



ANOCA NEWSLETTER



INTERNATIONAL
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COMMITTEE

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Monthly Review of African Olympism



Special edition African Athletes' Forum

In collaboration with the IOC, the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ACNOA) organised an African Athletes' Forum in Algiers on 11 and 12 March 2023. ANOCA Newsletter looks back on the highlights of that event, which culminated with the election of Namibia's Gaby Ahrens as Chair of the said Commission.

Address by the President of ANOCA at the opening ceremony of the African Athletes' Forum



- The Minister of Sports, the Vice President of the IOC,
- The President of the Algeria Olympic Committee,
- The Chairlady of the IOC Athletes' Commission,
- Dear friends of the IOC, Olympic Solidarity,
- Dear Athletes,
- Dear friends of the African Olympic Family,
- Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to thank all the delegations of athletes and all the officials for attending this very important event. I thank the people of Algeria who, with love and cordiality, welcomed the entire big family of the African Olympic and sports movement, who happen to be the cream of African and international athletes invited to these historic deliberations.

Before I proceed, I request that we all rise for a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of all the worthy athletes of our continent who have passed on, and who helped write the history of the African and world Olympic and sports movement by dint of their genius and talent.

Your Excellency, Distinguished guests, Ladies and Gentlemen, dear friends,

I would like to congratulate all the 54 African NOCs who permitted their athletes to be here, as they will especially be discussing major issues concerning athletes of the continent, including the importance, roles and responsibilities of the Athletes' Commission, ways to improve, promote and further develop sports in Africa, especially athletes' development and support.

The highpoint of our deliberations will certainly be the election of athletes' representatives in the ANOCA Athletes' Commission, and the setting up of Athletes' Commissions in all NOCs in Africa per zone.

This agenda is obviously in line with ANOCA's 2020-2024 strategic plan, which makes the athlete a focal concern. Our strategic plan advocates for sport and Olympism. We have to equip athletes with all the necessary tools to rise to the pinnacle of elite sport.

Therefore, we have to brainstorm athletes' career management, as well as their post-career and socio-professional life. We have to organise and design with them strategies tailored to their needs and requirements.

To prevent our athletes from fleeing the continent, they should be granted a special, official and institutional status, both for athletes in general and elite athletes in particular.

African athletes are endowed with a natural potential that only needs an effective guidance and support policy to continue improving the outstanding performances that our continent has recorded for ages in continental and international competitions.

This invaluable talent pool warrants even further reflection, and who else can better suggest and recommend even more inclusive strategies than athletes themselves? Such is the rationale behind this maiden African Athletes' Forum.

Africa has gained fame through the exceptional performances of its athletes, while disseminating the intrinsic African values of dignity. The aim is to plan on better care for athletes on the continent by developing an appropriate, performing and efficient framework for the monitoring and implementation of support measures for the African athlete to be able to rise to the challenges of the future.

Your Excellency, Distinguished Guests, dear athletes,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Sportsmen and women contribute significantly in portraying a positive image of Africa and imprinting a spirit of patriotism. Their contributions must be recognised for what they are worth.

This is one challenge among many others. Together, we must take up this challenge and forge ahead in solidarity to give hope to Africa's sporting youth through the opportunities afforded by sport and the status of athlete.

The elite African athlete has the ears of all social categories, be they political authorities, young and old people, governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions, and international bodies. For this reason, African athletes must consider themselves as ambassadors of the cause of African sport.

Therefore, there is no gainsaying that the profile of the African athlete must match this identity as a driver of development.

Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me, at this juncture, to congratulate African sportswomen on the occasion of International Women's Day, a day on which we collectively pay tribute to their bravery and their participation in sport development and the furtherance of Olympic values.

The African woman athlete is focal to our successes. She is the standard-bearer of our maternal emotions and thus the protector of all that Africa has already achieved in continental and international competitions.

Please let's give a round of applause to our women athletes, which indeed is a deserved tribute.

Dear athletes, Your Excellency, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

The coming days will be very crucial for our athletes, with the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in the offing. They will have to shine and clearly show how far they have progressed. Their participation in the African Games in Ghana and the African Beach Games in Hammamet, Tunisia, this year, will be a suitable springboard for the much sought top notch performance at the Olympic Games.

