



# ACNOA

SPECIAL  
EDITION

REVIEW OF AFRICAN OLYMPISM

M A G A Z I N E

**Thomas Bach's visit to Africa**

**"AFRICA DESERVES TO  
HOST THE OLYMPIC  
GAMES"**



During his historic tour of Africa, the IOC President spoke out in favour of the continent's bid to host the Olympic Games.







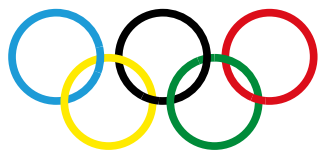
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ACNOA - ANOCA



**AFRICAN  
NOCs**







**ANOCA  
President's  
messages at the  
end of the IOC  
President's tour**

**TIME FOR STOCKTAKING**

## **ANOCA President draws lessons from historic visit**

Following the IOC President's visit to Africa, Mustapha BERRAF expressed his appreciation for the windfalls of a fruitful and promising tour, which confirms Thomas BACH's deep, unwavering commitment to Africa, and has earned him the affectionate and well-deserved nickname of 'Thomas BACH, the African.'

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**For ANOCA, for NOCs and for myself, this visit symbolises invaluable support and strong recognition of our potential.**

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**Dear colleagues, Olympic sport friends, athletes and partners;**

“I am deeply grateful and especially delighted to address you to share a defining moment in the history of African sport. It was a singular honour for our beloved continent to host IOC President, Dr Thomas BACH, who visited five of our sister countries: Senegal, Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda and South Africa. This exciting, fruitful and promising tour, confirms Thomas BACH’s deep, unwavering commitment to Africa, which commitment long earned him the affectionate and well-deserved nickname of *‘Thomas BACH, the African.’*

*“For years, President BACH has demonstrated his unflagging support for African sport, with a broad range of initiatives and actions aimed at developing our sport, our youths and our values.”* His recent visit to Africa reflects his continued support and affection for our athletes, the African Olympic and Sports Movement



and our collective ability to assert ourselves on the world stage. As IOC President, he did not merely observe our progress. He encouraged us to think big and dream boldly, strongly urging us to bid for the Olympic Games.

For ANOCA, for NOCs and for myself, this visit symbolises invaluable support and strong recognition of our potential. Through his visit to these five nations, Thomas BACH highlighted Africa’s value within the Olympic Movement and delivered to us a message of hope and self-assurance for the future of sport on our continent.





**UNWAVERING SUPPORT**

# Thomas Bach, the African

For ANOCA President Mustapha BERRAF, Thomas BACH's nickname is in recognition of his unwavering commitment, his loyalty to African values and unflinching support for our sporting ambitions.







“  
**Mr BACH’s support grew steadily and his visit to these five countries is the most recent and patent proof of his commitment.**  
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**T**he nickname “*Thomas BACH, the African*”, now well established, is much more than an affectionate tribute. It is in recognition of his unwavering commitment, his loyalty to African values and his unflagging support for our sporting ambitions. Thomas BACH has been able to listen to, understand and support the needs of Africa, needs that are often specific to our own reality, but which he has never underestimated and has always been attentive to.

Mr BACH’s support grew steadily and his visit to these five countries is the most recent and patent proof of his commitment. He discerned in our athletes and our nations the sort of energy, determination and resilience that enrich the Olympic Movement and underpin its greatness. His call for an African bid for the Olympic Games and for Dakar 2026 to host the Youth Olympic Games, urges us to believe in our ability to rise to the most daunting challenges and to share our culture, our traditions and our vision with the world at large.



**HISTORIC VISIT TO AFRICA**

# Bearing Africa's Olympic Hopes

According to the ANOCA President, the IOC President's visit to the continent was a proud get-together moment, an opportunity to reassert our Olympic aspirations, share our projects and strengthen our ties with the IOC, thanks to the involvement of the Heads of State who accorded the distinguished guest a warm welcome at every stage.

President BACH's five-country tour of Africa was a proud and unifying moment for us all. From Senegal to Kenya, via Lesotho, Uganda and South Africa, each meeting afforded an opportunity to assert our Olympic aspirations, share our projects and strengthen our ties with the IOC. Thomas BACH toured the construction sites for the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026,







discussed with young Kenyan athletes, visited training and development centres in Lesotho, attended social inclusion functions in Uganda, and paid his respects to the legacy of Nelson Mandela in South Africa. Everywhere he went, we all noted the progress and challenges of our initiatives.

In Dakar, he was enthusiastically welcomed by CNOSS President, Mamadou Diagna NDIAYE, and appreciated the progress made in ahead of the YOG Dakar 2026, an event that symbolises the commitment of Senegal and all of Africa to hosting high-profile events. In Kenya, Paul TERGAT and his teams organised a memorable welcome, during which President BACH met with athletes and visited the Kakuma refugee

camp, where the Olympic Refuge Foundation reaches out to thousands of young people through sport.

In Lesotho, a warm welcome from Tlali RAMPOOANA and Matlohang MOILOA-RAMOQOPO spotlighted the Olympafrica centre, a true model of local development and inclusion through sport. In Uganda, Donald RUKARE paved the way for sustainable development initiatives and the inclusion of refugees through sport, thereby showcasing the positive impact of the “*Game Connect*” programme. Finally, in South Africa, Barry HENDRICKS and SASCOC welcomed President BACH with honours to Nelson Mandela, an iconic embodiment of the IOC values of unity and peace.





