



NORTHERN  
IRELAND  
HUMAN  
RIGHTS  
COMMISSION

**Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission  
submission to the All-Party Parliamentary  
Group on Sport, Human Rights and Modern  
Slavery**

**July 2018**

**Building a Culture of Human Rights**

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## Summary of Recommendations

The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC):

- 6.0 Recognises that sport encompasses every international human rights treaty, and recommends that the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Human Rights and Modern Slavery (APPG-SHRMS) produces a statement to acknowledge that sport can be used to address a multitude of human rights issues, in addition to modern slavery.**
- 15.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS encourages the organising committees of mega-sporting events and sports governing bodies to work with NHRIs, and to adopt human rights-based approaches to the design and delivery of events.**
- 18.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS asks the UK Government to provide evidence of a strategic approach on how its hosting of mega-sporting events has and will continue to comply with and promote human rights protections in its submissions to the UN treaty monitoring bodies.**
- 22.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS considers what might be appropriate mechanisms for remedy and redress within the context of mega-sporting events, and what role NHRIs might play.**
- 24.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS expresses disappointment at the loss of the Belfast 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games - recognising its capacity to protect and promote human rights, and the commitments made by the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council to achieve that aim.**
- 25.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS calls on the UK Government to support the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council in any fresh bid it may make.**

**27.0 Recommends the APPG-SHRMS recognises the role that NHRIs can play in helping local organising committees to engage with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals.**

**32.0 Recommends that human rights provisions and standards are mainstreamed in the procurement processes conducted for the purpose of mega-sporting events.**

**34.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS considers the appropriate role of all UK NHRIs going forward, including the Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.**

**40.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS acknowledges the remit of and utilises the UK's NHRIs to facilitate dialogue with stakeholders on sport and human rights.**

## Introduction

1.0 The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) pursuant to Section 69(1) of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, reviews the adequacy and effectiveness of law and practice relating to the protection of human rights. In accordance with this function the following statutory advice is submitted to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Human Rights and Modern Slavery in response to its call for evidence.

2.0 The NIHRC bases its advice on the full range of internationally accepted human rights standards, including the European Convention on Human Rights, as incorporated by the Human Rights Act 1998 and the treaty obligations of the Council of Europe (CoE) and United Nations (UN) systems.<sup>1</sup> The relevant regional and international treaties in this context include:

- European Convention on Human Rights 1950<sup>2</sup>;
- UN International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination 1965<sup>3</sup>;
- UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights 1966<sup>4</sup>;
- UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights 1966<sup>5</sup>;
- UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women 1979<sup>6</sup>;
- UN Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984<sup>7</sup>;
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989<sup>8</sup>;
- UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities 2006<sup>9</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The Northern Ireland Executive (NI Executive) is subject to the obligations contained within the specified regional and international treaties by virtue of the United Kingdom (UK) government's ratification. In addition, the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 26(1) provides that "if the Secretary of State considers that any action proposed to be taken by a Minister or Northern Ireland department would be incompatible with any international obligations... [s]he may by order direct that the proposed action shall be taken". The NIHRC further recalls that the Northern Ireland Act 1998, Section 24(1)(a) states that "a Minister or Northern Ireland department has no power to make, confirm or approve any subordinate legislation, or to do any act, so far as the legislation or act... is incompatible with any of the Convention rights".

<sup>2</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1951.

<sup>3</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1969.

<sup>4</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1976.

<sup>5</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1968.

<sup>6</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1986.

<sup>7</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1988.

<sup>8</sup> Ratified by the UK in 1991.

<sup>9</sup> Ratified by the UK in 2009.

