



**ANNUAL
ACTIVITY
REPORT**

**2023 IN REVIEW
AND LOOKING
FORWARD TO 2024**

FREEDOM, EQUALITY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL



Centre for Sport
& Human Rights

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Cover Image: Human Rights 75 celebrations during UEFA Match Week 6 in December 2023



FOREWORD

*Mary Robinson, Former President of Ireland,
Former UN High Commissioner for Human Rights
Chair of the Elders, Founding Chair and First Patron of
the Centre for Sport and Human Rights*



Mary Robinson at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

We begin 2024 face to face with the painful realities of a fractured world. We witness the ever more present impacts of the climate crisis, ongoing turmoil and violent conflict costing the lives of so many innocent people, as well as persistent economic and social divisions within and among nations. All of these challenges threaten global stability and prospects for a better future. They are stark reminders of the need to build bridges and look continually to what binds us together as one human family.

Despite many divisions, sport can transcend boundaries, and can help us continually recognise and embrace our shared humanity. All actors must keep up their work to make sport more responsible,

but also never doubt the vital role sport can play in shaping more equitable and just societies.

This report looks back on progress in our shared work over the past year. It serves as a testament to the efforts of our team at the Centre for Sport and Human Rights (CSHR), working alongside our partners in the broader sport and human rights community to see to it that human rights are not just acknowledged, but actively championed.

I'm proud of our small but critical role in fostering positive change in the sport ecosystem. From our work to strengthen effective grievance mechanisms, to convening all the actors in sport dedicated to advancing the human rights agenda, each initiative

represents a step forward in fostering a culture of transparency, accountability, and respect for human rights.

One of the highlights of 2023 was being back at the United Nations in Geneva to host our Sporting Chance Forum, and to mark the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This global platform has proven to be instrumental in fostering collaboration, dialogue, and the exchange of ideas among diverse stakeholders. The significance of the Sporting Chance Forum in shaping our approaches and enriching our perspectives with active engagement from the broader global community can't be overstated. The Forum is a powerful example of how we can

continue to build a global movement dedicated to effecting change at the intersection of sports and human rights.

Looking forward, our activities in 2024 will chart a course for the future, one where commitments deepen and positive impacts expand. Gender equality, child rights and human rights education are emerging as focal points, aligning with the evolving dynamics of our world.

I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to every individual, organisation, and partner who has contributed to our shared journey. We look forward to working together in 2024. The examples of our work shared in this report are not just ours—they

belong to everyone who believes in the potential of sports to drive positive change. I hope this report inspires continued collaboration and sparks innovative solutions for the ongoing pursuit of a world where the principles of human rights are not just upheld but celebrated throughout the world of sports.

2023 ACTIVITIES

ONE
HUMAN
RIGHTS
75



CSHR partnered with the United Nations Human Rights Office for 'The 75' campaign, showcasing sports stars and their commitments to human rights in the countdown to the 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 10 December 2023. This resulted in the publishing of 75 short social media videos from athletes who have spoken out on social issues and human rights or have demonstrated in other ways their commitment to human rights - through their foundations, NGOs, or support for UN causes. CSHR also developed, together with its

Advisory Council and Engaged Organisations, a 'collective pledge' to support the UN's Human Rights 75 pledging campaign. In addition, CSHR developed pledging guidance for sports bodies that wish to make their own pledges, with this guidance published on the UN's Human Rights 75 website alongside other official pledging guidance for other sectors. In the week following the anniversary of the Universal Declaration, CSHR partnered with UEFA to promote the "Human Rights 75" initiative at European games across UEFA competitions.



Human Rights 75 celebrated during UEFA Match Week 6



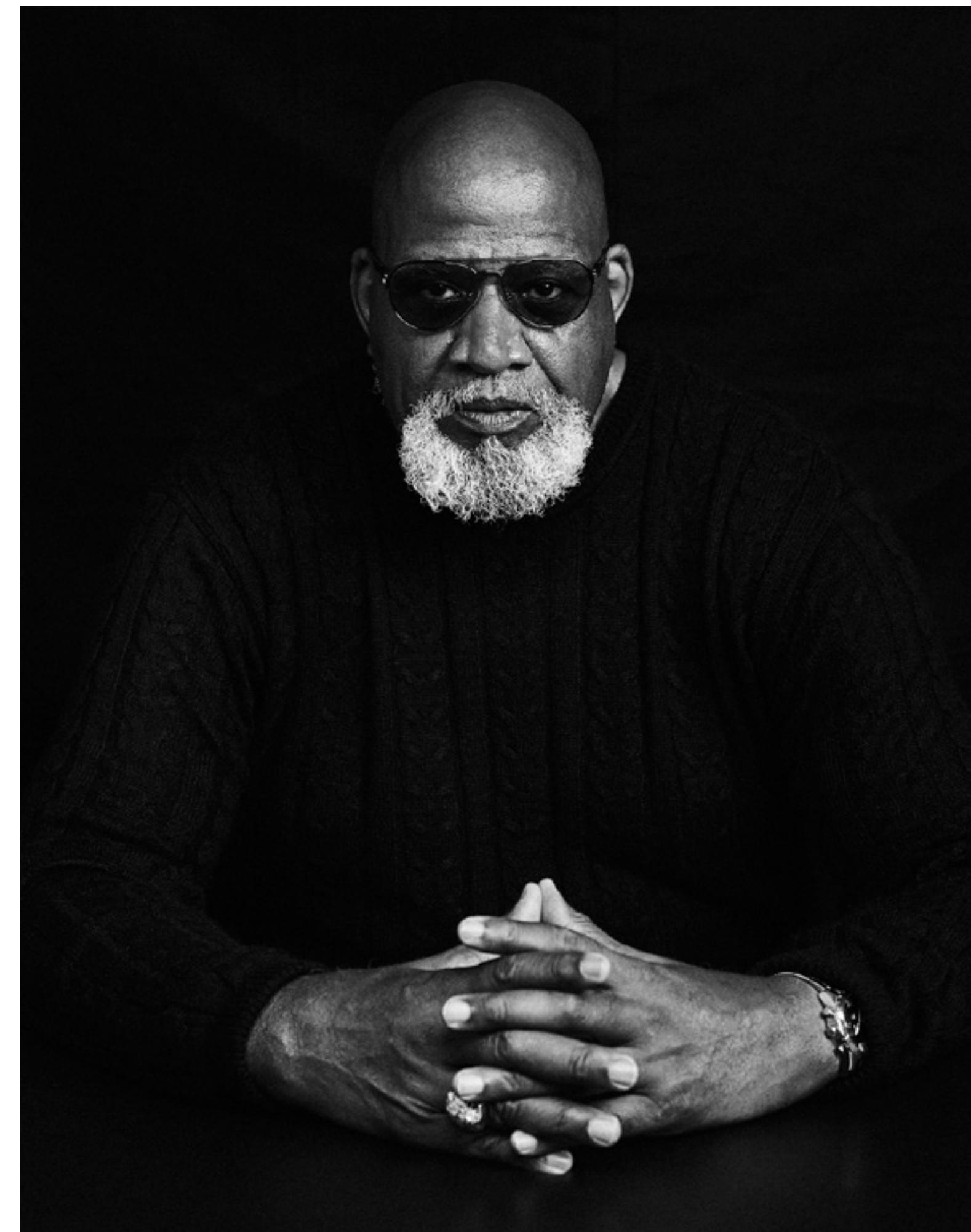
HUMAN RIGHTS 75

Athletes past and present from across the world including Caster Semanya, Gary Lineker, Juan Mata and Vini Jr celebrated the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights



TWO
HARRY
EDWARDS
APPOINTED
PATRON

CSHR was delighted to appoint Dr Harry Edwards as a new Patron in October 2023. Dr Edwards, a veteran of the civil rights movement and instigator of the 1968 Olympic Project for Human Rights is a founding father of sports sociology and long-standing ally and activist on athletes' rights. The appointment was announced at a special one-off performance of "Rumble in the Jungle Rematch" in London on 31 October 2023, delivered in partnership with the theatre company Rematch. This special event brought together the sport and human rights community in the UK to connect, and also paid tribute to the human rights legacy of Muhammad Ali.





Rumble in the Jungle Rematch, October 2023

THREE PARTNERSHIP WITH BBC STUDIOS



StoryWorks
Commercial Productions

CSHR announced a new online web-series to be produced by BBC Studios' multi-award-winning content studios, BBC StoryWorks Commercial Productions. This will feature a series of branded documentary-style short films and immersive content exploring critical issues on the sport and human rights agenda. The new series will spotlight varied and

replicable initiatives contributing towards a vision of inclusive, equitable and responsible sport. Each story will demonstrate how sport – from elite to grassroots level – can advance human rights through mutual respect and understanding, catalysing social inclusion, and promoting healthier societies. The first stories in the series will be available in 2024.

