

ACNOA - ANOCA

ANOCA PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE FOR THE YEAR 2026

"TOGETHER, LET'S SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OLYMPIC AFRICA"

Dear brothers and sisters of the African Olympic and Sports Movement,

Your Excellencies, NOC Presidents,

Dear Athletes, Sports Officials and Development Partners,

As we embark on this new year, I address you with a heart full of hope, determination and immense pride for all that we have accomplished together and, above all, for all that we are about to achieve.

2026 is no ordinary year. It is a historic and crucial year that will forever mark the history of the African Olympic and Sports Movement. It is the year in which Africa will cement its place as a key player in world sport, not only through its outstanding athletes, but also through its vision, organisation and leadership.

AFRICA, A CONTINENT OF EXCELLENCE AND INNOVATION

My dear friends, we live in truly extraordinary times. Our young, dynamic and resolutely forward-looking continent is undergoing tremendous transformation. Our athletes are shining on every international stage, our sports organisations are modernising, our infrastructure developing and above all, our young people are dreaming and daring to believe in a better future through sport.

This transformation extends far beyond the playing fields. It encompasses all aspects of the Olympic and Sports Movement: training, diplomacy, technology, health and culture. It is against this backdrop that we have developed an ambitious roadmap for 2026, under the auspices of ANOCA, a roadmap that reflects our vision of a strong, united and modern Olympic Africa.



OUR 2026 ROADMAP: SEVEN MILESTONES TO EXCELLENCE

In March, we will turn a leaf in the history of African sport with the Afro-Asian Cultural Event, billed for 28 March in Kuwait City. Under the theme "***Silk to Sahara***", we will celebrate, with our Asian brothers, thousands of years of unity between our two continents. Sport is more than just competition; it is about culture, fraternity, mutual understanding and a vehicle for peace. The 99 African and Asian NOCs will come together to show the world that we are stronger together.

In May, we will hit a game-changing milestone in upskilling our sports leaders with the first batch of the ANOCA Diploma in Sports Diplomacy in Hungary.

This top-tier academic programme will empower a new generation of African leaders to champion our interests globally, negotiate professionally and represent Africa with competence and dignity because the future of African sport is also shaped in boardrooms, well negotiated deals and good mastery of global sports diplomacy.

Come June, we will dive into the future with the ANOCA AI Forum. Africa must not merely ride the tech wave, we should be at the helm. This forum will be about unleashing the power of AI to level up our training methods, boost athletes' performance, streamline the management of our sports organisations and make elite sport more accessible. Innovation is no longer an option, it is a must.

In July, we will be placing the health of our athletes at the centre of our concerns with the ANOCA Medical Forum. Our champions deserve the best medical and scientific support. This forum will bring together leading experts to share best practices, develop care protocols tailored to our continent and ensure that every African athlete receives world-class medical care. A healthy athlete is a high-performing athlete, and the health of our athletes is our collective responsibility.

In September, we will meet for our Ordinary General Assembly, a key democratic moment when we will take stock of our actions, adjust our strategies and consolidate our unity. ANOCA is only as strong as each of its 54 members. Your voice matters. Your concerns are our concerns. Together, we decide on our future.

In October and November, Africa will step into the international spotlight with the Youth Olympic Games in Dakar, Senegal. What a symbol! For the first time, this prestigious event will land on African soil. Our young athletes, aged 15 to 18, will have the opportunity to live the Olympic experience at home, cheered by their own fans, on their own turf. These Games will be clear proof that Africa can organise major sports events with excellence, professionalism and passion. Dakar 2026 will be our showcase to the world, and I know that we will rise to this historic responsibility.

Still in November, we will wrap up the year on a high with the second batch of the ANOCA Diploma in Sports Diplomacy in Hungary. We are doubling down on training our executives and upskilling our sports officials, thus consolidating our commitment to ongoing development.

My dear friends, none of these achievements would have been possible without the commitment and support of many partners, whom I would like to formally thank.

I salute with respect and admiration the leadership of the IOC President, Mrs Kirsty COVENTRY. Her landmark election marks a new era for the Global Olympic and Sports Movement. Her vision and experience as an elite athlete and her commitment to equality and sport development in all regions of the world inspire us deeply. Africa is proud to walk alongside her as Olympic and Sports Movement embarks on this new journey.

