



Participation in the Commonwealth Games by the Athletes of Fiji

Statement by the Oceania Region's Leading Sporting Institutions

27 November 2009

The Pacific Games Council and the Olympic Sports Federations of Oceania are today united in their opposition to the recent decision of the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, subsequently endorsed by the Commonwealth Games Federation, to exclude the Athletes of Fiji from competing at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi, India.

The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group's decision to "fully suspend" Fiji from certain Commonwealth activities, such as sporting events like the Commonwealth Games, whilst trade, commerce, and other activities are able to continue unfettered only serves to highlight the inconsistencies of the Commonwealth's approach.

These type of inconsistencies create great and understandable disillusionment and resentment within the sporting fraternity - its participants, supporters and communities - all over the world and in this case specifically, within the Oceania region.

The Athletes of Fiji are fit, healthy, talented and dedicated young people whose sporting prowess on the Commonwealth Games fields of play in Delhi can only serve to strengthen the bonds of friendship and solidarity between Fiji and other Commonwealth countries and thereby set an example for other Fijians to follow right through to their Government.

The Athletes of Fiji are therefore the very LAST group of people within Fiji who should be used as a bargaining chip to punish the behaviour of its Government.

Our organisations are united in this position and through our respective memberships, we will make this position known to our region's Heads of Government as they prepare to meet in Trinidad later this month at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting.

In the name of Sport, and all its positive manifestations and community benefits, we say with one voice "Let Fiji Play".

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Mr Steve Smith
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