FOUR LAUNCH OF THE GLOBAL SPORT AND HUMAN RIGHTS ACADEMY



CSHR has partnered with the World Academy of Sport to launch the [Global Sport and Human Rights Academy](#). The Academy is the first of its kind in the field, establishing online open courses and developing bespoke content on critical topics and themes in sport and human rights, including tailored pathways for different stakeholders - federations, sponsors or others in the sport ecosystem. In 2023 the Global Sport and Human Rights Academy made available a beta version of its first course, an introductory 101 to sport and human rights as well as a course on child rights and mega-sporting events.

FIVE THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF MEGA- SPORTING EVENTS

Published in October 2023, the Routledge Handbook of Mega-Sporting Events and Human Rights is the first book to explore in depth the topic of mega-sporting events and human rights, offering accounts of adverse human rights impacts linked to MSEs while considering the potential for promoting human rights in and through the framework of these events. Drawing on the contributions of an international group of leading researchers, practitioners and advocates, the book introduces key concepts in human rights and considers

how they relate to ethical, social, managerial and governance issues in contemporary MSEs, from inclusion and welfare to corruption and sustainability. The editors of the handbook are CSHR's William Rook, Daniela Heerdt and Shubham Jain.



SIX SUMMER SCHOOL

CSHR and the Asser Institute in the Hague collaborated again in 2023 to deliver the second edition of a one-week training programme on sport and human rights, following the success of the inaugural programme in 2022. Participants for the programme travelled from across the world, with representation from Australia,

Chile, Europe, India, and the Philippines. For the participants gathered at the FIFPRO headquarters in the Netherlands, it was fitting that athletes' rights was a prominent theme explored across the four days, among other themes within the sport and human rights field.



SEVEN INNOVATING ON SPORT AND HUMAN RIGHTS WITH THINKSPORT

CSHR and ThinkSport announced a strategic partnership for 2023 and 2024 supported by the Swiss Government to promote knowledge sharing, invoke creative thinking and build innovative projects to drive progress in the field of sport and human rights. The organisations are working together to deliver ideation and innovation projects that address challenges and harness opportunities at the intersection between sport and human rights. The partners will use their major events in 2023 and 2024 - THE SPOT in Lausanne and the Sporting Chance Forum

in Geneva to promote the outcomes of the partnership and highlight how multi-stakeholder collaboration and innovation are vital to developing a world of responsible sport.





ADVISORY COUNCIL

An independent council of government, UN agencies, sports bodies, NGOs and trade unions, academia and foundations work closely together as members of the Advisory Council on International Sport.

Together, we work to advance our shared mission: to promote, practice and improve through collective action. We believe, through our shared vision, we can create the Olympic Legacy for the People.



Innovation Booster. Sport, Human Rights and Leadership Workshop in Lausanne, October 2023

EIGHT HUMAN RIGHTS VOLUNTEERS

CSHR's Human Rights Volunteers programme, which supports real-time human rights due diligence during events, is now available to major events owners and organisers for use globally. The programme helps organisers leave a positive legacy of increased human rights capacity in local communities and among sports federations and local event hosts, while contributing to the growth of the global sport and human rights movement. It builds human rights capabilities, organisational

capacity for event organisers for future activities, and creates a model that can be applied by events of all sizes in all regions. CSHR supported FIFA in its Human Rights Volunteers programme at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022.



NINE ROADMAP TO REMEDY

CSHR has consulted widely with a range of stakeholders on how sports organisations can improve their responses to reports of abuse. The project – Roadmap to Remedy – was borne out of a realisation that, across continents and disciplines, those most affected by abuse – victims, survivors, and whistle-blowers – all shared concerns about inadequate, unsafe and ineffective investigation and resolution mechanisms. With support from the Clifford Chance Foundation, CSHR teamed up with a group of Affected Persons across the globe to explore together what

needs to improve when it comes to investigating abuse, reaching determinations and resolutions based on the evidence gathered in investigations, and better engaging Affected Persons in building longer term solutions. CSHR will publish a number of guides on these topics in the coming year.

ROADMAP TO REMEDY

SPORTING CHANCE FORUM 2023

SPORTING CHANCE FORUM 2023


SPORTING CHANCE FORUM 2023

SPORTING CHANCE FORUM 2023

SPORTING CHANCE FORUM 2023

RESPONDING TO AND REMEDYING ABUSE IN SPORT

Scan me



Q & A

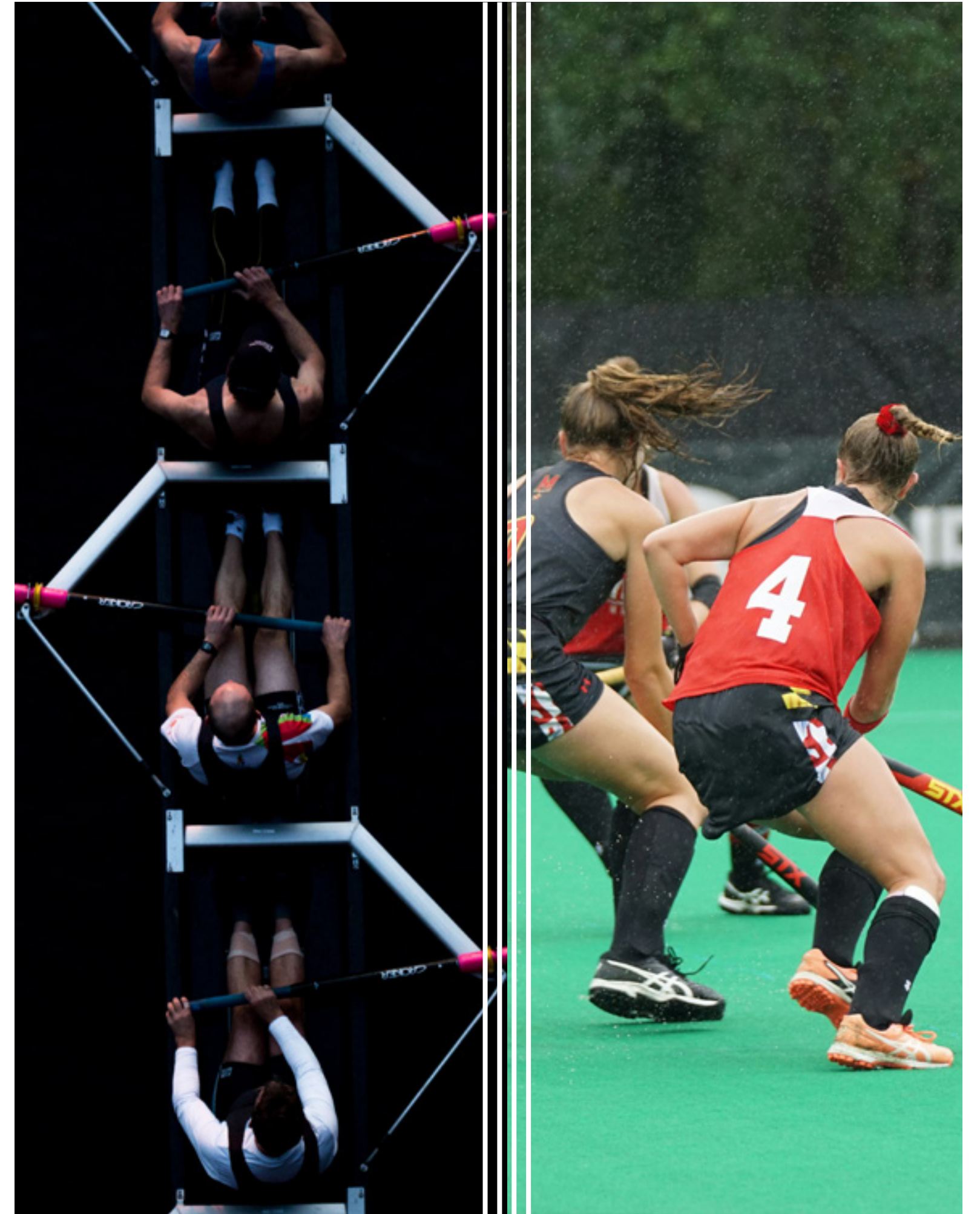
or visit [slido.com](https://www.slido.com) and enter code 2965485



Remedy session at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

TEN EXPANDING THE NETWORK

One of the key roles of CSHR is to bring together stakeholders throughout the sport ecosystem to foster collective action. As the Responsible Sport agenda gains momentum, CSHR has expanded its network beyond its Advisory Council and launched a new form of engagement with institutions across the sport ecosystem: Engaged Organisations. Organisations joining CSHR's multi-stakeholder platform in 2023 included the International Hockey Federation (FIH), Airbnb, McDonald's and World Rowing.



ELEVEN ENGAGING HOST CITIES GLOBALLY



Supported by l'Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie, CSHR undertook a project to raise awareness of respect for human rights within the framework of the organisation and staging of the IXieme Jeux de la Francophonie. Project activities took place in Kinshasa, Democratic Republic of Congo including support work for the National Human Rights Commission of the Democratic Republic of Congo (CNDH) in the context of consultations with civil society organisations in order to identify the risks of human rights violations during the Games. Secondly, awareness raising sessions with members and staff of the CNDH and the Comité national des Jeux de la



Francophonie (CNJF) were held, as well as with games volunteers. These efforts build on ongoing work with the Swiss Government to engage host governments via the mechanism of the Host Government Forum. The 2023 Host Government Forum brought together representatives from three continents to discuss their work to prepare upcoming major events.

