



# ANOCA

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Kigali, capital city of Rwanda, hosted an Afro-Asian forum on women's leadership in sport from 9 to 11 August 2017, to strategize on how to eradicate gender inequality in sport. The forum was an IOC initiative, in partnership with the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA), the Association of National Olympic Committees (ANOCA) and NOC Rwanda. Highlights of that strategic encounter in this special issue of ANOCA Newsletter.



## Kigali Forum

Advancing women in sport leadership roles



Challenges of Kigali 2017 .....



More than two decades have passed by since the IOC made a clarion call for gender equality in sports governing bodies. In this light, and further to actions already undertaken, IOC, ANOCA and the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) jointly organised the maiden Afro-Asian Forum on Women and Sport in Kuwait from 18 to 20 November 2013. That meeting brought together representatives of 98 NOCs of Africa and Asia, as well as delegates from UN agencies, NGOs, IOC, OCA, ANOCA and national and continental federations. Deliberations concluded with a clear promise and active commitment to give women in both continents a more assertive role in sport.

The Kigali come together was thus not just an occasion to size up the ground covered so far in either continent, but also to develop and implement a “*strategy for the promotion of women in sport in both continents.*” It attracted representatives from 71 NOCs of Africa and Asia with the goal of federating them and other sports stakeholders around the idea of truly empowering the woman in sport in both continents and thus giving them greater representation in sports and Olympic structures. Participants also hoped, through their reflections and exchange of experiences, to contribute in enhancing initiatives and ideas that seek to strengthen the role of the woman in sports governing bodies, women sports economy and the benefits of sports practice for young girls and women.

Moreover, Kigali 2017 came at a time when NOCs are being urged to implement the recommendations of IOC Agenda 2020 which seeks, as of its priorities, to initiate measures aimed at encouraging sports practice amongst women and their inclusion in sports governing bodies. ANOCA and OCA thus hope to materialise, in their member NOCs, the IOC recommendation of 20% women’s representation within NOCs. At this dawn of the 21st century, gender equality should more than ever be visible within NOCs, national sports federations and continental structures.

The meeting issued strong recommendations that will help foster and make gender equality a reality in Africa and Asia.

## Opening ceremony attracts a good number of dignitaries .....

The opening ceremony in the MHI Hall at the Kigali Convention Centre brought together several dignitaries, including 71 delegates from African and Asian countries, members of government, representatives of international sports federations and various other international organisations. Addressing participants on that occasion, the Prime Minister of Rwanda, Anastase Murekezi, welcomed them to Rwanda and then reasserted the commitment of the Head of State, H.E. Paul Kagame, to promote gender equality in various areas of social life. He



then placed the meeting in context, as it was the first time it was holding in Africa. Taking the cue from him, the Minister of Sports and Culture of the Republic of Rwanda, Julienne Uwacu, hailed the tremendous progress made by Rwanda to empower the woman, including in sport.

Other speakers, prominent amongst them the UN Women Regional Director for East/Southern Africa, Izeduwa Derex-Briggs and IOC Member and President of NOC Rwanda, Lydia Nsekera, also lauded progress made by Rwanda in empowering women in sport.

The ceremony thus set the pace for three days of intense deliberations, during which participants mainly discussed gender equality in sport.

## Advocating women's empowerment in sport leadership roles .....

The Advancing Women in Leadership Forum for Africa and Asia brought together 251 participants from 71 African and Asian countries. They came from NOCs, international federations, national federations, continental associations, international organisations and the business world. It featured panel discussions on the following themes: "It is time for women to run for office"; "Championing Gender Equality- Everyone should get involved"; "Temporarily Special Measures to speed things up: what solutions?"; "Sustainable progress towards gender equality needs the media"; "Leadership: Educating youngsters and athletes to ensure succession"; "Promoting Women's leadership in communities through partnership" and "Sports leaders committed to greater efforts to promote gender equality."



The forum concluded with strong recommendations aimed at eradicating obstacles to women's advancement in sport.

Mustapha Berraf bears ANOCA's voice in Kigali .....



Representing the President of ANOCA, the first Vice President, Mustapha Berraf, was ANOCA's voice at the forum.

Speaking on the occasion, Berraf said that *“ANOCA has drawn up a road map in line with IOC goals aimed at encouraging and supporting women's empowerment at various levels and in all structures, especially in decision-making positions.”* According to him, *“the said road map demonstrates the commitment of African NOCs to gender equality in sport and in making women a top priority pursuant to IOC Agenda recommendation 11, which urges us to brainstorm together, both at NOC and continental levels, on ways of implementing it.”* The First Vice President of ANOCA further said that *“The issue is primordial to our action and is a focal concern for our association. Considerable progress has been made with respect to equality and women's representation is constantly on the rise. Upon recommendation by the President, a female Vice President and a Chairlady of the “Women and Sport” Commission are co-opted into the Executive Committee in addition to the traditional elective posts.”*

In the same vein, Mustapha Berraf reminded the gathering of many meetings organised or patronised by ANOCA or in which the association has participated in recent years, and during which it reasserted the place of the woman in the management of sports institutions and sports practice, notably: The Continental Forum on Women and Sport organised by ANOCA in partnership with the IOC Department for International Cooperation and Development in Luanda, Angola, on 8 November 2010; the Women Leaders' Forum co-patronised by ANOCA and IOC in Harare, Zimbabwe, in January 2012; participation in the 5th IOC World “Women and Sport” Conference from 16 to 18 February 2012 in Los Angeles, jointly organised by IOC, the U.S. Olympic Committee (USOC) and the South California Olympic Games Committee. The latter was a planetary event during which the ANOCA **“Women and Sport”** Commission presented a paper, clearly articulating Africa's stance on the issue.

