

Africa's time has come



**WELCOME ADDRESS BY Mr NKENKE KEKANA, CHAIRPERSON OF THE 2010 NATIONAL COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIP AT THE ANNUAL NATIONAL COMMUNICATION PARTNERSHIP CONFERENCE, CONFERENCE HELD IN SANDTON, GAUTENG, SOUTH AFRICA, 15 AUGUST 2007**

Programme Director, Mr Tim Modise  
Honourable Minister of Sport & Recreation of South Africa, Rev Dr Makhenkesi Stofile  
Distinguished international guests (President of the African Union of Broadcasting, Mr Ben Egbuna and Secretary-General of the Southern Africa Broadcasting Association, Mr Arlindo Lopes)  
Danny Jordaan CEO FIFA 2010 LOC  
CEOs and Government Officials, Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentleman

We extend a warm welcome to all delegates of the 2010 National Communication Partnership attending this conference; also a special welcome to those who are joining us from other African countries and those who have crossed oceans to be with us today.

Exactly on this day last year, communicators from within South Africa congregated to discuss the communication opportunity created by the 2010 FIFA World Cup and to foster alignment among South African communicators to leverage on this mega-event that South Africa has the privilege to host. I must say that the support was magnificent.

Today the Partnership has a membership of more than 250 communication practitioners and specialists in different fields and sectors from government, public and private sector organisations working voluntarily together.

We are gathered here today with the same objective, but a step further forward – to ensure that as African communicators we take advantage of the opportunities created by the 2010 FIFA World and to project Africa positively to the world.

Indeed, Africa's time has come – and as communicators and we are ready to tell our own stories, as Africans we will tell stories of a developing African continent. It is our responsibility not anybody else responsibility. It is our assignment not anybody else assignment. We are delegated by history to communicate about Africa's stories of success; the world cup is one of those stories to be told.

Our communication will be much more than football. The hosting of the 2010 world cup by South Africa, an African country is carried out within the broader understanding that the hosting of the event is part of a new moment in Africa's history – a moment of growth, development, and the rebirth of the continent.

As Amadou-Mahtar M' Bow former director general of UNESCO once observed “For a long time, all kinds of myths and prejudices concealed the true history of Africa. From the world at large. African societies were looked upon as societies that could have no history”. Africa's time has come; we are a proud people with lots of history.

Today the successful use of mobile telephony in many countries of Africa is a demonstration of a continent ready to leapfrog even higher, the communication technology to be used at the 2010 world cup is already more advance than the 2006 event hosted in the continent of Europe.

The Partnership has long realised the need for other African communicators to work together with the host communicators in order to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the 2010 World Cup.

Honourable Minister, we are also proud to report that our continent is responding positively to the clarion call, as can be see through the presence of communicators from Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, Swaziland, Malawi and Zimbabwe. We are greatly humbled and honoured by your presence fellow African communicators, as communicators let us spread the word.

This conference is one step in an ongoing process of developing linkages and partnerships with more communicators from the continent. We anticipate that with the involvement of all African communicators we will create a powerful communication platform in order to build unity and solidarity, inspire the youth and mobilise stakeholders in our various constituencies – to play a role of projecting Africa in a unique way to the world. It is time for change and the world cup is offering us an opportunity to project that change.

We would like to extend our thanks to Partnership members who have created the platforms for us to communicate and advance the Partnership objectives and projects. We look forward to even more fruitful engagements with you beyond this conference. We need to create the ‘buzz’ about Africa’s achievements and its rebirth to the world.

Indeed **Africa’s time has come** and let’s all work hard in order to create a memorable world cup that will be remembered for many generations to come.

It is my greatest pleasure to now officially declare this conference open.

Thank you once again for responding to the clarion call.