**AFRICA TO HOST THE OLYMPIC GAMES**

# A historic opportunity

For ANOCA President, Mustapha BERRAF, the IOC President’s encouragement to bid for the Games is an unprecedented invitation and confirms what has been known for ages, that Africa is ready.

**T**homas BACH’s invitation for African countries to bid for the Olympic Games is unprecedented. By stating that “... a number of African countries are in a position to host the event after all the reforms we have undertaken...,” he confirmed what we have known deep down for a long time: Africa is ready. African countries have the infrastructure, the talent

and the will to host the whole world and celebrate Olympic fraternity together.

The reforms introduced by the IOC as part of Olympic Agenda 2050+5 facilitate an African bid by reducing costs and encouraging the use of existing infrastructure. These measures are a strong signal for Africa and demonstrate Thomas BACH’s desire to make the Olympic Games a more inclusive event, one that is no longer the exclusive preserve of the well-to-do nations. This is a unique opportunity for us to prove our ability to organise spectacular Games that reflect our cultures, our hospitality and our spirit of solidarity.







**Thanks to their determination, the IOC has been able to see that Africa is ready to take a historic step forward.**



“I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the NOC Presidents of Senegal, Kenya, Lesotho, Uganda and South Africa. Their dedication and commitment made President BACH’s visit memorable. Each and every one of them, through their warm welcome, demonstrated the professionalism and spirit of cooperation that characterise our continent.

My deepest gratitude to Mamadou Diagna NDIAYE, Paul TERGAT, Tlali RAMPOOANA, Donald RUKARE and Barry HENDRICKS for the good work. Thanks to their determination, the IOC has been able to see that Africa is ready to take a historic step forward. The support of their teams, their hospitality and the quality of the organisation of this visit have helped convey the image of a strong and unified Africa.



## FUTURE OF AFRICAN SPORT

# A joint project focused on athletes

The high point of Thomas BACH's tour was the commitment by the IOC and ANOCA to ensure the project is focused on athletes, to create opportunities for budding talents to develop and reach their full potential, and to place athletes at the heart of the system, by investing in their training, welfare and protection, in a bid to build a sustainable Olympic future for Africa.

**“W**hat stands out from this tour, and what guides our actions on a daily basis, is the importance of placing the athlete at the centre of our project. The values of the IOC and ANOCA point to a shared vision: creating opportunities for our budding talents to flourish and reach their full potential. Athletes are at the heart of all our undertakings, and it is by investing in their training, welfare and protection that we will build a sustainable Olympic future for Africa.

*The Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026, athlete support programmes, initiatives for refugees and social inclusion actions are just some examples of this shared commitment. Thomas BACH's support, with his watchful, encouraging eye, reminds us that we are not alone in this mission. He is a strong ally, a friend who shares our vision and who works tirelessly to take sport in Africa to another level.”*













# Thank you, Thomas Bach, for your historic commitment! Historique !

President Berraf thanks the IOC President most heartily for his presence, commitment and support.

*“In conclusion, allow me, on behalf of the entire African Olympic family, to once more express my heartfelt thanks to Thomas BACH for his presence, commitment and support. Mr President, you have lent fresh impetus to our continent, with renewed faith in our potential and hope for an Olympic future in Africa. Your visit will be etched in our memories as a milestone for African sport, and we know that, thanks to you, Africa has all the chances of one day hosting the Olympic Games. For this reason, we thank you from the bottom of our hearts, dear Thomas BACH, the African, and rest assured of our strong resolve to pursue this path for the glory of Olympic sport.*

*Together, let us forge ahead towards a bright Olympic future for Africa.”*

*Mustapha Berraf*

ANOCA President  
IOC Member  
Vice President of ANOC





## ANOCA President's Special message

**“We have the human and infrastructural potential to host the world’s biggest sports event”**

The ANOCA President backs IOC President’s request and insists that the Olympic Games are now within our reach, following Thomas BACH’s call for Africa to bid for the Games.



**T**he IOC President reassured us that “a number of African countries are in a position to host the event after all the reforms we have undertaken.”

“This good news relieves us of all frustration and stress. The visit of my friend Dr Thomas BACH to five African countries confirms his love for our beloved and beautiful continent, Africa. We have for ages affectionately called him Thomas BACH, THE AFRICAN, and we are today calling him that unreservedly.

Proof is that he is encouraging Africa to bid for the Olympics. The IOC President reassured us that “a number of African countries are in a position to host the event after all the reforms we have undertaken.” We support this statement and even go further by saying that **WE HAVE THE HUMAN AND INFRASTRUCTURAL POTENTIAL** to host the world’s biggest sports event. Henceforth, the Olympic Games are within Africa’s reach.

Throughout the 10-day visit to Senegal, Uganda, Lesotho, South Africa and Kenya, we were struck by the wave. The entire continent is seriously and meticulously preparing for the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026. We all stand with Senegal, the host country. Several sports infrastructure are under construction. Thanks to IOC support, the athletes are also at the heart of these preparations.