TWELVE LEARNING AND EXCHANGE FOR HOST CITIES

On 6 December CSHR launched the Host City Human Rights Learning and Exchange Initiative and convened 21 representatives in Geneva after the Sporting Chance Forum. In collaboration with the World Academy of Sport, CSHR brought together host city human rights leads to engage in peer sharing about challenges and opportunities in protecting and promoting human rights through their event delivery. Representatives hosting three different mega-sporting

events attended, including representatives from 10 FIFA World Cup 2026 host cities.





THIRTEEN CARIBBEAN OUTREACH

In October 2023, a significant shift in the sports paradigm began with a pivotal consultation in Barbados during workshops organised in conjunction with the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees' (CANOC) General Assembly. CANOC represents 29 National Olympic Committees and Commonwealth Games Associations across the Caribbean.

The workshops in Barbados provided a significant opportunity for CSHR supported by the Open Society Foundations (OSF),

to kick off a global dialogue to understand sports in the context of decolonisation and reparative justice. These aren't just conversations but urgent calls to immediate commitment, action and mobilisation for change, with the event in Barbados leading directly to a powerful plenary session at the 2023 Sporting Chance Forum. During the workshop in Barbados, CANOC announced and formally submitted its commitment as an engaged organisation of CSHR.

WORKSHOP
23



THE XXI CANOC GENERAL ASSEMBLY
BARBADOS 2023

CANOC 10TH ANNUAL
BARBADOS



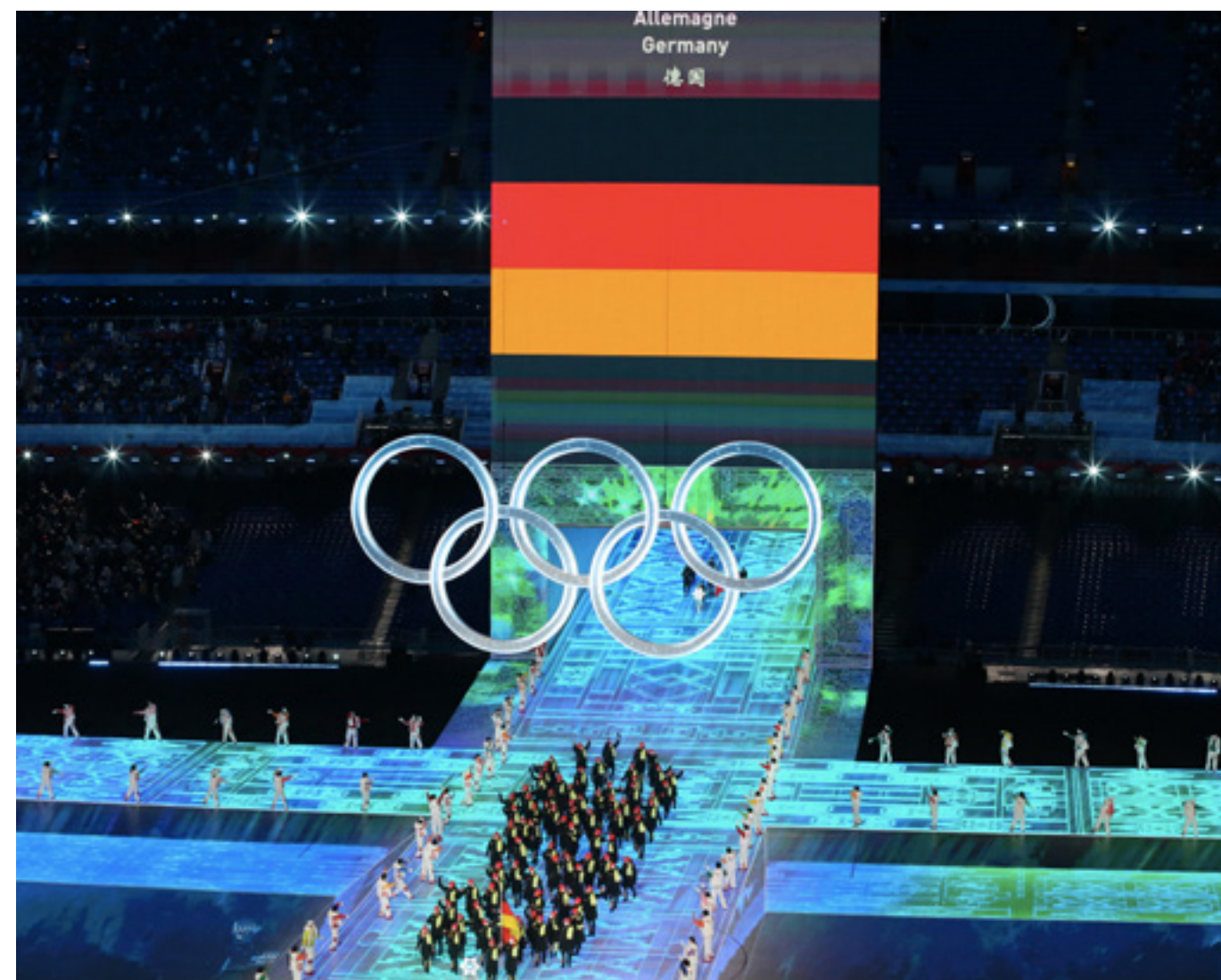
ABRAMSON
VICE PRESIDENT

KEITH JOSEPH
CANOC—PRESIDENT

CARSON EBANKS
1ST VICE PRESIDENT

David Grevemberg CBE at the XXI CANOC General Assembly

FOURTEEN TECHNICAL SUPPORT FOR SPORT BODIES



CSHR launched its Advisory Services function to address gaps between commitments and practice, launching new partnerships with national and regional federations to support the development of human rights policies and processes. In the past year, CSHR worked intensively with the German National Olympic Committee to support their process of developing a human rights policy. This included conducting the human rights impact assessment and stakeholder engagement, as well as drafting the first version of the human rights policy and a list of measures for implementation.

The policy is a first of its kind and makes important commitments and promises regarding ongoing human rights due diligence and implementation. CSHR also worked with European Athletics on integrating human rights requirements in the bidding process and regulations of European athletics events.

ADVISORY SERVICES



FIFTEEN
**EMBEDDING
CHILD RIGHTS
WITHIN
HOST CITY
ENGAGEMENT
IN NORTH
AMERICA**

As part of CSHR's ongoing engagement with FIFA World Cup 2026 host cities on child rights in New York / New Jersey, Guadalajara, Toronto, and Los Angeles, and thanks to support from the Oak Foundation and Clifford Chance, in September CSHR brought together 30 attendees across four host cities in New York for two days of powerful learning, exchange, and activation. This in-person workshop brought individual host city work into the next phase of engagement, sharing cross-city approaches focused on child participation and child safeguarding, and embedding the inclusion of children's rights within the larger

human rights framework. As a result of the workshop, 100% of attendees completing the post-workshop survey strongly agreed or agreed that they were more likely to include child rights and participation in their everyday work, that they would recommend the workshop to other host cities, and that their knowledge and understanding of child safeguarding in sport increased. The foundational work set in 2023 with host cities is paving the way for further engagement and collective action to improve child safeguarding in sport, increase child participation, and link the ecosystem actors together within cities and across North America.



Host cities workshop in New York, September 2023

SIXTEEN SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS DECLARATION FOR UEFA EURO 2024

On 14 November 2023, a Human Rights Declaration for UEFA EURO 2024 was presented at a sport and human rights conference hosted by the German Federal Ministry of the Interior and Community in Berlin. CSHR welcomed the collaboration between public and private sectors in line with their roles and responsibilities to strengthen and enforce protection and respect for human rights ahead of the event and welcomed the organisers' commitment to respecting all internationally recognised human rights. During the last stage of the process, CSHR was involved in reviewing the Declaration for conformity and alignment with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs).

CSHR's comments were fully integrated in sections I and II of the Declaration. This Declaration creates a strong framework for the implementation of processes to support the human rights dimensions of the tournament.





SEVENTEEN INTEGRATING HUMAN RIGHTS INTO SUSTAINABLE EVENT STANDARDS

In 2023 CSHR was officially approved as a liaison organisation to the International Organization for Standardization (ISO), allowing CSHR to formally liaise with the technical committee overseeing a review of the ISO 20121 standard. ISO 20121 is the flagship global sustainability standard for events of all kinds

including Mega-Sporting Events and is the standard used in most MSE bidding processes. As part of this process, CSHR has been tasked with soliciting feedback from its membership base and incorporating these comments into the review. CSHR represents these views at technical committee meetings.

EIGHTEEN
**YOUTH MEDIA
FORWARD
INITIATIVE
LAUNCHED**

The Youth Media Forward Initiative was launched at the Sporting Chance Forum and will work with 40 youth reporters in four of the FIFA World Cup 2026 host cities, during the preparations for and delivery of the event.

