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National Basketball Federations of Europe

CC: FIBA Europe

Statement from Nordic and Baltic basketball federations and Polish basketball federation

The military aggression of the Russian Federation and its closest ally the Republic of Belarus against the sovereign state of Ukraine has been ongoing for more than a year. A part of the Ukrainian territory has been occupied, not only military personnel, but also civilians die, huge damage is done to the civil infrastructure, a large part of the Ukrainian people is deprived of their homes and sports life is also paralyzed.

In order to stop the criminal war, it is very important not only to financially and materially support Ukraine and its armed forces, but also send a clear signal from the international community that brutal military aggression is unacceptable. This should not be seen as an unpleasant side effect of peaceful life in countries that are not in the immediate area of conflict.

In response to the aggression, the International Basketball Federation (FIBA) and its European division (FIBA Europe) have excluded the teams of the aggressor countries from international tournaments. However, the impression has been that as the war continues, FIBA's positions become less principled. The participation of representatives of Russia and Belarus in FIBA governing structures and various programs are being accepted.

We believe that such tolerance shows a lack of understanding of how the sports system works in Russia and Belarus, as well as how sports are used for political purposes in both domestic and foreign policy in these countries. The efforts of FIBA and other international sports organizations to refer to the values and human rights of the Olympic movement are well-intentioned, but in practice in these countries they are evaluated as the reconciliation of the international community with the political reality - effectively legitimizes the practice of military aggression.

In order to draw the attention to this problem and express an uncompromising position, we, the nine national basketball organizations, withdrew our representatives from participation in the FIBA WiLead program, which admitted representatives of the aggressor countries. The reaction of FIBA, leaving participants from Russia and Belarus in the program and inviting participants from other countries instead of our representatives, shows a distorted perception of reality. The hypocritical words "sport outside of politics" are covered by the lack of a principled position and a complete lack of understanding of the fact that the aggression of Russia and Belarus threatens not only Ukraine, but democracy in Europe and around the world.

We, a coalition of 9 countries, call for compliance with the ethical norms of the civilized world, solidarity with the Ukrainian people and until the resolution of the situation accepted by the democratically elected government of Ukraine:

1) to achieve the exclusion of representatives of Russia and Belarus from participation in FIBA programs (WiLead, FECC, etc.), except in cases where the specific representative has publicly and unequivocally

expressed condemnation of military aggression and is not connected to the military or repressive structures of Russia and Belarus;

2) to achieve non-election of representatives of Russia and Belarus to the board and commissions in the FIBA Europe management elections;

3) to prevent Russian and Belarusian teams from returning to international competitions organized by FIBA;

4) in this case, when the management of FIBA and FIBA Europe ignores our common position, we invite other federations to join the vision of our coalition and withdraw their representatives from participation in FIBA programs (WiLead, FECC, etc.).

Signed by:

Danmarks Basketball-Forbund, President Mads Young Christensen

Estonian Basketball Association, President Priit Sarapuu

Basketball Finland, President Timo Elo

Icelandic Basketball Association, President Guðbjörg Nordfjörð Elíasdóttir

Latvian Basketball Association, President Raimonds Vejonis

Lithuanian Basketball Federation, President Vydas Gedvilas

Norwegian Basketball Federation, President Jan Hendrik Parmann

Polish Basketball Federation, President Radosław Piesiewicz

Swedish Basketball Federation, President Susanne Jidesten

