The Center of African Studies of the ISCTE-Lisbon University Institute, in cooperation with the Institute of Social Sciences of the University of Lisbon, the Sport: Laboratory of the History of Sport and Leisure, of the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro and the Group of African Studies of the Fluminense Federal University, are promoting the II International Conference on Sport in Africa, entitled Sport and leisure in Africa: practices and identities, in Lisbon on the 5 and 6 of June 2012.

Papers are welcome, particularly from scholars who study or are interested in developing topics related to sport and leisure in Africa.

In recent decades, research on sport and leisure in Africa experienced an extraordinary development, making it an area of independent research. Social scholars from different backgrounds have explored these issues, focusing on both the colonial reality and the post-colonial context. The increase in the consumption and practice of sport in Africa reflects both the logic of social organization imposed by the colonial system and the modes of political and social organization in the post-independence period.

In the colonial past, sports were involved in political and cultural resistance, especially within the associative movement. Sports associations, sometimes the only accessible to the colonized peoples, thus also became centers of sociability and social networks where racial tensions conflicted with sport cooperation. By analyzing sport in the colonial period, a set of axes for comparison between cases representing different colonial experiences can be established.

Sport in African countries deserves the same attention among scholars as has been devoted to other contexts. Mainstay of a nationalist discourse and base of identity-building, sport in Africa is currently one of the main axes of projection of the African continent and countries in the world.

This ideological function of sport coexists with the tensions within it, which, somehow, are symptoms of the level of social organization and cohesion in many of these countries. The success of many African athletes for instance hides exploitative labor practices that continue to characterize the relationship between Africa and the centers of world sport. Moreover, there are attempts of social inclusion projects based on the appeal of the sport which, as well as the organization and practice of sports, require the mobilization of resources and opportunities, leading to cooperation and disputes between political and social actors.

The connection between the formation and establishment of a sports field and the structuring process of African societies can be researched from numerous perspectives.

Apart from contributions from a historical perspective, which help map the trajectories of sport in Africa, the conference Sport and leisure in Africa: practices and identities welcomes theoretical and methodological reflections on the evolution of policies and on the place sport and leisure in Africa. This
conference also aims at boosting research and partnerships on topics that, given the growing political and social importance of sport and leisure in Africa, warrant greater attention.

This conference will be organized according the following thematic guidelines:

**Sport, leisure and colonialism**
The history of the introduction of the consumption and practice of sport and of numerous sporting and leisure activities in Africa is inseparable from the colonial process. As part of the habits of the population in the colonial period, sport and leisure activities have been implicated in forms of domination and resistance. In this thematic line, papers will be accepted that address both the use of sport for the purpose of accommodation and regimentation of the African people, as well as the steps taken by Africans to appropriate sport and recreation associations to claim their own space and create a political awareness.

**Sport and leisure policies in African countries**
It is important to think about the dynamics of sport and leisure beyond reductionist readings that describe them as merely processes that can be manipulated according to the intentions of social control or political contestation. It should be borne in mind that linear interpretations, which replicate the "domination or subversion" opposition, tend not to understand the object in all its complexity. This is especially true of Africa, where the meaning of sport and leisure changes according to the context. Sport and leisure should also be considered as instruments of social transformation. In this thematic line, papers will be accepted that address different aspects of sports policies in the post-independence period, as well as the initiatives of political and social actors with respect to sport and leisure as a means of (re)building society in African countries.

**Sport and Identity in African countries: from internal tensions to the insertion of African countries in the international settings**
Far from what its pioneers ever imagined, sport - particularly football - has served to instil a national identity. However, despite the strength of sport as a universal language that shapes nationalism, this process not only is not linear, but nationalism does not cease to contend with other identity affiliations. Sport nevertheless adds effectiveness to nationalisms or to the sense of belonging to a continent. Subliminal and responsive, the affective projections help determine identification in relation to national or racial affiliations, sometimes operating in the African diaspora as well, which are notable in the emotional attachment to the success of African sport representations. In this thematic line, apart from papers that will analyze the role and place of sport and leisure in the construction of national and/or ethnic identities, we welcome papers that analyze the role of sport in building of the sense of belonging to the African continent.

**The economic and social contexts of sport in Africa: markets and flows of talent and manpower**
With regard to sporting events, some analysis points to the policies of attraction of potential talent to the most economically powerful centers which can offer salaries without comparison with the ones offered in Africa. European sports institutions often benefit from their investment, sometimes at the expense of the symbolic erasure of the origins of imported talent players. Papers will be accepted that analyze the trends and characteristics of the talent and muscle drain and of the political discussions surrounding the motives and reasons of political, economic and social aspects of this flow and its impact on African societies.

The Conference will be open to the public. The Conference languages will be Portuguese, French and English. Those interested in participating with the presentation of papers should take note of the following schedule:

January 15 - Submission of proposals of papers
February 15 - Communication of the Scientific Committee on the acceptance of communications
May 15 – Publication of papers on the site of CEA-ISCTE/IUL

Abstracts of papers should not exceed 200 words and be accompanied by three keywords. Speakers must attach a brief biographical note and indicate their institutional affiliation and personal contacts.

Proposals should be sent to the following email:
desporto.africa.cea@gmail.com

*Info:* http://conferenciadesportoemafrica.wordpress.com