

2016 Sporting Chance Principles on Human Rights in Mega-Sporting Events

1. Bidding to host mega-sporting events is open to all.

All nations/localities should have the opportunity to host mega-sporting events and bring these celebrations of human achievement to their people, provided they responsibly meet the criteria of the sports bodies.

2. All actors respect internationally recognized human rights and labor rights.

All actors involved in a mega-sporting event should commit to protecting/respecting (as appropriate) internationally recognized human rights, including the fundamental principles and rights at work, and other relevant international labor rights standards across the event lifecycle.

3. Mega-sporting events need to take account of human rights at every stage of their lifecycle.

Mega-sporting event bids, bid evaluation, planning, delivery and legacy should be based on international instruments, principles and standards, including those expressed in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, the OECD Guidelines on Multinational Enterprises, the ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work, and in the ILO Tripartite Declaration of Principles Concerning Multinational Enterprises and Social Policy. Awarding bodies, host bidders and their delivery partners should address human rights risks and considerations identified through impact assessments and due diligence.

4. Affected groups merit a voice in decision-making.

Principled and practical ways should be found to strengthen the voice of affected athletes, workers, fans and spectators, and residents at each stage of the mega-sporting event lifecycle through meaningful and ongoing engagement. Special efforts should be made to engage with vulnerable and hard to reach groups.

5. Access to remedy is available.

Effective remedy should be available to those whose human rights are negatively impacted during any stage of the mega-sporting event lifecycle. Companies, governments, trade unions and other civil society groups, and sports bodies should coordinate and collaborate on this issue.

6. Lessons are captured and shared.

Lessons learned with regard to human rights successes and failures throughout the mega-sporting event lifecycle should be captured and shared to raise standards and improve practices, in order to prevent a recurrence of human rights problems over time.

7. Stakeholder human rights capacity is strengthened.

To address human rights risks and opportunities, sports federations, organizing committees and other key stakeholders involved at all stages of the mega-sporting event lifecycle should develop human rights knowledge and capacity, and seek expert advice as required.

8. Collective action is harnessed to realize human rights.

To help mega-sporting events continue to be a source of inspiration for decades to come, all stakeholders should forge collective solutions to address human rights challenges that are beyond the capacity of any single stakeholder to resolve.



About the 2016 Sporting Chance Principles

Mega-sporting events (MSE) inspire humanity and have the power to bring people together under the banner of friendship and mutual understanding. They also have the potential to bring many societal benefits, particularly to the host country. These events are complex, with a lifecycle from bidding through construction and delivery, requiring a years-long planning process. As such, these events carry inherent risks, including preventable adverse human rights impacts.

Despite their benefits, mega-sporting events have been linked to human rights abuses virtually without exception and across all hosting countries and continents. The pattern of human rights abuses linked to mega-sporting events over recent decades runs counter to the core values of sport and risks undermining the unique power of sport to bring people together.

These human rights challenges are often foreseeable and can thus be mitigated. They are however often beyond the capacity of any one stakeholder group to adequately resolve. All actors should unite to reinvigorate the ideals of harmony among nations and respect for humankind and common dignity upon which the greatest sporting traditions rest.

To be successful, mega-sporting events rely on a rules-based system, fair play, and the courage, cohesion, support and goodwill of society in all its facets, including athletes, spectators, workers, volunteers and local communities, as well as host governments, businesses large and small, the media and sports bodies. The foundational principles of the world's preeminent sports federations speak to universal humanitarian values, harmony among nations, solidarity and fair play, the preservation of human dignity, and commitment to non-discrimination. These values have much in common with international human rights principles and standards.

To meet these challenges, a diverse coalition of stakeholders has come together around the shared belief that more effective strategies are needed to prevent, mitigate and remedy abuses of human rights associated with mega-sporting events. Chaired by Mary Robinson, the Mega-Sporting Events Platform for Human Rights seeks to widen dialogue and cooperation, and to develop innovative strategies that can make a positive difference.

To further such efforts, the 2016 Sporting Chance Principles were proposed by the U.S. Department of State, the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs and the Institute for Human Rights and Business (IHRB), the co-hosts of the Sporting Chance Forum on Mega-Sporting Events and Human Rights, held in Washington D.C. on 13-14 October 2016. The 2016 Sporting Chance Principles aim to underpin the common goal of ensuring that mega-sporting events showcase the best in humanity and are built on respect for human rights.