“A strong partnership unites the IOC and its African members. The impact of the Youth Olympic Games must be considered as a unifying force for a bright future of sport in Africa and across the world. The furtherance of Olympic values is the strong and powerful symbol of these Youth Olympic Games.

Historically, Dr Thomas BACH noted the growth of sport in Africa and the influential role we all play in creating this bond, with Olympic solidarity as its foundation.

“

**We support this statement and even go further by saying that **WE HAVE THE HUMAN AND INFRASTRUCTURAL POTENTIAL** to host the world’s biggest sports event. Henceforth, the Olympic Games are within Africa’s reach.**

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In all the countries that he visited, we sent across our message of unity and of our desire to foster youth development in Africa. Our performances at the last Olympic Games Paris 2024 demonstrated that we have the wherewithal to achieve great feats at major events.

Our shared vision with the IOC is to put the athlete at the heart of everything we do. It is thanks to the athlete that everything is possible, and every opportunity must be identified.

Thomas BACH, the African, has been fully aware of this challenge for a long time and continues his incredible work of constantly supporting Africa.

We wish to THANK him for this commitment!

THANK YOU for yet another historic visit!



## African Tour

# African NOCs welcome the IOC President

IOC President, Thomas BACH, embarked on a tour of five African countries from 16 to 27 October, in a bid to strengthen Africa-IOC ties. Visiting Senegal, Uganda, Lesotho, South Africa and Kenya, Thomas BACH highlighted Africa's potential to host major sports events, including the Olympic Games. The visit also underscored the importance of sport for development and unity in Africa and reasserted the IOC's commitment to local and continental projects.









SENEGAL

# President Diomaye Faye hosts reception in honour of IOC President

IOC President Thomas Bach, together with IOC members in Africa led by ANOCA President Mustapha BERRAF, began a visit to Africa in Dakar, Senegal, host country of the 2026 Summer Youth Olympic Games (YOG). During the Dakar lap, the famous guest was honoured by the Senegalese Head of State.

President Thomas BACH began his tour of Africa in Dakar, Senegal, host country of the 2026 Summer Youth Olympic Games (YOG). He was welcomed by officials of the African Olympic Movement, with whom they reviewed the progress made so far in preparation for the Dakar event. They were led by ANOCA President



Mustapha BERRAF, together with the CNOSS President who doubles as YOG Organising Committee Chair, Mamadou DIAGNA NDIAYE.

Also present were IOC Vice President Nawal EL MOUTAWAKEL, Lydia NSEKERA, Aïcha Garad ALI, Odette Assembe ENGOULOU, Filomena FORTES, Tidjane THIAM, Mehrez BOUSSAYENE, Aya MEDANY and IOC Honorary Member Habu Ahmed GUMEL. Another remarkable presence was that of IOC members in Africa whose countries he could not visit during this tour.

Day one began with a visit to some construction sites where work is underway, followed by a meeting with Senegalese athletes and fencing and taekwondo demonstrations.

Later in the day, the delegation was invited to a reception hosted by the NOC and attended by local and national dignitaries, including the Mayor of Dakar.

The next day, the delegation visited the NOC headquarters for a presentation on the ground covered in preparation for the YOG, covering topics such as volunteers and the journey of the Youth Olympic Flame, and how these Games can mobilise the entire continent.

At a reception given by the President of the Republic, Bassirou Diomaye Diakhar FAYE, President BACH thanked him for his deep commitment to the Games. Rounding off this first lap, he expressed his vision of the YOG as an opportunity to mobilise the entire African continent: *“These Youth Games do not concern only Senegal, but all of Africa. That is why I am accompanied by many of our African members who fully back this vision. They are excellent ambassadors of these Games in their own countries. Together, they testify to the solid partnership between the IOC and its African members.”*















**UGANDA**

# IOC President awards Ugandan President gold medal

Visiting Uganda on 23 October 2024 as part of his African tour, IOC President Thomas BACH, awarded the Ugandan Head of State, Yoweri MUSEVENI, an honorary gold medal for his sport development endeavours.

**U**gandan President Yoweri MUSEVENI could not have wished for a better recognition from the IOC. On the third lap of his African tour, IOC President Thomas BACH, hailed the initiatives of the Ugandan Head of State, by awarding him a highly prized honorary gold medal on 23 October 2024.







President Museveni has been contributing to sport development not only in his country, but across Africa.

The IOC President availed himself of the opportunity of his visit to the State House in Entebbe to thank the Ugandan Government, under the distinguished leadership of President MUSEVENI, for always supporting sport, as evidenced by the many medals won by the country on the international stage, including at the Olympic Games. On this occasion, the Ugandan President said that the Government would provide land for the construction of the new headquarters of the Uganda Olympic Committee (UOC).

Expressing his approval of this initiative by President MUSEVENI, UOC President Donald RUKARE noted that the old headquarters in Lugogo have been there

for many years, and so their dream is to have a new home.

