

# Nigel Huddleston's speech at the International Forum for Sports Integrity

Thank you to the President and to the International Olympic Committee for inviting me to speak here today.

It is a pleasure to be here with you in Lausanne at the Olympic House, and to see so many of you tuned in to talk about integrity in sport from all across the world.

As the UK's Minister for Sport, fair and clean sport is of paramount importance to me, as it is for the wider UK government.

Just two weeks ago, I had the privilege of addressing the eighth session of the Conference of Parties to UNESCO's Anti-Doping Convention.

There, I spoke about our commitment to clean sport, and the importance of international collaboration in the continued fight against doping.

Just as the threats to sport from doping change and evolve over time, our efforts to tackle these challenges must also adapt.

It is through continued close working with international partners, and our sustained domestic focus on doping, that we will meet these challenges.

But we also recognise other threats to the integrity of sport, such as corruption and match-fixing.

These are growing threats and tackling them requires absolute commitment from governments, inter-governmental organisations and sports bodies working together in unison.

The fact that so many of you have joined today from across the world demonstrates our shared commitment to fighting corruption.

The covid pandemic has shown how integral and valuable sport is to our lives.

The Tokyo Games lifted our athletes and the nation's spirits in the UK, and I commend the IOC, the International Paralympic Committee, and the Tokyo Organising Committee for hosting a wonderful games in such challenging circumstances.

I was lucky enough to be in Tokyo to witness the extraordinary achievements of our Olympic and Paralympic athletes.

The games have shown that even in the most challenging circumstances, sport and the Olympic Movement has the power to unite people and communities together, change lives and inspire the next generation. Indeed, as the

Olympic motto now states: 'Faster, Higher, Stronger – Together'.

We now look forward to the Beijing Olympic and Paralympic games which begin in a few short months. 2022 is also a big year for sport in the UK with the Commonwealth Games, Rugby League World Cup and Women's Euro Championships all being hosted in the UK.

The UK Government recognises the wide ranging benefits that hosting major sports events can bring, from societal benefits in building stronger communities, improving mental and physical wellbeing to inspiring the next generation of sporting stars. As well as huge economic benefits.

But, while the pandemic has focused efforts on the economic stability and recovery of sport, given the health of the entire sporting system has been weakened, it is more important than ever that we tackle integrity risks.

Sport matters more than ever and all governments need sport to be resilient, sustainable, inclusive and well governed. That is why the UK Government are investing large amounts of money every year in grassroots, elite sport and major events.

The nature of this forum replicates exactly what we need in the fight against corruption – collaboration at an international level to be able to respond to global threats and strengthen the credibility of sport at a national and international level.

The threat to integrity often is, and will continue to be, cross-border, and so we can only tackle this if we work together internationally. And by working together internationally we can ensure our individual domestic efforts are strengthened.

Back in 2016, the then British Prime Minister hosted an anti-corruption summit in London. At this summit, Governments committed to support the launch of an international partnership with a view to eliminate corruption from sport.

Here we are, five years on from that summit, and four and a half years later from the launch of the International Partnership against Corruption in Sport. And we have made much progress.

We are proud to be a founding partner of IPACS alongside the IOC, the UNODC, the OECD and Council of Europe with the mission to bring multi-agencies together to eliminate corruption and promote a culture of good governance.

From our perspective, IPACS provides a unique and open platform for real interaction and dialogue with other governments on their approaches and challenges in the fight against corruption.

IPACS provides concrete and tangible outputs to tackle and prevent corruption, such as the toolkit to ensure integrity in the selection of major events, to the development of a global benchmark for good governance.

This is all thanks to the four taskforces of IPACS who provide the fruits of

the partnership, and I want to pay particular thanks to the taskforce members, and the lead organisations for their work.

One of the strengths of the partnership and the taskforces is its ability to evolve and adapt as the threats and landscape change, for example, with the creation of task force 4.

We were delighted to join the Bureau of IPACS this time last year under the leadership of the Canadian Government and the IOC, and continue to be committed to the support and development of the partnership, working with others such as the Australian Government, CONI and ASOIF who are playing a key role in strengthening the governance of sports bodies at the international level.

I know you will all be hearing more about IPACS from our Bureau colleagues at the next panel session today.

Domestically, good governance is of huge importance to the UK.

Our Code for Sports Governance, which was first published in 2016, sets out the standards all sporting organisations must meet in return for public funding.

It has proved hugely successful in setting clear expectations around good governance and diversity.

But standards in good governance also evolve, and our sporting agencies, UK Sport and Sport England, will be publishing an updated Code later this year.

One of the key updates will be to ensure sporting bodies in receipt of substantial public funding each have clear ambitions and actions to drive diversity and inclusion reflective of our communities and society; and that good governance cascades from Boards to all levels of operations. The revised code will make even clearer the levels of transparency, diversity and inclusion, accountability and integrity required to ensure that sports bodies in receipt of public funding are well governed.

Looking ahead, there is still more we can do collectively. We must continue to work together internationally on this agenda – tackling corruption and promoting good governance in sport.

I would urge those governments who are not yet involved in IPACS to participate in the partnership – we can be stronger together in eradicating corruption in sport.

The sports industry has a unique reach and power around the world. It is in everyone's interest that governments, as well as international sports bodies and international organisations, work together to look at addressing these challenges.

So as we look to 2022, and the exciting sports events in the UK, we remain committed to tackling corruption at all levels, as we build back better from the pandemic.

Thank you.