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ANOCA ZONE 3 GAMES
MOBILISING AFRICAN
YOUTH AROUND SPORT

ANOCA ZONE 3 GAMES

SPECTACULAR OPENING CEREMONY

The University of Lome was the venue for the opening ceremony of the maiden ANOCA Zone 3 Games, an exclusively women's event. It also hosted the competition venues.

The highly colourful event, featuring songs and parades, was staged at the Scène Bella Bellow of the University of Lome. It was graced by the President of ANOCA Zone 3, Jean YAMEOGO, the President of NOC Togo (CNO-TOGO), Deladem AKPAKI, Presidents of participating NOCs, former CNO-TOGO Presidents, and Benjamin BOUKPETI, Togo's sole Olympic medallist and ambassador of the ANOCA Zone 3 Games. An AFD-Paris 2024 Joint Mission was also present.

The 6 delegations at the Games, namely Burkina Faso, Benin, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Nigeria and Togo, paraded happily and in solidarity at the official opening ceremony, clearly demonstrating their overwhelming joy through their active participation.





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Deladem AKPAKI

CNO-TOGO President

stated:



“Yes, the fact that competition venues and accommodation sites both meet the required standards and are all in a natural and green environment, makes the University of Lome the ideal venue for the Games. Indeed, our pledge to streamline the organisation of the Games also shows our commitment to the environment, a cause so cherished by the IOC, whose sustainability strategy requires us to comply with several environmental protection provisions when organising sports events.... Thank you very much for choosing our country, Togo, to host this competition reserved solely for female athletes. This underscores the commitment of the African Olympic and sports Movement to gender issues. I urge athletes from participating countries to make these few days of competition, happy moments that cannot be marred by rivalry on the field of play.”

The stage was set by the
ANOCA Zone 3 President

Jean YAMEOGO

who, said:



***“We commend ourselves
for the quality organisation.
It will forever be
remembered in the history
of Olympism in Togo.”***

The ANOCA Zone 3 President, who represented the ANOCA President, furthered that,

***“The ANOCA President, Honourable
Mustapha BERRAF, is delighted
to know that these Games have
made Lome the hub of African
solidarity in sport, which we see as a
springboard for elite sport. Devoting
a competition solely to female
athletes is unprecedented, and is an
achievement that should be sustained.***

***It is an excellent way of promoting
both women in sport and universal
Olympic principles. ANOCA wishes to
thank the President of the Republic of
Togo, His Excellency Faure Essozimna
GNASSINGBE, for his hospitality and
his commitment to promoting youth
development through sport in Togo in
particular and Africa in general.”***



ALL ABOUT CHAMPIONS

Many female athletes were outstanding and bagged medals during the maiden ANOCA Zone 3 Games held in Togo from 5 to 8 December 2023.



Each national team made a strong impression. There was a massive public turnout, especially university students, who all attended each event and supported athletes every day as desired by both the IOC and ANOCA, who wish to attract more young people and showcase the Olympic Movement. The Games were a major success for ANOCA.

Sports disciplines included Basketball 3x3, Handball and Volleyball.

After a rugged competition that brought together senior female athletes, Côte d'Ivoire won gold in Basketball 3x3, ahead of Nigeria (silver) and Togo (bronze). According to observers, the Games were highly competitive.

In handball, Nigeria beat Ghana 29 to 16 to clinch the bronze medal. In the final that pitted Burkina Faso against Côte d'Ivoire, the Elephants of Côte took home gold, and the Stallions of Burkina Faso, silver.

In volleyball, and following their victory over Ghana by three sets to zero, Nigeria bagged gold, Ghana silver, and Burkina Faso, bronze, after edging Benin three sets to two in a very tight third place match.

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MAIDEN ANOCA ZONE 3 GAMES FOR THE FURTHERANCE OF PEACE

For the organisers, the ANOCA Zone 3 Games were an exceptional celebration of sport, peace and friendship among nations.



