



BOTSWANA NATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE



WELCOME REMARKS BY THE BNO PRESIDENT MR. NEGROES KGOSIETSI AT THE ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY HELD ON 23RD MAY 2015 AT CRESTA LODGE, GABORONE.

Salutations

- 1. It is my pleasure to welcome you all to the penultimate Ordinary General Assembly of the BNO, before the conclusion of our 2008 – 2016 Strategic Plan.**

Moment Of Silence

- 2. Perhaps before I go any further, it will be proper that I propose we observe a moment of silence; in honour of departed colleagues and sport heroes and heroines, amongst them Mr. Nicholas ‘Lele’ Sebele, Ms Theresa Bokete and young Kyle Bannister.**
- 3. May their souls rest in peace and their legacies live forever.**

Newly Elected NF Committee Members

- 4. On the other hand, it is only proper that I recognise and congratulate those of us that have recently been elected to sport leadership positions.**
- 5. In sport alphabetical order we wish to congratulate:**

- a. **Mr Moses Bantsi and his executive team at Athletics;**
 - b. **Mr Ebrahim A. Bhamjee and his re-elected committee at Cricket;**
 - c. **Ms Unaswui Matebu and her team at Hockey;**
 - d. **Mr David Mathe and his Team at Karate; and**
 - e. **Mrs Tebogo Lebotse-Sebego and Members of her Netball Executive Committee.**
- 6. We have no doubt of your commitment to sport and are we are thus very happy to have you as members of our family.**
- 7. Let me take also take this opportunity to applaud Fazal Sheriff of Cricket for winning the Volunteer of the Year Regional Award for Africa for the year 2014 and for the election of Sumod Damodar as Tournament Director for Africa Cricket Association.**
- 8. To Mothusi Ramaabya, our Young Ambassador at the Nanjing 2014 Youth Olympic Games, kudos for being chosen to represent Africa in the adjudication of the Medal Design Competition for the 2016 Winter Youth Olympic Games to be held in Lillehammer, Norway.**

BNSC Awards

9. As tonight is an important night for our athletes, administrators and technical staff; being the night of the BNSC Awards, we wish to seize the opportunity to applaud and congratulate all the nominees.

10. As much as only a few will walk away with trophies during the awards, we are all winners in our own right. It is our love and passion for sport that should motivate us to continue working harder. May the best men and women win.

11. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, let me take a bit of your time to touch upon some critical issues in our sport.

Anti-Doping

12. The issue of doping in sport is one we can only ignore to our own peril. With the recent cycling and athletics scandals, surveillance has heightened and sanctions have become steeper.

13. Besides that, we all want clean sport and therefore are duty bound to ensure the doping scourge does not afflict our athletes.

14. By now we would be aware of the fact that our star Amantle Montsho is serving a two-year sentence that will end in August 2016.
15. Clearly no one wished that upon her, but as we would all agree, the law had to take its course.
16. We are convinced she will come out of this a stronger person and will be willing to guide other athletes not to face a similar challenge to hers.
17. On the positive though, be pleased to note that Botswana has managed to maintain her compliant status with respect to the World Anti Doping Code.
18. At the recent World Anti Doping Agency Foundation Board meeting, of which our Minister is a Member, six (6) countries were declared non complaint and Botswana was not amongst those.
19. We therefore would like to thank you for your individual and collective efforts in the fight against doping in sport. Of course we need not rest on our laurels, but continue working towards clean sport in Botswana.

20. We wish to inform Members that discussions around the Botswana National Sport Commission Act have been resuscitated and that the BNOC President and CEO have already attended meetings to that respect.

21. A meeting that involves the Ministry of Youth Sport and Culture Senior Management and the BNOC and BNSC Boards as well as a stakeholder Pitso remain on the cards.

African Youth Games

22. Yesterday marked exactly one year from the date the Games kicked off, and it is important that we commemorate in some form or shape, that milestone in our sport history.

23. Not only are we receiving overwhelming positive feedback on what was hailed a huge success by the international community, but the legacy of the Games remain for all of us to see.

24. If it were not because of the Games, we would perhaps not have seen an international volleyball competition taking place at Ditshupo Hall, as it was through the Games that a movable international standard surface was procured for them.

25. Equally, I doubt we would have won the two silver medals that we did last year at the Youth Olympic Games; a performance that placed us fourth on the African Continent.

26. The examples are many and as a result, we should pat the Organising Committee and all of ourselves on the back for that delivery of and performance at the Games.

27. I am aware that as National Federations, we would have desired that some things were done differently. But as you will agree with me, we were delivering a project of that magnitude for the first time, and thus mistakes were bound to happen.

28. Let us take those as experiences that will give us wisdom in future.

Athletes Performance

29. Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, our athletes continue to make us proud with their stellar performances in international competitions.

30. Just recently, the Volleyball Women's Senior National Team that is receiving financial support from Olympic Solidarity finished first in a Zone 6 regional

tournament; a result that has secured them a slot at the 2015 All African Games.

31. The Men's team did well too, finishing second at the Games.

32. Congratulations are in order to both Teams and we do keep our fingers crossed that the Women's Team will achieve the objective of qualifying for the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

33. Should that happen, it will be the first time Botswana is represented in a Team sport at the Olympic Games. Of course this is excluding relay teams.

34. Rio 2016 Olympic Scholarship holder Isaak Makwala and the Men's 4 x 400metres relay team need special mention for having already booked themselves places at the Rio 2016 Olympic Games.

35. This development means that we already have a higher headcount of athletes to Rio than we did to London, with about 14 months of qualification period still remaining open.

36. Another beneficiary, Naomi Ruele has just performed impressively in Mauritius, where she has amassed a total of three (3) gold medals.

37. We do hope she will do even better times at the impending World Swimming Championships, and in the process qualify for Rio 2016.

38. Least I spend the whole day on this, let me congratulate athletes that have done well in the year to date, across all sport. We are proud of all of them and implore them to continue lifting higher the blue, white and black flag.

Efficient and Effective use of resources

39. Ladies and Gentlemen, as you will agree with me, it becomes imperative that we continually look for ways to minimise costs, such that money could be channelled to athlete development.

40. One of the initiatives include less printing of documents. We would therefore like to only print one document per member in the near future for our meetings, and ultimately move to only electronic documents.

41. We wish to request for your support on this initiative that is not only beneficial financially, but one

that would also ensure we are environmentally friendly.

Committees & Commissions

42. With a view to streamline the roles and functions of our Commissions and Committees, as well as modernise them and ensure we uphold principles of Good governance, we attempted to dissolve and reconstitute the structures.

43. We appreciate the feedback received and acknowledge that we could have handled it better. As a result, we have decided our valued volunteers to continue in their roles until we advise otherwise in future.

44. We apologise for the inconvenience and any distress caused.

Minimum Standards

45. Before I conclude, let me seize the opportunity to thank our Members for their participation in a workshop that looked at our minimum compliance standards.

46. As a modern organisation, we no doubt need to adhere to the highest levels of Governance and we are

pleased that you in principle gave the Minimum Standards a nod.

47. We will of course table those for formal approval at a Special General Assembly later this year.

Conclusion

48. At this juncture, let me once again welcome you to the meeting, wish you fruitful discussions as well as an enjoyable awards ceremony tonight.

49. Ke a leboga betsho.