3.0 In addition to these internationally-binding treaties, there exists a body of 'soft law' developed by the human rights bodies of the UN and CoE. These declarations and principles are non-binding but provide further guidance on specific areas. The relevant standards referred in this context include:

- UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights 2011
- 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals 2015

4.0 Relevant regional instruments and declarations include:

- CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings 2005<sup>10</sup>
- The Merida Declaration on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development 2015<sup>11</sup>

## Evidence

5.0 The NIHRC has carried out a range of work across the areas of Sport, Human Rights and Modern Slavery. The NIHRC acknowledges that there has been an international movement among sports bodies, organising committees, businesses and athletes towards respecting and championing human rights in sport. This is demonstrated by the Commonwealth Games Federation and the publication of its [Transformation 2022 Strategy](#)<sup>12</sup> in October 2017.

**6.0 The NIHRC recognises that sport encompasses every international human rights treaty, and recommends that the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Sport, Human Rights and Modern Slavery (APPG-SHRMS) produces a statement to acknowledge that sport can be used to address a multitude of human rights**

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<sup>10</sup> Ratified by the UK in 2008.

<sup>11</sup> *The Merida Declaration* was adopted in 2015, during the Twelfth International Conference of the International Coordinating Committee of National Institutions for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights (now renamed the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions), which focused on the SDGs and the role of NHRIs.

<sup>12</sup> *Transformation 2022* is the title given to the Commonwealth Sports Movement's Strategic Plan for 2015-2022, which was unanimously approved by all 71 nations and territories at the Commonwealth Games Federation's General Assembly in September 2015. The document aims to transform the Commonwealth Sports Movement's focus on hosting the Commonwealth Games to a wider vision based on 'partnership, engagement and value generation'.

## **issues, in addition to modern slavery.**

- 7.0 The NIHRC included sport and human rights as a priority in its [2018/19 Business Plan](#)<sup>13</sup>, and has engaged with key stakeholders - including the Commonwealth Games Federation, the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council, and the Irish Football Association - to deliver a programme of work on the area.
- 8.0 The NIHRC has a particular interest in the inquiry being undertaken by the APPG-SHRMS in the context of the 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games, which had been set to take place in Belfast. The NIHRC was eager to share knowledge and good practice with the APPG-SHRMS in order to support the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC) to ensure that the Belfast 2021 Games could be utilised to promote the human rights of all. The NICGC secured the Games in 2016, after successfully bidding to host the event - which would have brought 1,000 young athletes from across the Commonwealth nations to Belfast. In a press statement, Belfast City Council [stated](#) that this would be a 'unique opportunity to promote the Games Federation's values of Humanity - Equality - Destiny and the sharing of ideas and culture with young people from across the world to help promote tolerance and respect.' This was closely followed by the collapse of the Northern Ireland Assembly in 2017, which occurred before the necessary funding could be released to begin preparation for the Games. The NICGC lobbied for the funding to be released by the Northern Ireland Civil Service (NICS), and the Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) repeatedly renewed deadlines for funding to be secured. However, on 22 June 2018, the NICS confirmed that public funding would not be provided to host the Games, having decided it was "not value for money". The CGF then overturned the NICGC bid and invited other cities to submit new bids to host the Games - with the option open to the NICGC to submit a new bid.
- 9.0 The removal of the Belfast 2021 Games is a significant loss, particularly given that a programme of work on sport and human rights work had been committed to by the NICGC and a partnership for delivery

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<sup>13</sup> The NIHRC's 2018-19 Business Plan sets out targets to develop its partnerships with the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council and the Irish Football Association, and to 'scope the possibility of a wider set of partnerships with sports governing bodies to deliver a programme of work supporting human rights in and through sport'.

advanced with the NIHRC.

10.0 Set out below is evidence from the NIHRC in answer to several questions listed in the APPG-SHRMS call for evidence, as well as a summary of the work carried out by the NIHRC in the field of Sport, Human Rights and Modern Slavery to date.

## Sports Bodies

- Why should sports bodies consider human rights risks when selecting a host city/country?
- Why is there a need for sports bodies to integrate human rights into their bidding, planning and other processes?
- How can sports bodies integrate human rights into the planning of a sporting event?
- What can UK sports federations do to ensure they are in line with international best practice?

