**SCOTTISH HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION STATEMENT**

**TO UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE**

PANEL ON THE USE OF SPORT AND THE OLYMPIC IDEAL TO PROMOTE HUMAN RIGHTS FOR ALL

(HRC res. 31/23)

28 June 2016

Mr. President,

Major sporting events can have a significant impact on human rights. In just a few months the 2016 Olympic Games will began in Rio and 2018 welcome the FIFA World Cup in Russia, Winter Olympics in South Korea and Commonwealth Games in Australia. In the coming years we have a unique opportunity to ensure that the organisation and delivery of international sporting events fully protect and promote human rights for all.

While this will require transformative change and extraordinary leadership, it is not beyond the realms of possibility. Following a year of collaboration between Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Organising Committee of the 2014 Glasgow Commonwealth Games, for the first time in over 80 years of Commonwealth Games history, the Games adopted a [human rights policy](http://www.glasgow2014.com/sites/default/files/documents/Glasgow%202014%20-%20approach%20to%20human%20rights%20-%20December%202013.pdf). It became the first mega sporting event organiser to publish a human rights position statement.

The Organising Committee was clear that adopting a focus on human rights ‘was the right thing to do: as a business, a buyer of goods and services, an employer, and as an organisation with significant reach and influence’. The policy set out how human rights were to be protected and promoted in the preparation and delivery of the Games. The Glasgow 2014 Approach to Human Rights acknowledges unambiguously that competing athletes, its workforce, the volunteers, spectators and its contractors, as well as the wider the people of the Commonwealth, all have rights and freedoms enshrined in national and international law.

Following the Glasgow Games, a post-Games [update](http://www.megasportingevents.org/pdf/2014-10-16-Glasgow-2014-Approach-to-Human-Rights_Post-Games-Update.pdf) was published by the Organising Committee. Lessons learned and suggestions for future actions were then identified at a national conference in 2015. These are being taken forward by partners and lessons have been shared with the Commonwealth NHRIs and those involved in hosting the Gold Coast Games in Australia. SHRC would be delighted to share our learning from the Glasgow Games with others.

As the national human rights institution for Scotland, SHRC envisaged the Glasgow Games as an important opportunity to ensure respect for human rights. As the international sporting world’s attention turns to other parts of the planet, we encourage Members States to follow this example.

Thank you

Judith Robertson

Chair

Scottish Human Rights Commission