of today, the rhetoric for a united sport and a united government approach is not really matched in action.

Global, not merely national or regional leadership, is not only essential today, but time is clearly running out for some sports.

There are in fact two inextricably linked international problems that you are considering here today, and they are of course MATCH FIXING - or the corruption of sport competitions; and BETTING FRAUD - or theft from gamblers on sport, and bookmakers offering sport around the world.

In many ways these two linked problems of match fixing and betting fraud are either seen too simply or in too small a context.

Today YOU can correct that.

And by doing so you can save international sport from this dangerous collision of circumstances, essentially wrought from its own international success.

Today match fixing is not simply an opportunistic and occasional corruption of a few, by a few. Nor is it merely the manipulation of relegation or competition table systems. More often today, it is criminally planned; it is truly transnational; and it is driven by long-term investments in the corruption of international sport - including its athletes, its administrators and its referees or umpires.

Today the real intention of transnational crime in match fixing, and in betting fraud, is institutional corruption of organizations and systems, and not merely the compromise of a few individuals.

Today international betting fraud is not a simple theft. It is sophisticated, technical and disguised criminal cheating and fraud on a truly global scale.

And today it is the vulnerability of international betting to large-scale theft that inspires and pays for modern match fixing. It is also a cash bonanza for the criminal organizations that are right now, as we sit here, seeking to take control of both match fixing and betting fraud.

These critical issues of match fixing and betting fraud are not only often seen too simply, but also in too small or monochromatic a context. They are too often considered only as national or regional problems; or that they are confined to just one or several sports or betting operators; or they only apply to minor competitions. More menacingly, some feel that these global problems can be fixed by sport alone, or by governments alone, or by police, or by regulators or by betting organizations, alone.

These twin problems are just too big, too global and too organized, for anything but collective and multifaceted solutions to be successful at a global level. Hence, why we are here today.

The plain truth is that the corruption of competitions is marked by an absolute internationality in its commission, and by a vigorously growing influence of transnational organized crime.

Moreover, theft from sport betting is stealing from a massive, essentially uncontrolled international sport-gambling economy, which is primarily, but not exclusively, situated in South East Asia.

And because these two issues are often viewed too simply and in too small a context, the solutions proposed are also far too simple and far too small.

For instance:

Anti-corruption training and awareness education within sport is essential, but requires proactive preventative investigation of sport, and monitoring of both field play and progressive betting movements, to be fully effective.

Pressuring and supervising sport without pressuring and supervising betting on sport, is focusing on the primary effect, and not on the primary cause.

Strengthening national legislations, sport regulations and inter-agency cooperation, without the context of a fully collective international approach, will leave gaps and safe havens within the global environment, thereby essentially nullifying the effort.

Dealing with one sport, one country or one region in isolation, at best shifts and evolves the problem, or at worst, dilutes it to ineffectuality within the global oceans of both sport and betting.

Labels and slogans, such as "Play Clean", "Respect" and "Fair Play", must be backed up with serious integrity machinery, and with real consequences for doing the opposite.

Because of a heightened awareness, today, the sport integrity field is becoming increasingly crowded, with many new players and interested parties entering. While this is also a strong indicator of the seriousness of the overall problem, sport integrity solutions must be as big, global, organized and as harmonized as the criminal predation itself is. To do otherwise is ultimately to fail, leaving the next generation, the next MINEPS probably, to pick up the global problem.

Worldwide the betting integrity field is patchy at best, non-existent at worst, and in truth, focuses on protecting betting, not on protecting sport, except as a by-product. It is not focused on identifying the criminals who commit the crimes of betting fraud. But you cannot reasonably expect an industry, where the major players skate the borders of legality, to selflessly police itself. That is why you have betting regulators, or at least in some jurisdictions.

Moreover national police struggle within a difficult international investigation environment. They naturally focus on the collection of evidence and on national prosecutions, not on disrupting the multi-national criminal enterprises involved, and not as a matter of course on cooperating with sport and betting to prevent match fixing in the first place. There are not many preventative police investigations on match fixing or betting fraud. Most such investigations are either retrospective or coincidental, in that police came across match fixing within an unrelated organized crime investigation.

So what can be done, especially through this eminent group?

First, you could formally recognize that there is a serious existing international problem with the corruption of sport competition results, and with related betting fraud.

Second, you could formally recognize that this is a global phenomenon that should be solved by consistent and collective global action.

Third, you could formally recognize that the problem actually, or at least potentially, crosses all sports internationally.

Fourth, you could formally recognize that increasingly, transnational organized crime is active in corrupting sport competition results, and in committing international betting fraud.

Finally and vastly most importantly, you could formally recognize that an independent and neutral international platform or global compact of some design, that draws together key stakeholders for their collective protection, should be considered. An international platform that assists by facilitating global information exchange, develops and recommends consistent preventative actions and policies, and identifies and reports on any substantive international gaps or incapacities across jurisdictions.

These are all essentially covered by the texts that are before you today.

I thank you for this opportunity to address you.