

DIRECTORATE OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

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Africa reaffirms its commitment to promote unity through sports as the first African Games under the ownership of the African Union ended in Brazzaville



Brazzaville, Congo, 21 September 2015. The 11th edition of the African Games officially ended on 19th September 2015 after 15 days of intense competition at the Kintele Stadium and sporting Complex in Brazzaville, Congo. The African Union Commission honored the closing ceremony of the Games with the presence of a delegation

headed by the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission, H.E Erastus Mwencha accompanied by the Commissioner for Human resources, Science and Technology, H.E Dr. Martial de Paul Ikounga. The ceremony, presided over by H.E Denis Sassou Nguesso, was attended by some Heads of State and Government as well as high ranking officials from African countries.



The colorful closing ceremony was an occasion to display the rich and diverse African culture as well as its dynamism and potential. The participants had an opportunity to visualize the aspiration 5 of Agenda 2063 aiming to create “An Africa with a strong cultural identity, common heritage, values and ethics”. Indeed different performances by African artists described a continent relying on the values of community, hard work and

mutual respect and ready to take charge of its own destiny. Brazzaville, cradle of the African Olympic spirit, successfully hosted the 11th edition of African Games, after the organization of the very first edition in 1965, 50 years ago.



During the closing ceremony the Minister of Sports of Congo and President of the organizing committee, Mr. Leon Opimba handed over the AU flag to the AUC Deputy Chairperson, H.E Erastus Mwencha, as the AU is the owner of the African Games and the institution implementing the decision of the African Union Executive Council establishing

the new architecture for Sports in Africa and approving the dissolution of the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA). The integrated functions of the SCSA including the ownership, coordination and organization of the African Games were transferred to the African Union in January 2012.

Mr. Opimba commended the fair play spirit of the African youth during the competition and expressed his gratitude to the African Union for its leadership and constructive collaboration. He pointed out the fact that sport is a catalyst towards bringing the African people together and a driver for peace on the continent. He also highlighted that the 11th edition of the African Games was a window of opportunity to show the ability of Africa to host important sporting events.

This 11th edition brought together 8000 athletes competing in 22 sporting disciplines, 1000 officials and 1000 journalists to celebrate Pan-Africanism and African solidarity. The next edition will take place in 2019.



About the African games

African Games is a Pan-African multidisciplinary sports event which gathered African Union member states every 4 years to promote African unity and solidarity through sports. The celebration of the Africanness on the continent through sports started in 1960 marked by the organization of the first Friendship Games held in Madagascar. However, the Friendship Games was reserved exclusively to French-speaking countries.

In order to correct involve all African countries in the games, a conference of African Sports Ministers recommended the organization of games involving all African countries. The Decision facilitated the participation of several English-speaking countries during the 1963 Friendship Games, held in Dakar. This was without a doubt a major triggering factor in the hosting of an event on a continental scale. And in the end, it was Brazzaville who hosted the first African Games from 18 to 25 July, 1965 with the participation of 30 countries, competing in 10 sporting disciplines. **JL/wzm**

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