Journalists play an important role shining a light on the human rights dimensions of sport & Mega-Sport Events. Through the initiative, young reporters will create stories that influence the actions of host governments & decision-makers, & help shape the future of journalism on sport & human rights.

"Getting direct experience reporting at the Commonwealth

Youth Games gave me greater exposure and knowledge of the industry, and insights on the importance of sharing diverse perspectives on topics such as safeguarding. It's exciting to see a growing global network of young reporters."

Monifa Monderoy,
Commonwealth Youth Games
journalist

"As a sports journalist in Canada, I can't wait for this program to get started as more young journalists in Canada, the U.S. & Mexico elevate important stories, shift dominant narratives of sport & give more attention to human rights."

Shireen Ahmed, CBC Sports



Youth journalism panel at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023



NINETEEN
GENERATION
2026:
NORTH
AMERICAN
HOST CITY
STAKEHOLDER
ENGAGEMENT

Through CSHR's Generation 2026 project, local stakeholders in NY/ NJ, Guadalajara, Toronto, and LA were engaged on child rights.

For example, in Guadalajara, a three day workshop in August on child protection was conducted by CSHR in collaboration with the State Human Rights Commission of Jalisco, the Guadalajara Local Committee and UNICEF Mexico. The workshop boosted awareness of child rights through sport, and the coordination to promote safe and inclusive spaces.

More than 70 experts of various government agencies, such as child protection, police, tourism, and civil society organizations established the priorities of a cross-sectoral preparedness plan within the child protection ecosystem. Also, a children's focus group was also held to hear their opinions and proposals.

The participants recognized that the World Cup is not only a sporting event but a unique opportunity to create positive changes in their communities.



Workshops in Guadalajara in collaboration with the State Human Rights Commission of Jalisco, the Guadalajara Local Committee and UNICEF Mexico

GENERATION 2026

GENERACIÓN 2026
GUADALAJARA

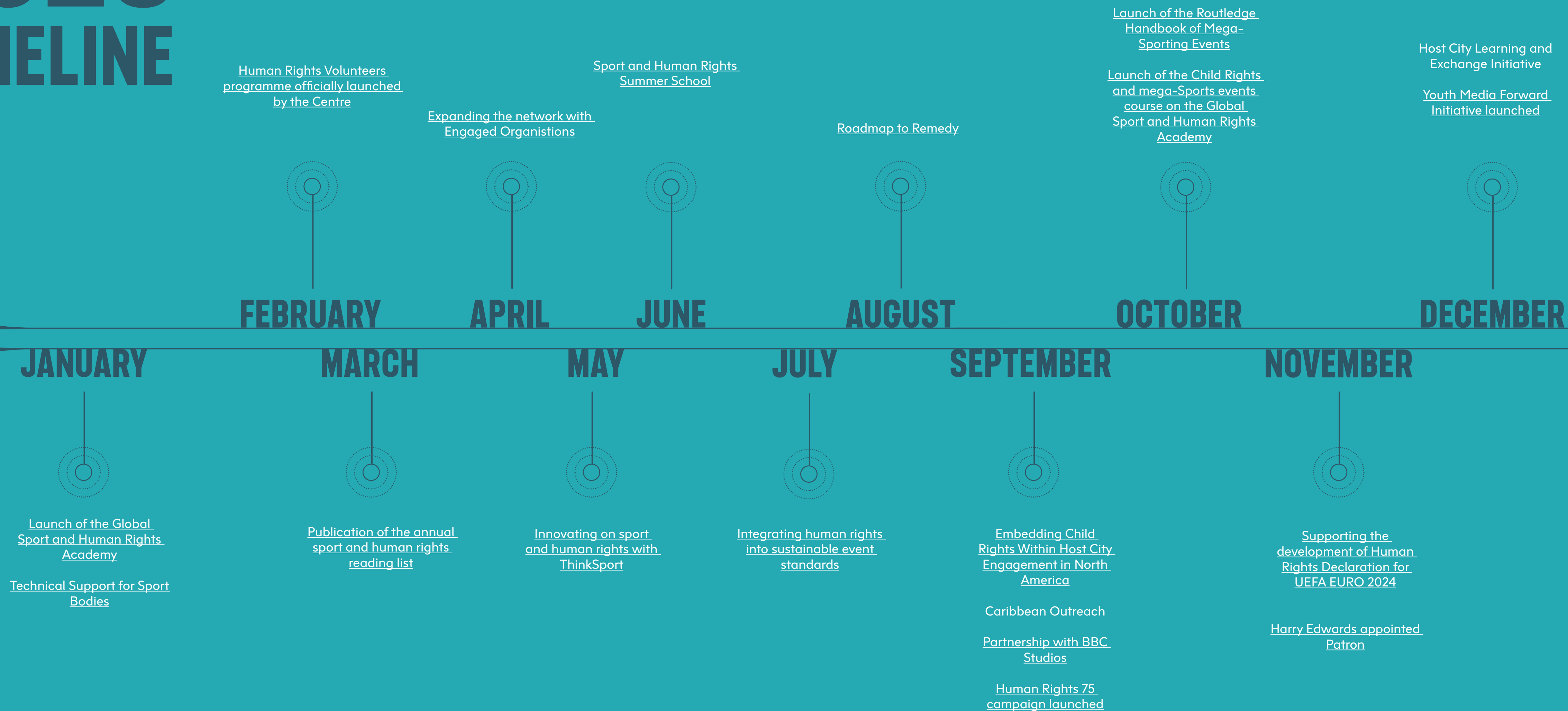
GENERATION 2026
NEW YORK/NEW JERSEY

GENERATION 2026
LOS ANGELES

GENERATION 2026
TORONTO



2023 TIMELINE



Key messages from the
**SPORTING CHANCE
FORUM
2023**



A black and white photograph of Volker Türk, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, speaking at a podium. He is wearing glasses, a white shirt, a dark tie, and a dark suit jacket. The podium in front of him features the United Nations logo and the text "UNITED NATIONS" and "NATIONS UNIES".

“We need responsible sport – sport and Mega-Sporting Events that are inclusive, fair, and safe, where stakeholders are properly engaged, and where human rights risks are mapped and addressed in line with international standards.”

**Volker Türk,
UN High Commissioner for Human Rights at
the Sporting Chance Forum 2023**

The 2023 Sporting Chance Forum (SCF23), hosted at the UN's Palais des Nations in Geneva, coincided with the commemoration of the 75th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). More than 650 speakers and delegates from across the sport ecosystem and around the world met on 5-6 December 2023 to explore innovative strategies and new forms of collective action to advance respect for human rights across the world of sport. As a contribution to the UN *Human Rights 75* initiative, participants looked to prepare, engage and pledge their support to shape the coming decades of responsible sport grounded in universal human rights and labour rights principles. SCF23 was organised by CSHR and co-hosted by the Office of UN High Commissioner for Human Rights

(OHCHR), the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the Government of Switzerland with the support of Open Society Foundations.

SCF23 drew together representatives with varied backgrounds and roles from across the global sport ecosystem. With esteemed journalist **Tracey Holmes** as Master of Ceremonies, **Mary Harvey**, and Ambassador **Anna Ifkovits Horner** of the Swiss Government welcomed delegates to the UN. Opening speakers **Volker Türk**, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, ILO Assistant Director General **Manuela Tomei**, Canada's Minister of Sport **Carla Qualtrough**, and **Epsy Campbell Barr**, Chair of the UN Permanent Forum on People of African Descent all set the scene for the event. Over

the two days, participants also heard interventions from **Theodore Theodoridis** of UEFA, **Tatiana Valovaya** of the UN Office at Geneva, **Daphne Panayotatos** of Open Society Foundations, and footballer **Vinicius Jr**, culminating in **Payoshni Mitra** introducing South African athlete **Caster Semenya** in conversation with honorary chair of SCF23, **Mary Robinson**.

The SCF23 agenda addressed a diverse range of issues across six sessions, with the expertise and insights of panelists from all parts of the sport and human rights ecosystem. The sessions included exploring how to go beyond commitments towards transformational leadership and culture change, with the help of **David Rodin**, **Mayi Cruz Blanco**,



Epsy Campbell Barr at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023



Caster Semenya in conversation with Mary Robinson at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023



Ruben Escalante Hasbun, Matthew Graham, and Michelle Moore; addressing the social and governance risks, regulations & responsibilities shaping the future of sport led by **Anita Ramasastry, Tihana Bule, Rae Lindsay and Magali Martowicz;** tackling systemic challenges in sport through the voices of those with lived experience, first in relation to racial inequality and legacies of colonialism on questions of truth, justice, repair & reconciliation with **David Grevemberg, Stan Grant, Marjorie Guillaume, Keith Joseph and Azeem Rafiq;** second, on questions embracing intersectionality and solidarity in policies and practices in women's sport with **Lombe Mwambwa, Gabriela Garton, Khalida Popal, and Natalie Washington,** and third, by focussing on young journalists in communities and

Theodore Theodoridis at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

at sporting events with **Sabrina Razack, Shireen Ahmed, Nénucha Ciss, Monifa Monderoy** and **Miriam Walker-Khan**; through to considering how to respond to and remedy cases of abuse in sport by conducting safe, effective and appropriate investigations with the expertise of **Kat Craig, Miles Benjamin, Kirsty Burrows** and **Joanna Maranhao**. SCF23 culminated with insights on how to bring sport and human rights to life at the host city level with **Minal Davis, Danne Diamond, Matt Mullen** and **Lee Strieb**. With thanks to all the speakers, this summary report distills and identifies consistent and emerging themes from participants across SCF23.