11.0 It has become increasingly important for sports bodies to consider human rights risks when selecting a host city or country, as hosts are more frequently being held to account for their obligations to protect human rights. One recent example of this has been the media attention given to the 2022 FIFA World Cup preparations in Qatar, where several news outlets have reported up to 1,200 fatalities of migrant workers during the construction of venues. Campaigns by human rights activists have added to international pressure to bring Qatari labour laws into line with the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. This culminated in discussions with the International Labour Organisation and, as a result, [new commitments were made by the Government of Qatar<sup>14</sup>](#) to align its laws on domestic workers' rights and practices with international labour standards. Another example is the 2018 FIFA World Cup, taking place in Russia in June/July 2018, which has faced criticism by the media and other spectators, due to reports of human rights violations such as discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in the country. FIFA has faced criticism for its awarding of the two events to their respective host countries which, in turn, has prompted other sports

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<sup>14</sup> In October 2017, the Qatari Government announced a series of labour reforms in a commitment to the International Labour Organisation, which included a reform of the kafala system and establishing a minimum wage.



bodies to reassess the criteria potential host cities/countries must meet in order to be considered in bids.

12.0 Although dependent on what resources and capacity are available, one option available to UK sports federations to help them adopt a human-rights based approach would be to engage with their national human rights institutions. This is an initiative supported by the NIHRC in the London Declaration on Sport and Human Rights, drafted in its role as chair of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI) in 2018<sup>15</sup>. The Declaration, which sets out a number of commitments to realise the value of sport in contributing to the promotion and protection of human rights, was adopted by the Forum in April 2018. The Declaration contains a commitment by members to 'work with local Commonwealth Games Associations in Member States, Sports Ministers, national organising committees, and national and local sporting bodies to advise on the protection and promotion of human rights'<sup>16</sup>.

**13.0 The NIHRC recommends that the APPG-SHRMS encourages the organising committees of mega-sporting events and sports governing bodies to work with NHRIs, and to adopt human rights-based approaches to the design and delivery of events.**

14.0 In its [2018/19 Business Plan](#), the NIHRC demonstrated its ongoing commitment to the area of sport and human rights, setting out to develop its partnership with the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council (NICGC) on sport and human rights in preparation for the Belfast 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games. The NIHRC committed to an additional partnership with the Irish Football Association (IFA), and to scope the possibility of a wider set of partnerships with sports governing bodies to deliver a programme of work supporting human rights in and

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<sup>15</sup> Between 2015 and April 2018, the Commission was the chair of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions (CFNHRI), which consists of 46 NHRIs and Ombudsmen from across the Commonwealth. In this role, the Commission drafted the [London Declaration](#) on Sport and Human Rights, which was adopted by members at its 2018 Biennial Meeting. It was drafted while the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission (NIHRC) was chair of the Forum, as the NIHRC was working together with the NHRIs of New Zealand and Australia, and the Commonwealth Games Federation, on the issue of sport and human rights. The Declaration was adopted in the context of the 2018 Commonwealth Games, having taken place just ahead of the Biennial in Gold Coast, Australia, and with the 2021 Youth Games set to take place in Belfast, Northern Ireland.

<sup>16</sup> London Declaration, Para ix.

through sport.

15.0 The NIHRC's engagement with the NICGC and the IFA predates the adoption of the London Declaration, and demonstrates what such partnerships can achieve. The IFA Foundation is the charitable arm of the IFA, which focuses on education, wellbeing and the development of sport in areas of economic need. Having formed a partnership with the IFA Foundation in early 2018, the NIHRC has committed to delivering human rights training to its staff as part of a wider programme of work together.

