



"Uniting Trough Sport: Legal Reflection on Sport for Development and Peace in the Indonesian Context"

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Abstract

This article explores the relevance and potential of the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) framework within the Indonesian context, particularly through the lens of national sports law. Despite the global recognition of SDP as a transformative tool for fostering inclusivity, peace, and social development, Indonesia lacks a formal legal foundation for its implementation. Drawing on a normative juridical method that incorporates statutory and conceptual approaches, the study critically analyses Law No. 11 of 2022 on Sports to evaluate its alignment with SDP values such as equity, sustainability, and social cohesion. The findings reveal that while Indonesia's current legal framework implicitly supports several SDP principles, it falls short of offering explicit provisions or strategic policies for their integration. The paper recommends the reconstruction of existing legislation or the issuance of derivative regulations to institutionalise SDP in Indonesia. Such reforms would not only enhance the legal clarity and operational capacity of SDP programmes but also affirm Indonesia's commitment to utilising sport as a means of nation-building, youth development, and global peace advocacy.

1. Introduction

Every individual living within a societal order aspires to a harmonious and peaceful life. However, numerous challenges arise in achieving such conditions, particularly in regions characterised by a diverse population. To navigate these challenges, a process known as integration is required. In a social context, integration refers to stability and cooperation within the social system. Thus, it can also be seen as a process of strengthening that system by accommodating new actors and groups being introduced into it. Social integration is essential for maintaining unity and cohesion. Without reinforced social integration, diversity may become a source of conflict that threatens social stability. Therefore, it is crucial for all elements of society to foster tolerance, respect for differences, and uphold the values of pluralism. Successful integration creates an inclusive environment in which every individual feels accepted and able to contribute to building a fairer and more prosperous society.¹

In Indonesia, differences are inevitable due to the multitude of ethnicities, religions, races, languages, and more. In addition to the national language, which serves as a unifying force, sport is an activity that creates a shared space where individuals and groups of various ethnic, racial, religious, and social backgrounds can come together. Sport also serves as a projection of group or national identity, whereby athletic achievements become a source of pride. For instance, Japan utilises baseball and sumo wrestling to portray its modern identity while preserving its cultural heritage. Sport also symbolises key societal values such as cooperation, discipline, and equality, aligning with the theory of symbolic interactionism.²

Beyond national boundaries, sport plays a unifying role on the international stage through diplomacy, the development of collective identity, and efforts to overcome

¹ Rahman, I., & Ramdoni, A. (2025). STRATEGI INTEGRASI SOSIAL WILAYAH PENGEMBANGAN IBU KOTA NEGARA BERBASIS MULTIKULTURAL DI PENAJAM PASER UTARA, KALIMANTAN TIMUR (STUDI KASUS: DESA WONOSARI, KECAMATAN SEPAKU, KABUPATEN PENAJAM PASER UTARA). *Journal of Innovation Research and Knowledge*, 4.

² Aisha, A. (2025). The role of sports in national identity and unity. *Newport International Journal of Current Issues in Arts and Management*, 6(1), 21–27. <https://doi.org/10.59298/NIJCIAM/2025/6.1.2127>

prejudice. Sports diplomacy acts as a non-political means of easing tensions between countries, such as the 1971 “ping-pong diplomacy” that opened relations between the US and China, or the 2004 India-Pakistan cricket match that served as a door to peaceful dialogue.³ Global events such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup foster collective identity by uniting millions of spectators from diverse backgrounds in the spirit of healthy competition. These events also act as a “universal language” that transcends geographical boundaries, evident in the cross-cultural recognition of figures like Cristiano Ronaldo or Naomi Osaka. Sport also serves as a medium of social inclusion, seen in initiatives such as FIFA’s anti-racism campaigns or the Paralympics, which have reshaped global perceptions of disability. Economically and culturally, sport facilitates exchange, such as Japan’s adoption of baseball following the 1964 Olympics a fusion of local tradition and globalisation or European football leagues recruiting players from multiple continents.