KEY THEMES

When sport leads by example, it has the potential to champion social and environmental transformation, break down barriers and unite diverse peoples in confronting complex challenges. Speakers throughout SCF23 reinforced the reality that for too long sport has not delivered for everyone, with hierarchical and patriarchal structures helping perpetuate power imbalances in modern-day sport, and preserving European and North American centrism. Participants explored how to rekindle the hope of realising human rights in sport and the importance of rebuilding trust, listening and

collaboration. A number of broad themes and priorities for action were identified that should inform the work of all stakeholders in the time ahead.

Addressing the trust deficit in sport

The institutions of sport and its leaders must do more to earn the trust of all stakeholders. Multiple sessions highlighted how hierarchies thrive on control and conflict, and sport - by conscious or unconscious design - has sometimes pitted those who are most vulnerable against each other, in particular women and LGBTQI+ people, people of colour, boys and girls, persons with visible and invisible disabilities, and others with



*Panel on The transformative future of women's sports
at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023*

intersecting and overlapping identities. Too often, those celebrated in sport have been let down. Discrimination, harm or abuse in sport, whether on the basis of race, gender, or any other factor, affects individuals and reverberates through entire groups and communities. From athletes and volunteers, to workers, fans and the communities that bring sport and its events to life, and to the journalists who tell their stories, examples from across sport point to how people have been denied the recognition and rewards due to them, and excluded from decisions that affect them. To renew sport's social license, panelists called on institutions throughout the sport ecosystem to shed out-dated structures and strengthen accountability in cases of abusive and harmful behaviour. The work requires more

inclusive and participatory processes, practices and structures.

Sharing authority, ensuring accountability

A common thread throughout SCF23 was a call on sport institutions to cede some power to the people that bring sport to life to better enable sport to fully realise its potential for good. To reference a message cited at the conference - in the words of Thomas Bach, President of the IOC, it is a question of "change or be changed". Too often, the rhetoric and reality of a level playing field in sport do not match. From John Carlos, Tommie Smith and Peter Norman, to Caster Semenya, Jenny Hermoso and Azeem Rafiq, athletes

who have dared to voice their truths, to speak of discrimination, abuse, and the pressures to conform to prevailing heritage, gender and behavioural norms, or defend themselves and their bodily autonomy, have often paid a price. In such cases, athletes may risk their funding and sponsorship, or being vilified, dehumanised or driven out of sports they have loved since childhood. Whistleblowers in cases of sexual abuse and bullying risk being retraumatised by the very investigations and legal processes meant to afford them remedy. Many only come to know justice through the solidarity of players associations or by sacrificing athletic careers and fighting for what is right when they have nothing more to lose. The plight of affected persons must be taken seriously, and all should

stand with the people who have been harmed. It was evident throughout SCF23 that more and more stakeholders across the ecosystem are looking for change.

Athletes are workers, and when athletes speak out they are also human rights defenders who require collective support and solidarity. They are free and equal in dignity and rights, but their dignity comes first. This is true too for all people affected by sport. Fans - like those who lost their lives or who faced a near miss in the soccer stadium crushes of 2022 - also need protection and to be treated with respect, as do sports reporters who operate in high-risk environments and themselves risk discrimination, harassment and arbitrary arrests. Workers - many

of whom on stadium construction sites and in sport's supply chains have endured unsafe working conditions and been exploited - should also expect better. All deserve protection and to enjoy the right to organise and bargain collectively, have their voices heard, benefit from gender pay equity, equitable conditions of work and maternity rights, and as boys and girls be protected from abuse or trafficking through athletic training schemes. Everyone in and around sport expects decent work and to feel physically and psychologically safe, free from violence, bullying and harassment.



*Panel on leadership and cultural change
at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023*

Fostering leadership and culture change

Many SCF23 speakers stressed that sport today is not adequately prioritizing human rights and diversity, with power too often continuing to protect those already in authority. A new generation of leaders is seeking changes in sport culture to penetrate glass ceilings and more actively involve historically marginalized groups who have long been excluded from decision-making. Participants acknowledged that sport is still off the pace when it comes to succession planning, advances in technology, and purpose-led marketing and partnerships. Issues such as pay inequity, lack of free expression, systemic

discrimination, sexual abuse and harms to athlete mental and physical health are taking too long to solve. Entire generations of athletes, particularly girls, are suffering or not taking up sport as a result of these systemic challenges. Within the bastions of sport in Europe, North America and beyond, senior management of global organisations rarely represents the diversity of its membership or is tokenistic at best, with men, often older white men, continuing to hold power at the expense of black, brown and indigenous people, young people, religious minorities, women or other marginalised groups. Attendees heard that those in leadership positions too often appear resistant to change, or simply afraid or uncertain of where to begin. Leadership for the twenty-first century requires



Anita Ramasastry at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

responsibility, capability and motivation. A new type and generation of leaders is knocking at the door. Leading sports body representatives acknowledged that with power comes responsibility, admitted where things had gone wrong, and discussed practical actions being taken to ensure mistakes are not repeated. Leaders may have to unlearn prejudices, acknowledge when they don't have the answers themselves, and - as sports bodies are increasingly doing - ask for help from human rights experts, and work hand in hand with affected people like supporters groups, local communities, trade unions, and survivors of abuse. This provides the opportunity for fresh solutions and new narratives.

SCF23 heard calls for sport to embrace a blend of the "hardware" of robust governance structures and "software" of culture change. This goes beyond policies. Sport can learn from the Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) agenda, by converting strong leadership into sustainable organisational practices fit for the future. On the "social" or human rights side, this means following the roadmap set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs), and compatible instruments like the OECD Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises. Rooted in international human rights principles, these standards assign human rights responsibilities to economic actors - from universities to sports bodies, and sponsors and broadcast corporations

- independent of government, and are increasingly being mainstreamed across business, integrated into management standards and hardened into law, such as the forthcoming - and potentially far-reaching - EU Corporate Sustainability Due Diligence Directive (CS3D). This goes beyond law and external pressure, with businesses already on the journey recognising the cost of not addressing adverse impacts on people in a comprehensive way. As one delegate put it, if you are not looking at risks to people, you are not addressing risk in a holistic way. A key takeaway was that prevention is always the best form of remedy and reputation management.



The SCF23 noted how leading sports bodies, including the IOC, FIFA and UEFA have made strong commitments and integrated human rights norms into their event hosting requirements and beyond. The journey starts with those at the top taking responsibility and forging new models of leadership and commitment, cemented through people-centric organisational and cultural change and robust due diligence. There are no gatekeepers to doing this work and no reasons not to get started. Human rights due diligence demands among other things, upskilling and resourcing, and looking ahead to understand the potential impacts on people of activities across sport, in supply chains and at tournaments, talking to people who have been harmed and doing something so harms are

prevented, mitigated or put right, including by using contractual and other leverage with partners. There is a role for sports journalists, experts and those with lived experience, in investigations and reporting on performance, with remedy and reparative processes that put people first. It was reiterated that it is impossible to be 100% risk free or guarantee that survivors won't be retraumatised by investigations, but human rights due diligence can be practical and operational. To break down difficult-sounding tasks requires identifying who is best placed to support, including experts and those with lived-experience of the issues. If abuse thrives on secrecy, deception and isolation, the antidote is communication, transparency, clarity and collaboration.

Rebuilding trust starts with listening. Speakers made clear those with grievances are not the problem but can become partners in finding better solutions, noting that inherited structures and abusive behaviours had gone unchallenged. Through the safe and direct involvement and insight of those with lived experience of harm, sports bodies can build renewed legitimacy. From risk assessments, to understanding which risks are salient and need to be prioritised, through to trauma-informed investigations and remedy processes, sports institutions and leaders need to hear directly from the voices of those who have endured historical injustices and faced gender inequities, being ever mindful of how different aspects of a person's

identity intersect, overlap, and implicate specific risks, needs, and experiences for them. Delegates were reminded - if you are in the room, you need to look around and see who's missing, ask experts for advice, seek out non-obvious voices, in particular those of victims and survivors, and enlist athletes and others who may be willing messengers. The work is not always easy, often involving getting comfortable with being uncomfortable.



Young journalists panel at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

Creating space for dialogue and shared learning

The work ahead to strengthen respect for human rights in sport requires sincerity, ongoing education, consciousness raising and opportunities for constructive dialogue with mentors. Privately, many sports leaders admit to a basic lack of training on leadership development, talent scouting and aspects of the human element of organisational change, through to how to conduct investigations with victims and survivors. Help is at hand. Frameworks and tools already exist, from key human rights norms to a new UN Human Rights Council Resolution that looks to forge a world

of sport free from racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, to sector-led initiatives like the IOC's Framework on Fairness, Inclusion and Non-discrimination on the basis of gender identity and sex variations. Practical tools designed for sport such as CSHR's forthcoming Roadmap to Remedy toolkit will also provide guidance in specific challenging areas. The UN High Commissioner for Human Rights was among those to acknowledge CSHR's role as a distinct institutional home for international efforts to bring awareness, education and action to the intersection between sport and rights. From CSHR, its Advisory Council and Engaged Organisations, to friends across the ecosystem, including from academia, civil society, the private sector partners, government



Delegates arrive at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

and intergovernmental institutions, many are ready to collaborate further.