ANOCA and Olympic Solidarity scholarships granted to our athletes will help further build athletes' capacities and create enabling conditions for them to prepare. We thank Olympic Solidarity and Dr Thomas BACH, our IOC President, for his significant contribution to sport development in Africa and his immense support to African athletes.

The IOC Athletes' Department is also at the forefront of the sports arena and is displaying its expertise for the benefit of athletes.

Congratulations to African National Olympic Committees for fulfilling their responsibility in guiding the athletes.

With shared experiences, we hope, together, shape a better future for African athletes.

Long live Olympism! Long live athletes! Long live African youths! Long live Olympism in Africa!

I wish us successful deliberations, thank you."

Mustapha BERRAF

IOC Member, President of ANOCA



Understanding the stakes of the Athletes' Forum

Deliberations of the African Athletes' Forum organised by ANOCA took place on 11 and 12 March 2023, with representatives of all 54 African NOCs in attendance. Organised in collaboration with the IOC, the Algiers Forum was an opportunity for representatives of ANOCA member NOCs to discuss

major issues concerning the continent's athletes and elect their representatives in the ANOCA Athletes' Commission. The meeting highlighted the importance and role of athletes in Olympic institutions, by giving them the opportunity to create a communication network among NOCs, ANOCA and IOC Athletes' Commissions. It also afforded an opportunity for the



continent's athletes to talk unity with just one year to the Paris 2024 Games and three to Dakar 2026, two major challenging events for African athletes.

The Algiers event was attended by senior ANOCA officials, including President Mustapha Berraf, the Algerian Minister of Youth and Sports, Abderrazak Sebgag, the

Chair of the IOC Athletes' Commission, Emma Terho, World and Olympic Champions as well as high profile African sports dignitaries.

Established in 2013, the ANOCA Athletes' Commission is actively and fully playing its role in boosting sports and Olympism in Africa.



Algiers Forum deliberations proper

The African Athletes' Forum opened on 11 March 2023, with athletes from all 54 member NOCs. Also present were ANOCA President Mustapha Berraf, the Algerian Minister of Youth and Sports, Abderrazag Sebgag, IOC Athletes' Commission Chair Mrs Emma Terho and ANOCA AC acting Chair, Paul Tergat.

Besides the opening ceremony which featured speeches by the President of NOC Algeria, the acting Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission, the President of the supreme governing body of the African Olympic Movement and the Algerian Minister of Youth and Sports respectively, the deliberations also featured papers by several partner bodies and workshops. The highpoint of the meeting was the election of the Commission's executive



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Athletes should be able to participate in international competitions without any form of discrimination.

”

board, following which Gaby Ahrens of Namibia was elected Commission Chair.

Suffice it to note that the Algiers Forum fully supported the independence of the Olympic Movement based on the principles of Olympism, without discrimination of nationality, religion or ethnicity. In this regard, the Forum participants resolved that athletes should not be penalised for the

actions of their governments. In their opinion, athletes should be able to participate in international competitions without any form of discrimination. Concerning the participation of Russian and Belarusian athletes, they must return to international competitions on condition that they do so as strictly neutral athletes, as earlier moved by the 59th session of the ANOCA Executive Committee on 3 March 2023 in Nouakchott.



Message

IOC President stands with African Athletes

On the occasion of the African Athletes' Forum held in Algiers, IOC President Dr Thomas Bach addressed a video message to participants, a recording broadcast during the event. Following in the full text of the message of encouragement from the boss of world Olympism.



As you the athletes have shown us: we can only go faster, aim higher, become stronger if we stand together.

“-Dear President of ANOCA, my dear colleague and friend Mustapha Berraf;

-The Interim Chair of the ANOCA Athletes’ Commission, my dear colleague and friend Paul Tergat;

-Dear athletes,

Athletes are not only at the heart – they are the heart of our Olympic Community. This is why this ANOCA Athletes’ Forum is first and foremost an opportunity for you, the athletes to make your voices heard on the issues that affect all of you. Sitting at the table where the decisions are made, with a voice and a vote.

This is the most impactful representation that a person can have. You deserve this right and as representatives of your peers, you must be involved in all decision-making.

In this respect, your elections at this Forum will be an important step. Athletes have a major responsibility to lead by example.

This is why I am so pleased to see how ANOCA through its Athletes’ Commission, is doing exactly that: leading by example, empowering athletes and being at the core of action.