Nonetheless, sport also faces significant challenges, such as politicisation as seen in the 1978 FIFA World Cup in Argentina, used to distract from human rights issues or extreme nationalism, which has provoked conflict, such as the 1969 “Football War” between El Salvador and Honduras.⁴ Disparities in sports infrastructure between developed and developing nations also pose barriers. To maximise its potential, anti-discrimination regulations, equitable funding, and the strategic use of media to spread inclusive narratives are essential. Sport is not merely a competition, it reflects global dynamics and can unify groups or nations through collective pride and diplomacy, while also reminding us of the need to critically address political exploitation or hidden injustices behind the roar of the crowd.

In reality, sport possesses a dual nature: it unites society through national pride and diplomacy but also reveals social inequalities. To harness its full potential as a unifying force amidst diversity, efforts must be made to combat racism, promote gender equality, and

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*

support inclusive narratives. This document emphasises the importance of a critical approach to optimising sport's potential as a medium for social harmony.

With the evolving role of sport in global life, various aspects of human existence have been explored as innovative elements in developing sport concepts that can more significantly impact society,⁴ One such innovation is the emergence of the concept of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP). In essence, this concept positions sport as an alternative path to promote development and peace within communities, with the hope that it can address ongoing societal issues and challenges in a rapidly globalising world. The concept has existed for some time and has been adopted by numerous countries worldwide. However, to date, there appears to be no structured application of SDP within Indonesia's sports development, despite clear relevance when the concept is compared with the Indonesian context.

As a vast nation, Indonesia's diversity often leads to differing perceptions among individuals and groups, which may result in conflict or discord.⁵ In this context, the SDP framework is highly relevant as an alternative solution, focusing on peacebuilding through sports activities. In addition to these issues of diversity, the Indonesian population's strong interest in sports adds to the relevance of SDP for the country. This enthusiasm can be utilised as a tool for resolving societal problems in line with the SDP concept. To support the effective implementation of SDP, a strong and comprehensive legal foundation is necessary, this is where the role of sports law becomes crucial. Sports law comprises a set of regulations governing all aspects of sports, including the protection of athletes' rights and the fair and sustainable organisation of sporting activities. The presence of such laws ensures that sports development including within the SDP framework takes place within a structured and purposeful context.

Sports law specifically governs all matters relating to the sporting world, including the rights of athletes. Previous literature shows that sport plays a strategic role in shaping

⁴ Hammerschmidt, J., et al. (2023). Sport entrepreneurship: the role of innovation and creativity in sport management. *Review of Managerial Science*, 1-30. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11846-023-00711-3>.

⁵ Saifudin, N. (2024). Efforts to Resolve Social Conflict in Facing Social Conflict Emergencies in Indonesia. *JIHAD : Jurnal Ilmu Hukum dan Administrasi*. <https://doi.org/10.58258/jihad.v6i4.7919>.

leadership qualities among the youth, particularly by reinforcing values of character, socio-emotional skills, and decision-making abilities. Sporting activities, whether in the context of physical education or extracurricular pursuits, affect not only physical fitness but also the development of resilient, disciplined, and collaborative leadership traits.⁶ This aligns with the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) approach, which positions sport as an effective medium for social development, especially in nurturing active, responsible, and integrity-driven youth. Furthermore, legal frameworks such as Indonesia's Law No. 11 of 2022 on the National Sports System serve as a key foundation to ensure fair access to sports facilities, support coaching programmes, and promote sustainable policy-making. The role of government and institutions also stands out in previous studies, particularly in providing infrastructure, training, and cross-sector collaboration to optimise youth development through sport.

Research into the concept of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) and its application in Indonesia remains limited. Therefore, this study aims to examine the extent to which Indonesia's sports law aligns with the SDP concept. It also seeks to analyse whether the current legal framework provides sufficient space and access for the practical implementation of SDP in the national sporting context.

2. Problem Statement

The issue addressed in this study is the continued absence of national legislation that directly facilitates the implementation of the Sport for Development and Peace (SDP) concept within Indonesia's sporting landscape. The authors hold the view that the SDP concept is fundamentally aligned with the goals and vision of Indonesian sports activities, as stipulated in Law No. 11 of 2022 on Sports, which serves as the principal legal framework governing sports-related matters in the country. The compatibility between the SDP concept and Indonesia's national sports law becomes a point of inquiry in the absence of explicit regulation outlining the application of SDP in the context of Indonesian sport. This article aims to examine in greater depth the forms of alignment between the SDP concept and Indonesia's sports law, which may serve as the basis for

⁶ Rusandi, D., Juliantine, T., Sucipto, & Yulianto, A. G. (2025). Analisis Peran Olahraga dalam Membangun Kualitas Kepemimpinan Generasi Muda. *JURNAL SPORTA SAINTIKA*, 10.

offering policy suggestions or recommendations. These recommendations would be aimed at supporting more sustainable legal frameworks, particularly through the provision of regulations that enable the practical implementation of SDP in the Indonesian sporting domain.