Amplification of people's stories is vital for social advancement, but who tells the story is as important as the story itself. Young journalists, including women and those of marginalised racial, religious and diverse identities, themselves often have to battle to tell stories relating to sport from the point of view of the communities they represent. While many broadcasters are welcoming more diverse perspectives and facilitating a broader range of sports coverage, there is still work to do. The abuse of Jenny Hermoso after the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 final rightly captured global headlines and was condemned, yet racialised women from

Argentina to Zambia with analogous situations did not receive similar attention. Questions need to be asked, for example, why is there so much vitriol on the question of transgender rights in sport, or against Muslim women players in France who wear the hijab when other demonstrations of faith are accepted? Is it at least in part because audiences so rarely hear from those with lived experience or reporters from these groups?

The road to truth starts with a conversation. Sport is a space for new narratives, and building towards FIFA World Cup 2026 in Canada, Mexico and USA, representatives from host cities, FIFA and coalitions of civil society, unions and athlete voices discussed how to walk the talk on human rights due diligence and bring sport and human rights to life at the



host city level. For them, stakeholder engagement is the floor not the ceiling. It involves incorporating expertise from public bodies, event organisers, human and labour rights experts and activists, and prioritising local knowledge and perspectives. Insight from a diverse mix of affected people is proving to be essential, and recalling that a person with one set of lived experiences cannot be expected to speak for all. In parallel, strong minimum standards are imperative, from questions of discrimination - to ensure equal treatment of diverse and intersectional communities, through to guarantees on the right to organise - so international norms prevail for global events even where inconsistencies arise at the national or local level.

Regular communication, ongoing dialogue, adaptability and transparency, can help ensure affected individuals are treated as players not spectators. Participants heard how host cities, civil society groups, trade unions, national and local human rights commissions, child rights advocates and many more, have been instrumental in shaping the forthcoming FIFA World Cup 2026 Host City Human Rights Framework. This will steer cities as they develop their locally tailored human rights actions plans and provide specifics on inclusion, safeguarding, worker rights and access to remedy, pinpointing these and other salient human rights risk areas for prioritisation, including the rights of unsheltered populations, responsible policing and protection for human rights defenders and journalists. By facilitating agency and ceding some

level of power and control to be more inclusive, this experience shows how it is possible to overcome initial scepticism, rebuild trust, prevent harms arising or recurring, and be ready to put things right if needed. As sports bodies and their commercial partners who have already taken these steps can affirm, the work is powerful and can help organisations understand the realities people face across their activities, plug gaps and ultimately make better decisions. A key message to all participants was that once the truth of the past is acknowledged, alongside ongoing efforts to listen and rebuild trust, then collectively a better future for sport is within reach.

Just as human rights and democracy do not maintain themselves but have to be defended vigilantly from authoritarianism, populism and impunity, the power of sport is only as good as

the people who wield it. Each of us has a role to play. SCF23 delegates were urged to identify their respective roles in the sport ecosystem, take personal and institutional responsibility, go on journeys of self-education and fight for a future of sport that is welcoming and respectful of all involved. The progressive realisation of human rights throughout sport is a shared responsibility that requires collaboration between all actors, a sentiment that inspired the SCF23 hashtag: #TeamHumanRights. Through cooperation, dialogue and collective action between governments, sports organisations, corporations, civil society and trade unions, athletes, fan groups, journalists, foundations and others we can reclaim, as recalled in a special video produced for the event, Nelson Mandela's uniting vision of the transformative power of sport.

TAKING STOCK OF 2023

Mary Harvey,
CEO



Human rights are under threat globally - amidst a rise in populism, authoritarianism and impunity, accompanied by ongoing conflicts and humanitarian crises. With the international human rights system facing generational challenges and historical reckonings, we all share a vision that sport - one of humanity's greatest social manifestations - can play a prominent role in supporting, respecting, and promoting universal human rights.

As multilateralism and international standards come under mounting pressure, it is increasingly important to reinforce the role of sport as a social good - delivered in accordance with internationally recognised human rights principles, norms and standards. At a time when the "power of sport" is frequently instrumentalised, it is more important than ever to establish baseline expectations for all

actors in the sport ecosystem to meaningfully commit to respecting and upholding human rights and labour standards for all affected by sport and its activities. Through developing and maintaining a social licence rooted in respect for human rights, sport and its unparalleled reach can be further leveraged in the interests, and with the participation, of all those affected.

With increasing awareness of the human rights abuses and violations that exist within sport, there is a pressing need to collaborate to bring human rights due diligence into all aspects of sport. Through doing so, we can work towards a shared vision of responsible sport - with people at the centre - offering a foundation for sport to provide authentic leadership on global challenges and advance human rights.



In a world looking for leadership on critical issues, sports provide scope for optimism, championing values such as respect, inclusion, fairness, and integrity. However, despite its vast contributions to society, sport has been complacent about its own involvement in serious harm to individuals, particularly athletes and wider communities hosting its events, with detrimental effects on the legitimacy and credibility of everyone in the world of sport. Examples of human rights abuses in sport mirror or exacerbate those outside of sport, such as discrimination, including sexism, racism, and homophobia; harassment and abuse, including the physical and sexual abuse of athletes, as well as corruption and labour abuses. Given systemic power imbalances in sport, athletes are particularly at risk often working in environments where their safety and rights as workers are under threat, or

aren't recognised. By walking the walk and tackling its own human rights issues, sport can serve as a beacon for human rights everywhere.

Encouragingly, sport is now more aware of its social dimensions than ever before and has begun to engage with its positive and negative impacts on the human rights and labour rights of individuals and communities worldwide. Public awareness of human rights issues associated with sport and its most prominent events has never been greater, with many actors within the sport ecosystem, including civil society, trade unions and investigative journalists, playing key roles and using the spotlight of mega-events to shed light on human rights issues in many parts of the world. This increased scrutiny over the past decade has coincided with a maturing architecture for non-state actors to address their

human rights responsibilities - namely through the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and aligned standards.

Over recent years, global sports bodies have started to embed international human rights standards into their policies and practices, including bidding and hosting requirements for major events. FIFA became the first international sport federation to adopt a human rights policy in 2017. Organisations such as the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Commonwealth Sport, and the Organisation Internationale de la Francophonie (OIF) have since developed strategies, charters, or position statements to affirm their human rights commitments, culminating with the IOC adopting amendments to the Olympic Charter to include human rights in October 2023. From this critical scaffolding,



FIFA Women's World Cup Australia New Zealand 2023

innovative and collaborative work is needed to support – and ensure – sport implements its human rights responsibilities.

Serious engagement on human rights within sport has advanced furthest in major events, where sports bodies act most like businesses and where established corporate approaches to human rights due diligence most clearly apply. In 2018, FIFA included human rights criteria into the bidding requirements for hosting its biggest events, awarding the 2026 Men's FIFA World Cup to Canada, Mexico and the United States with a requirement that every host city have a human rights plan. A similar approach was taken for the 2023 Women's World Cup in Australia and New Zealand. Indeed, there is now a significant pivot towards a future where human rights commitments

and processes are embedded into the entire lifecycle of sport's greatest events, including Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris (2024), Milano/Cortina (2026), Los Angeles (2028) and Brisbane (2032). In November 2023, the organisers of the UEFA Euro 2024 Championships adopted a human rights declaration. A requirement to issue an independent human rights risk assessment and develop a strategy to mitigate human rights risks will be a component of the proposals to host FIFA Men's and Women's World Cups in 2027, 2030, 2031, and 2034. Notwithstanding, despite this progress, knowledge of international human rights and labour standards and the requisite processes to implement them is still new, and remains unfamiliar to those awarding, planning and organising sport and its events.

We therefore enter 2024 at an inflection point. On one hand, there is increasing demand from sports bodies, federations, clubs, event organisers and host cities, all seeking to build their own capacity to understand and act in accordance with their human rights responsibilities in a world that is very new to them. This presents an immediate opportunity for leaders across sport to do well at incorporating human rights standards and considerations within their operations, strengthening sport in doing so, and demonstrating that these strategies are possible; both help to manage risk and add value, and can resonate and connect with communities. On the other hand, implementation of human rights commitments and responsibilities, is ultimately where sport will be tested. Will the world of sport, with increasing human rights expertise and support, evolve and develop better practices for

the sector itself and pilot, catalyse, and develop good practices with broader applications, making a significant contribution to global efforts to uphold human rights? Or, will hard-fought and historic human rights commitments devolve into performative exercises with limited accountability? Given this inflection, how can each of us play our role - individually and collectively - to ensure these commitments become the new normal?

