



PRESS RELEASE



ASSOCIATION OF NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEES OF AFRICA

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International Women's Rights Day

TRIBUTE TO AFRICAN WOMEN AND SPORTSWOMEN





8 March 2025, By Mustapha BERRAF, IOC Member, ANOCA President, Vice President of ANOC.

On this day, 8 March 2025, ANOCA celebrates International Women's Rights Day with a glowing tribute to African women and African sportswomen.

These women, who have left an imprint on the history of continental and world sport, embody tenacity, resilience and excellence. They flew and still fly Africa's colours high on the biggest sports arenas, notably at the Olympic Games, where they have won medals and written glorious pages in the history of African sport.

We celebrate their achievements, their courage and their contribution to sport development in Africa. We also pay tribute to all those who, behind the scenes, work for the development of sport on the continent: sportswomen, coaches, managers, volunteers and activists.





The African woman, a force to be reckoned with in world sport

Women's sport has made remarkable strides in Africa in recent decades. African female athletes have not only held sway in their disciplines, they have also broken barriers, pushed back boundaries and inspired generations of young girls across the continent.

At the Olympic Games, African women have always been emblematic figures, winning medals in disciplines as varied as athletics, boxing, gymnastics, taekwondo and many others. Their success is rooted in hard work, unfailing determination and growing support from African sports institutions.

Memorable performances include Ethiopian and Kenyan runners who have reigned over long-distance and middle-distance events for decades. Names like Tirunesh Dibaba, Nawal El Moutawakel, Kirsty Coventry, Hassiba Boulmerka, Faith Kipyegon and Hellen Obiri resonate as symbols of excellence. Nigerian women footballers, the Super Falcons, have won several continental titles and represented Africa with pride on the international stage. Judoka like Nigerian Aminat Adeniyi have won medals at the African Championships and the Commonwealth Games. These athletes, and many others, have shown that African women are a force to be reckoned with in world sport.

Overcoming challenges and obstacles

Behind every success is a story of struggle and perseverance. African women in sport have had to overcome many challenges to achieve excellence. The lack of infrastructure in many African countries makes it difficult for women to take part in sport. Stereotypes and prejudice often hinder their ambitions and their access to sport. In addition, female athletes often receive less financial support than their male counterparts, making things even more difficult for them.

Despite these obstacles, African women have continued to forge ahead, train and excel. Their success is a testament to their resilience and determination.





ANOCA and its commitment to women's sport

Aware of the challenges faced by women in sport, ANOCA, is committed to promoting gender equality and supporting the development of women's sport in Africa. Among the initiatives it has put in place, ANOCA supports training programmes for female athletes, coaches and managers. It also encourages the organisation of competitions reserved for women, to give them greater exposure and opportunities. Awareness-raising campaigns are run to combat stereotypes and promote gender equality in sport. Finally, ANOCA is working with its partners to increase funding for women's sports programmes.

These initiatives have already borne fruit, but there is still much to be done to ensure that every woman and every young girl in Africa has the opportunity to play sport and fulfil her dreams.



Message of hope and determination

On this International Women's Rights Day, ANOCA hereby conveys a message of hope and determination to all African women. You are a source of inspiration for millions of people across the continent. Your success shows that, despite the obstacles, it is possible to achieve your dreams and shine on the world stage.

We also call on governments, sports institutions and international partners to step up efforts to support women's sport in Africa. Investing in women means investing in the future of the continent.





Women, the future of African sport

ANOCA pays a glowing tribute to all the women who make African sport shine. You are pioneers, role models and sources of inspiration. Your success is proof that Africa can shine on the world sports stage.

On this International Women's Rights Day, we reassert our commitment to supporting and promoting women's sport in Africa. Together, we can build a future where every woman, every young girl, has the opportunity to play sport, to fulfil her dreams and to contribute to the continent's influence.

Long live the African woman!
Long live women's sport!
Long live Africa!





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