

The dangers of hate speech can be stymied through sports UN Special Adviser Nderitu

Boston, 08 August 2023 Sports has the unifying power to stop the next hate crime, including incitement to commit genocide and other related crimes, UN Under-Secretary-General Alice Wairimu Nderitu said in Boston, in remarks to partners of an initiative dedicated to countering hate speech through sports.

The Special Adviser of the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide said it made sense to leverage the global appeal of sports to billions for the common good.

Sports speaks to and makes a difference in the lives of billions of people. Hate speech uttered during a sports game or at a sports venue, echoes strongly. That act plants the seeds of discord. And when a sports team stands up against hate speech, the waves it creates hit every shore in the world. Adviser Nderitu in her remarks to members of the Eradicate Hate Sport Working Group.

Hosted by the Fenway Sports Group on Wednesday, August 02 2023, the gathering provided a platform to not only take stock of activities related to *The Game Plan* – a UN-led [Plan of Action for Countering Hate Speech through engagement with Sport](#) – but also an opportunity to introduce it to representatives of the local professional teams, as well as local colleges and universities. A similar meeting was hosted by Liverpool F.C. in April this year at Anfield, bringing together representatives of various major sports.

Sports Group has been working alongside the U.N. and the Eradicate Hate

that Special Advisor Nderitu and her team at the U.N. seek to combat have their roots in hate speech – something we all have the power to help address. The global sports community wields tremendous influence that can shift viewpoints and attitudes and our goal is to help the Special Advisor by using the power of sports to

The Game Plan acknowledges that hate speech is widespread in society, and that perpetrators of hate crimes are emboldened and encouraged by insufficient action by governments and other stakeholders to tackle it.

The highlight of the meeting was a testimony by Raymond Whitfield, a survivor of a racially motivated shooting in Buffalo, New York, in 2022, who spoke about the painful experience of the death of his mother and how it changed his life.

The Game Plan makes us know that longstanding dehumanizing rhetoric is not the head and how

intervene before messages of hate that may lead to incitement of violence can take root; recognizing, rewarding, and reporting success stories and positive impacts of athletes and sports figures who join the Game Plan; and training at all levels to identify and address hate speech in line with international human rights law.