3. Methods

The normative juridical method is employed in the preparation of this article to further examine the compatibility of national sports law with the concept of Sport for Development and Peace. Within this research method, two approaches are utilised: the statute approach and the conceptual approach. In addition to these approaches, legal materials constitute an essential element of this study. These legal materials comprise both primary and secondary legal sources. Primary legal sources refer to national legislation, with the principal reference in this article being Law Number 11 of 2022 concerning Sports. Furthermore, the secondary sources that support this article consist of scholarly legal journal articles relevant to the subject matter under discussion.⁷

In this study, as it directly addresses the concept of sports, which lies outside the domain of legal science, non-legal materials are also required in the preparation of this article. These non-legal materials include journal articles, documents, and literature that support the discussion of the topic at hand. Accordingly, the article can be structured and conveyed effectively.

4. Discussion

Referring to the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace (UNOSDP), Sport for Development and Peace is a concept that has long been promoted by the UN, recognising the significant importance and impact of sport on community development and peacebuilding.⁸ Within this concept, the positive values of sport are harnessed to support development and peace within community settings. Fundamentally, sport is not merely a physical activity aimed at health and achievement; rather, from the perspective of this concept, sport is viewed as a form of recreation that can serve as an alternative means to

⁷ Dr. Muhaimmin, S.H., M.Hum., *Metode Penelitian Hukum*, Edisi 1 (Mataram, Mataram University Press, 2020).

⁸ UNOSDP, Sport for Development and Peace.

promote health, education, social inclusion, and other aspects that contribute to the building of diverse forms of community within society.⁹

In terms of peacebuilding, sport can serve as a means to foster unity among various segments of society with diverse backgrounds. Participation in sporting activities can cultivate a sense of solidarity, tolerance, and mutual respect.¹⁰ Core values related to personal development such as leadership, cooperation, and discipline can be nurtured through sporting activities. These are the very foundations upon which the United Nations regards sport as a vital element in supporting community development and peace.

4.1 Indonesian Sports Law and Its Relevance to Sport for Development and Peace (SDP)

Law No. 11 of 2022 on Sports was enacted to replace the previous legislation, namely Law No. 3 of 2005 on the National Sports System, as it was deemed no longer relevant to the evolving needs of national sports, particularly in responding to the rapid advancements of the digital age and modern technology. The purpose of this law is to improve the quality of life and the well-being of the people, to enhance national development in the field of sports in a systematic, integrated, planned, and sustainable manner, with a focus on increasing both public welfare and sporting achievements. Consequently, the management and development of sports are directed towards achieving better public health and fitness, equitable access to and fulfilment of sports infrastructure, improved performance and sporting climate, and governance of sports that aligns with societal developments and global sports competition.¹¹

In line with the objectives of the enactment of the aforementioned law, sport is to be organised based on the principles of nationalism, equity, and sustainability. Sport guided by the principle of nationalism aims to foster unity and bring pride to the nation through achievements on the international stage. Such accomplishments enable the public to feel a

⁹ Karstensen, V., Piskorz-Ryń, O., Karna, W., Lee, A., Neo, X. S., & Gottschlich, D. (2024). The Role of Sports in Promoting Social Inclusion and Health in Marginalized Communities. *International Journal of Sport Studies for Health*, 7(3), 41-48. <https://doi.org/10.61838/kman.intjssh.7.3.6>

¹⁰ Moustakas, L. (2022). Sport for Social Cohesion: Transferring from the Pitch to the Community?. *Social Sciences*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci11110513>.

¹¹ UU No.11 Tahun 2022 Tentang Keolahragaan

sense of national pride, which is highly relevant to Indonesia's current context. Sport under the principle of equity means that it should be accessible to all individuals regardless of race, religion, or social status. Equal access to sports for all segments of society, including persons with disabilities, is also an essential effort in promoting unity. Meanwhile, sport under the principle of sustainability entails the need for athlete regeneration and structured development programmes, ensuring that all members of society have equal opportunities to excel in sporting competitions.

