

Press Release

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Ministerial sports conference in Athens on ethics and autonomy opened

Athens, 11.12.2008 – A major conference of sports ministers has just opened to find solutions to new ethical challenges in sports: from the latest in genetic doping to online gambling.

The conference – co-organised by the Council of Europe's Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS) and the Greek government at the **Astir Palace Westin Hotel in Vouliagmeni** (Athens) – also aims to insure the financial autonomy of international sports organisations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA), the European Non-Governmental Sports Organisation (ENGSO) and others.

Some 100 participants will include sports ministers, sports federation officials, representatives from the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and Council of Europe and EPAS officials.

The press is invited to attend a press conference at 2.30 p.m. on Friday, 12 December at the hotel's Atlas Room A with the following participants:

- Maud de Boer-Buquicchio, Deputy Secretary General of the Council of Europe
- Giannis Ioannidis, Deputy Minister of Culture with responsibility for Sport, Greece
- Michel Platini, President of UEFA

Participants will consider updating the Council of Europe's 2001 Code of Sports Ethics and other ways to address ethics challenges, from match fixing and online betting to corruption and doping via gene manipulation. Other themes to be examined include human trafficking in sport and discrimination – including unequal access to sports facilities and resources.

A planned resolution on sports autonomy would examine the increasing complexity of sports systems and ways to preserve the autonomy of the sports movement. A growing economic dimension in sport can bring financial autonomy, but could entail risks from sponsors, investors, even gamblers.

Another resolution would intensify cooperation in sport initiatives between the Council of Europe and the European Union and encourage further involvement in EPAS, both from Council of Europe member states and from NGOs.

The conference will also elect one of two candidates for the European member of the WADA Executive Committee: Jeannot Krecke, Luxembourg's Minister of Sports, and Jaime Lissavetzky, Spain's Secretary of State for Sport.

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A political organisation set up in 1949, the Council of Europe works to promote democracy and human rights continent-wide. It also develops common responses to social, cultural and legal challenges in its 47 member states.

Notes for Editors**Council of Europe Sport Department**

Sport can be seen to show universal human values which, at major sports events, are understood and shared by all. Having realised this, the Council of Europe policy is to "promote sport and the social and health benefits which it brings to individuals and to society, thanks to the policies based on the same principles across Europe". In the Council of Europe, the Sport Department co-operates with governmental and non-governmental organisations and carries out initiatives which both benefit the practice of sport and make it accessible across Europe.

EPAS

After more than 30 years of experience in the field of international sports legislation, the Council of Europe adopted [Resolution CM/Res\(2007\)8](#) on **11 May 2007 creating the Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport (EPAS)** in order to give new momentum and dynamism to pan-European sports co-operation.

World Anti-Doping Agency

The World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) is an international independent organisation created in 1999 to promote, coordinate, and monitor the fight against doping in sport in all its forms. Composed and funded equally by the sports movement and governments of the world, WADA coordinated the development and implementation of the World Anti-Doping Code (Code), the document harmonising anti-doping policies in all sports and all countries.