Thomas BACH later visited the Uganda Wildlife Authority Centre with local athletes, where he planted a tree as part of the ‘Olympic Forest’, an IOC environmental initiative. He later met with Prime Minister Robinah NABBANJA, with whom he discussed IOC efforts to promote the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The IOC President praised the Game Connect project in the slums of Kampala, a programme that uses sport to support the welfare of young refugees. ‘Sport can be a powerful tool for peace, unity and social inclusion,’ said Thomas BACH, emphasising the importance of this project for the inclusion of refugees in Uganda.













LESOTHO

# Thomas Bach hails outstanding performance at the OG Paris 2024

During a roundtable with the country's athletes at the NOC headquarters, President BACH spoke about IOC support to athletes. He also lauded the great performance of athletes at the Olympic Games Paris 2024, where Lesotho was represented by three athletes.

From Uganda, President BACH moved on to Lesotho for the next stop of his tour of Africa. After landing in the capital, Maseru, President BACH was warmly welcomed by IOC Member, Matlohang MOILOA-RAMOQOPO, and the NOC President Tlali RAMPOOANA. He was accompanied throughout the visit by IOC Member and ANOCA President, Mustapha BERRAF.



Upon his arrival in the capital, Maseru, Thomas BACH was welcomed by officials of the Olympic Movement of the country together with ANOCA President Mustapha BERRAF. The delegation was received at the State House for a meeting with the acting Prime Minister, with whom they discussed the social impact of sport. During the meeting, Thomas BACH emphasized the IOC's commitment to sport development and the important role sport plays in health and education in the country. President BACH hailed the unwavering support of the NOC and the enthusiasm of the country's athletes, stressing that these efforts are inspiring a new generation of young people.

Thomas BACH then visited a school in Maseru, where he met young athletes and participated in a roundtable discussion. This meeting aimed to inculcate the youths with the values of sport such as perseverance, respect, and team spirit. A dance and music performance concluded this phase, showcasing the rich Lesotho culture and the importance of sports and art in building national identity.

In partnership with the NOC, the IOC has for several years been working to develop sports infrastructure accessible to youths. Meeting with the Director of the Olympafira Centre in Lesotho, Thomas BACH highlighted the role of these centres in making sport more accessible and creating learning and development opportunities for children from all backgrounds.

Thomas BACH's visit to Lesotho also celebrated the achievements of Lesotho's athletes at the Paris 2024 Olympics. With only three participating athletes, Lesotho shone in the men's marathon, where one of its representatives finished in an impressive seventh place. These performances attest to the country's efforts to train elite athletes notwithstanding the paucity of resources.



These achievements, made possible thanks to Olympic Solidarity Scholarship Programmes, demonstrate the importance of IOC support to developing countries. Thomas BACH hailed the crucial role played by Matlohang MOILOA-RAMOQOPO who, in her capacity as IOC Member, works tirelessly to support Lesotho's athletes. He also highlighted the excellent work done by Lesotho NOC, which supports athletes with suitable resources to help them achieve their Olympic goals.

Thomas BACH's visit to Lesotho is part of the IOC's long-term vision to support African countries in their sports development efforts. The IOC President underscored his organisation's commitment to supporting Lesotho, particularly in organising sports events, talent development, and infrastructure improvement.'





CELEBRATING NATIONAL PRIDE

# Gala night in Honour of Lesotho's Paris 2024 Athletes

The highpoint of this visit was the gala evening organised in honour of the achievements of Lesotho's athletes at Paris 2024. This gala, attended by key stakeholders in Lesotho's sports sector and the Minister of Sports, provided an opportunity to recognise athletes' efforts and celebrate Olympic values.

Speaking on the occasion, IOC President Thomas BACH, in company with ANOCA President, Mustapha BERRAF, noted that despite Lesotho's small size, it embodies strong enthusiasm for sport. President BACH took this opportunity to encourage young people to pursue their sports dreams.





**Thomas BACH expressed admiration for this initiative and encouraged NOC Lesotho to continue developing such infrastructure.**



While underscoring the importance of perseverance, he insisted that sports in Lesotho can play a vital role in inspiring a new generation and promoting social cohesion.

His visit to the Olympafrica Centre provided insight into the groundwork undertaken in Lesotho to promote community sport. Established to provide young people with basic infrastructure, this centre has become a community development model through sport. With youth-driven programmes, the Olympafrica Centre contributes to strengthening social inclusion, offering a space where young people can train, learn, and get an Olympic values education.

Thomas BACH expressed admiration for this initiative and encouraged NOC Lesotho to continue developing such infrastructure. These centres help young people transform their passion into real talent, paving a pathway for children and teenagers from often marginalised rural areas.

Lesotho's international profile is set to receive a boost thanks to this visit, offering a chance to forge stronger partnerships. With a focus on developing talent and investing in grassroots sports, the country hopes to be a successful model for fellow African nations pursuing Olympic dreams. President Thomas BACH urged local leaders to sustain their sports promotion efforts for Lesotho to earn respect within the global Olympic movement.

Clearly, President BACH's visit to Lesotho demonstrates the IOC's solid support for African Olympic aspirations. This lap of the visit helped strengthen ties between the IOC and Lesotho, highlighting national efforts to promote sports and provide young people with new opportunities. By celebrating the successes of athletes and supporting local initiatives, this visit embodies the IOC's vision of promoting inclusive and inspiring sports.

