



# ANOCA NEWSLETTER



INTERNATIONAL  
OLYMPIC  
COMMITTEE

MARCH 2024

MONTHLY REVIEW OF AFRICAN OLYMPISM



**2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION OF "24 HOURS OF WOMEN'S SPORT"**

# PROMOTES GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICAN SPORT

► **2023 IOC CHAMPIONS OF  
GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY  
AND INCLUSION AWARDS**

**IRENE LIMIKA  
(KENYA) NAMED  
WINNER FOR AFRICA**



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGES

On the occasion of the celebrations marking International Women's Day on 8 March 2024, and the beginning of the fasting month of Ramadan 2024, ANOCA President, Honorable Mustapha Berraf, addressed two special messages, one to women, hailing ANOCA's inclusive vision and advocating gender parity, and the other to the Muslim faithful, encouraging them to stay on the path of devotion, forgiveness and peace as they launch into the fasting month of Ramadan 2024. ANOCA Newsletter publishes full texts of both special messages by the steward of the African Olympic and Sports Movement.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

# 2024, YEAR OF PARITY IN SPORT

**This year, parity will be a guiding principle in the organisation of several international sports competitions.**

International Women's Day will be celebrated this year, 2024, on a theme that inspires inclusion: "*Invest in women: Accelerate progress.*" It has to do with human rights, with parity as the focal concern.

The Olympic Games Paris 2024 will be the first in history in which the same number of male and female athletes will participate. Male and female competitors on an equal footing. This is a milestone. We will be privileged witnesses of parity at the Olympic Games.

Female athletes from Africa will live these exceptional moments of sport and Olympism with joy.

In 1924, only 5% of the athletes competing at the Olympic Games were women. In 1984, 40 years ago in Los Angeles, women accounted for 23% and in Tokyo 2020 it was 49%. In Paris, in a few months, we will be at 50% women and 50% men.

Gender equality is in the spotlight. Our continent, Africa, is committed to this vision. Several of our competitions incorporate the notion of parity. Sports competitions at the recent ANOCA Zone 3 Games in Lome, Togo, were exclusively for female athletes.

Future competitions, such as the African Games in Egypt, the African Beach Games in Equatorial Guinea, and the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026, will put a stamp on this state of affairs, which is quietly turning the tides in favour of women.

We still have to rise to the challenge of placing even more women at the highest levels of decision-making in African sports governing bodies. This was addressed at the second ANOCA gender equality forum held in SAL, Cape Verde, in October 2023.

We need women on the tracks and pitches, as well as in administrative governance of the African Olympic and sports movement. We need to give more women the opportunity to climb up the highest rungs of the sports management ladder. The *“Women in High-Performance*



*Sport”* project offers just such an opportunity. Thanks to this project, more than 100 women from over 50 countries, representing 17 sports, have been trained as high-level coaches.

ANOCA has set up a Gender Equality Commission. It is doing a wonderful job in promoting women in the practice of sport to keep fit, and especially in elite sports practice.

The road to parity is long and fraught with challenges. From 1900 to 2024, the world



has made history on the road to gender parity, which will be evidenced at the Olympic Games Paris 2024.

Africa is fully committed to the struggle to reject marginalisation of women in sport. Success beckons, and we should be proud of our joint actions, which have led to unprecedented women's empowerment in Africa.

Our daughters and our mothers have shaken up the world, and the world has returned the favour with joy and gratitude.

Advocacy for women's rights in Africa also, and above all, involves sport and Olympism.

May this International Women's Day, on 8 March 2024, put a stamp on our resolve to achieve genuine parity on our dear and beautiful continent, "*mother of the world at large*"! Let's celebrate women's sport in Africa; simply put, let's celebrate the African woman.

## LAUNCH OF THE FASTING MONTH OF RAMADAN

# DEVOTION, FORGIVENESS AND PEACE IN AFRICA THROUGH SPORT

It is our custom, every year, to take time off to humble ourselves before God Almighty through fasting and prayer. This is a major pillar of Islam.

This, above all, is a moment of spiritual solidarity and ecumenism for all of Africa and the world at large.

These are difficult times for the planet, which is fraught with all sorts of crises: high cost of living, security crises, climate change, immigration, pandemics, you name them...

More than ever, we need God. Each and every one of us, wherever we are, country, continent, city, village, home, school, workplace, we must turn to God.

Like sport, which, through Olympic values inspires in us tolerance, humility and love, so must sharing and peace guide our daily lives and our actions.

This month of fasting and prayer is necessary for us to reconsider our goals in our constant quest for the divine way.

A peaceful world is shaped by our individual and, above all, our common faith.

It is in GOD that we will find peace.

This is already a reality through sport. Our prayers and sacrifices will bolster our aspirations to build a peaceful world devoid of misery and poverty.

Africa, our Africa, needs our prayers, which is why I urge the entire African Olympic and Sports Movement to forge ahead in devotion, forgiveness and peace.