Mustapha Berraf went further to cite the maiden Afro-Asian Forum on women and sport organised by IOC, ANOCA and the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) in Kuwait from 18 to 20 November 2013; the “Women and Sport” Forum organised in the Mauritius Island by ANOCA on 24 November 2015 and the 1st Africa “Women and Sport” Forum held on 18 and 19 January 2016 in Algiers under the auspices of the IOC and ANOCA. Organised by NOC Algeria, the meeting brought together 47

NOCs of the Continent under the theme: “Introducing and getting Women and Young Girls Interested in Sport.” According to the first Vice President of ANOCA, the meeting helped put in place “a mechanism that encourages African leaders to promote the inclusion of women in leadership positions and General Assemblies in the area of sport.”

For Mustapha Berraf, ANOCA’s actions to enhance women’s empowerment and inclusion in decision-making bodies today have a noticeable impact within African NOCs: “Allow me state on behalf of all colleagues of our association, that all is in place to empower women in leadership positions within African NOCs, and it can be observed today that they are progressing and do participate more actively in Olympic activities,” he said.

The First Vice President equally touched on the role of the ANOCA women and sport commission: “The ANOCA Women and Sport Commission has stepped up actions and meetings aimed at giving the African woman greater consideration in sport,” he concluded.

## Kigali 2017 attracts leading Sports Figures .....



The Kigali Forum featured a series of panel discussions facilitated by renowned figures like H.E. Julienne Uwacu, Minister of Sports and Culture of the Republic of Rwanda; Mustafa Berraf, 1st Vice President of ANOCA; FIFA Secretary-General, Fatma Samba Diouf Samoura; Gary Barker (PhD), President-CEO of Promundo-USA; Brian Lewis, President of the Caribbean Association of National Olympic Committees (CANOC) and President of NOC Trinidad and Tobago; Lydia Nsekera, IOC member and Chairlady of the IOC “Women and Sport” Commission and President of NOC Burundi; Beatrice Allen, IOC member, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President of NOC Gambia and Chairlady of the ANOCA “Women and Sport” Commission; Jochen Färber, Director of the Olympic Channel in Lausanne; Evelyn Watta, Vice President of the International Sports Press Association (AIPS).

With their expertise and experience, they raised the quality of the Kigali deliberations.

Participants hail resolutions .....

Delegates to the Kigali Forum were unanimous that the meeting provided “concrete solutions” for the inclusion of women of Africa and Asia in various continental and world sports governing bodies.

Their deliberations sharpened the focus on women’s empowerment and leadership in sport. They also raised the difficulties faced by athletes and African and Asian leaders seeking solutions on how to better integrate them at the end of their sporting careers.

The forum issued several recommendations, which aim at eradicating obstacles to women’s advancement in sport.

Recalling the commitment to “proactive action” taken by the maiden Afro-Asian Forum on women and sport held in Kuwait in 2013, the Kigali delegates noted that despite constant efforts aimed at increasing the number of women in governing bodies, inequalities persist between women and men in the world of sport.

They declared that changes will only be possible if men

and women are committed to eradicating all barriers that are still hindering women from fully enjoying sport at all levels. The Forum equally recommended that all sports organisations adopt and develop a “clear strategy to promote gender equality at all levels by 2018.”

It was agreed in the action plan that sports organisations, be they national or international, should “promote gender equality as a good governance principle and take special measures to ensure electoral processes that allow for diverse representation.” Besides, the Kigali Forum envisaged and sought to implement a “sport promotion strategy for women of both continents, by developing educative programmes for them at all levels and sports aspects that can encourage their election to positions of influence.”

Finally, delegates agreed to issue a concluding document that could be a catalyst for all stakeholders in sport in a bid to inspire a wider range of leaders in the sports world.



**Impressions... Kady Kanoute Tounkara**

*Former captain of the Mali basketball team, winner of the Africa Championship for Women in 2007 and a Kigali forum participant.*



*“My main take home message is that we should be more proactive. I believe such a platform is necessary for women, especially in Africa. This forum affords us a wonderful opportunity to meet and exchange information and ideas, and also to learn from various participants about what they are doing in their own countries. More to the point, the forum creates a network of men and women who can work together to achieve great things with respect to women’s advancement in sport. We want athletes to be involved in decision making because they are the game players. They are the heart of the sports movement and athletes’ commissions are a major dissemination channel that can relay the voices of athletes.”*

