ACNOA - ANOCA

from 26 july to 5 august 2025

Echoes of the games

African School Games Newsletter

Algeria 2025

الألعاب الإفريقية المدرسية
AFRICAN SCHOOL GAMES
ALGERIA 2025



Annaba 2025

AFRICA LAUNCHES MAIDEN AFRICAN SCHOOL GAMES AND MAKES HISTORY



Africa has written one of the most promising chapters in its sports and educational history during a spectacular ceremony that marks the beginning of a new era for school sports on the continent.

On Saturday 26 July 2025, at the legendary 19 Mai 1956 Stadium in Annaba, Algeria officially gave the kick-off to the maiden African School Games, a historic event placed under the most distinguished patronage of the President of the Republic of Algeria, H.E. Abdelmadjid Tebboune. This unprecedented event, born of a shared vision between ANOCA and the International School Sport Federation (ISF), brings together for the first time thousands of young athletes from across the continent in a stunning celebration of sport, education, African unity and fraternity.

The President of the Republic, who had already instructed the government to revive school sports, underscored that "***Algeria was honoured to host such a prestigious event, which does not only put young people at the heart of its priorities, but is also a vehicle for peace and sustainable development in Africa.***"



HISTORIC EVENT ON A CONTINENTAL SCALE

The maiden African School Games represent much more than just a sports competition: they fulfil an African dream, that of creating a new tradition within the continental sports movement. The brainchild of a joint initiative between ANOCA and ISF, this historic event brings together 1,700 athletes representing 47 African countries for the first time.

The event, which will be held until 5 August in four Algerian cities - Annaba, Constantine, Sétif and Skikda, with the tennis competition taking place in Algiers - will also hbring together 2,500 delegates, ANOCA members, representatives of 50 African NOCs, referees and observers. These record figures reflect the exceptional scale of this maiden edition, which will undoubtedly be difficult to match.



The African School Games project was officially launched during the Olympic Games Paris 2024 and was commended at the time by the IOC. They embody the ANOCA vision of creating a sustainable sports ecosystem by investing in training, talent identification and education through sport from a very tender age.

The African School Games are not just a one-off event; they are an essential cornerstone of the new model for sports development in Africa, inspired by the ANOCA Olympafrica programme. They demonstrate the organisation's deep commitment to making sport a lever for inclusion, peace, social cohesion and international outreach.

"***These Games are the tangible response to a shared ambition: to make sport a cornerstone of the continent's transformative journey. They represent the promise of a future where every African student can dream, challenge their limits and embrace Olympic values***", said Mustapha Berraf in his speech in Annaba.



AN OPENING CEREMONY THAT LIVES UP TO AFRICA'S AMBITIONS

The opening ceremony truly depicted the African spirit. It blended sport, music, culture and tradition to offer the world a spectacular show that was both unifying and stirring. With the sounds of music drawn from the national repertoire, both modern and old, fans were treated to an exceptional artistic and sports journey. The sports and arts exhibitions showcased by various entertainment troupes, including performances by singers like Chemsou Freeklane, Salim Chaoui, and the rapper from Hippone, Azzou, created a warm and festive atmosphere.

The arrival of the official delegations, proudly flaunting their national emblems, the solemn oaths taken by athletes and judges, and the inspiring speeches delivered by officials were the most exciting moments of this memorable evening.



The powerful words of the officials set the tone for this exceptional ceremony: Sports Minister, Walid Sadi, Youth Minister, Mustapha Hidaoui, and ANOCA President, Mustapha Berraf, all hailed a strategic turning point in the history of African sport.

"***Africa finally has a continental event dedicated to academic and sports excellence. These Games are more than just a competition, they are a pioneering initiative***", said Mustapha Berraf. It is worth noting that, in a remarkable democratic gesture, access to the stadium was completely free, enabling Annaba residents to celebrate this continental event live.

ALGERIA RISES TO THE CHALLENGE WITH PANACHE

It is not by chance that Algeria was chosen host this maiden edition. Recognised for its exceptional capacity to host major sporting events, Algeria was entrusted with this daunting task by continental sports authorities at the highest level, with less than five months to plan.