**A wonderful fasting month of Ramadan 2024!**

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### Mustapha Berraf

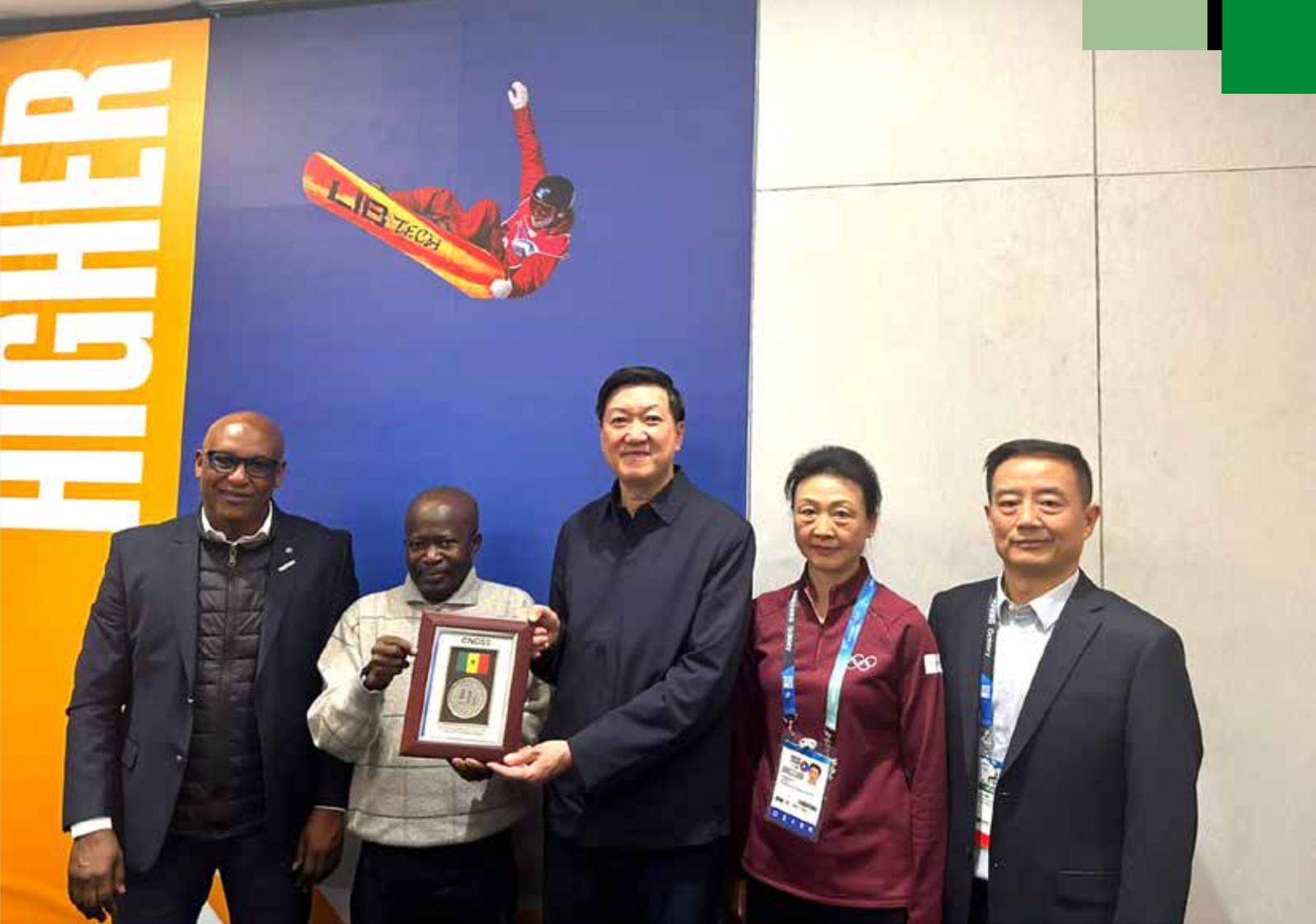
IOC Member

President of ANOCA

Holder of the African Olympic Order

Holder of the ANOC Olympic Order

Holder of the IOC Olympic Order.



## YOG DAKAR 2026

# YOGOC UNDERTAKES MISSION TO JAPAN AND SOUTH KOREA, SIGNS MULTIPLE AGREEMENTS

**L**ed by the NOC President Mamadou Diagna Ndiaye, who was accompanied by the General Coordinator, Ibrahima Wade, the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee (YOGOC) was on a working mission to Japan and South Korea in January 2024 at the invitation these two countries.

Their stay in Japan is the outcome of the partnership agreement signed in 2018 between the NOCs Japan and Senegal. Mamadou Diagna Ndiaye presented to institutional and non-state actors the challenges of Dakar 2026, the first ever Olympic event on the African continent, and the need to foster partnerships that reflect the good relations between both



**Mr Ndiaye also met with Tadaaki Hayano, CEO of Tokyo Marathon Foundation, who said he was very available to work with YOGOC by sending experts specialised in the organisation of marathons or accepting Senegalese volunteers at the 2024 Tokyo Marathon. Finally, he visited the Tokyo 2020 Legacy Exhibition, a platform for sharing Japan's experience.**



countries. According to CNOSS, it was agreed with NOC Japan and JICA, that in the coming weeks, two Japanese experts will be dispatched to assist YOGOC in its preparation activities.

President Diagna Ndiaye met with Mrs Jimi Hanako, Minister in charge of Osaka World Expo 2025, establishing gateways for collaboration between Osaka World Expo 2025 and Dakar 2026, two events



that seek to promote dialogue and peace among peoples and to make Osaka 2025 a platform for promoting Dakar 2026.

The NOC president also held talks with representatives of the Japanese private sector in the hope of signing sponsorship partnerships with Dakar 2026, through the company Toyota Tsusho, operating in the field of mass distribution and agribusiness in Senegal, on the one hand and, on the other, the sports equipment supplier, Asics.

He also met with the Nippon Foundation Chair, Yohei Sasakawa, with whom he discussed prospects of cultural partnerships.



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After Japan, the delegation moved to South Korea to attend the opening ceremony of the Winter Youth Olympic Games Gangwon 2024. In South Korea, Mamadou Diagna Ndiaye met with political leaders and senior officials of the private and industrial sector. He also had audience with IOC President, Thomas Bach, with whom he discussed

preparations for the YOG Dakar 2026 and topical Olympic issues; Mrs Jang Mi-Ran, Korean Vice-Minister of Sports, with whom he discussed possible sports partnerships through support projects for the Republic of Korea in preparation for Dakar 2026, especially drawing on the legacy of Gangwon 2024 ahead of Dakar 2026; GaoZhidan, Minister of Sports of the People's Republic of China and President of NOC China with whom he raised the sustained cooperation dynamics between both countries, ties reflected in the concrete support projects implemented in Senegal preparation for the opening ceremony of the YOG, athlete preparation and the quest for Senegalese athletes to stage sterling performances.