I would also like to express my deep gratitude to IOC Honorary President, Dr Thomas BACH, for the rock-solid support to the African Olympic and Sports Movement throughout his tenure. His attentiveness, understanding of our challenges and concrete sport development actions in Africa will remain etched in our memories. Mr President, Africa thanks you from the bottom of our hearts.

Dear Presidents, dear Secretaries General, dear officials of all the 54 African NOCs, you are the cornerstones of our Movement. Nothing would be possible without you, your daily dedication and your commitment in the field.

At times, you work in difficult conditions, with limited resources, but you do so with passion, conviction and love for your country and for sport. You identify talent, nurture it, coach it and support it all the way to the top of the Olympic podium.

Every medal won by an African athlete is the fruit of your labour. Every young person who finds hope and fulfilment through sport is the result of your efforts. Every Olympic value instilled in our youths bears your mark.

For all this, I say thank you. Thank you for your loyalty to ANOCA. Thank you for your commitment to your athletes. Thank you for your contribution to building a strong and respected sporting Africa.

My dear brothers and sisters, 2026 will be a challenging year. It will require effort, coordination, mobilisation and determination on our part. But I know we are ready. I know we can do it.

Africa has been underestimated for far too long. We have too often been confined to the role of spectators. For far too long, our organisational abilities, our seriousness and our professionalism have been doubted. 2026 will be the year when we prove, once and for all, that we are key players in the Global Olympic and Sports Movement.

But to achieve this, we must remain united. Unity is not wishful thinking! it is a must. Our 54 countries, our 54 NOCs, our thousands of athletes are all part of one family: the African Olympic family. Our differences are our wealth, but our unity is our strength.

I therefore make a solemn appeal to each and every one of you today: let's all commit to making 2026 the year of Olympic Africa. Let's all attend every event. Let's all actively participate in every forum. Let's share our experiences. Let's learn from each other. Let's support each other, because when an African NOC succeeds, the whole of Africa wins. When an African athlete shines, all of Africa glows.

Our ambition for ANOCA goes beyond 2026. We are laying the foundations for a modern, efficient, transparent and respected organisation. An organisation that trains its officials, innovates, anticipates future challenges, fiercely defends the interests of African sport and makes athletes its priority.

We want ANOCA to be a credible partner for the IOC, international federations and sister continental organisations. We want an ANOCA that attracts investors, creates opportunities for our youths and uses sport as a lever for socio-economic development.

We want an ANOCA whose African Games can measure up to the world's major competitions. We want an ANOCA whose training programmes are recognised globally. We want an ANOCA that is the pride of every African, wherever they are in the world.

This vision is not far-fetched. It is being built day after day, event after event, and decision after decision. And 2026 is a crucial step in this process.

Finally, allow me to express a personal but heartfelt wish for good health, happiness and prosperity to each and every one of you throughout 2026.

Take care of yourselves. Take care of your loved ones. Take care of your athletes. Without good health, nothing is possible. We need each and every one of you in top form and full of energy to achieve our shared mission.

May 2026 be the year in which we write the most beautiful pages in the history of African sport together. May 2026 be the year in which our athletes shine even brighter. May 2026 be the year in which ANOCA takes a decisive step forward in its development strides.

My dear friends, I say this with conviction and determination: the future of African sport is in our hands. We have the talent. We have the youth. We have the passion. We have the vision. Let's remain united.

So, together, with confidence and ambition, let's shape that future. Let's build a strong, respected, innovative and successful Olympic Africa. Let's build an ANOCA that we can be proud of, and that our children will be proud of tomorrow.

The year 2026 has begun. It has begun with you. It has begun with all of us. It has begun with the firm conviction that when Africa is united, when Africa is committed, when Africa believes in itself, nothing can stop us.

Long live the African Olympic Movement!

Long live ANOCA!

Long live Africa, united in sport and through sport!

Together, let's shape the future of Olympic Africa!

Hon. Mustapha Berraf

ANOCA President
IOC Member
ANOC Vice President
President of the Olympafrica Foundation