With dignitaries like Matlohang MOILOA-RAMOQOPO and Tlali RAMPOOANA, Lesotho is on track for a promising Olympic future, where sports can become a true driver of social and economic development. Youth enthusiasm, support for authorities, and the IOC's commitment are working together to transform Lesotho into an exemplary sports nation that can proudly represent Africa on the global Olympic stage.

In Lesotho, Thomas BACH expressed his admiration for the efforts of the NOC, led by Tlali RAMPOOANA and IOC Member Matlohang MOILOA-RAMOQOPO. He hailed the excellent performances of Lesotho's athletes at the Paris Games, with one of them finishing seventh in the men's marathon. During a roundtable discussion, he exchanged ideas with young athletes and highlighted the role of the Olympafrica Centre, an initiative promoting grassroots sports. «*Lesotho may be a small country geographically, but it is a country with a true passion for sports,*» Thomas BACH stated, highlighting the impact of sport on the country's development.





## SOUTH AFRICA

# Thomas Bach honours Nelson Mandela

During the fourth lap of his African tour, the IOC President held a number of meetings, including with the South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC), and an audience with Sports Minister Gayton MCKENZIE, who reasserted South Africa's support for the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games. This lap concluded with honours to Nelson Mandela, including a visit to the historic Soweto home and the Nelson Mandela Foundation.

The penultimate lap of the African tour took President Thomas BACH to Johannesburg, South Africa. He was welcomed by SASCOC President Barry HENDRICKS, Honorary IOC Member Sam RAMSAMY, and IOC Member Anant SINGH. They accompanied President BACH throughout his visit, together with ANOCA President and IOC Member, Mustapha BERRAF. At the SASCOC headquarters, Mr BACH participated in the the 'Indaba', a gathering of South African athletes, where



they discussed the outcomes and lessons learned from the Paris 2024 Olympics. During a press conference, he addressed topics ranging from athlete protection and gender balance to the possibility of hosting future Olympic Games in Africa.»

The IOC President also met with SASCOC Board members, and Presidents and Secretaries General of national federations, and congratulated them on their great success at the Paris 2024 Olympics. He also lauded the recent progress made by the NOC, saying he was «*very pleased to see it sailing in calm waters*» while ensuring dynamic development with a strong focus on the close link with athletes and the promotion of Olympic values.»

In the evening, President Thomas BACH was invited to a dinner with SASCOC Board members, as well as South Africa's Minister of Sports, Arts and Culture, Gayton MCKENZIE. In his speech, the minister spoke about the unifying power of sports in his country and praised the Paris 2024 Olympics for «*uniting the whole world*». He also welcomed the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympics and stated that South Africa was ready to do everything in its power to make it a success for the African continent.

The next morning, the IOC President held a meeting with the Minister, with whom he discussed Team South Africa's outstanding success at the Paris 2024 Olympics and the very positive developments within SASCOC in recent years. During a phone call with the country's Head of State, President Cyril RAMAPHOSA, the two leaders discussed the current geopolitical situation and how it impacts world sport.

During his visit to South Africa, IOC President Thomas BACH also met with Phumzile MLAMBO-NGCUKA, Chair of the IOC Human Rights Advisory Committee.

Thomas BACH's visit ended with honours to Nelson Mandela, especially a visit to his historic home in Soweto and the Nelson Mandela Foundation.



These emblematic sites highlighted the importance of the values of peace and unity shared by South Africa and the Olympic Movement, being places that house the archives of the former South African president and Nobel Peace Prize winner.