**16.0 Recommends that the APPG-SHRMS asks the UK Government to provide evidence of a strategic approach on how its hosting of mega-sporting events has and will continue to comply with and promote human rights protections in its submissions to the UN treaty monitoring bodies.**

17.0 The NIHRC's partnership with the NICGC was formed in 2016, via an initiative of the Northern Ireland Business and Human Rights Forum to engage businesses and civil society organisations in Northern Ireland on sport and human rights. The partnership has enabled the NIHRC to participate in a knowledge exchange with UNICEF and the Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Organising Committee (GOLDOC), which focused on ensuring the free and meaningful participation of all athletes and monitoring the steps taken to safeguard the rights of all involved in the 2018 Games.

18.0 The NIHRC also recognises the need for access to remedy, and acknowledges the role that NHRIs can play in aiding individuals to seek remedies - as set out in the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

**19.0 The NIHRC recommends that the APPG-SHRMS considers what might be appropriate mechanisms for remedy and redress within the context of mega-sporting events, and what role NHRIs might play.**

## Local Organising Committees

- Why is it important to plan for legacy from the beginning?

- How can upcoming UK hosts apply these lessons? Eg Belfast 2021

20.0 As noted above, the NIHRC participated in a knowledge exchange with GOLDOC and UNICEF in October 2017, ahead of the 2018 Games. During this exchange, GOLDOC emphasised the need for the Games to leave a legacy for the Gold Coast – citing the example of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, ahead of which the Scottish Government published '[A Games Legacy for Scotland](#)'<sup>17</sup> in 2009. This document prioritised five principles of: enabling diversity; ensuring equality; enhancing partnerships; encouraging community engagement; and embedding sustainability. GOLDOC created the '[Gold Coast 2018 Commonwealth Games Reconciliation Action Plan](#)'<sup>18</sup> for the 2018 Games – a commitment by Games Partners to deliver legacy outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, led by the Queensland Government through the Office of Commonwealth Games and GOLDOC. GOLDOC also made the 2018 Games the first to implement a sustainability impact measurement, reflecting the relevance of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#)<sup>19</sup> in sport.

21.0 One issue highlighted by GOLDOC was the absence of a central database where information could be shared and lessons learnt from one organising committee to the next, making it more difficult for upcoming UK hosts to apply good practice from the predecessors. One of the advantages of the NIHRC partnering with the NICGC several years ahead of the Belfast 2021 Games was to use the opportunity to carefully plan a legacy for the Games. The NICGC had plans to engage with schools on sport and human rights in the lead up to 2021; utilise the Games to shed a positive light on human rights in Northern Ireland; and to showcase ethical trading. Another proposed legacy project was to work with Events Management students at Ulster University through to graduation in Summer 2020, with a view to employing select individuals to help deliver

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<sup>17</sup> *A Games Legacy for Scotland* was published in 2009 ahead of the Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games, and detailed the ambitions of the Scottish Government to 'make faster progress towards a healthier nation; developing healthy communities; and a strong and flourishing economy.'

<sup>18</sup> *The Reconciliation Action Plan* was led by the Queensland Government through the Office of the Commonwealth Games and Gold Coast Commonwealth Games Corporation, created to deliver a Games that would leave a 'lasting and meaningful legacy through: employment and training; procurement; showcasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures; building a culturally capable workforce and providing authentic Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural experiences for GC2018 and beyond.'

<sup>19</sup> *The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* is an initiative signed by more than 150 world leaders in 2015, containing 17 Sustainable Development Goals and 169 targets and covering economic, social and environmental development.

the Games in 2021. This long-term input to the degree syllabus would have helped to ensure that a human rights-based approach was embedded in the next generation of event managers.

22.0 The NIHRC had identified the 2021 Games as having the potential to ['demonstrate the right to participate to its fullest extent as enshrined by the Convention of the Rights of the Child'](#)<sup>20</sup>, and acknowledged the pertinence of the Games taking place in a post-conflict society. The NIHRC had sought to support the NICGC to ensure the Belfast 2021 Games left behind a legacy of human rights and was used to further the process of peacebuilding in Northern Ireland. This would have been enhanced by engaging with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The SDGs overlap with human rights treaties and conventions, and the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights. SDG 16 is particularly relevant to the proposed legacy of the Belfast 2021 Games: 'promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels'.

