



# PRESS RELEASE



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEES OF AFRICA



## 5<sup>TH</sup> CONTINENTAL ATHLETES' FORUM 2025

# A FLAGSHIP EVENT THAT WILL CHART THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN SPORT





The Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) and its Athletes' Commission are proud to announce the 5<sup>th</sup> Continental Athletes' Forum, which will take place from 5-6 April 2025 at the Windhoek International Convention Centre, Namibia. This major event will bring together athletes' representatives from NOCs across the continent, providing a unique platform for discussions, innovation and enhanced support for African athletes.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Continental Athletes' Forum is a forum for sports excellence and athlete development, which aims to strengthen the skills, resources and networks of African athletes, while promoting their key role in the sports ecosystem. Discussions between participants will focus on key themes such as:







The 5<sup>th</sup> Continental Athletes' Forum will be fully open to the press. Media representatives will be invited to attend the event as observers. They will have the opportunity to follow plenary sessions, workshops and presentations, while enjoying privileged access to lunch breaks and coffee chats. This will give journalists the opportunity to collect feedback and points of view from the athletes, sports leaders and experts present.

The 5<sup>th</sup> Continental Athletes' Forum promises to be a breakthrough for African sport in general and for African athletes in particular.





This is a long-awaited and special event for ANOCA and its President, Mustapha Berraf, who hailed the key role played by African athletes in the global Olympic Movement, saying: ***“This forum is a crucial milestone in strengthening the voice of African athletes and ensuring that they are at the heart of decisions that shape the future of sport on our continent. We are convinced that the recommendations that emerge from these discussions will contribute to the emergence of a fairer and more successful sports ecosystem.”***







He added that ***“To avoid athletes’ exodus, it is important to grant them special, official and institutional status, whether they are African athletes in general or high-level athletes in particular. African athletes have a natural potential that would only need an effective supervision and support policy to continue and improve on the stunning performances that our continent has achieved over the years through numerous continental and international competitions. This talent pool is huge, and who else can suggest and recommend even more inclusive strategies than the athletes themselves? This is the raison d’être of the African Athletes’ Forum. Africa has gained notoriety through the exceptional performances of its athletes, while demonstrating the intrinsic African values of dignity.”***





In conclusion, he said: ***“The objective is to better support athletes on the continent by drawing up an appropriate framework to monitor and implement African athletes’ support measures to ensure that they perform effectively and efficiently, as well as rise to future challenges. A high-level African athlete enjoys a special audience in all social categories, namely among political authorities, the younger and older populations, governmental and non-governmental organisations and institutions, and international institutions.”***

***To achieve this, African athletes must see themselves as ambassadors of African sport. It is therefore an undeniable fact that the African athlete’s profile must match this identity of a catalyst for development.”***





Gaby AHRENS, chair of the ANOCA Athletes' Commission, echoed the same commitment. ***"Athletes are the ambassadors of African sport. This forum offers them a platform to express their concerns, share their successes and propose concrete solutions to the challenges they face,"*** she added.

Reiterating the need for athletes to take responsibility and be involved in the decision-making process that affects the future of the Olympic Movement, Thomas BACH said: ***"Athletes are not only at the heart - they are the heart of our Olympic Community. That is why, this ANOCA Athletes' Forum is above all an opportunity for you, the athletes, to make your voice heard on the issues that concern you all: to sit at the table where decisions are taken, with a voice and a vote. It is the most effective representation a person can have. You deserve this right. As representatives of your peers, you must be involved in all decisions that have an impact on the lives of athletes. This Forum is a milestone. Athletes have a duty to lead by example."***





***And I am delighted to see that ANOCA is doing exactly that through its Athletes' Commission: leading by example, empowering athletes and being at the heart of the action. Today, I would like to congratulate you all ...I would also like to***



***heartily thank all ANOCA members, under the great leadership of the President and my great friend Mustapha BERRAF, for supporting athletes and promoting sport and its values throughout Africa.”***

(Message of support from Thomas BACH to African athletes at the African Athletes Forum held on 11 and 12 March 2023 in Algiers)

It is against this backdrop that the 5<sup>th</sup> Continental Athletes’ Forum, which will take place from 5 to 6 April 2025 at the Windhoek International Convention Centre, Namibia, is already proving to be a key moment for the future of African sport and its athletes, an event not to be missed, particularly for the media, which will play an essential role in disseminating the ideas and resolutions of this event.

### PRACTICAL INFORMATION

**Event:** 5<sup>th</sup> ACNOA Continental Athletes’ Forum 2025 edition

**Dates:** April 5-6, 2025

**Venue:** Windhoek International Convention Centre, Namibia.





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