The Games also afforded a wonderful opportunity for athletes to measure up to one another to prepare the sub-region for upcoming international events, particularly the Paris 2024 Olympic Games in France.

The logo of the Games, a dove decked out in the colours of the Olympic rings, symbolised peace. The mascot, a star bearing the logo of the Games, demonstrated Togo's commitment to peace. It showcased Togo as a model of peace,

Togo, the host country, was chosen for its legendary hospitality, peace and security, and for promoting excellence in Olympism and sport.

living together, friendship and fraternity among peoples.

The first ever ANOCA Zone 3 Games were organized based on an agreement signed between CNO-TOGO and ANOCA. Thanks to this ground-breaking collaboration, the event was held in keeping with international competition standards.

600 athletes were expected and their participation crowned organisational efforts and, above all, the desire to promote a healthy Olympic competition for African youth.

Togo, the host country, was chosen for its legendary hospitality, peace and security, and for promoting excellence in Olympism and sport.

The country also intended, through the maiden ANOCA Zone 3 Games, to take the celebration of Olympism and its values to an international level. And it was a huge sporting and organisational success, all to the credit of a sub-region faced with real security challenges.



NOC TOGO STANDS WITH ATHLETES AND VOLUNTEERS

According to NOC TOGO President Deladem AKPAKI, athletes are provided with the best conditions for ***“The qualifiers, which are not yet over. I hope Togo will participate in the Paris Olympic Games with many qualified athletes.”***

While hosting the maiden ANOCA Zone 3 Games, NOC TOGO spared no effort to ensure success, as NOC TOGO President Deladem AKPAKI noted in his closing remark: ***“...for success tomorrow, for***

other zone games or other games that Togo will certainly have to host, this success will come from you. You who have devoted your time to learn how to manage sports. Keep up the good work. Meanwhile... there are other training courses offered by Olympic Solidarity.”

Addressing volunteers, he added: ***“Dear volunteers, I would like to convey to you my special thanks. A special thank you because when we first wanted to launch***



the Games, a lot of people came to see me and said President: What shall we do... to find people? I said we were going to launch a volunteer programme."

The closing address had been preceded by an opening speech by CNO-TOGO President, who had earlier indicated that: *"I think we have a better future ahead of us... so let's make sure we sustain this competition so that we can stay together in the same spirit."*



Thank you. Thank you for everything you have done for us, and this holds for all eight countries. Thank you very much."



ANOCA PRESIDENT, HONOURABLE MUSTAPHA BERRAF, BEARS THE VOICE OF ATHLETES, WHO MUST BE A FOCAL CONCERN

Lome hosted the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa from 3 to 10 December 2023 during the ANOCA Zone 3 Games. ANOCA is delighted to be hosted

by the wonderful nation of Togo, a brotherly and friendly people whose reputation transcends borders.

Members of the African sporting and Olympic family would like to thank

His Excellency Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, President of the Republic of Togo, for his commitment to African youth and for the hospitality accorded us in the spirit of African solidarity, in tune with Olympic values.

The competition was reserved for senior females in three major disciplines: handball, basketball 3x3 and volleyball.

Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, Benin, Liberia and Togo showcased 600 athletes, athletes who represent our essential challenge in the governance of African sport as a whole.

The Togo 2023 Zone 3 Games meet our aspirations. We want and will continue to encourage healthy competition within the African Olympic and sports movement. This is a pre-Olympic year, ahead of the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, and it is a crucial time for athletes to prepare for current and future events.

These Zone 3 Games are also intended to be a fertile ground for athlete development and the promotion of sport and Olympism. A Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between NOC Togo and ANOCA, and it translates the organisation of the Zone 3 Games by Togo into concrete reality. This choice has been confirmed by the quality of the infrastructure hosting the competition, the country's legendary hospitality and the climate of peace and security that reigns in Togo. All these factors are conducive to the development of sport and friendship among nations.

One of our primary objectives is to make Togo a dynamic Olympic venue and ANOCA Zone 3 a well spring of athletes if

we want to shine the world over thanks to our efficiency and spontaneity.