We therefore enter 2024 with much progress that has been made, but much work ahead to ensure that these new commitments are the dawn of the new normal in sport and sporting events. The Centre will be working hard to help sport to take up these responsibilities, and embrace this brave new world. Please join us.

REFLECTING ON THE FIRST FIVE YEARS OF CSHR

William Rook, Deputy CEO



First proposed in 2015, a multi-stakeholder initiative came together to develop an evidence base and mandate for a new organisation dedicated to the specific human rights dimensions of sport. As an outcome of that process, CSHR launched in 2018 with a mission to advance a world of sport that fully respects and promotes human rights.

A venture building on decades of work by many parties, CSHR was established with a specific role to share knowledge, build capacity, and strengthen the accountability of all actors in sport through collective action and realisation of the Sporting Chance Principles. The 2023 Sporting Chance Forum therefore provided a moment to reflect on the first five years of CSHR.

Following three years of incubation by the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB), CSHR became independent, grew its team, and gained increased

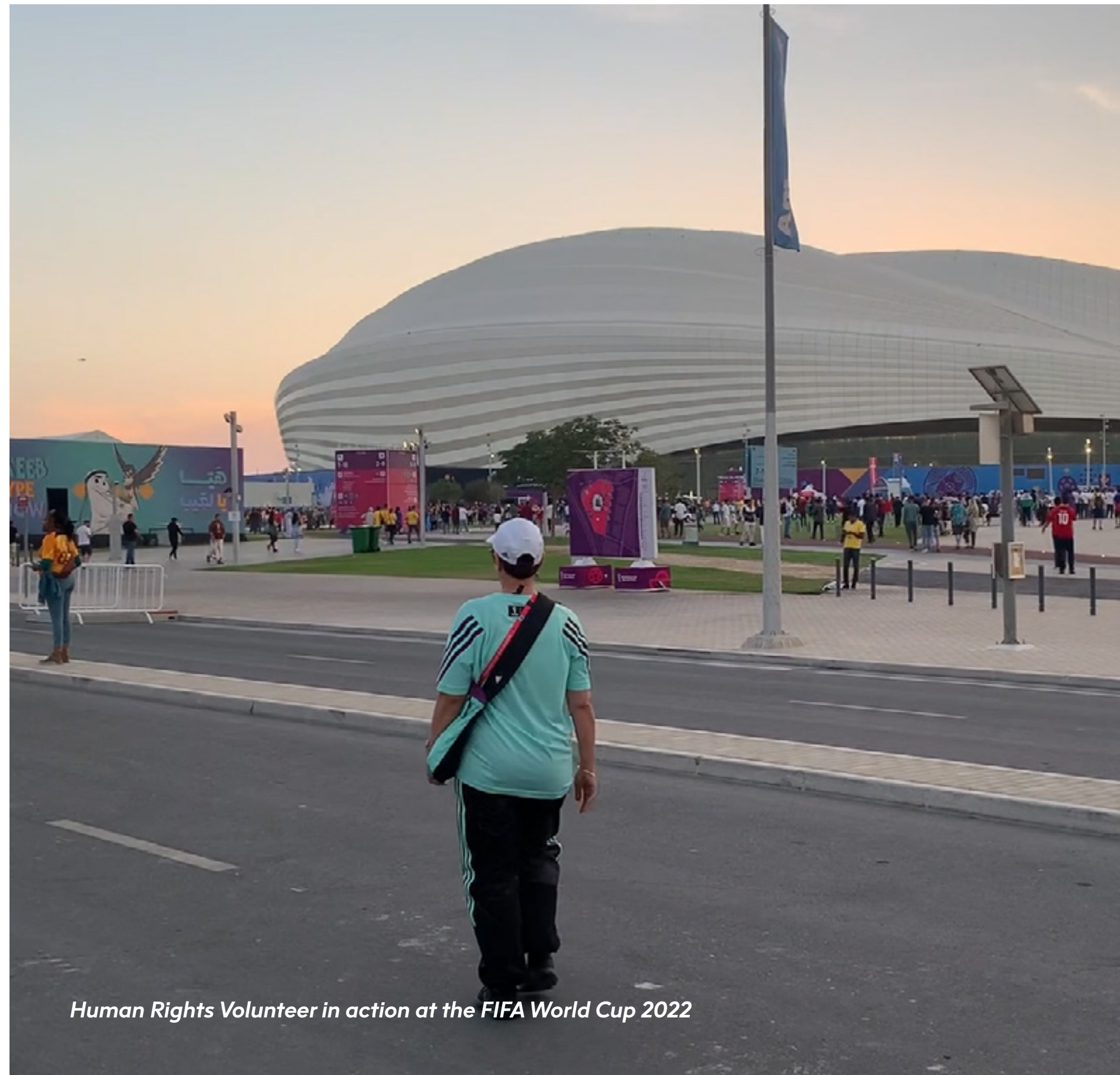
visibility in 2021, adopting a four-year strategic plan, "Convergence 2025" premised on a theory of change involving generating awareness, building capacity, and creating lasting value.

Generating awareness, the first pillar of CSHR's theory of change, aligns with a strategic priority to nurture innovation and knowledge, encompassing communications, campaigns, education and training - all targeted at mainstreaming respect for human rights within sport. Broader engagement with public audiences has sought to cement the connection between sport and human rights, reinforce the relevance of human rights to sport, and highlight actionable steps that all stakeholders can take. As a result of these efforts, it is increasingly understood that sport and human rights are inherently connected and what this means for different stakeholders.

Building capacity, the second pillar of CSHR's theory of change, has included work to strengthen operational systems and practices in sport to align them with human rights responsibilities. CSHR has co-created, developed and published a range of best practice tools, guides and materials, including on fans' rights, mega-event due diligence for sports bodies, event security, responsible sponsorship, guidance for broadcasters, mapping human rights risks across the mega-event lifecycle, child rights, games-time risks and in embedding human rights in sports body governance. In doing so, CSHR seeks to speak to the needs of all affected groups at the heart of the ecosystem, incorporate an intersectional approach, apply a gender lens, and consult widely in developing its outputs. In pioneering high-quality new standards, guidance and know-how, CSHR has positioned itself as the go-to resource on human rights in sport, with strong regional experience in Europe, the Middle East and North America. Now,

with an increased focus on implementation, CSHR has instigated innovative new projects, bringing National Human Rights Institutions together with sports bodies, piloting the concept of Human Rights Volunteers for major event organisers, including a significant deployment at the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022, and working hand in hand with host cities to engage stakeholders and develop human rights strategies.

Recognising the challenge of access to effective remedies within sport, CSHR has developed its Roadmap to Remedy project, developing and publishing guidance on working with Affected Persons and on conducting investigations into complaints of abuse in sports. In 2022, CSHR launched its Advisory Services function to address gaps between commitments and practice, launching new partnerships with national and regional federations to support the development of human



Human Rights Volunteer in action at the FIFA World Cup 2022

rights policies and processes. As a result of these efforts, institutions in sport are increasingly prepared to acknowledge, engage, and adapt to their human rights responsibilities with an appreciation of actionable steps that can be taken. In the last twelve months, CSHR has worked as a technical expert with FIFA, World Athletics, European Athletics, the Commonwealth Games Federation, the German National Olympic Committee, Special Olympics, the Francophone Games, and the Swedish Sports Confederation.

As a trusted partner and critical friend to sports organisations, CSHR contributes to the preparedness, resilience and capability of sporting institutions to respect human rights. Creating lasting value, the final part of CSHR's theory of change, reflects origins as a multi-stakeholder network and ongoing dedication to fostering inclusive engagement, cultivating collective action and forging transformational alliances. CSHR's roots are maintained by convening diverse groups of

stakeholders through an influential and growing Advisory Council, with broader engagement structured via an Engaged Organisations model. CSHR's people-centred ecosystem approach has taken root within the sector, contributing to ongoing policy dialogues at regional and international stages.

Meanwhile, a major focus on the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Canada, Mexico and the US has focussed on ensuring the promise of a positive legacy for host cities - with particular attention to the child rights legacy of mega-sporting events: promoting safety, child voice and agency in the delivery and legacy of events. Notably, CSHR continues to host the largest global gathering of the sport and human rights community - the Sporting Chance Forum and to convene a series of private strategic dialogues with a focus on specific actors and regions - such as the Host Governments Forum and the Doha Dialogue, in both cases demonstrating unique convening

power. This intensive work to bring the sport ecosystem together has resulted in unprecedented conversations, collaborations and partnerships and contributed to developing the broader sport and human rights movement.

With respect to governance, stewarded by Mary Robinson as Founding Chair and Patron, CSHR has developed a unique governance structure with the UN Human Rights Office and the International Labour Organization - key UN agencies - formally part of its constitution alongside peak global bodies representing workers, employers, and athletes. CSHR is now a specialist agency based in Geneva, Switzerland, working to bring all actors in the sport ecosystem together to understand and act upon their roles and responsibilities - requiring a strong and iterative focus on building trust, conducting outreach, and deepening engagement. Governed by an independent board of directors, CSHR is a

regulated non-profit dedicated to fulfilling its mission for the benefit of people and communities affected or impacted by sport, namely athletes, workers, communities, fans, volunteers, coaches, officials, administrators, and journalists, with a particular focus on the rights of at-risk, vulnerable and historically disadvantaged groups.