## CNO-CIV UNRAVELS MAJOR PLAN FOR 2ND TRAINING CAMP

**A**fter the first training camp held from 11 to 19 February 2023 for athletes ahead of the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026, the second is scheduled to run from 27 March to 6 April 2024. Close to a month to this major event, NOC

Côte d'Ivoire (CNO-CIV) convened 10 participating federations for an information and discussion session on Tuesday, 20 February 2024, at its headquarters in Deux Plateaux Vallons.

Côte d'Ivoire participated in the first three editions of the YOG in six disciplines. This

global competition is meant for young athletes aged between 15 and 18, and given the major difficulties encountered by the country's athletes to qualify directly in the past, CNO-CIV has found a working strategy to break with this tradition: organising training camps to prepare athletes for the YOG.

This initiative will help hone athletes' skills to enable them to qualify directly and to bring home Côte d'Ivoire's first medals.

Thus, after the first camp in February 2023 with 42 participating athletes aged between 12 and 14 from 4 sports federations, plans are underway for the second. The Tuesday meeting thus aimed to outline major thrust areas in this regard. *"We are here this morning to outline the major plan for this second training camp and to educate federations on the relevance of working with younger people. This is a blueprint for success, one that will take us to the highest level, as is the case with Ruth Gbagbi (Taekwondo), who competed in all three YOG editions and who, today, is shining on the international stage,"* noted Jeannot Kouadio Kouamé, 2nd Vice President of CNO-CIV who is in charge of the Technical Commission.

He further stated, *"We will do our utmost to provide them with efficient coaching. We will encourage them to be regular at training sessions and provide the necessary means. We will work on their physical abilities early enough to enable them perform well in future."*

The 2<sup>nd</sup> camp will bring together 60 athletes from 10 federations. A four-session training seminar will be organised

for coaches on 27 and 28 March. *"We will devote two days to coaches, since we noted coaching lapses and shortcomings during the first camp. We will give them the basics to correct these, because training children is a different ballgame altogether,"* explained Jeannot Kouadio. After the first two days, the opening ceremony will be held and medical tests conducted on 30 March.

Training sessions for athletes will be held from 1 to 5 April before evaluation, and the camp will end on 6 April 2024. *"CNO-CIV hopes these camps to help qualify more athletes and limit the number of universality places that discredit Côte d'Ivoire. This means preparing ahead of time. Besides these camps, federations must also identify these categories and train them regularly. Federations must guide and scout for competitions for them. CNO-CIV will support them,"* stated Jeannot Kouadio, CNO-CIV Technical Officer.

The second training camp for the YOG Dakar 2026 will include athletics, badminton, boxing, fencing, golf, gymnastics, judo, taekwondo, tennis and table tennis. This important session also featured discussions featuring by speeches by Mrs Nah Aminata Fofana, Executive Director of CNO-CIV, and Prof Germain Karou, Treasurer General of CNO-CIV.

Visibly pleased with the information given by Jeannot Kouadio Kouamé, representatives of the six attending sports federations adjourned to meet again on 27 March at CNO-CIV headquarters.



# RWANDA SELECTS 130 ATHLETES TO BEGIN PREPARING FOR DAKAR 2026

**O**ver 100 young Rwandan athletes have begun preparing for the Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, after they were selected from a shortlist of 372 candidates. The young

athletes were selected in the following disciplines: swimming, tennis, table tennis and cycling. Activities were organised by their respective national federations and the Rwanda National Olympic and Sports Committee (RNOSC).



This number was whittled down to 130 athletes at the end of the first phase of the 2021-2024 Youth Development Programme, which ran from October to December 2022.

All athletes are aged between 10 and 14.

RNOSC hopes that these athletes will participate in many training camps ahead of the Dakar 2026 Games, which were taken forward to four years due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with attendant preparation problems.

**RNOSC will work with athletes by organising training camps and helping them take part in qualifiers and international competitions.**

Athletes must also prepare for the 2026 African Youth Games scheduled for Maseru, Lesotho. Most athletes are training in table tennis, where 40 athletes were selected. Tennis, swimming and cycling each has 30 athletes.

The Rwandan Swimming Federation organised its talent identification programme in October and November in Kigali, following which 30 athletes were selected out of 134 candidates.

Half of the table tennis candidates were selected, while 30 were selected for tennis out of 85 candidates. 30 cyclists were selected out of 73 candidates.

RNOSC will work with athletes by organising training camps and helping them take part in qualifiers and international competitions.



# ANOCA ZONE 1 HOLDS FIRST MEETING IN TRIPOLI

ANOCA Zone 1 held its first meeting in the Libyan capital, Tripoli, a session opened by the President of the Zone, Dr KHALED EZANKULI, and attended by all members as well as representatives of the following countries: Tunisia, Libya, Morocco, Algeria, represented respectively by the following dignitaries:

1. **Mr MEHREZ BOUSSAYENE**, President of NOC Tunisia;
2. **Mr JAMAL EZARRUGH**, President of NOC Libya;
3. **Mr MUHSAN ESSABAI**, First Vice President of NOC Libya;



4. **Mr ABDELLATIF IDMAHAMMA**,  
Secretary General of NOC Morocco;

5. **Mr KAMEL SAIDI**, representative of  
the Algeria Olympic Committee.

**Mr ABDERRAHMANE ETHMANE**,  
President of the Mauritanian Olympic  
Committee, also took part in the meeting  
as a guest of the Zone.

The opening ceremony  
featured addresses by the President of the  
Zone and the President of the Region,  
who heartily welcomed participants,

praising Libya's role in organising the  
meeting and stressing the importance of  
pooling efforts and implementing visions  
in order to achieve the objectives of the  
region and the continent within various  
Olympic and international forums. There  
was also a message from ANOCA  
President, Mustapha Berraf, who was  
due to attend but was held up at the last  
minute by another meeting in the UAE,  
and who wished the region every success  
in the deliberations.

His message was delivered by His  
Excellency the Minister of Sport, through  
the Undersecretary of the Ministry  
of Sport, in which he welcomed the  
distinguished guests and expressed  
his appreciation of the role played by  
the Zone in supporting and developing  
sport in North Africa, while encouraging  
discussions and communication between  
the peoples of neighbouring countries.