Today I would like to congratulate you all and in particular your interim Chair, Paul Tergat. I would also like to thank everyone at ANOCA under the great leadership of the President and my great friend, Mustapha Berraf, for the wonderful work they are doing, in supporting Athletes and promoting sport and its values across Africa.

As you the athletes have shown us: we can only go faster, aim higher, become stronger if we stand together. Your Forum is the perfect illustration of this new Olympic motto: Faster, Higher and Stronger together. In this Olympic spirit, I wish you fruitful discussions and a successful ANOCA Athletes’ Forum.

Goodbye and see you soon.

Dr Thomas Bach, IOC President



ANOCA Athletes' Commission Elects New Board in Algiers

One of the highlights of the Algiers Forum was undoubtedly the election of the Athletes' representatives within the ANOCA Athletes' Commission. At the end of this election, Namibian shooter Gaby Ahrens, flag bearer of her country at the 2012 London Olympic Games, was elected Chair of the Commission. This bodes well for the future, as Gaby who, as a candidate for the position of ANOCA AC Chair, presented her vision in her candidate manifesto:

"As chairperson of the ANOCA AC I would ensure that the AC works as a collective to truly represent the views and opinions of each region of our vast continent.

My leadership approach is a team approach, and I believe that each AC member has a key role within the AC which speaks to their interest and passion and in this way can contribute positively and constructively.



I am committed to give the input, energy and time the AC deserves.



I understand and respect the importance of engaging and building strong relations with all athlete stakeholders and know that by all working together, we can really do a lot of good work within the Olympic Movement on the African continent.

One of my key focus areas would be to ensure athletes and the international Olympic movement build a positive association with the ANOCA AC by developing a communication strategy and campaign which supports, empowers and engages with african athletes.

I am committed to give the input, energy and time the AC deserves.”

Volleyball player Victoire Ngon Ntame (Cameroon), who represented her country in Rio 2016, was elected Vice Chair of a commission that also includes Aya Medany, (Egypt), silver medallist at the 2008 World Modern Pentathlon Championships. Ahrens and Ngon Ntame will both sit on the ANOCA Executive Committee.

Paul Tergat, President of NOC Kenya and IOC member, also used the occasion to thank ANOCA President Mustapha Berraf

for appointing him as interim Chairman of the Athletes' Commission and to organise the first ever election of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission. Thus, with this election, he hoped that the voice of athletes will be represented at the highest levels of ANOCA and beyond.

The Commission is made up as follows:

Elected members

- Gaby Ahrens (Namibia) - Chairperson
- Victoire Ngon Ntame (Cameroon) - Vice Chair
- Amina Rouba (Algeria)
- Balla Dieye (Senegal)
- Djenebou Dante (Mali)
- Angelika Sita Ouédraogo (Burkina Faso)
- Kossi Médard Nayo (Togo)
- Daniel Rockman Samedi (Central African Republic)
- Aya Medany (Egypt)
- Olivier Ntagengwa (Rwanda)
- Khotso Mokoena (South Africa)
- Sally Faisal Abdourahman (Djibouti)

Appointed members

- Paul Tergat (Kenya)
- Olarinoye Adijat Adenike (Nigeria)

Ex Officio member

- Humphrey Kayange (Kenya).

Who is Gaby Ahrens...

The new ANOCA AC Chair?





Namibian Gaby Ahrens, Commonwealth Games bronze medallist in shooting, has become the first elected Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission. Ahrens, who finished third in ball-trap in Delhi in 2010, was elected by more than 100 representatives from all 54 African NOCs at the ANOCA Athletes' Forum held in Algiers, which unanimously supported the IOC's stance that athletes from Russia and Belarus be given the opportunity to return to international competition well ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games.

The newly elected Chair, who celebrated her 42nd birthday on the eve of the election, succeeds two-time 10,000m Olympic silver medallist, Kenya's Paul Tergat, who was appointed acting Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission in 2021.

Gaby Diana Ahrens was born on 15 March 1981 in Windhoek, Namibia. She is a trap (shooting) specialist. Silver medallist in trap at the 2007 African Championships in Cairo, she competed in her first Olympic Games in 2008 in Beijing. She won the bronze medal in women's trap at the 2010 Commonwealth Games in Delhi and a gold medal at the 2011 African Championships in Rabat. She was the flag bearer for Namibia at the opening ceremony of the 2012 Summer Olympics in London. Gaby won her second continental trophy in trap at the 2015 African Championships in Cairo. She retired from competition sports after her third participation in the Olympic Games, which happened to be the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro.