The 2023 Sporting Chance Forum came at the midway point of Convergence 2025 and offered a chance to reflect on the delivery of CSHR's strategy. As part of a strategy review process in 2024, CSHR will assess how the activities flowing from its strategic plan have moved the needle against defined collective outcomes. An independent review of CSHR's impact in 2022 determined that the organisation makes its strongest impact when conducting activities that leverage its network, utilise its expertise, and benefit from its convening power.

As the organisation matures beyond its start-up phase and increasingly demonstrates the impact of its work, CSHR has the opportunity to consolidate global efforts and drive implementation. This will include further efforts to mainstream the human rights agenda and cultivate transformative leadership within the sector. Long-term systemic and cultural change to truly embed respect for human rights can make sport safer, fairer and more inclusive, unlocking the immense potential to leverage sport's role as a social good. This is generational work requiring many partners, and CSHR will continue to offer its good offices as a coordinator, catalyst, and convenor.



The Centre co-hosted the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

2024

INCREASED MOMENTUM AND EXPANDING EFFORTS

*David Grevemberg CBE,
Chief Innovation and Partnerships Officer*

The global landscape has undergone significant transformations since CSHR launched in 2018, marked by advancements and setbacks in human rights and humanitarian efforts. These changes have been driven by ongoing conflicts, disparities in access to resources, housing insecurity, disruptions in food supply chains, economic inequalities, and structural discrimination. While these issues underscore an era of uncertainty, they also highlight the resilience and adaptability of global communities.

The realm of sports, traditionally seen as a competitive domain, has evolved into a significant platform for addressing broader societal issues. Mega-sporting events such as the Olympic and



Paralympic Games and FIFA World Cups have transcended their athletic purposes to become stages for social activism, discussions on human rights, and avenues for national policy reform. These events serve as a showcase for national pride and offer opportunities for host countries to reposition themselves on the global stage through sports diplomacy.

The shifting dynamics of international alliances, exemplified by formations like BRICS, are recalibrating global power structures and challenging traditional sports hegemonies. This multipolar world sees sports as a strategic field for asserting national aspirations, drawing in significant investments from private equity and

sovereign wealth funds. This influx of capital underscores the growth potential of sports as a market while bringing to light the importance of ethical and inclusive governance.

Amidst these developments, the conversation around gender identity, inclusion, and intersectionality has gained prominence, challenging entrenched norms and advocating for equality and diversity in sports. This movement is not just about equal pay or representation; but also about recognising and rectifying historical injustices and systemic racism, ensuring that sports serve as a vehicle for social change and empowerment for all, including indigenous communities and marginalised groups.



Performance at the final of the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023

CSHR's commitment in 2024 is to harness this momentum to foster informed engagement and education on the nexus between sports and human rights. With a focus on upcoming major events in North America and continued educational efforts worldwide, CSHR aims to integrate human rights principles into the fabric of sports. This includes developing resources to navigate human rights risks, engaging stakeholders in meaningful dialogue, and promoting responsible sports sponsorship.

The introduction of CSHR's 'Responsible Sport Value Framework' signifies a strategic effort to embed human rights into sports governance and management that supports a world of sport that is responsible, sustainable and impactful. Our

upcoming annual state-of-play report on best practices in the sport ecosystem will represent a significant step towards transparency and accountability. Moreover, CSHR's Advisory Services and Human Rights Volunteer programmes aim to build a community of human rights-aware institutions and individuals that advocate and evolve within the sports world, demonstrating the power of sports as a catalyst for positive social transformation during events day in and day out.

In partnership with global stakeholders, including governments and international sports bodies, CSHR is poised to extend its outreach and influence, exploring innovative approaches to make sports more inclusive, accessible, and equitable. The

journey beyond our strategy Convergence 2025 envisages a sports industry that not only entertains but also champions the causes of social justice and human dignity.

In sum, while the challenges of our times are significant, the opportunities for making a meaningful impact through sports are immense. CSHR's endeavours in 2024 reflect a balanced perspective, acknowledging the complexities of the current landscape while striving for a future where sports play a pivotal role in advancing human rights and fostering peace and global unity.

A dark, atmospheric photograph of stadium floodlights at night. The lights are mounted on a tall pole and are casting a bright glow, illuminating the scene. The background is dark, suggesting a night sky or a dark stadium interior. The overall mood is dramatic and focused.

Introducing **THE ROUTLEDGE HANDBOOK OF MEGA-SPORTING EVENTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**

In 2023 CSHR gathered together leading global experts to produce *The Routledge Handbook of Mega-Sporting Events and Human Rights*. The Centre's Deputy CEO and handbook co-editor William Rook explains the importance of the book.



William Rook, Shubham Jain and Daniela Heerdt pictured with Mary Robinson (centre) holding a copy of the Handbook at the Sporting Chance Forum 2023

Why did CSHR decide to develop this book?

There has been so much good work done on mega-sporting events since we first convened the Mega-Sporting Events Platform for Human Rights back in 2015, this was an opportunity to take stock, update and refresh the analysis, provide a platform for longstanding experts and collaborators, and – through an open call for contributions – find new global voices and experts to include. Now in 2024 more and more mega-events are being awarded with human rights criteria in bidding or hosting requirements, so this is a resource for events themselves, other ecosystem stakeholders and a capstone project for lots of the early work we convened on MSEs. We've also noted an increase in higher education study programmes that look at sport and human rights – so we wanted to provide a resource for students and course leaders.

ROUTLEDGE
ROUTLEDGE
INTERNATIONAL
HANDBOOKS



The Routledge Handbook of Mega-Sporting Events and Human Rights

Editors: William Rook and Daniela Heerdt
Associate Editor: Shubham Jain

There are 54 authors writing 42 chapters on a huge variety of Sport and Human Rights topics, how did you set about defining the subject areas?

The structure is hopefully quite simple. First of all we're trying to situate sports events within broader scholarship on business and human rights - so we start with the normative framework that applies - basically considering how sports events and human rights are connected in a factual and legal context. Then we look at what an MSE is by unpacking the lifecycle of an event - with chapters on the various lifecycle phases such as bidding, construction, games-time, and legacy. With that we give the reader a good sense of what an MSE is, its various constituting phases and what risks are attached at each stage. This leads to a section with chapters about the institutional actors that come together to deliver an MSE - showing the respective

roles of sports bodies, organising committees, sponsors, broadcasters, suppliers or governments in delivering an event - and what their human rights responsibilities are. This provides a foundation for a section on affected groups - addressing how different groups like athletes, workers, children, gender minorities and persons with disabilities can be impacted positively and negatively by MSEs. The totally new bit is the final section which offers a series of case studies and insights from particular events or practical experiences. Of course, the themes and topics are quite interlinked. Therefore, we have cross-referenced various related concepts and themes throughout the book which should be helpful for the reader.

How did you gather together all the authors? What sort of people are involved?

The author group represents some of the leading global experts on these issues - many of which have been collaborators and supporters of CSHR over the years and who led the development of an early set of white papers back in 2017. But of course in that time new experts have come to the fore, new issues have come into scope, and the status quo has changed quite substantially - so this was a nice way to bring together some people we've worked with for a long time with some that have entered the field in the meantime. We did an open call for submissions that led to some very interesting contributions from across the globe, and brought all of the authors together a couple of times to workshop and peer review their draft chapters. The outcome is quite a practical volume with contributions from a good mix of academics and practitioners.

Who do you think is the audience for this book?

We developed this book primarily to be helpful to anyone involved in bidding for or delivering a major event, and for those who engage with and interact with MSEs, including from civil society, affected groups and the commercial actors - the whole sport ecosystem really. For that reason, it has been written to be accessible and with the intention to bring to life the human rights dimensions of MSEs, and what specific roles and responsibilities different actors have. As a result - it's also a general primer for an interested audience and would be a good course text for human rights, sports law and sports management programmes.

What do you think it says about the Centre that it was able to pull together this definitive book?

CSHR has been established to offer human rights expertise to the world of sport and to convene a wide multi-stakeholder network. This book is a product of that collective expertise and our strong and committed network. It's also the output of personal commitment from individual authors from across the ecosystem who dedicated their time to share their knowledge in this format, which for some was a new experience. It shows the trust in Centre's work, its mission and its expertise from a wide ranging group of academics and practitioners.

It's a serious, in-depth work, the guidebook. Any plans to turn it into more bite-sized multi-media chunks?

We don't expect people to read this cover to cover - but hopefully the way it is structured can help people finding easily the information they need and then motivating them to read further. In particular, the internal cross-referencing of the book content should be helpful. And of course we hope it's something that gets regular referral! There is so much good content in the book, we want to share some of the key lessons via various more accessible formats - social media posts, interviews with authors, podcasts, summaries etc. We won't just be putting it on the shelf - so stand by for lots more content based on this book - in the form of courses, teaching resources, videos and so on.



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