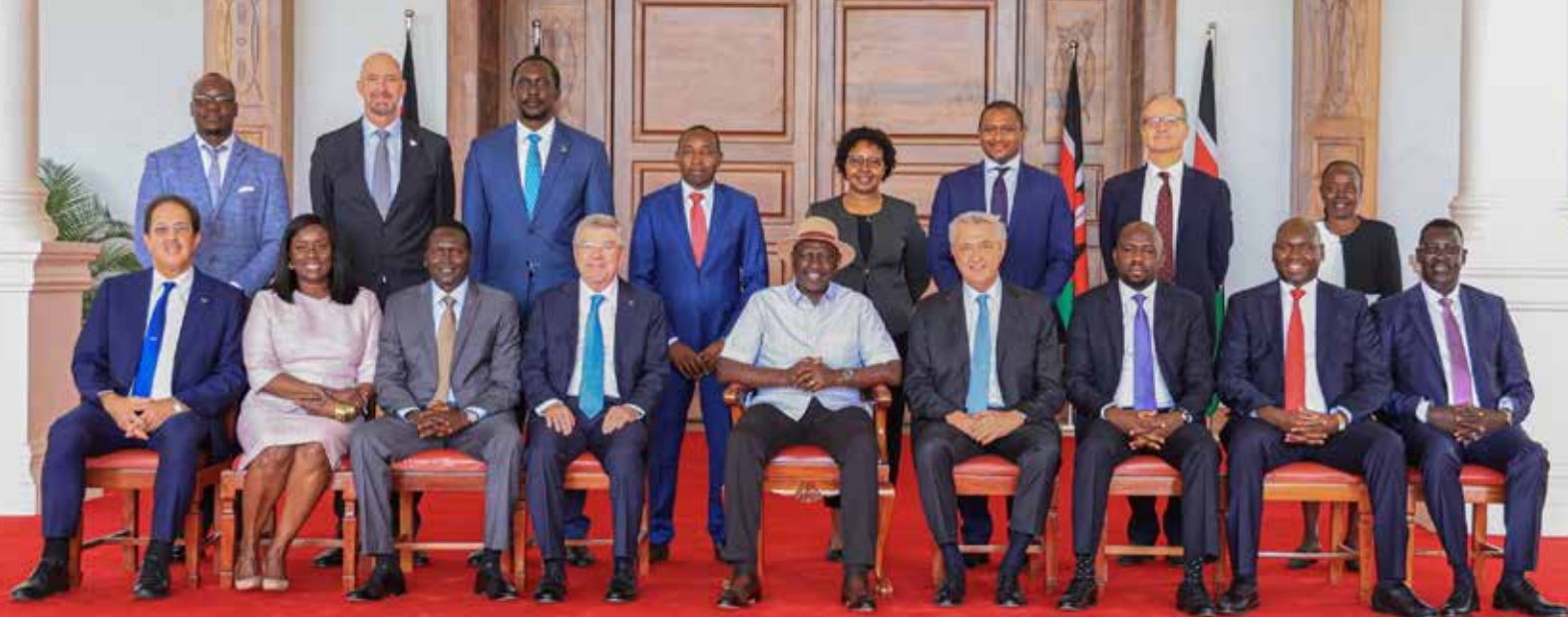












## KENYA

# Thomas BACH commends Kenya's historic performances at the OG Paris 2024

IOC President Thomas BACH concluded his African tour in Kenya with a meeting with President William RUTO, a symbolic choice that attests to the relevance of this country within the African and global Olympic Movement, as demonstrated by the historic performances of its team at the last Olympic Games in Paris, where Kenya bagged a record number of 11 medals.

**O**n his arrival in Nairobi, President BACH was welcomed by former marathon world champion and president of NOC Kenya, Paul TERGAT, and IOC Athletes' Commission member, Humphrey KAYANGE. Always in company with ANOCA President Mustapha BERRAF, President BACH devoted his first day to discussions with national sports federations.

He hailed the historic performances of Team Kenya at Paris 2024, where Kenya hauled a record number of





11 medals, a feat for an African nation. Discussions further dwelt on safeguarding of athletes, anti-doping, and prospects for sports development in Kenya, including the possibility of one day hosting the Olympic Games on the African continent.

The second day featured an official visit to the State House, where he was received in audience by Kenyan President William RUTO, who expressed his pride in Kenyan athletes and reaffirmed his Government's support to the National Olympic Movement. For his part, President Thomas BACH, underscored the key role played by Messrs Paul TERGAT and Humphrey KAYANGE within the IOC, stressing the NOC's sports autonomy and respect for Olympic values.

Anti-doping took centre stage at the meeting, with President RUTO insisting that his Government had taken strict measures to combat the scourge by allocating more resources and finances to the anti-doping agency.

This dialogue highlighted Kenya's desire to promote clean and fair sport.

Eldoret, nicknamed 'City of Champions', owing to its outstanding contribution to world athletics, was his next stop. Accompanied by legendary Olympic champion Kip KEINO, founding member of the very first IOC Athletes' Commission, President BACH visited many sports facilities and community infrastructure. He also inaugurated the new administrative building of the Kip KEINO School, hosting more than 900 students and visited an orphanage managed by the Olympic champion.

On this occasion, he expressed his admiration for Eldoret, a city renowned not only for its champions but also for its warm welcome of international athletes and the Olympic Refugee Team. His visit strengthened the spirit of unity and solidarity within the Olympic Movement, embodied by dignitaries like Kip KEINO.













## OLYMPIC REFUGE FOUNDATION

# Thomas Bach visits Kakuma Refugee Camp

One of the most touching episodes of President Thomas BACH's tour in Kenya was his visit to the Kakuma refugee camp, alongside Filippo GRANDI, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees and IOC Member Felicite RWEMARIKA, who was herself a refugee in her childhood.

**T**he Kakuma refugee camp, home to more than 300,000 people, is an iconic site for Olympic sports. Half of the first-ever Refugee Olympic Team trained here in 2016. It is against this backdrop that the IOC President, in company with ANOCA President, Mustapha BERRAF, visited the camp to demonstrate his Olympic solidarity with refugees.





According to President BACH, the Olympic Refugee Foundation (ORF) plays a crucial role in the camp by offering sports activities to young refugees and host communities. Included in the ‘Play 2 Protect’ programme, these initiatives help fight gender-based violence and provide psychosocial support to young refugee boys and girls. Since 2020, the programme has helped reduce cases of gender-based violence in the camp by 30 %, attesting to the transformative power of sport.

Ending his visit to Kakuma, President BACH highlighted the importance of ORF and thanked local partners for their commitment, even as he declared: ‘Here, sport becomes a vehicle of peace and inclusion’ and stressing the role of sport in preserving human dignity.