The new ANOCA Athletes' Commission Chair is also Vice-Chair of NOC Namibia and member of the WADA Athletes' Commission.



Return of Russian and Belarusian athletes

African athletes support ANOCA Executive Committee resolution

Over 100 African athletes' representatives attending the Continental Athletes' Forum held in Algiers unanimously expressed their full support for the resolution adopted by the ANOCA Executive Board on 3 March 2023, welcoming the return of Russian and Belarusian athletes competing as strictly neutral athletes in international competitions.

Representatives from 54 NOC Athletes' Commissions (ACs) from across Africa reasserted that athletes should never pay the

price of any conflict, regardless of its nature or where it occurs. In their opinion, politics must not put pressure on sports to drift away from its fundamental values of solidarity and unity. The ANOCA Athletes' Forum has ruled that Russian and Belarusian athletes should be readmitted to international competitions with the status of neutral athletes. African athletes are of the opinion that these athletes should be allowed to participate in international competitions «without any form of discrimination.»



Statement by the **ANOCA** Athletes' Forum

The ANOCA AC support the IOC recommendations published on 28 March for the International Federations. During the recent ANOCA Athletes' Forum 11-12 March in Algiers, African athletes made a statement welcoming the return of Russian and Belarusian athletes competing as neutral athletes in international competitions.

It should be noted that some of our athlete representatives asked that the Russian and Belarusian athletes return to international competitions without any restrictions meaning participate under their national flag and anthem.

ANOCA AC would like to reiterate that athletes should never pay the price of a conflict their government is involved in.

World Olympians Association presents its activities in Algiers



The recent African Athletes' Forum was also an opportunity for the World Olympians Association (WOA) to address participants. The exchange took place in two phases. The first part introduced the organisation. It was noted that this institution is recognised by the International Olympic Committee with one hundred member associations across the world. In 2022, it carried out a wide range of projects for confirmed and budding athletes, as

well as in many camps hosting persons in distress. Its actions target areas like sports training, dissemination of Olympic values, environmental protection, etc.

The second part featured discussions between participants and WOA representatives, namely: Abeer Essawy, El Hadj Amadou Dia Ba and Sandrine Billiet. The session discussed career transition of athletes, status of the elite athlete, preparation for major competitions, etc.



Algiers Forum discusses first steps of the WADA Athlete Council

During the African Athletes' Forum in Algiers, Gaby Ahrens gave a presentation on the way forward in terms of the involvement of athletes in the World Anti-Doping Agency under a new structure called the WADA Athlete Council. For sports to be a healthy activity, she believes that WADA's work should primarily be focused on athletes. The Council's vision is to create conditions for a world where all athletes can compete in a doping-free sports environment. She said that WADA's greatest potential for creating more opportunities to interact with athletes lies in online content and channels. The WADA Athlete Council was created in January 2023 as a WADA Permanent Special Committee.

It comprises 20 world-class athletes chosen by athletes, including herself. It is worth mentioning that the first meeting of this Council was scheduled for 16 March 2023. As

concerns the Council's missions, they include: raising awareness and supporting clean sport; soliciting and sharing athletes' comments on the World Anti-Doping Programme; acting as ambassadors for WADA and clean sport; supporting WADA athletes engagement activities at major sports events; recommending effective ways to reach out to athletes and those close to them; broadening the reach of WADA by making commitments with their governments, sports disciplines and regional/national sports organisations.

The young association intends to deploy its first awareness-raising actions during major upcoming sports events, notably: the European Games, which will take place from 21 June to 2 July (Poland); the African Games, postponed from 8 to 24 March 2024 (Ghana); the Asian Games, from 23 September to 8 October 2023 (China) and the Pan-American Games, from 20 October to 5 November 2023 (Chile).