Speaking on the occasion, the President  
of the Libya Olympic Committee  
expressed his gratitude to all the  
participants, and announced Libya's  
readiness to provide everything that would  
facilitate the deliberations and contribute  
to their success, underscoring Libya's  
willingness to consolidate its role, while  
participating in and working towards the  
development and furtherance of sport in  
Africa.

He also availed himself of the opportunity  
to congratulate the head of the region,  
Mr MEHREZ BOUSSAYENE, on his new  
accolade as IOC member, expressing his  
pride and that of the entire Zone. It was  
well deserved, he said, as he wished him  
all the best.



The floor was then given to Mr MEHREZ BOUSSAYENE himself, and he expressed his thanks and gratitude to both the Ministry of Sport and the NOC for the warm welcome and generous hospitality shown to their brothers of the Zone.

He also made a point of thanking the members of African NOCs present, and especially expressed his gratitude to all those who had helped him attain this important position, with the support of the region and African friends. This accolade

will bring prosperity and development to the African sports movement.

Part two of the meeting started at 11.10 a.m. to discuss the following agenda items:

**Agenda item 1:** Approving the launch of the region's games

After extensive discussions, the issues debated and approved were summarised in the following points:



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- The primary goal of the Region's Games is to prepare for the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games.
- Limiting the age categories eligible to participate in these Games, with some exceptions for participating countries. Define the sports disciplines from 5 to 7, and the organising country has the right to choose one of these.
- The terms of reference following approval by the region's executive office.
- Technical aspects regarding the age groups, the competition system and other aspects are determined by the technical directors of the various national committees in the region following consultation with the NOC technical directors.



- For national federations: In the light of all the above, the budget for the games and for the host country will be set by the region's executive office at a meeting organised in person or by videoconference, to be held before the end of April 2024.

**Agendaitem 2:** The maiden ANOCA Zone 1 Gender Equality Forum Conference. It was agreed that this conference be held in Libya at the beginning of May 2024.

**Agendaitem 3:** Strengthening means of cooperation between Member States and their counterparts in various fields.

The need for enhanced cooperation between the region's members in all areas was emphasised - Riyadh and benefiting from the Olympic Solidarity programme in conjunction with the bilateral cooperation of the Olympic Committees.

**Agendaitem 4:** any other business.



The request from the President of the International Diving and Rescue Federation to participate in the Zone and African Games was presented.

In addition, the President of the International Diving and Rescue Federation is expected to submit a request for participation in the ANOCA Games to the President of ANOCA via the President of the Zone.

However, regarding participation in the Zone's games, it was approved that Diving competitions be introduced in support of the sport's International Federation and to cover its financial obligations.

In the end, the President thanked everyone once again for attending, before closing the session.









# NOC MAURITANIA CELEBRATES SPORT IN ATAR WITH SPORT OPEN DAYS

**F**or one whole day, the city of Atar became the centre of interest and a rallying point for all Mauritanian sportsmen and women on the occasion of the

second edition of the Open Days for Sport in Mauritania. The goal was to bring sport closer to the people so that they can take advantage and ownership of it.

**NOC Mauritania (CNOSM) and the French Embassy availed themselves of this opportunity to underscore their desire to harness efforts in support of sport in Mauritania.**

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Overseeing the official launch of the event on Saturday, 10 February, the Technical Adviser at the Ministry of Culture, Youth, Sports and Relations with Parliament, Mr Mohamed Lô said how honoured he was to represent his Department. He then opined that *“This CNOSM initiative, backed by the French Ambassador to Mauritania through his Cooperation and Cultural Action Service, aligns with the vision of His Excellency the President of the Republic, Mr Mohamed OuldCheikhGhazwani who, in his Tahoudaty programme, gives a choice place to sport, the core activity of*

*young people, who make up 76% of our population in Mauritania.”*

*“Every day, sport demonstrates that it is a critical vehicle for the economic, social and cultural development of a country. It is also a powerful tool in strengthening our social cohesion through its values and fairness,”* Mr Lô added.

*“This was seen,”* he noted, *“through the expressions of joy that greeted the return of our Mourabitounes from the recent Africa Cup of Nations, when all of Mauritania, in its diversity, stood up as one man to give them the sort of welcome that will forever remain etched on our memories.”*

The Technical Adviser went on to say that *“this vision of the Head of State is evidenced by the work carried out on a daily basis, led by the Minister of Culture, Youth, Sports and Relations with Parliament, and the results of which are beginning to be felt.”*

Mr Mohamed Lô recalled that *“sports development in recent years is reflected in increased budget allocations and subsidies to national federations, associations, sports clubs, academies and training centres, as well as in the Ministry’s continuous organisation of school, university and local youth competitions, which have become a real showcase and platform for our young athletes to compete and draw the attention of national sports federations.”*

*“In addition to this,”* he went on, *“our national teams participated in zonal, continental and global competitions,*



*where our young athletes emerged victorious in combat sports, brain games and team sports. Their most recent performances have been very encouraging, notably the historic qualification of our Mourabitounes for the round of 16 of the recent CAF Africa Cup of Nations.”*

While addressing the NOC Mauritania President and members, as well as the presidents and members of national sports federations, Mr Lô was confident:

*“We are on track. We highly commend you for that, and the Ministry will spare no effort to further back your national sport development efforts.”*

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## ENCOURAGING YOUNG PEOPLE IN HINTERLAND TOWNS TO PARTICIPATE IN SPORT

For the NOC President, Abderrahmane Ethmane, *“This second edition, organised in Atar, testifies to NOC Mauritania’s desire, supported by its partners, to organise these activities in the interior of the country, to encourage young people in towns within the country to participate in various sports activities.”*

Mr Abderrahmane recalled the various activities organised by NOC Mauritania in collaboration with the French Embassy in Mauritania, notably the training course for female coaches and some 50 basketball 3x3 players, the course on Olympic values, judo and an introduction to athletics. Recalling the benefits of sport,

the NOC president encouraged sports leaders to become more involved and urged Mauritians to make sport a way of life. He hailed the performance of the Mourabitoune at the AFCON, and thanked them for their efforts, hoping that various sport disciplines would enjoy similar moments of popular joy.

