

IASI ACTION PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE SPORTS INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA.

PREAMBLE

In times like this, there is the need to take a cursory look at sports development in the new millenium and the role of information in particular. There is need to give kudos to the role of International Association for Sports Information (IASI) to sports development. in almost all the regions the effect of IASI has been felt. However there is a particular region that is peculiar and needs special attention. This is the Africa region. It might be needful to say that all the countries in this region are tagged developing or underdeveloped. United Nation Development Programme statistics have shown that about 60% of the population in this region cannot afford to spend one dollar per day. The illiteracy level is very high and information technology knowledge is still at low ebb. Despite the negative picture painted this region, there is still abundant human, material and physical resources which if adequately tapped can turn the region to a force to be reckoned with in the world of sports information.

Problems of Sports Information in Africa Region

1. Wrong impression by IASI: By my own assessment of about eight years, I am of the opinion that IASI has a wrong impression about Africa. IASI has little information about geography, economic, educational and administration of sports in the continent. IASI equates Africa with other region and expects a perfect system. Apart from South Africa and Egypt to mention a few, there is hardly any other country in Africa that the government supports sports information. IASI missed a unique opportunity of the last All Africa Games to project itself to Africa. This could not be done because the amount earmarked was not even able to pay for the guest speaker from South Africa.

IASI AND THE LAST ALL AFRICA GAMES

During the Exco meeting in Barcelona, I muted the idea of having a workshop and cybercafe for the 8th All Africa Games. I tried to back it up with a proposal. During the last Exco meeting in Cuba, I was informed by the President that \$4000 has been approved for the workshop and cybercafe. I set up a committee to implement the action plan for the proposal. A budget was drawn (see the attached appendix). Some expenses were incurred (see the attached expenses). I traveled from Lagos to Abuja on two occasions to discuss with the Executive Director of COJA (Organizing Committee of the Games). This was after my initial discussion and meeting with the Nigeria Olympic Committee President, Engr. Habu Gumel. He went personally to discuss with the Executive Director who later advised that I should back it up with a letter (see the attached letter). I sent letters through postage, fax and e-mail to all Ministers of Youth and Sports and National Olympic Committees in Africa, IASI members, Supreme Council for Sports in Africa and ANOCA. I specifically sent one to Mr. Thomas Sithole in Lausaune and I had a personal discussion with him. I got in touch with Nuria Puig at the Olympic Museum and they decided to send a guest speaker to us.

Charl Durand was also invited and he accepted to come. I sent an official letter of invitation to him through COJA, which he received. He also had a discussion with the President of IASI who promised to pay for his transport. The workshop was cancelled at the dying minute because the

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amount voted by IASI was not even enough to take care of Mr. Charl Durand' s transport and other allowances. I quickly sent mail to the President, Charl and Nuria Puig after an initial discussion with the President of NOC of our postponement of the workshop. This was a painful decision. I gave our brochures to journalists, athletes and officials that came.

IASI ACTION PLAN FOR AFRICA

Despite these initial or temporary set back, I am still of the opinion that much can be achieved by IASI within the next one year. IASI stands to have at least five hundred active members from Africa if this action plan can be followed.

1.. Collaborative Publicity drive by IASI: IASI should be prepared to send letters, leaflets and brochure to all the National Olympic Committees, Federal Ministry of Youth and Sports, States Sports Councils, Higher Institutions in Africa, Sports Institutes, ANOCA, CONFEJES, Supreme Council for Sports in Africa and CAF. The letters will be signed and sent by the President informing them about IASI.

2. IASI Initiated All Encompassing Workshops in Africa: We need an IASI organized and sponsored sports information conference or workshop in Africa. This must take place this year. I am suggesting that IASI solicit for part sponsorship from IOC so as to be able to foot the transportation bills for the participants most especially those from NOCs. Also we need to liaise with Supreme Council for Sports in Africa for the Ministers to be able to send representatives. I was so impressed that the President of IASI and most Vice Presidents are fully involved in the sports information conference in Lisbon. This group of experts should also be made to come to Africa. This will be a landmark and breakthrough for IASI.

3. Brochure on Sports structure in Africa : Since I was elected vice President representing Africa I have made up my mind to produce a brochure on sports structure in Africa. This I have not been able to do due to logistics and financial problem. This I want IASI to take up. I will supply the data and form, IASI will help to send out and if result comes I will collate, do the write up and IASI will publish.

4. NewsLetter on Africa IASI This is another pet project, which I have not been able to accomplish. With a little assistance from IASI this will materialize. Next year will be an election year. I want to be able to see many Africans attending the congress and also to be able to show them what I have been able to achieve in the last four years.

Finally, even though the workshop did not hold but since there was an approval, some expenses were made. I shall be grateful if IASI in its wisdom can pay.

Thanks.

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