The Kenyan tour ended with a farewell dinner hosted by NOC Kenya in honour of the IOC President and Olympic solidarity. It was a moment of conviviality that allowed for the celebration of the strong ties between Kenya and the Olympic Movement. Perina Lokure NAKANG, Refugee Olympic Team member, was also present, showcasing the relevance of Olympic solidarity beyond borders.

Thomas BACH then expressed his gratitude for the warm welcome he enjoyed, and lauded Kenya’s continued efforts in promoting sport, while stressing the country’s key role in refugee inclusion through sport.

During the dinner, the IOC and Kenya both reasserted their shared commitment to an open and inclusive Olympic future. President BACH’s visit to Kenya marked a turning point in the IOC’s commitment to African sport. By celebrating Kenya’s Olympic success, backing anti-doping initiatives and encouraging refugee inclusion programmes, this tour demonstrated the positive influence of the Olympic Movement in the country. The Kakuma camp is an embodiment of

the spirit of the Olympic Refugee Foundation, which is striving to bring hope and stability through sport.

While Kenya continues to stand out on the international stage, the legacy of this tour should translate into increased support for sports and athletes from all social backgrounds to enhance inclusion, dignity and peace.

In conclusion, President BACH’s African tour highlighted the key role of sport in developing and uniting the continent. His call for Africa to bid for the Olympic Games is a symbolic step, providing the continent of an unprecedented opportunity to rise on the world stage as an Olympic host. Various African initiatives indicate that an Olympic future is possible on the continent, as it has consistently demonstrated its dynamism and commitment to sports values.





**HOSTING THE OLYMPIC GAMES**

# IOC President calls on Africa to bid for the Games

The IOC, through its President, Thomas BACH, availed himself of the opportunity to pledge support for Africa's bid to host the Olympic Games. A golden opportunity for the continent to showcase its organisational skills and support the wind of change brought about by IOC reforms.

At the end of his ten-day tour to five African countries, President BACH, during a press conference in Nairobi, clearly stated his support for Africa's bid for the Olympic Games. He declared: «*I know that a number of African countries are in a position to host*





*the event after all the reforms we have undertaken...For the Games to take place in Africa, an African country must show interest in organising them,'* underscoring the importance of the strong commitment of African countries to seizing this opportunity.

With evidence, the IOC President praised Africa's qualities, highlighting its ability to host major sports events. He noted that with the Olympic Games 2028 and 2032 already awarded to Los Angeles (United States) and Brisbane (Australia) respectively, 2036 is a golden opportunity for African countries, and this is particularly so because, as he recalled, the IOC recently developed Olympic Agenda 2050+5, which seeks to reduce the cost of the Games and to prioritise existing infrastructure. For Thomas BACH, these reforms allow for increased participation of African countries that have already successfully proven their organisational skills by hosting events such as the 1995 Rugby World Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup.

He also recalled that Africa is not limited to its past experiences, as the continent is gearing up for the Youth Olympic Games 2026 in Senegal and the 2026 UCI Road World Championships in Rwanda. These events illustrate growing interest in major sports events in Africa, backing the case for Africa's ability to organise global events.

The IOC President noted that for a successful OG bid, an African country must show palpable interest and strong political will through sports infrastructure and resource mobilisation, both necessary for the organisation of an event of this magnitude. The enthusiasm for this bid must be backed up by concrete actions and a long-term vision. This urgent call by President BACH is a strong signal for Africa, but it remains to be seen which country will fulfil this ambition. The Road to the organization of Olympics could be a stepping stone for sport development on the continent.







**MUSTAPHA BERRAF'S LETTER TO THE IOC PRESIDENT**

## My Heartfelt Thanks to Thomas BACH, a Friend of Africa!

Dear Dr Thomas BACH,

“It is with deep gratitude and renewed admiration that I wish to thank you, on behalf of the entire African Olympic Movement, for your recent visit to five of our nations. This exceptional tour, which

took you to Senegal, Uganda, Lesotho, South Africa and Kenya, once again bears witness to your sincere affection and commitment to our beloved continent. For a long time, we have affectionately called you “*Thomas BACH, the African*”, and this nickname now has its full meaning.



Your visit to Africa confirms your confidence in our potential, and your encouragement for Africa to bid for the Olympic Games is a historic move. You said with conviction that: *“a number of African countries are in a position to host the event after all the reforms we have undertaken.”* We fully embrace this vision and would like to note that we too boast the human, technical and infrastructural potential to host the world’s biggest sports event with brio. The Olympic Games are no longer a far-fetched aspiration for Africa, but a tangible objective going forward.

During the ten days you spent with us, we felt the wave of a shared determination to make our continent a major actor in world sport. Alongside Senegal, we are committed to preparing the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026 with rigour and determination. This initiative is a unifying force for the entire continent and symbolises our shared commitment to the future of sport in Africa. The infrastructure development projects are progressing at a steady pace, and our athletes, who are at the heart of these preparations, are benefiting from the invaluable support of the IOC, which you are managing with extraordinary foresight.

The partnership between the IOC and its African members is strong and sustainable and enshrined in the Olympic values that we all foster as a model for the world. The Youth Olympic Games represent a crucial milestone in the development of sport in Africa and in bequeathing these values to future generations.