Emphasising NOC Mauritania’s readiness to support all sportsmen and women, Mr Abderrahmane Ethmane urged them *“to use the opportunity to disseminate and propagate the virtues of sport.”*

The steward of Olympism in Mauritania thanked the Minister of Culture, Youth, Sports and Relations with Parliament for

his constant support. He also thanked the French Ambassador to Mauritania for *“his commitment to the promotion and development of sport in Mauritania through his support for Sport Open Days in Mauritania.”* He also commended the company NASR and BAMIS for its support. Finally, Mr Abderrahmane paid tribute to all those who contributed to the success of these open days.

The French Ambassador to Mauritania, Mr Alexandre Garcia, for his part, noted that in addition to these open days, and throughout 2024, his country shall also assist in the implementation of concrete projects supported by the athletics, judo, basketball, tennis and football federations. He drew attention to the commitment of the French Development Agency in Nouakchott, which is working alongside teams from the Ministry of Youth and Sports to implement an ambitious and a high-impact project from 2024 onwards, developing and supporting a large-scale public sports policy.

Before concluding his speech, the French diplomat congratulated *“...the Mourabitounes on their remarkable journey at the AFCON, which foretells a better future for football in Mauritania...I was in Nouakchott on the day of the historic win against Algeria, and I saw for myself the popular enthusiasm that this qualification generated, showing once again the unifying power of sport.”*

On this open day, the public was able to obtain information from stands set up

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by seventeen sports federations, and watch sports exhibitions that gave the young and old alike a chance to try their hand at a variety of sport disciplines. A bicycle and a foot race were also organised. These were just some of the opportunities offered to the inhabitants of Atar to discover a sporting activity during the open day, and to practise it with volunteers from the relevant federations.







## NOC-Z: ATHLETES' COMMISSION SETS ATHLETES' WELFARE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES AS PRIORITIES FOR 2023

**T**he Athletes' Commission of NOC Zimbabwe has been quite active over the last few years, making good use of Olympic Solidarity grants for NOC AC activities. It has been working hard to

make itself better known to athletes and has been organizing various workshops, webinars and forums to support them. The AC is also working tirelessly for the welfare of its athletes and has drawn up a list of 52 athletes' rights.

## ACTIVITIES

**Webinars:** The AC invited athletes, coaches and parents to follow its webinars on how to combine studies and sport, and the advantages of a dual career. During another interactive webinar, it informed its athletes about Olympic Solidarity and Athlete365 offers open to them and the anti-doping procedures in force for upcoming competitions.

**Workshops:** In a bid to provide its athletes with more practical and in-depth training, the AC organised three workshops on: 1) Safe sport; 2) Anti-doping and manipulation in sport; 3) Women and girls in sport.

**Forum:** The AC organised an athletes' forum to make the athletes' representation system in Zimbabwe more efficient. A total of 17 national federations sent their athlete representatives to the event. Athletes were able to share their difficulties and discuss ways of increasing AC visibility in the country.

### Focus on Athletes' Welfare

In 2022, the AC of NOC Zimbabwe carried out a project to promote the welfare of top-level athletes. The aim was to jointly identify a comprehensive set of needs, considering that support to and preparation of athletes must always be a priority.

Following various consultations, the AC defined a set of 52 rights and values for athletes in Zimbabwe in major areas like:

- Health and well-being;
- Protection ;
- High-level performance ;
- Doping control and ;
- Career transition.

The document was approved by the NOC General Assembly at its annual general meeting and forwarded to all affiliated national federations.

### Tree-planting Initiative

Every December, the AC is also involved in a tree-planting initiative. In 2023, with the support of its athletes, it planted 150 fruit trees at Chiwashasha primary school on the suburbs of the capital, Harare. The AC believes it has a duty to raise awareness of key issues such as sustainable development and environmental protection. This is why it is committed to this initiative, especially by planting trees.



## NOC MALI

# 4<sup>TH</sup> ATHLETES' FORUM OFFERS SUITABLE PLATFORM FOR CAPACITY BUILDING

**N**OC Mali (CNOSM), through its Athletes' Commission, organised the 4th Athletes' Forum on 28 and 29 December 2023 on the theme: *"Together, athletes commit to building a better world through sport."*

The opening ceremony was attended by some sixty athletes from various sports federations and disciplines. According to Mrs Bengaly Mahawa Guindo, representative of the CNOSM President, the forum ties in perfectly with the Committee's vision of making sport clean



and preparing athletes for life after sport. Speaking to athletes, she pointed out that they would now receive insight from the various topics presented by experts.

Djenebou Dante, Chair of the Athletes' Commission, thanked the CNOSM President and all members for their unwavering support to their Commission. She also thanked the Belgian experts who contributed their expertise and knowledge for the benefit of Malian athletes.

While hoping that the topics to be discussed will be beneficial to all

participants, Djenebou said that her aim is to support, raise awareness, educate and train athletes. *"We fight night and day for the wellbeing of athletes, and we strive to seek the best solutions to your various problems. We work with sports officials to ensure that you are efficient and perform excellently until you become Olympic medalists,"* she said. She urged them to work together to create an honest and competitive athlete community with Olympic values. Belgian expert Lenvain Jean-François pointed out that the aim is to enable young athletes to become role



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models for their generation, to inspire others and enable Mali to have a long history of training and high performance in sport.

*“You’ve been doing it wonderfully well for several years in football, beginning with training, and it can also be done in other sports disciplines. In Belgium, we help elite athletes to balance sport and education, because as an elite athlete, it is important not to neglect your education. Performance during one’s career is important, as are all aspects of training, injury prevention, nutrition, hydration and*

*everything else related to ethics, values and so on. It’s all about preparing for life after sport. We’re going to discuss this topic in three phases. We’ll start by talking about education, career and life after sport,”* explained the Belgian trainer, who has been in the Belgian professional sports business for 15 years, in all disciplines, fostering all-round athlete development.

