

Call for articles: The closure of the UNOSDP

What does the closure of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace mean for the future of the sector? We want to hear from you.

On 4 May 2017, UN Secretary-General António Guterres announced that the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP) has closed, effective as of 30 April. According to Stéphane Dujarric, spokesman for Guterres:

“The Secretary-General has agreed with the President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), Thomas Bach, to establish a direct partnership between the UN and the International Olympic Committee. Accordingly, it was decided to close the UN Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP).”

The closure has surprised many, as the momentum on the policy level which began in the early 2000s has continued in recent years. The United Nations introduced an International Day of Sport for Development and Peace, celebrated first in 2014, before mentioning sport as an enabler of development in the post-2015 Sustainable Development Goals.

Since being founded in 2001, the UNOSDP has carried out a number of projects, but perhaps its biggest impact was in signifying the emerging role of sport and development in the public domain. As a part of the UN, it represented credibility.

Contribute to the discussion

It is too early to fully understand the impact of the closure, but it is a turning point for the sector. We would like to encourage creative discussion on the topic and invite you to share your thoughts with the community.

Some questions to consider:

- What does the closure of the UNOSDP mean for sport and development?
- What are the challenges and opportunities caused by the closure?
- What are the alternatives to the UNOSDP?
- Who could take on the leadership role, in which organisation and supported by whom?
- How do we ensure continued progress?

Submit an article

If you would like to contribute an article, please contact info@sportanddev.org with your idea and to discuss next steps. Articles should not exceed 500 words. The deadline is 18:00 (CEST) on 12 June 2017 but we will be publishing articles on a rolling basis and would encourage you to send yours early.