

# COUNCIL OF EUROPE

## COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS

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RECOMMENDATION No. R (84) 8

### OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO MEMBER STATES

#### ON THE REDUCTION OF SPECTATOR VIOLENCE AT SPORTING EVENTS AND IN PARTICULAR AT FOOTBALL MATCHES

*(Adopted by the Committee of Ministers on 19 March 1984  
at the 368th meeting of the Ministers' Deputies)*

1. The Committee of Ministers, under the terms of Article 15.b of the Statute of the Council of Europe,
2. Recalling its Resolution (76) 41 on the "Principles for a policy of Sport for All" ;
3. Bearing in mind the Resolution adopted by the European Ministers responsible for Sport on "violence associated with sport" at their 2nd Conference (London, 1978), and their Declaration on spectator violence at football matches and other sports events, adopted at their 10th informal meeting in Rotterdam, in 1983 ;
4. Having regard to Recommendation 963 (1983) of the Parliamentary Assembly on cultural and educational means of reducing violence ;
5. Respecting the established independence of sports federations, including the international football authorities and the national football authorities in member states ;
6. Emphasising the important contribution made by sport and, especially, because of their frequency, football matches between national and club teams from member states, to international understanding and European co-operation ;
7. Supporting the principle of fair play in sport and recognising the value of a thorough appreciation of this sporting ideal among spectators ;
8. Considering that, in order to reduce violence in society generally, action must be taken against all forms of violence ;
9. Concerned by the growth of violence associated with sport, and in particular by misbehaviour and violence among spectators at football matches, which damages sport by tarnishing its public image, by deterring spectators and which may also discourage participation at the level of the sports so affected ;
10. Concerned that violence and misbehaviour impose greater social and economic costs on the communities of member states, including those arising from injury to third parties, policing and damage to property ;
11. Considering that the governments of member states and the sports organisations have separate but complementary responsibilities in combating spectator violence and that the two should work together to this end ;
12. Commending the actions already taken by member states and by the responsible national and international football authorities to reduce or contain this problem ;

13. Convinced that member states of the Council of Europe should take a lead in seeking solutions to the problem, and that their first priority should be the implementation by governments and by football authorities of practical measures which will have an immediate impact,

I. Recommends that the governments of member states :

A. Should, as far as football matches are concerned, and within applicable constitutional limits :

1. acknowledge their responsibility, complementing that of regional and local government and of other public agencies, and that of the football authorities, to curb violence amongst spectators ;

2. co-ordinate at national level the policies and actions of government departments and other public agencies against spectator violence, and foster similar co-operation to this end at other levels ;

3. attach immediate priority to the formulation and implementation of practical measures designed to reduce spectator violence in the short term, including :

a. appropriate steps to provide that adequate police resources are available to counter anticipated outbreaks of violence, both within the immediate vicinity of and inside the stadiums and along the transit routes used by spectators and also to encourage co-operation including the exchange of information between the police forces of the different localities involved ;

b. the consistent employment of, or where such does not exist the consideration of the adoption of, appropriate legislation, with a view to ensuring that those found guilty of offences related to spectator violence receive appropriate penalties, taking into account the serious nature of violent offences, which penalties may also deter others from similar acts ;

B. That they co-operate fully with and take all possible steps to encourage their national football associations to :

4. ensure that effective measures are taken at and within stadiums to reduce spectator violence at football matches and in particular :

a. to ensure that the design and physical fabric of football stadiums provide for the safety of spectators, do not readily facilitate violence between spectators, allow effective crowd control by police and contain appropriate barriers or fencing so as to protect the playing field and to control the movement of spectators around it ;

b. to segregate rival supporters, with one or more terraces reserved for visiting supporters only ;

c. to ensure this segregation by controlling the sale of tickets for matches, and to avoid the casual sale of tickets that might undermine such segregation ;

d. to ensure insofar as it is legally possible the exclusion of known trouble-makers ;

e. to ensure the provision of an effective public address system and that full use is made of this, of the match programme brochure and of other publicity outlets to encourage good behaviour by spectators ;

f. to restrict, if not ban, the sale of alcoholic drinks, including beer, and, if the sale of such beverages is permitted, to ensure that they are not available in potentially dangerous containers ;

g. to take all practicable steps to ensure that spectators do not bring in any objects that might be used in acts of violence ;

h. to consider appointing liaison officers to discuss before matches arrangements for crowd control with all appropriate public authorities so as to ensure that any relevant rules are enforced through concerted action ;

i. to encourage the establishment of official supporters' clubs and the appointment of stewards from within their membership to help manage and inform spectators at matches and to accompany parties of supporters travelling to away fixtures ;

5. ensure that the rules and guidelines of the Union des associations européennes de football (UEFA) for the avoidance of crowd disturbances are implemented as a minimum standard at all

relevant matches and to consider adapting and extending them as appropriate to national circumstances so as to have a clear set of rules applicable to domestic matches ;

C. That they work closely with their respective national football authorities to :

6. seek arrangements to assist with the financing of alterations to the physical fabric of stadiums or other measures necessary to improve safety and to curb spectator violence ;

7. consider the possibility of introducing a system of stadium licensing to promote the safety and orderly behaviour of spectators especially for those stadiums used for matches likely to attract large or unruly crowds ;

8. invite the media—whilst supporting their editorial independence and recognising their responsibility to report acts of violence—to highlight examples of fair play and sporting behaviour by participants or spectators, in order to give publicity to the authors of such acts and encourage their peers to emulate them ;

9. foster co-operation among relevant public authorities, football clubs and stadium owners to ensure good spectator access to stadiums (including bus and car parking facilities), unnecessary obstacles to spectator access being a possible stimulus to aggression among spectators ;

10. consider the introduction of procedures and studies to monitor the impact of measures to alleviate violence and misbehaviour by football spectators ;

D. That, in addition, on the occasion of international club and representative matches or tournaments they should :

11. co-operate closely and encourage similar close bilateral and multilateral co-operation as appropriate both among the relevant national football authorities involved and among the respective national public authorities (for example, police forces) including those of countries which may be crossed by visiting spectators ;

12. seek to ensure, bearing in mind each member state's legal procedures and the independence of the judiciary, that visiting spectators apprehended in connection with acts of spectator violence are tried under procedures which are in accordance with the principles set out in paragraph A.3.b above, or, where appropriate, take advantage of the possibility of transferring proceedings against such persons to the country of residence ;

E. That, as far as other sports events are concerned where violence and misbehaviour among spectators may be a problem, they apply the same principles and ideas as are embodied in this Recommendation, with respect both to governmental action and to action in co-operation with the national sports organisations concerned ;

F. That, so far as the general causes of violence amongst players and spectators are concerned, they take additional long-term measures to prevent the growth of violence in sport by promoting the sporting ideal through educational and other campaigns and by giving support to the notion of fair play, especially among young people, so as to enhance friendship among sports players and spectators ;

II. Instructs the Secretary General to transmit this Recommendation to the governments of those states party to the European Cultural Convention which are not members of the Council of Europe.