Putting athletes at the forefront of our endeavours means organising major sports events such as the Togo 2023 Zone 3 Games.

The maiden Zone 3 Games will open a new page in the Olympic history of Togo in particular and Africa in general, with a special spotlight on our athletes. It is our fervent wish that athletes should make the best of these Games!

Mustapha BERRAF
IOC Member
ANOCA President

NOC TOGO President Deladem AKPABI expresses satisfaction with the high quality of the organisation of the first ANOCA Zone 3 Games in Lomé, and thanks ANOCA for its support, but above all the President of the Republic of Togo, His Excellency Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, for his commitment to offering opportunities to mobilise Togolese and African youth through sport.



**OPENING CEREMONY OF THE
ANOCA ZONE 3 GAMES**

ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF NOC TOGO



In so doing, we sought to ensure that, while being simple, the Games met Olympic competition standards.



The Minister of Sports and Recreation,

The Minister of Territorial Administration, Decentralisation and Regional Development,

The Minister of Higher Education and Research,

The Minister of the Economy and Finance,

The Minister of Security and Civil Protection,

The Minister of Foreign Affairs, African Integration and the Togolese Diaspora,

The Minister of Culture and Tourism,

The Minister of Basic Development, Youth Affairs and Youth Employment,

The Treasurer General of ANOCA,

The President of NOC Nigeria,

The President of ANOCA Zone 3, President of NOC Burkina Faso,

The President of NOC Benin,

His Excellency the French Ambassador to Togo,

The Managing Director of the French Development Agency (AFD),

Members of the AFD-Paris 2024 Joint Mission,

Members of the NOC Togo Executive Committee,

Secretaries General and Presidents of National Sports Federations,



Chefs de mission of various delegations,

Distinguished Guests,

Dear friends of the press,

Dear coaches,

Dear athletes,

Dear sportsmen and women,

On behalf of Togo's Olympic family, I wish you all a warm welcome to the opening ceremony of the maiden ANOCA Zone 3 Games in our country.

Delegations from Benin, Burkina-Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana and Nigeria,

Representatives of NOCs convened and all our distinguished guests who have travelled

all the way from their respective countries to Lome, I wish you a warm welcome to Togo, land of our forebears, land of hospitality and of peace, which, with open arms, welcomes you to celebrate Olympism and sports values.

The opening ceremony that has gathered us here today makes us privileged witnesses of a new milestone in Olympism in Togo. The organisation of the very first ANOCA Zone 3 Games in Lome will forever be remembered in the history of Olympism in our country.

Our country was unanimously chosen by its counterparts of the Zone to host the Games, and tis gave CNOTOGO the opportunity to showcase our ability to organise international multi-sports events.

The opening ceremony that has gathered us here today makes us privileged witnesses of a new milestone in Olympism in Togo. The organisation of the very first ANOCA Zone 3 Games in Lome will forever be remembered in the history of Olympism in our country.

In so doing, we sought to ensure that, while being simple, the Games met Olympic competition standards.

As a hub par excellence for training the Togolese youth, and thanks to its increased attractiveness due to the continuous development of various student facilities, the University of Lome was our best bet to host this first edition of the Games.

Yes, the fact that competition venues and accommodation sites both meet the required standards and are all in a natural and green environment, makes the University of Lome the perfect setting for the Games.

Indeed, our pledge to streamline the organisation of the Games also shows our commitment to the environment, a cause so dear to the International Olympic Committee (IOC), whose sustainability strategy requires us to comply with several provisions to protect the environment when organising sports events.

We are delighted that the University of Lome also cares about environmental protection, and we urge all participants to preserve the eco-friendly nature of the University.

We wish to sincerely thank the Chairman of the University of Lome and various officials in his Office for their kind support in preparations for this event.

The Deputy Chairlady of the University of Lome,

The Director of Students Affairs Centre, Lome (COUL),

The Director General of Village du Bénin,

Many thanks to you and all your teams for your unwavering support to the Organising Committee.

