

## OUR ATHLETES TO FACE THE DAUNTING CHALLENGE SOON!

No more time for pondering or procrastination. On this day, 26 June, we launch into the final lap heading to the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

he tartan track, the Olympic pools, the tatamis, the lawns and other floors are all set. It is now up to our valiant athletes to put them to good use, to turn their talents into medals.

We will need to bag every precious metal in every discipline in which we will be competing. This is our goal, the mission the entire African continent has entrusted to its brilliant athletes.

There is no doubt that they will live up to expectations. Their preparation was meticulous, perfectly timed like clockwork by the Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa, ANOCA, with support from IOC's Olympic Solidarity and, above all, our friend Dr Thomas BACH who, at every opportunity, has demonstrated his total commitment to supporting the African Olympic and Sports Movement. Paris 2024 once again confirms this solidarity with our athletes and Africa

From 26 July to 11 August 2024, the world's biggest multisport event will once again live up to its majestic reputation. The Summer Olympic Games will hold global audiences spellbound, especially those in Africa. Thousands of Africans will either attend as visitors or competitors.

The athletes will be on the front line. We will support them, cheer them, applaud them, promote them and, in a nutshell, exalt them.



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This will mainly depend on our ability to speak with one voice, to rally the Olympic Movement behind its sons and daughters who will be deploying their talents and skills in the service of sport, Olympism, and the development of Africa.

Sport is a tool for sustainable peace and development, and our role is to work to make this a reality.

ANOCA seeks unite, not divide. We are committed to working hand in glove with all Olympic and sports movement stakeholders for full youth development in Africa. Our ability to work in unity will transform today's dreams into tomorrow's realities. African sport is rock-solid against any attempt to destabilise its governance. Sport development in Africa hinges on a sacred union.

Athletes are the heart of our Olympic community. They are at the centre of all our concerns. We must ensure they are in the best possible state of mind, and show them by example that the solution lies in promoting and practising Olympic values. We should be driven by love, sharing, humility, and fair play so that Paris 2024 does not go wrong for Africa. Sport has always been a universal language for nations, thanks to its spirit and values.

The fighting spirit, which will be one of the performance elements of our athletes in Paris, will be powered by the energy generated by our ability to be alert, foresighted, and attentive to their needs.



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For example, they will have to be reminded of the need to comply with the anti-doping system. This is a fight to which they must contribute. Paris 2024 will tighten anti-doping measures for the good of sport and Olympism.

We are excited and ready to live unforgettable moments, and to cheer our athletes to the highest rungs of the final podium. The pressure mounts with our eagerness, at barely a month to the Games.

African delegations are on the starting blocks, just waiting for the starter pistols to be triggered off.

It is now just a matter of days. Together, we will soar higher and be stronger than in Tokyo 2020.

To our athletes, remain concentrated, with abnegation, integrity and seriousness. It is not about winning at all costs and at any price, but about winning medals in a genuine synergy of hearts and minds. That is what it will take us to rise to the daunting challenge.

## Mustapha BERRAF

IOC member ANOCA President Holder of the African Olympic Order Holder of the ANOC Olympic Order Holder of the IOC Olympic Order.



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