Olympic Solidarity... a powerful NOC assistance lever

A key feature of the Algiers Forum was the presentation by Olympic Solidarity. This body is now the main organ of the Olympic Movement in supporting NOC projects. Today, a total of 206 NOCs benefit from diverse OS support, including the 54 in Africa. Citing Rule 5 of

the Olympic Charter, Olympic Solidarity's Olivier Niamkey said that its aim is to provide assistance to NOCs as part of athletes development programmes, especially the neediest. He explained how income from various Olympic Games is shared among the Organising Committee, NOCs, IOC and International Federations. Olympic Solidarity



Olympic Solidarity assists NOCs in particular by supporting various projects under 20 programmes, notably through continental organisations such as ANOCA in Africa.

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The OS representative outlined the conditions for financial support laid down by his institution, namely: good governance,

transparency in funds management and compliance with financial guidelines. He also outlined the procedure for applications for support by NOCs even as he presented the numerous projects and programmes supported in Africa.



ANOCA decorates two African Sports icons, **Paul Tergat and Kirsty Coventry**

During the deliberations of the African Athletes' Forum held on 11 and 12 March 2023 in Algiers, ANOCA President Mustapha Berraf paid a glowing tribute to two iconic figures of African

sport, Paul Tergat and Zimbabwean Kirsty Coventry, for the work they do on a daily basis to promote continental sport.

To the IOC member and Acting Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission, Paul Tergat,



Mustapha Berraf said that he succeeded, during his tenure at the helm of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission, to give it its letters of nobility. The ANOCA President also noted that Paul Tergat worked hard to bring together the athletes of the continent and that he contributed, together with Gaby Ahrens, to the resounding success of the Forum.

As for Kirsty Coventry, the ANOCA President recognised her as an exceptional athlete and an extraordinary sports leader who has always been able to defend the cause of athletes.

Mustapha Berraf presented the two dignitaries with the African Order of Merit in Gold, a distinction welcomed by all forum participants who recognised the merits of these two illustrious actors of the African Olympic and Sports Movement as great leaders of men.



Emma Terho

Chairlady of the IOC Athletes' Commission



“My impression has been very positive. I think there has been a lot of interaction. Athletes have shown that they’re interested, they’re ready to work and they’ve been very active. So for me, I have enjoyed all the discussions here... Keep up the good work that you are doing. There is a lot of potential in the African Athletes and it’s important that we fill this together.”

Paul Tergat

Former Interim Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission and newly appointed member of same Commission

“I am very proud that finally the ANOCA Athletes' Forum has kicked off very well here in Algeria and it is going on very well and they’re going to have election which they’ve never done by the colleagues, athletes themselves, which I believe that it’s going to be a big way in terms of financing, participation of athletes within the NOCs and the zones that they represent. So I want to say I congratulate today the President of ANOCA for the support to see into it that this becomes a reality and I am very very excited that we are here today just may be to see that everything has gone well.”



Gaby Ahrens (Namibia)

Elected Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission



“The Athletes Forum was an absolute success! Thanks to the leadership of ANOCA, the committed ANOCA staff and Algerian hosts and of course the support of Olympic Solidarity and the Athlete365 Team.

I believe the forum was the perfect platform to increase the capacities of NOC Athletes' Commissions to further support athletes on the continent.”

Victoire Ngon Ntame (Cameroon)

Elected Vice Chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission

“This continental forum has established a strong link between the IOC Athletes’ Commission and the Athletes’ Commissions of continental associations, allowing participants to express themselves fully through the various workshops. At the end of the fruitful discussions held during the two days of deliberations, participants in the Algiers Forum agreed that all African NOCs must have an active Athletes’ Commission by 2024. We (editor’s note: Cameroon) have organised training seminars for athletes from various national federations, in collaboration with the Ministry of Sport, in a bid to implement the athlete career development programme.”



AYA Madani

Chair of the Athletes’ Commission in Egypt, elected member of the ANOCA Athletes’ Commission



“I thank ANOCA for the opportunity given to representatives of African athletes to gather and move forward together with the aim of finding solutions to improve the conditions and performances of African athletes as well as their lives after sport... We wish that the ANOCA appropriation to support the activities of the Athletes’ Commission be increased.”















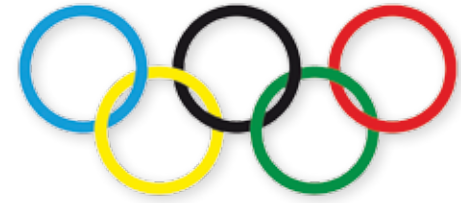








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