23.0 The NICGC had planned to establish an organising committee with a number of appointed independent oversight commissioners, to ensure that the Games could achieve best practice status across all aspects of its business. Among these commissioners would have been a representative from the NIHRC and the National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children's Child Protection in Sport Unit.

**24.0 The NIHRC recommends that the APPG-SHRMS expresses disappointment at the loss of the Belfast 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games, recognising its capacity to protect and promote human rights and the commitments made by the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council to achieve that aim.**

**25.0 The NIHRC recommends that the APPG-SHRMS calls on the UK Government to support the Northern Ireland Commonwealth Games Council should it choose to make a fresh bid.**

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<sup>20</sup> Representing the NIHRC and CFNHRI, NIHRC Chief Executive, David Russell, addressed the Commonwealth Sport Policy Expert Roundtable in April 2017 on: 'Balancing the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development in and through sport'.

## **26.0 The NIHRC recommends the APPG-SHRMS recognises the role that NHRIs can play in helping local organising committees to engage with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and the Sustainable Development Goals**

### **Suppliers**

- 27.0 The NIHRC recognises that the provision of goods, facilities and services plays a significant role in sport and mega-sporting events, and can have significant impacts on human rights. The UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights recognise the importance of NHRIs in helping to integrate human rights and business. Following the publication of the UK Government's National Action Plan on Business and Human Rights in 2013, the NIHRC produced its report on '[Public Procurement and Human Rights in Northern Ireland](#)'<sup>21</sup> together with the Danish Institute for Human Rights. This report advised on the applicable human rights standards in the context of awarding government contracts, and was subsequently referenced in the UK's second National Action Plan in 2016.
- 28.0 The report has also been used to engage with stakeholders and persuade businesses in Northern Ireland that a human rights-based approach to procurement protects them when working with contractors. One outcome of this report was that, in 2017, the Central Procurement Directorate (within the Northern Ireland Department of Finance) began to undertake a project to embed human rights within the public procurement process and has piloted a human rights-based approach to procurement. In January 2018, the NIHRC began conducting training for staff at the Central Procurement Directorate.
- 29.0 During its time as chair of the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, the NIHRC contracted the Institute for Human Rights and Business to produce a [Guide on Business and Human Rights for Commonwealth Forum National Human Rights Institutions](#)<sup>22</sup>. The Guide reiterates the importance of human rights due diligence and aligning

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<sup>21</sup> *Public Procurement and Human Rights in Northern Ireland* was published by the NIHRC in November 2013.

<sup>22</sup> The *Guide on Business and Human Rights for Commonwealth Forum National Human Rights Institutions* was published in April 2018 to coincide with the 2018 CFNHRI Biennial. The Guide is based on desk-based research and analysis of key developments, trends, initiatives and guidance materials in the field of business and human rights.

public procurement processes with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights.

30.0 Ahead of the Belfast 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games, the NICGC had planned to constructively challenge suppliers and venue operators with regards to their own human rights policies. This would have served to increase awareness around procurement and due diligence within local authorities and the wider business community in Northern Ireland.

**31.0 The NIHRC recommends that human rights provisions and standards are mainstreamed in the procurement processes conducted for the purpose of mega-sporting events.**

## Discrimination

- What can the UK Equality and Human Rights Commission (or similar entities in other governments) do to combat discrimination in sport?

32.0 Noting the reference to the 'UK Equality and Human Rights Commission', it should be recognised that this entity acts as the national human rights institution and equality body for Great Britain alone. It is only one of three 'A' status NHRIs that exist in the UK, having limited jurisdiction in Scotland (which has its own NHRI) and no jurisdiction on matters in Northern Ireland. The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is the National Human Rights Institution for Northern Ireland, with responsibility for devolved and non-devolved matters. Established on the basis of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement, the NIHRC has various statutory functions, such as to promote awareness of human rights through education, training and research; to carry out international treaty monitoring work; and to conduct legal advice work, including taking strategic legal cases. There are therefore a variety of actions the NIHRC can take to combat discrimination in sport.