The Athletes’ Commission was created in 2006 with 12 sports federations under the aegis of Mrs Tounkara Kadidiatou Kanoute. Today, the Commission chaired by



Djenebou Dantehas expanded to more than 30 federations. The initiators of the forum underscored that the Commission is not a trade-union, but aims to represent athletes within the Olympic Committee and help them become competitive. They added that it aims to manage their career, and to help them live comfortably after their sports careers.

### **DAY 2, A RESOUNDING SUCCESS!**

Athletes eagerly took part in various activities. The Career Management Quiz was an opportunity for them to test their knowledge with challenging questions, covering topics ranging from nutrition to stress management and career management.

Other highlights included testimonies on career and life after sport. Athletes shared their highs and lows, their triumphs and challenges.

This 4<sup>th</sup> Athletes' Forum served as a springboard for learning and sharing knowledge. It also bolstered athletes' will and determination to remain strong in all circumstances, and fostered a sense of camaraderie among athletes.

The next edition is eagerly awaited!

### **DELIBERATIONS OF THE 4<sup>TH</sup> CNOSM ATHLETES' FORUM**

The 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the CNOSM Athletes' Forum kicked off on Thursday, 28



December at the Millennium Hotel in Bamako, and continued until Friday, 29 December 2023.

Organised by the CNOSM Athletes' Commission in collaboration with Olympic Solidarity, the forum afforded a platform to discuss important issues concerning athletes.

It brought together many athletes from various national federations with the participation of Belgian experts Jean François LENVAIN, sports performance coach, and Hugo De WINTER, nutrition expert.

This year's theme: *"Together, athletes commit to building a better world through*

*sport"*, was in line with the Olympic Movement's mission to promote a better world through sport. It highlighted the positive effects of sport on physical and mental health.

*"When we practice sport, our mind and body stay strong and healthy. Sport drives us to always give the best of ourselves,"* said Djenebou Dante, Chair of the Athletes' Commission. She expressed her gratitude to President Habib SISSOKO and CNOSM, who made this event possible, and who continue to support and encourage athletes.

Transitioning from a career in sport to the business world is quite a tough journey, marked by daunting emotional and professional challenges. The forum addressed several topics, including the athlete career programme and how to prepare for life after sport during one's career.

According to Belgian expert, performance coach Jean-François Lenvain, when an athlete ends their career, they often find themselves at a crossroads where the identity they had built around their sport fades away. *"During this forum we will offer practical advice to help athletes redefine their identity, explore their passions outside sport and find a new purpose in life."*

Other important topics included injury prevention, invisible training, training on nutrition and doping.



# NOC BURKINA FASO ATHLETES' COMMISSION ORGANISES ANNUAL FORUM

**T**he first Annual Athletes' Forum of NOC Burkina Faso took place on 16 and 17 December 2023 at the NOC headquarters in Ouagadougou. It marked the actual launch of activities of the Athletes'

Commission of NOC Burkina Faso and set the pace for many other activities.

This maiden forum brought together 100 elite athletes and champions from various federations who listened to enriching and



**It hooked athletes' interest, as they paid keen attention to every presentation and did not hesitate to ask many relevant questions.**

The active collaboration of the partner, Ringo Club, and the participation of sports federations was the driving force behind this first forum.

It hooked athletes' interest, as they paid keen attention to every presentation and did not hesitate to ask many relevant questions.

The forum concluded with the following recommendations:

### **REGULARLY ORGANISE THE FORUM**

Expedite the creation of various federation athletes' commissions.

According to the report of the Secretary General, Dr Gaoussou SIDIBE, it was a huge success for the Athletes' Commission, which was organising its first activity with its athletes, and which has now set the pace for further activities with the support of new partners.

thought-provoking presentations from great champions, Olympians and members of the Athletes' Commission of NOC Burkina Faso and IOC experts in doping control and safeguarding, among others.

Discussions were held both virtually via Zoom and in person, with power point presentations, discussions and Q/A sessions.

This forum was organised thanks to actions taken by the Athletes' Commission and the unflinching support of the NOC.



## AWARD

# 2023 IOC CHAMPIONS OF GENDER EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AWARDS

### IRENE LIMIKA (KENYA) NAMED WINNER FOR AFRICA

A former professional athlete and World Athletics certified coach, Irene Limika is a member of the Sport and Active Society Commission of the National Olympic

Committee of Kenya (NOC-K). She is also the founder of the “*Arrows for Peace*” Programme in Kenya, which advocates gender equality.

The visionary “*Arrows for Peace*” initiative aims to empower women in traditionally



**Recognising the crucial importance of safety and respect in sport, Irene Limika has spearheaded initiatives to combat gender-based violence by promoting a culture of zero tolerance with regard to discrimination and harassment.**

marginalised pastoralist communities in East Africa through archery. By breaking down societal barriers and giving access to sport, she has set in motion a powerful movement for inclusion. Currently, 30% of archery teams in Kenya are made up of female athletes. Over and above

simple participation, she has facilitated the awarding of study grants abroad, opening the doors to personal fulfilment and societal change for countless women who were previously excluded from the sporting arena.

As a World Athletics certified coach and respected member of the Sport and Active Society Commission of NOC Kenya, Irene Limika has spearheaded the promotion of gender equality in coaching and mentoring within sports organisations. Furthermore, by supporting more than 120 young female coaches every year through the Train the Trainer (ToT) programme, Irene Limika has not only contributed to a transfer of skills, but has also given a whole new generation of female leaders the means to break through the glass ceiling and bring about significant change. She is a relentless advocate of policy reforms and organisational strategies that embed gender equality and diversity at the heart of sporting communities, paving the way for a more inclusive and equitable future.

