



Union des associations européennes de football



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“Sport should not be ruled by judges”

European Basketball, Football, Handball and Volleyball are united in defending the European sports model

The European team sport federations of basketball (FIBA Europe), football (UEFA), handball (EHF) and volleyball (CEV) met today to discuss serious matters relating to the EU White Paper on sport currently under preparation. The major European team sports federations issued the following statement:

1. The European team sports reiterate their support for the submissions already made by the IOC, EOC, world sport federations, FIFA and UEFA regarding the White Paper on sport.
2. Recent and upcoming EU court cases could have a very damaging effect on all sports across Europe. These cases could effectively hand the definition of sports rules from sport itself to the judges in the European Court of Justice. Sport, including its social, educational and cultural features, would risk being treated exactly like any profit-making business.
3. European sport is not asking for an exemption from the law or to be above the law. European sport is, however, asking the EU, after more than 30 years of cases and challenges, to finally provide the necessary legal certainty and stability – which will not exist until there is a clear legal recognition of the specificity of sport.
4. We believe that the overwhelming majority of sports fans across Europe want to see competitive and balanced competitions. They want to see strong national team competitions as well as exciting club competitions. They want to see local young talent being developed and given a chance. They want to see promotion and relegation and no breakaway leagues. They do not want their sport to be run by businessmen and judges. All of these key sports issues, and many others (club licensing for example), are currently under threat by ongoing court cases – court cases where people are manipulating EU laws to attack sports rules for their own personal profit.
5. The EU White Paper on sport gives the EU Commission a chance to actually implement the will of the EU Heads of State (Nice Declaration 2000), the European Parliament (Belet Report 2007) and the vast majority of sports fans across Europe.
6. In conclusion, the European team sports reiterate their support for the EU White Paper on sport, provided that it fulfils its original purpose – namely to outline concrete measures to implement the Nice Declaration.

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