

Sporting Contacts with South Africa: Canadian Policy

The following is the Canadian policy on sporting contacts with South Africa. It was adopted by the previous government in accordance with the terms of the Gleneagles Declaration and of the U.N. Declaration Against Apartheid in Sport, insofar as Canadian law and custom allows us to comply with this latter document.

Canadian teams or sportsmen visiting South Africa: The government will give no moral or financial support to any Canadian team or individual for the purpose of travelling to South Africa to participate in a sporting competition, and it reserves the right to voice public disapproval of such travel. The government will not withhold passports in order to prevent such contacts, because this would be an infringement on the right of a Canadian citizen to travel abroad.

South African teams or sportsmen visiting Canada: The government will refuse entry visas to South Africans wishing to enter Canada to participate in a sporting competition or congress as representatives of South Africa, of a South African sports federation, or of a club associated with such a federation. In practice this means that if a tournament is organized on the basis of national representation, with flags, symbols, etc., South Africans wishing to participate will not be given visas, while if an event is organized on the basis of individual competition, they may. Thus Gary Player may enter Canada to play in the Canadian Open, an individual competition, but not in the World Cup of Golf, in which he would formally represent South Africa.

Canadians competing against South Africans in a third country: No action is taken to discourage such contact, as we consider that invitations to an event are the responsibility of the host country, and that by refusing to enter such competitions in third countries we run the risk of seriously damaging the national sport development program. It is also difficult to verify in time whether South Africans will actually participate. Nonetheless, the Canadian team is advised of the government's opposition to apartheid in sport, and if any member should refuse to compete against the South Africans, the government will not subsidize his or her replacement.

We recognize that this policy does not totally shut off sporting contacts between Canadians and South Africans. Nonetheless it does discourage most significant contact, and it has been praised by the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa as a model for Western nations to follow.