As the Minister of Sports, Walid Sadi, stressed in his official speech: "***Thanks to the political will of the President of the Republic, H.E. Abdelmadjid Tebboune, the multiple sports facilities that have been built have made Algeria a sporting destination par excellence, demonstrating its ability to organise major sporting competitions, like the maiden African School Games today***."

Algerian authorities have honoured their commitments by providing the organisers with all the financial, logistic and infrastructural resources necessary for the success of this major continental event. Key to this success are modernised sports facilities, seamless logistics and a warm welcome: everything has been put in place to guarantee a memorable edition. The challenge is on the verge of being met, and with flying colours.



VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF AFRICAN SPORT

The maiden African School Games are part of an ambitious initiative aimed at developing and promoting African sport through meticulous talent identification, high-quality coaching, effective training and better management of sports careers. Positioned as a key hub for the continent's development across all sectors, Algeria is establishing itself as a springboard for a forward-looking programme aimed at supporting talented young African athletes.

"***Today, we shoulder a historic responsibility: that of laying the foundations for a new tradition within the African sports movement***", said Mustapha Berraf, ANOCA President and an iconic figure in Algerian sport. "***A continental event dedicated to academic and sports excellence. A space for discussion, fair competition, peace and fraternity for the continent's young people***."



YOUTHS IN THE SPOTLIGHT, AFRICA ON THE MOVE

Beyond the competition, the Games are designed as a platform for intercultural exchanges, celebration of diversity and promotion of fraternity among peoples. Every match, every encounter, every moment spent on and off the tracks and pitches becomes an opportunity for learning, mutual respect and collective development.

The African School Games are thus intended to be a school for living together, challenging limits and discipline, in keeping with the vision of ANOCA and its continental partners.

The young athletes, aged between 12 and 18, will have their first international experience in a structured Olympic setting, with professional standards and top-level support. This experience is expected to generate interest in sport, reveal potential champions and, above all, build a new generation of committed and confident Africans.



MESSAGE OF PEACE, UNITY AND PROGRESS

In a global context marked by tensions, rifts and uncertainties, the organisation of these Games in Algeria sends out a powerful message, that of a continent capable of uniting, planning and achieving; that of a resilient, ambitious and united youth; that of an Africa that ensures it has the means for a promising future.



PROMISING FUTURE

The eyes across Africa are on this historic event, as Mustapha Berraf puts it: "***These Games are the perfect demonstration of what Africa can do and achieve when it is united. We must now make them a permanent event on the continental sports calendar***", he insisted. "***These Games are the achievement of a collective dream. They embody an ambitious vision, that of offering Africa's youth a platform for sporting excellence, unprecedented cultural exchanges and a springboard for the champions of tomorrow***", he went on to say, before concluding that "***the organisation of these Games by Algeria testifies to the strategic importance attached to the development of school sports on the continent***".

ANOCA extends its thanks to all stakeholders - governments, ministries, sports federations, NOCs, volunteers and citizens - who have contributed to making this dream a reality. The Association also wishes to pay a heartfelt tribute to President Tebboune for his personal involvement and total support.



For the ANOCA President, the objective is now clear: institutionalising the Games, improving them from one edition to the next, and making them a powerful tool at the service of Africa's youths. ANOCA is also planning a post-Games follow-up programme to support the budding talents identified and factor in the lessons learned into national public sports and education policies. As Mustapha Berraf declares: "***Our objectives are clear: they aim to identify budding talents, build capacities and promote the values of solidarity, fair play and friendship. We are together, united and ready to take up any challenge... Be proud of belonging to our beautiful Continent and show your remarkable abilities.***"

President Berraf concluded by invoking Allah: "***On behalf of the African Olympic and Sports Movement, I wish you every success in these first-ever African School Games, which I can assure you will go down in history for their culture, education and level of excellence. May Allah the Almighty be your helper!***"


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