Dear Dr BACH, your historic commitment to the growth of sport in Africa is an inspiration to our continent. You have always acknowledged Africa’s role in this great Olympic bond founded on solidarity and unity. In every country you visited, you witnessed our determination to foster the development of our young people, to impart values of excellence and to forge a strong and ambitious generation. Our performances at the Olympic Games Paris 2024 demonstrated that Africa has the resources and resilience to compete on the world stage.

Your shared vision with the IOC, which puts the athlete at the centre of everything we do, is the cornerstone of our activities. Thanks to them, we are creating opportunities and working towards a more inclusive and equitable future. Thomas BACH, *“the African”*, you have now clearly understood the importance of this issue, and over the years, you have constantly supported our continent with a level of commitment that commands respect.

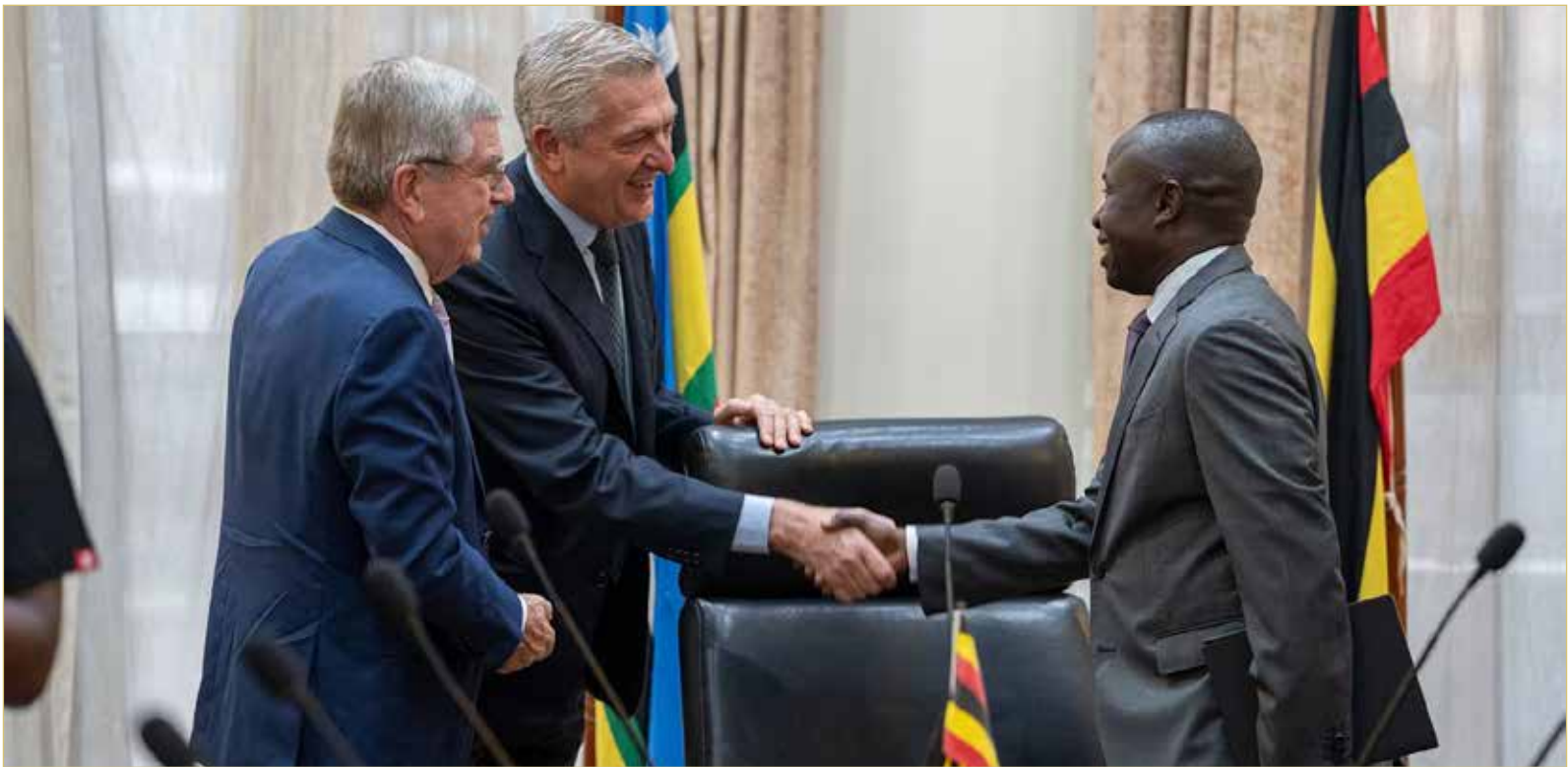
We would like to thank you most sincerely for this historic visit and your unwavering support. It will forever be etched in our memories as a turning point for Olympic Africa.

Kind regards.

*Mustapha Berraf*

ANOCA President  
IOC Member  
Vice President of ANOC






















**UNITY,  
SOLIDARITY,  
FRATERNITY**

**UNITÉ,  
SOLIDARITÉ,  
FRATERNITÉ**





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