**33.0 The remit of the APPG-SHRMS spans across the UK Parliament, therefore relevant to the UK as a whole. The NIHRC recommends that the APPG-SHRMS considers the appropriate role of all UK NHRIs going forward, including the Scottish Human Rights Commission and the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission.**

- 34.0 Following its engagement with the Commonwealth Games Federation, the NIHRC attended the 2017 Sporting Chance Forum, organised by the Mega-Sporting Event (MSE) Platform with the NICGC to share knowledge on how NHRIs can support mega-sporting events. During this forum, which was attended by representatives from such sporting bodies as FIFA, IOC and CGF, the NIHRC's Chief Executive highlighted how NHRIs could support organising bodies by sharing human rights expertise and helping to anticipate potential violations of human rights.
- 35.0 Prior to Belfast losing the 2021 Commonwealth Youth Games, the NIHRC had planned to share its expertise with the NICGC in order to help combat discrimination - such as ensuring the safeguarding of athletes. The proposed programme of work also contained plans to engage with primary schools to engage with students on sport and human rights, with an emphasis on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

## Modern Slavery

- How significant is the risk of modern slavery in sport? What aspects of sport and its supply chain are most at risk?
- 36.0 In 2015, the NIHRC established the Northern Ireland Business and Human Rights Forum, which engages members on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights and frequently focuses on modern slavery and sport. A key focus of the Northern Ireland Business and Human Rights Forum has been combatting human trafficking and modern slavery (in line with the CoE Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings), and what obligations businesses have under the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015. Among the Forum's membership are several organisations whose primary aim is to educate on and alleviate human trafficking in Northern Ireland, including the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Guest speakers at the Forum have included representatives from the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority, the Modern Slavery Registry, Shift, and Anti-Slavery International. Prior to the Forum's establishment, the NIHRC published a paper on [The](#)

[Nature and Extent of Human Trafficking in Northern Ireland'](#)<sup>23</sup>, and the Forum has provided further opportunity to raise awareness of and engage businesses and civil society representatives on the reality of modern slavery in the UK.

37.0 The NIHRC has also utilised this Forum to raise awareness on interrelatedness of business and sport. In 2016, the NIHRC hosted an event on sport and human rights in Belfast, bringing together experts from business and sport backgrounds - including Caroline Rees, President of Shift and a key advisor on the UN Guiding Principles; David Grevemberg, CEO of the CGF; Jim Boyce, Vice-President of FIFA and former President of the IFA; and Dr Lisa Bradley, a Commonwealth Games medallist and Head of Department of International Business at Ulster University. This mirrors the actions at the heart of the London Declaration, demonstrating the crucial role that NHRIs can play in bringing together stakeholders to share knowledge and best practice for the purpose of instilling a human rights-based approach to sport. In 2016, as part of a series of films on 'hidden rights', the NIHRC produced a [film](#) which focused on the rights of migrant workers and human trafficking.

38.0 The [Merida Declaration](#), adopted in 2015, sets out the role of NHRIs in implementing the SDGs and recognises that NHRIs are uniquely placed to play a bridging role between stakeholders.

**39.0 The NIHRC recommends that the APPG-SHRMS acknowledges the remit of and utilises the UK's NHRIs to facilitate dialogue with stakeholders on sport and human rights.**

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<sup>23</sup> *The Nature and Extent of Human Trafficking in Northern Ireland* was a scoping study commissioned by the NIHRC and the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, and conducted by the Institute for Conflict Research in 2009. The purpose of the study was to 'increase the knowledge of the commissioning organisations about trafficking and identify the appropriate steps that might be taken to respond to this issue'.



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