Using sports facilities at the University of Lome for these regional games is ample proof that, even with basic sports facilities, our countries can rise to the challenge of organising major sports events while waiting for specific modern facilities to be put in place.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Given that the Games are at the heart of Olympism, there is more to their organisation than just bringing athletes

together in sports competitions to honour and celebrate the best.

Thanks to their ability to convene athletes, coaches, referees, medical staff, sports leaders, a well-informed public and other curious spectators, these Games remind the world, wherever they are organised, of the unique ability of sport to unite people around a common ideal that fosters living together, open-mindedness, tolerance, solidarity, acceptance and respect for our racial, cultural, religious and political differences, etc., values that are so often not only threatened but are sources of conflict in many parts of the world.

The President of ANOCA Zone 3,

The Treasurer General of ANOCA,

Fellow Presidents of ANOCA Zone 3,

Thank you very much for choosing our country, Togo, to host this competition devoted solely to female athletes. This underscores the commitment of the African Olympic Movement to gender issues.

By placing the first ANOCA Zone 3 Games under the very distinguished patronage of His Excellency Faure Essozimna GNASSINGBE, President of the Republic of Togo, NOC Togo is confirming the unifying power of sport and its contribution to the furtherance of African integration, peace and friendship among our brother countries in line with the vision of Togo's Head of State, a vision also shared by his counterparts in the various participating countries.

Thank you very much for choosing our country, Togo, to host this competition devoted solely to female athletes. This underscores the commitment of the African Olympic Movement to gender issues.

These games are therefore an ideal opportunity to celebrate African integration, peace and friendship among our brothers and friends.

We hereby urge you to make these few days of competition, happy moments that even sports rivalries cannot spoil.

We wish to warmly welcome members of the AFD-Paris 2024 Joint Mission for heeding our invitation to this event. Thank you for your esteemed presence.

We avail ourselves of this opportunity to thank all our partners for their support in organising this event. In this regard, I would, without being exhaustive, like to particularly mention the French Embassy in Togo, the companies Offset 5 Impression, ADEQUA, Société Nouvelle de Boissons;

CMJN; SEMOA and many others. To all Organising Committee teams that have worked tirelessly over the last few months, I thank you very much for your commitment.

I would like to equally thank Chefs de Mission of various participating delegations, whose honest collaboration with the Organising Committee made it possible to prepare for this hitch-free event. To all volunteers who responded massively to CNOTOGO's call to support us at various levels, we also say thank you. Your commitment reassures us that today's youth can still embrace the values of self-sacrifice, service and support for a common cause, without necessarily expecting remuneration in return.

The National Police and the National Gendarmerie, in this spirit of civic participation, also volunteered their services through their multifaceted and invaluable support, which we all highly appreciate. Thank you for standing by us.

With regard to the opening ceremony of the Games, which brings us together today, I would like to point out that the stage hosting this event has a strong cultural symbolism for us because it bears the name of the late Togolese song diva, Bella Bellow, who has left an indelible mark on the musical memory of Togo and Africa as a whole. This is a very special way for us to pay tribute not only to this music icon, but also to all African artists, whatever their field of artistic expression, whose outstanding talents have left an indelible imprint on the collective memory of our people.

To athletes who have already started the competition and to those who will do so tomorrow, I urge you to embrace fair play,

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to fight for your country and to fly Faster - Higher - Stronger - Together, in order to bravely defend the national colours of your respective countries.

On this note, I wish you all very successful games and great performances, while respecting each other and Olympic rules and regulations.

Thank you for your kind attention.



NOC TOGO TO BUILD MODERN HEADQUARTERS



NOC TOGO has benefited from ANOCA support under the project to build new headquarters for African NOCs that so request through IOC's Olympic Solidarity.

It will be a futuristic and modern NOC infrastructure, which will create a more

enabling working environment and thus facilitate youth development in Togo and, by extension, in Africa. The NOC headquarters construction project is a major development challenge in the furtherance of sports governance in Togo and Africa as a whole.



















**THANK
YOU!**

Lomé