Recognising the crucial importance of safety and respect in sport, Irene Limika has spearheaded initiatives to combat gender-based violence by promoting a culture of zero tolerance with regard to discrimination and harassment. Through targeted educational programmes and impactful awareness-raising campaigns, she uses sport as a powerful tool to break down systemic barriers and empower everyone to stand up against injustice, thereby ensuring that every athlete can compete in a safe and friendly environment.

**Following the designation of Irene Limika as the winner for Africa of the 2023 IOC Champions of Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Awards, the President of ANOCA addressed her the following message:**

**Madam, dear sister,**

I write to congratulate you on your choice as winner for Africa of the IOC “2023 Champions of Gender Equality, Diversity and Inclusion” Awards, through the «Arrows for Peace» project in Kenya. All ANOCA Executive Committee members also join me to sincerely congratulate and encourage you to keep it up.

We are all delighted that you have taken the initiative in your capacity as a member of the Sport and Active Society Commission of NOC Kenya and founder of the ‘Arrows for Peace’ programme.

Through this initiative, archery has become a real springboard for the development of women from traditionally marginalised communities. Today, 30% of

archery teams in Kenya are made up of female athletes. Kindly extend our sincere congratulations to all those directly or indirectly involved in this dynamic movement for inclusion through sport.

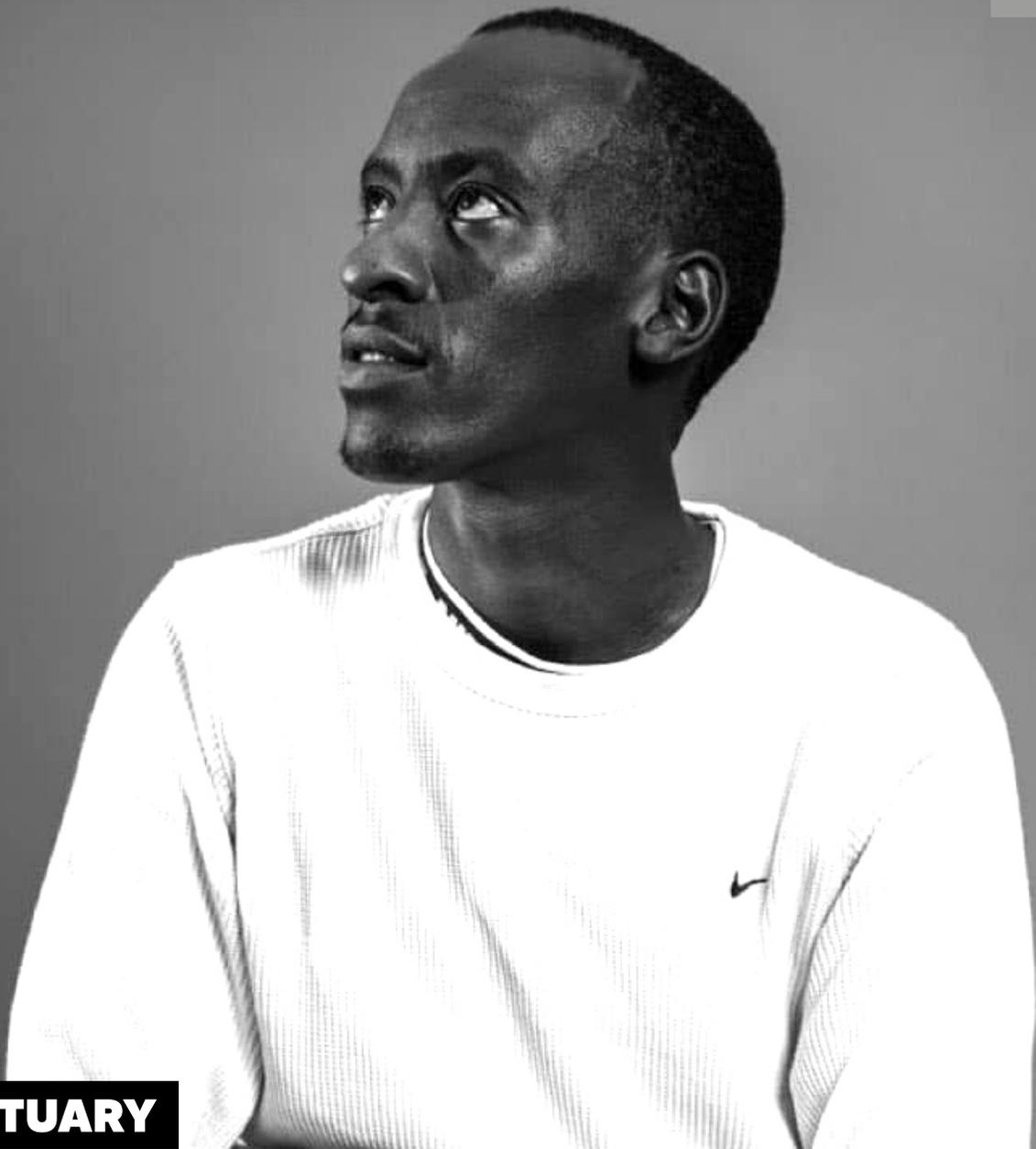
ANOCA encourages the participation of female athletes in archery, which is an Olympic discipline.

Together, let us put a stop to all forms of discrimination and violence.

**Madam, dear sister,**

We stand with you and hereby convey the gratitude of the entire African Olympic and sports movement.

Yours sincerely,



## OBITUARY

KELVIN KIPTUM

# A GREAT CHAMPION BOWS OUT!

**K**elvin Kiptum, who set the new world record at the Chicago Marathon in 2023, died alongside his coach Gervais Hakizimana in a road accident on Sunday, 11 February.

Thousands of people converged on Chepkorio, Elgeyo Marakwet County, Kenya, to attend the funeral of the men's marathon world record holder on Friday,

23 February as he was laid to rest at his farm in Naiberi, about 20km from Eldoret.

Prominent among the mourners were Kenyan President William Ruto and World Athletics President Sebastian Coe, who joined Kiptum's family, friends and fellow athletes to bid a final farewell to the departed icon who, regretted Sebastian Coe, "*...never got to show his full potential.*"

“  
**President Ruto gave a moving tribute to Kiptum, who began running barefoot in primary school at the age of 10.**  
”

Coach Gervais Hakizimana was buried in his home country, Rwanda, two days prior to Kiptum's burial.

