



**MINISTRY
SPORT AND RECREATION
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA**

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**Opening Address On The Occasion Of
THE 2010 NATIONAL COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIP
CONFERENCE**

**15 AUGUST, 2007
SANDTON, GAUTENG, SOUTH AFRICA**

**BY
THE MINISTER OF SPORT AND RECREATION (S.A.)
REVD. DR M.A. STOFILE**

Introduction/ Salutations:

Programme Director, Mr Tim Modise
2010 National Communication Partnership Chairperson, Mr Nkeke Kekana
CEO of the 2010 FIFA World Cup Organising Committee SA, Dr Danny Jordaan
President of the African Union of Broadcasting, Mr Ben Egbuna
Secretary-General of the Southern Africa Broadcasting Association, Mr Arlindo Lopes
CEO of the International Marketing Council of South Africa, Ms Yvonne Johnston
2010 Government Unit Coordinator, Dr Joseph Phaahla
CEO of Government Communications (GCIS), Mr Themba Maseko
Media and Communication, Marketing and Advertising and Tourism practitioners
Distinguished international guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

Africa's Time Has Come!

May 2004 was an important milestone for FIFA, for South Africa and for the African Continent. After 101 years of her existence (since May 1904), FIFA awarded an African Country the right to host the most prestigious sports event in the world, the Soccer World Cup. After taking a conscious decision to rotate the bidding and hosting of the World Cup among the continents of the World. 2010 was Africa's time. South Africa was to be the torch bearer/flag bearer on behalf of the continent.

It is recorded history that soccer has been played in South Africa since the 19th Century. A good example is the "Orange Free State Kaffir Team" that went to play in England in 1899. So impressive was this team that their sponsors organised for matches in Germany and Austria in 1900. Of course there was a war in South Africa, which sabotaged this trip to Europe. (The Anglo-Boer War). The interest recorded in a British publication of the 7/10/1899 "to the performance of the Kaffir football team now touring this country" (courtesy of Prof A. Odendaal's research) is now gripping the whole world. South Africa is in the spotlight and we dare not disappoint ourselves as South Africans and as Africans.

The inaugural FIFA World Cup was in the Southern Hemisphere. It was hosted by Uruguay in 1930. In 2010 FIFA's Golden Trophy will head to the South again. This should inspire all Africans from the gold-miners of South Africa to the undulating golden fields of Tunisia.

After more than one hundred years of playing soccer football, African countries have very little to show for it. Our national Leagues as well as the Continental competitions (including the African Cup of Nations - Afcon) have still to shine with glory and warm the hearts of us all. Our merchandise shines in foreign shores where African players continue to distinguish themselves with skills last seen in the Kaffir Tour of 1899. Maybe with better technique!

What we are arguing here is that we have been playing soccer football long enough to be taken seriously in the community of football playing nations. The legacy of a "heart of darkness, the dark continent, the continent ravaged by wars and diseases" has to be dealt with once for all. Afro-pessimism must be banished.

Seeds that give root to it must be eradicated from Cape Town to Cairo. South Africans must unite behind the Organising for and hosting of the FIFA World Cup in 2010. The entire continent must work together and consolidate African solidarity around this project, the African showpiece.

A good beginning has been made. Our closest contestant for hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup Morocco. When we won the bid, Morocco and 36 other African nations sent us letters of support and congratulations. Many countries like Brazil, Argentina, France, Germany, England, Australia, New Zealand and many more also pledged their support to South Africa and Africa. On the 29th January 2007 the Summit of the AU declared an unwavering support for this premier event being hosted by South Africa. This was the first time in the history of the World Cup that FIFA had received such recognition and accolades.

As if this was not enough, the AU declared 2007 as the International year of African Football. This in celebration of the 50th Anniversary of the Confederation of African Football (CAF founded in Khartoum, Sudan in 1957). The AU took these decisions to underscore the truth recognised by no mean organisation than the United Nations, viz. that sport can be an instrument to promote unity, solidarity and peace.

(Look at what winning the Asian Nations Cup did to Iraq last month). Sport also encourages a healthy lifestyle and inculcates positive values of a citizen among young people. Sport is also known to have built the economies of such towns as Manchester, Chelsea and Liverpool. It continues to contribute to the economic growth of Dubai. So indeed sport can be a useful tool to attain the Millenium Development Goals for Africa. It should contribute to strengthening the New partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) as Africa's blue print.

Plans and preparations for staging the 2010 FIFA World Cup must be inextricably linked to the milestones of political leadership and gains that have seen the advent of multi-party democracy and the end of bloody coup de 'atats in Africa. It must contribute to the end of traditional leadership and bad governance in sport in the way our political leadership has led to limited terms for heads of state and government.

If these political milestones worked to place Africa in the front trenches of defining the new world, a correct and strategic approach to planning and preparing for staging the World Cup in 2010 could leave behind a legacy of undoing the historical marginalisation of Africa from the mainstream of world soccer football and of the economic spin-offs that flow from it.

The next four years will be a time to test our resolve in practical terms. Informed by our common goal of building a better Africa, communicators from all corners of Africa should strive to speak with one integrated and coherent voice. The outcomes of the Technical Workshop of the AU and the 2010 FIFA World Cup Legacy Committee held in March 2007 in Pretoria must be properly and widely communicated. The Workshop developed implementation strategies for both the International Year of African Football as well as the kind of legacy the 2010 World Cup must deliver to South Africa and the continent.

Among the "Quick Wins" identified by that Workshop is :

**The DEVELOPMENT OF A COMMUNICATION STRATEGY ON THE 2010
FIFA WORLD CUP and its Legacy Programmes.**

This Conference kick-starts that process. Africa and the world must know. They must hear about our vision and plans, of our progress and challenges from ourselves. For this reason, the forging of communication partnerships is very critical. Communicators must be acquainted with decisions of Africa's leadership. This way communicators will have enough tools to engage their various sectors in preparations for 2010. Unity is Strength!

Ours should be a message of hope that shows that Africa is changing for better. It must also be a message that reaffirms what the then Secretary of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), Mr Amara Essy said in Durban in 2002. He said:

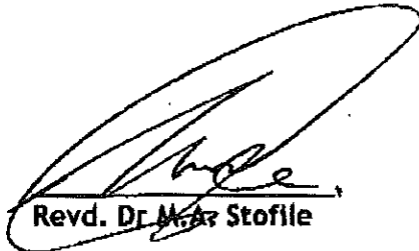
"..... apart from the optimism and exaltation, it is the resolute will of the damned of the earth to grab from fate the control of their destiny in all lucidity, brotherhood (sic) and the comity on nations. Because nobody will do it for us."

Let President Thabo Mbeki have the final word. Speaking at the adoption of South Africa's Constitution in Parliament in 1996, the then Deputy President of South Africa said:

"Whatever the setbacks of the moment, nothing can stop us now!
Whatever the difficulties, Africa shall be at peace!
However improbable it may sound to the skeptics,
Africa will prosper!"

Forward to a Memorable World Cup in 2010!!

Africa's Time Has Come!



Revd. Dr. M. A. Stofile

Date: 15 August 2007