

**Press Release N° 112 /2013****Fifth Session of AU Conference of Ministers of Sport Kicks Off**

Abidjan, 23 July 2013- The Fifth Session of the African Union Conference of Ministers of Sports opened on 22 July 2013, at experts' level in Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire. The senior officials from the African Union member states gathered to discuss the theme of the conference, "harnessing the power of sport to contribute to the broader government development agenda". In addition, the two days meeting will consider a case study of the zone 6 Strategic Plan, Regional Youth Games, programmes and activities; the 2013-2014 sport programmes of the Commission; and implementation of the African Sport Architecture, among other issues.

Dr. Olawale Maiyegun, Director for Social Affairs at the AUC said that CAMS5 is taking place at a time when Africa is celebrating the Golden Jubilee of the formation of OAU/AU. "Sport had already featured prominently and will continue to feature among the year-long activities marking the 50th years activities", he add.

"The 50th Anniversary celebration is an opportunity to reflect on the roles and achievements of sport and to take stock of the key milestones on the road Africa has travelled over the past 50 years as far as the management and coordination of sport is concerned on the continent", the Director highlighted. Emphasising the significance role of sport for the development agenda in Africa, Dr. Maiyegun underscored that "we must also reflect on how we can take sport to the greatest height on the continent while harnessing its power and multiplier effects to the development of the continent". (Complete speech of the Director is available on www.au.int).

Officially opening the experts' session H.E Alain Michel Lobognon, Minister of Youth Promotion, Sport and Leisure, government of Cote d'Ivoire, emphasised the importance of the experts' to make concrete recommendations to the ministers to ensure that sport in Africa contributes to social and economic advancement.

The Minister reiterated participants that sport is a tool for social change, development and integration in the continent.

The experts are expected to deliver the following outcomes for the consideration of the ministerial session on 25-26 July 2013:

- To offer recommendations regarding the implementation of the new Sport Architecture;
- Concrete measures and roadmap to improve the performance of African teams at international sport events including the participation of women and persons with disabilities would be provided;
- Measures to harness and integrate the tremendous power of sport into broader national and international development and peace strategies.

Journalists are invited to attend the opening session of the ministerial session on Thursday, 25 July 2013 at 9:30am at the Palais des Congrès, Hôtel Ivoire Sofitel, in Abidjan.

Further Information:

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