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## **The future of sports co-operation in the Council of Europe**

Written question No 500 to the Committee of Ministers

Reply from the Committee of Ministers  
adopted at the 984<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Ministers' Deputies (17-18 January 2007)

### **I. Written Question No. 500 by Mrs Dromberg and Mr Elo (Doc. 11003)**

At its Warsaw Summit Conference in 2005, the Council of Europe decided to concentrate on Europe's human rights policy, democracy, and the development of the state, as ruled by law, in Europe. The budgetary situation of the Council of Europe is at present extremely tight and proposals have been made to come out of this situation.

It has been proposed that sport sector operations would be separated from the Organisation's operations as such and be transformed into an activity based on a Partial Agreement funded by member states. It is in accordance with the Council of Europe's regulations that those countries, too, that will not be part of funding the Partial Agreement will participate in the meetings of Ministers.

Co-operation in sport is a sector in which the Council of Europe has clear added value. In the co-ordination of joint sport-policy decisions, the Committee for the Development of Sport (CDDS) and meetings of European Ministers responsible for sport constitute the only competent intergovernmental structure for sport-policy co-operation. The European Union, for example, does not have sector-specific competence in the area of sport. However, the Council of Europe is the only pan-European organisation which effectively, at both inter-governmental and parliamentary level, deals with anti-doping, one of the major challenges of sports today.

Furthermore, sport has a broad interface with European citizens' organisations. In our opinion, sport is a good means of dialogue with civic society. Through sport, we can promote the development of European human rights and democracy.

Mrs Dromberg and Mr Elo

To ask the Committee of Ministers:

How will the Committee of Ministers ensure that sports co-operation on the pan-European level will be ensured in the future, and that sufficient financial means and resources will be allocated to this co-operation?

### **II. Reply by the Committee of Ministers**

1. The Committee of Ministers has carefully considered Written Question No. 500 by the members of the Parliamentary Assembly which raises the issue of the future of sports co-operation in the Council of Europe.

2. In this connection, the Committee of Ministers informs the Honourable Parliamentarians that at the 17th informal meeting of Ministers of Sport (Moscow, 20-21 October 2006), the Ministers held discussions

on future pan-European co-operation in the field of sport. In this context, they expressed almost unanimous support for the creation, as soon as possible, of an Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) and unanimously adopted a resolution along these lines.

3. In the light of this resolution and with a view to taking the necessary measures for the creation of the future enlarged partial agreement, the Committee of Ministers, at the 981st meeting of the Ministers' Deputies, on 29 November 2006, expressed its approval in principle for the setting up of the Council of Europe Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport.

4. The Committee of Ministers considers the continuation of the Council of Europe's role as a platform for European co-operation in sport as an issue of particular importance. Accordingly, it strongly hopes that the States Parties to the European Cultural Convention will rapidly give formal notification to the Secretary General of their intention to join the EPAS in order to reach as soon as possible the minimum number of member states needed to set up the Partial Agreement (16).

5. Furthermore, the Committee of Ministers has agreed, in principle, to launch the EPAS at the 117th Ministerial Session on 10 and 11 May 2007, and thereby underline its importance and give added visibility to this initiative.