It was an impressive crowd of athletes, officials and government leaders who converged on ElgeyoMarakwet, Kenya's "County of Champions", to honour Kiptum, who beat the previous world record held by two-time Olympic champion EliudKipchoge's, becoming the first man to run the marathon under two hours one minute.

Kiptum's widow, Asenath Rotich, was inconsolably devastated as she spoke of her husband's last journey in her eulogy:

***"I can't learn to say goodbye... It's unbelievable that today I have learnt to stay with our kids without you coming home...I have cried until no more... I promise to gather my strength for the sake of our children."***

It was as an emotional moment of grief, but also a moment to celebrate Kiptum's outstanding marathon achievements.

President Ruto gave a moving tribute to Kiptum, who began running barefoot in primary school at the age of 10:

***"In Kelvin, we saw the future of athletics in Kenya," he said. "He came from a relatively unknown family and area, but today the world knows his name because of his world record. He had more reasons not to succeed than to succeed, but he beat the odds."***

Sebastian Coe aptly summed up bright-gloomy atmosphere: ***"As a young life ends so soon and in such a brutal and devastating way, it is in and of itself enough to grieve. It's a cause of intense sadness. [We have] legitimate permission to celebrate an extraordinary young man. But it is a celebration suffused in frustration. Frustration because Kelvin would have written more epic chapters in the illustrious history of Kenyan and world athletics. This I know,"*** he lamented in his tribute.

Other leaders of the athletics world were not left out, as they extolled the departed icon, a young man who raced to the fastest marathon debut in history, before winning the 2023 London Marathon, and then breaking the world record in Chicago later that year.

He was expected to race in the upcoming Rotterdam Marathon, with the hope that he will fulfil his stated his desire to "beat his time" in the Dutch city.

“All indications were that he was going to achieve his dream of lowering the marathon time to under two hours,” said Athletics Kenya President, Jackson Tuwei.

***“...we selected a team to represent Kenya and his name was on top of that list. We are going to miss him in Paris. It is our hope that we shall be able to send a strong team to Paris, we wish our athletes to run tactically and bring the win back to Kenya in honour of Kelvin Kiptum”.***

In December 2023, he had received the 2023 World Athlete of the Year for men's out of stadia award in Monaco. Along with the sports leaders, local and international athletes expressed their condolences following the devastating loss of the young marathoner, who ran three of the seven fastest times in history.

They also pleaded for more support to improve training conditions and security in the region.

*“It's sad that Kiptum never lived to enjoy his exploits,”* said Julius Yego, the Rio 2016 Olympic javelin silver medallist.

***“Mr President there is no training facility in the North Rift for athletes. We also request for the world record holders to be handed security and a driver by the government.”***

Belgian track Olympian Bob Verbeek, who heads Kiptum's management company Golazo, pledged to set up the Kelvin Kiptum Foundation to continue supporting the athlete's family, as well as

**Belgian track Olympian Bob Verbeek, who heads Kiptum's management company Golazo, pledged to set up the Kelvin Kiptum Foundation to continue supporting the athlete's family, as well as the running community that mattered most to him.**

the running community that mattered most to him.

***“Your journey was so inspiring and full of hope. The Chicago Marathon world record-breaking performance was just the beginning. Breaking the two-hour barrier was just an intermediate step in your mindset. You also wanted to light the lamp for others.”***

Kiptum leaves behind two children, his seven-year-old son Caleb and four-year-old daughter Precious. He was the only child of Samson Cheruiyot and Mary Kangogo. Rest in peace Great Champ!



## 2<sup>ND</sup> EDITION OF “24 HOURS OF WOMEN’S SPORT”

# PROMOTES GENDER EQUALITY IN AFRICAN SPORT

**S**aturday 9 March 2024 will go down in the annals of the celebration of women in sport, through sport and for sport. The Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee (YOGOC) Dakar 2026 organised the second edition of the “24 Hours of Women’s Sport” in March, the women’s month.

The event took place on Gorée Island, a highly historic site, and attracted a significant number of sportsmen and women, as the mayor of Gorée,

SENGHOR Augustin, who doubles as President of the Senegal Football Federation, pointed out.

SENGHOR Augustin expressed satisfaction with “*the efforts made by NOC Senegal and the OCYOG to promote women’s sport.*”

The event was presided at by the Coordinator of Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee, Ibrahima WADE.



More than 300 girls took part in the event, out of a total of 700 participants. It was an opportunity for them to make their voices heard, with touching testimonies, as they advocated their rights. This created a special atmosphere that reminded everyone of the importance of supporting and encouraging women to achieve their goals, whether in sport or other areas of life.

The YOGOC Coordinator, Ibrahima WADE, enthusiastically welcomed the initiative, which was championed by a team of women for women. He also specified that: *“We are grateful for the commitment of women within the YOGOC. There are 17 of them out of 40 members, and we encourage all women to become more involved in the world of sport and to take up leadership positions. Besides, three of the seven strategic positions are held by women, who are making a decisive contribution to the preparations for the Games.”*

It was indeed a commitment to gender equality, which brought together the badminton, judo and kickboxing federations, who put on spectacular shows. Breakdance, which will make its debut as an Olympic discipline at the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, featured in the programme of events. The aim was for the YOGOC to stimulate the interest of young girls in diverse and innovative sports that will also feature at the Youth Olympic Games Dakar 2026.

Moreover, young girls were schooled in Olympic values during a course on the Olympic values of excellence, friendship and respect. The aim is to encourage them to cultivate a positive and respectful attitude towards themselves and others. For the YOGOC, it is important to provide equal opportunities for all athletes and sports sector professionals.



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SOLIDARITY,  
FRATERNITY**

**UNITÉ,  
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FRATERNITÉ**



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