



For immediate release

The United Nations – Eradicate Hate Sports Summit hosted by Liverpool Football Club brings together sports leagues in fight against hate speech

(Liverpool - New York, 27 April 2023)

More than 100 representatives from sports leagues and clubs across the United Kingdom and USA gathered at Liverpool's Anfield stadium this week for the United Nations and Eradicate Hate Global Sports Working Group Summit. The Summit was organized as a first in-depth look at the Plan of Action to Counter Hate Speech through Engagement with Sports - the GAME PLAN.

The Plan of Action to Counter Hate Speech through Engagement with Sports was officially launched by the United Nations Secretary-General at the high-level event on 9 December 2022, and was developed by the United Nations Office on Genocide Prevention and the Responsibility to Protect in collaboration with the Eradicate Hate Global Summit. The document provides recommendations of actions to identify and combat hate speech and promote positive messages through outreach initiatives, identification of success stories, and comprehensive training.

The foundation which the GAME PLAN presents - as a first ever global effort to counter hate speech through engagement with sport – makes it possible to support ongoing efforts and overcome the barriers preventing the sports world from addressing and countering hate speech.

“From school matches to the World Cup, football brings people together across racial, religious, social and political divides. It unites communities around pride and purpose; and it can help to combat hate. Leading sports men and women, as celebrities and role models, can inspire people across generations and continents. I know many members of Liverpool Football Club's team are doing just that“, **the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres** conveyed in his message read by **the Special Adviser and Under-Secretary-General Alice Wairimu Nderitu**.

“The GAME PLAN is based on the knowledge that the perpetrator of a hate crime most often has encountered hate speech that dehumanized his/her target. It is also based on the fact that most perpetrators are like most ordinary people who are, like you and me, sports fans. As we look at the GAME Plan together with the Sports Leagues, let's drive community-level actions and engage as many sports partners as possible globally in our fight against hate speech and atrocity crimes“, the UN Special Adviser Nderitu added in her remarks.

Hosted by Sky Sports and BBC 5Live presenter Kelly Cates, the Summit included representatives from Premier League clubs and football authorities, and several major UK and US sports, including Formula 1, Lawn Tennis Association (LTA), Major League Baseball (MLB), National Football League (NFL), National Hockey League (NHL), NASCAR, Rugby England, and Rugby Football League. Remarks by the **co-chairs of the Eradicate Hate Sports Working Group - the UN Special Adviser Nderitu, Laura Ellsworth and Michele Rosenthal** - introduced the participants to the Game plan and to the beginnings of the initiative, including with personal testimonies from those affected most by hate-speech motivated atrocities.

“We were proud to be involved in the launch of The Game Plan at the end of last year and this is another step in the right direction in eradicating hate, not just from sports but from society as a whole. Hosting this summit is a continued part of the club’s commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion, and driving forward positive change”, **Mr. Rishi Jain, the LFC Senior equality, diversity and inclusion Manager** noted speaking on behalf of the Liverpool Football Club.

Participating leagues and clubs committed to take up the implementation of the GAME Plan further, with locally-driven actions focused on countering hate speech and fostering inclusion. The United Nations and the Eradicate Hate Sports Working Group will continue on expanding the initiative with sports partners across different regions of the world.

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For more on the initiative and the Game Plan:
<https://www.un.org/en/genocideprevention/countering-through-sports.shtml>

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