Law No. 11 of 2022, more commonly known as the Sports Law, is accompanied by derivative regulations in the form of Government Regulations (PP) that govern its implementation in practice. The government mandates the issuance of various implementing regulations including Government Regulations, Presidential Regulations (Perpres), and Ministerial Regulations (Permenpora) no later than two years after the law comes into effect. The following are several derivative regulations issued under this law:

1. Government Regulation Number 46 of 2024 which governs the organisation of sports activities.
2. Minister of Youth and Sports Regulation (PERMENPORA)

As outlined in Law No. 11 of 2022 on Sports, policies related to the development of sports in Indonesia are divided into three sectors, each with its own specific objectives, namely:

1. Educational sport aims to instill character values, knowledge, and skills through both curricular and extracurricular activities within formal and non-formal education pathways. These activities begin from an early age, tailored to the developmental stages of learners, and must be supported by adequate sports facilities, as stipulated in Article 18. For example, schools are required to organise inter-institutional sports championships or festivals to foster camaraderie and social skills.
2. Community sport is recreational in nature, carried out based on individual interest and ability, with the aim of promoting health, fitness, and enjoyment. These activities include both traditional and modern forms of physical exercise, such as mass gymnastics or regional sports festivals. In accordance with Article 19, the central

government, local governments, and the community share the responsibility of promoting and developing community sports based on the principles of accessibility, affordability, appeal, and mass participation. For instance, the development of traditional sports such as *pencak silat* or *sepak takraw*, which are integral to local cultural heritage..

3. Elite sport (or performance sport) focuses on enhancing athletes' abilities with the aim of achieving success at national and international levels. Its development is carried out in a planned, systematic, and sustainable manner, supported by science and technology. National Sports Federations (Induk Organisasi Cabang Olahraga or IOCO) are responsible for managing tiered competitions, ranging from the regency level up to the international stage, as stated in Articles 20 and 28. For example, this includes the establishment of talent identification systems, national training centres, and regular championships to nurture high-performing athletes.¹²

4.2 Alignment of National Regulations with the Principles of Sport for Development and Peace (SDP)

4.2.1 Alignment of Indonesian Sports Norms and Legal Values with International SDP Standards.

Law No. 11 of 2022 on Sports in Indonesia is fundamentally aligned with international standards set by the United Nations through the *Sport for Development and Peace* (SDP) framework. In the UN's SDP document, sport is recognised as a powerful tool to support the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including poverty alleviation, improved health, quality education, peacebuilding, and gender equality. Core values such as sportsmanship, fairness, cooperation, and respect central to international SDP standards are also reflected in the goals and principles of Indonesian sports development, as outlined in Articles 4 and 5 of the Law.

Furthermore, Articles 7 and 31 of Indonesia's Sports Law reaffirm the importance of ensuring that sport is accessible to all groups, including persons with

¹² UU No.11 Tahun 2022 Tentang Keolahragaan Pasal 18 hingga 20

disabilities, women, and the general public. This reflects the international standard of inclusivity, which advocates for equal access and opportunities for everyone to participate in sport. In the contexts of education and health, the law also provides a strong foundation for integrating sport into healthy lifestyles and as an educational medium aligning closely with global objectives that emphasise the role of sport in promoting wellbeing and youth development. These commitments are detailed in Articles 18, 19, 26, and 27.

This law also addresses environmental sustainability and long-term development by encouraging the organisation of environmentally friendly sporting activities that adhere to sustainability principles. It also provides space for active community participation in sports development ranging from support and oversight to the management of sporting activities. This demonstrates that, in general, the norms and values contained in Indonesia's Sports Law have adopted the fundamental principles of international standards.

4.2.2 The Potential Role of Sport in Addressing Social Conflict, Discrimination, and Building Harmony.

Sport is not solely about physical fitness; it also holds great potential in fostering harmonious relationships and addressing social conflict and discrimination. When people come together to engage in sport, social barriers and prejudices often fade, replaced by a shared sense of unity and camaraderie. Sport naturally encourages cooperation and teamwork, helping to break down stigma and promote mutual respect despite differences.

Through sport, individuals learn to work together, appreciate diversity, and develop a culture of inclusion. It becomes a platform for meaningful interaction, support, and the strengthening of friendships. A powerful example of this was the match between the United States and Iran during the 1998 FIFA World Cup. Despite the political tension between the two nations, the game proceeded respectfully. Players from both sides exchanged gestures of peace posing for photographs together and presenting gifts such as flowers and team emblems demonstrating how

sport can transcend political divides and serve as a bridge for dialogue and understanding.

Sport also serves as a powerful medium for promoting positive values such as fair play, discipline, and leadership. Engaging in sport teaches individuals how to work effectively in a team, manage emotions under pressure, and develop leadership skills all of which are essential for everyday life. These experiences foster resilience, accountability, and mutual respect. Moreover, sport can act as a tool for instilling ethics and personal integrity. By participating in structured sporting activities, individuals learn to uphold rules, respect opponents, and value honesty contributing to the development of a more dignified and morally grounded society. In this way, sport goes beyond physical activity, becoming a lifelong learning space that shapes character and promotes civic responsibility.

In addition to its individual benefits, sport plays a vital role in building healthy and inclusive communities. Through structured sporting activities, communities can grow stronger and more connected, offering mutual support among their members. Sport fosters a sense of belonging and community pride especially through support for local teams or clubs which, in turn, reinforces unity and encourages collaboration in pursuing shared goals. This collective identity helps bridge social divides and empowers communities to work together, not only in sporting success but also in social development and civic engagement.

Sport holds a strategic role in shaping a harmonious and inclusive society. Beyond being a physical activity, it serves as a bridge to overcome social conflict and discrimination, while strengthening relationships between individuals and communities. Through values such as teamwork, fair play, discipline, and leadership, sport creates a space for learning to respect differences and fosters the development of communities that are healthy, inclusive, and dignified—paving the way towards a more peaceful and just social life.

4.3 Reconstruction of Sports Law Policy in Indonesia

Law No. 11 of 2022 is, in essence, already aligned with the concept of *Sport for Development and Peace* (SDP), which upholds the values and principles of sportsmanship, inclusivity, and

development. However, there is no explicit provision granting access for SDP to be formally implemented in Indonesia, resulting in regulatory ambiguity should SDP be applied without a supporting legal framework. The absence of formal legal recognition for SDP risks causing policy overlaps, legal uncertainty, and a lack of synergy among government bodies, sports organisations, and development actors. Moreover, without a clear legal structure, the use of sport as a tool for development often remains sporadic, unmeasured, and reliant on the initiative of specific institutions or individuals.

Therefore, the reconstruction of sports law policy must be directed towards the integration of SDP principles into existing legislation either through the revision of the Sports Law or the formulation of derivative regulations specifically addressing sport as a tool for development and peace. This approach would strengthen legal legitimacy, provide clearer guidance for the implementation of SDP programmes, and encourage cross-sectoral collaboration in achieving inclusive and sustainable national development through sport. In doing so, Indonesia would not only meet domestic needs in the realm of sports development but also demonstrate its commitment to the global agenda that recognises sport as a transformative force in building a peaceful, healthy, and just society.

5. Conclusion

This explanation illustrates that sport holds a strategic role in supporting sustainable development and social peace, as outlined in the concept of *Sport for Development and Peace* (SDP). This concept positions sport as a multidimensional tool capable of driving progress in key development areas such as health, education, inclusivity, and conflict resolution. Indonesia's Law No. 11 of 2022 on Sport has, in substance, adopted many of the core values and principles of SDP, including sportsmanship, fairness, social inclusion, and sustainable development. However, the regulation has yet to explicitly recognise or integrate SDP as an official legal and policy framework. This creates normative and operational gaps that may lead to legal uncertainty, weak cross-sectoral coordination, and underutilisation of sport as a tool for social development.

Therefore, a reconstruction of Indonesia's sports law policy is necessary one that explicitly acknowledges and regulates SDP, whether through legislative amendments or the

formulation of derivative regulations aimed at integrating sport into various development sectors. Through this approach, sport would not only serve as a means of improving performance and public health, but also emerge as a transformative force in fostering an inclusive, harmonious, and socially just society, while simultaneously strengthening Indonesia's position in supporting the global development agenda.

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