



YOUTH VOICE

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REGION 5 COUNCIL OF
MINISTERS MEETING

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THE 2024 COMMONWEALTH
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NAMIBIA HOSTS AUSC REGION 5 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING

By Guilhermina Eduardo

Namibia is proudly hosting the AUSC Region 5 Council of Ministers Meeting from December 12–13, 2024, at the Windhoek Country Club Resort.

This significant gathering marks Namibia’s assumption of the Chairmanship of the AUSC Region 5 Council of Ministers, reflecting the nation’s leadership and dedication to advancing sports development in Southern Africa.....continued to page 4.

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From the ED's Desk

Mr Mbumba Erastus Haitengela
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As 2024 draws to a close, Namibia finds itself at a pivotal moment in its sports and youth development journey. From hosting prestigious regional events to leading vital international discussions, the country has demonstrated its unwavering commitment to fostering talent, promoting unity, and shaping the future of sports in Southern Africa.

One of the standout highlights of the year was Namibia's successful hosting of the Africa Netball Cup 2024 in Swakopmund. The tournament, which took place from December 9–14, showcased not only the growing prominence of netball in Africa but also Namibia's ability to bring together top-tier teams from across the continent.

South Africa's dominance, securing gold in both the men's and women's categories, highlighted the competitive nature of the tournament. However, Namibia's Desert Jewels and Desert Stallions displayed resilience, securing solid placements and making the nation proud. Their performances signal a bright future for Namibian netball, one that we hope will continue to flourish in future regional and international competitions.

Another defining moment for Namibia this year was the official launch of the Independence Stadium renovation project, aimed at upgrading the facility to meet CAF Category 3 standards.

This upgrade is not just a physical transformation; it is symbolic of Namibia's ambitions to become a major hub for African sports. With the capacity to host prestigious events like the Africa Cup of Nations and FIFA World Cup qualifiers, the Independence Stadium will soon become a cornerstone of Namibian sports infrastructure.

The country's commitment to sports development is further underscored by the appointment of the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) for the Region 5 Youth Games 2025, which will bring together young athletes from across the Southern African region.

This is a significant milestone in Namibia's journey toward becoming a leading sports nation, offering a platform for youth engagement and showcasing the nation's growing influence in regional sports governance.

Namibia's leadership was also highlighted during its hosting of the AUSC Region 5 Council of Ministers Meeting in December 2024. The event emphasized the country's commitment to fostering collaboration and advancing regional sports development.



Under the leadership of Minister Hon. Agnes Tjongarero, Namibia's role as the new Chair of the AUSC Region 5 Council represents a vital opportunity to drive sustainable growth in sports across Southern Africa, particularly with the upcoming Region 5 Youth Games scheduled for 2025. The strategic conversations that took place during the meeting are expected to play a pivotal role in shaping the future of regional sports programs, youth empowerment, and climate change initiatives.

As the year ends, it is evident that Namibia is positioning itself as a leader in both sports development and regional cooperation. The commitment to building world-class sports facilities, empowering youth through programs like the Commonwealth Youth Forum, and fostering collaboration with international partners demonstrates a clear vision for a brighter sporting future. Namibia's leadership role in regional and continental sports initiatives reflects not only the government's dedication to the sector but also the collective ambition of the nation to create an environment where sports, youth development, and regional unity can thrive.

As we look to 2025 and beyond, the success of these initiatives offers much hope. The Region 5 Youth Games will be a momentous occasion for Namibia to showcase its growth as a sports destination, while also providing a platform for young athletes to compete at the highest level. The renovation of the Independence Stadium and the country's active participation in various regional and international forums set the stage for continued progress in sports, youth empowerment, and economic growth. The future is indeed promising, and Namibia's journey is one to watch with great anticipation.

Enjoy reading the Youth Voice newsletter. I am wishing our dear readers a blessed festive season filled with joy, peace, and good health, and a prosperous New Year ahead! May 2025 bring success and happiness to you and your family!

NAMIBIA HOSTS AUSC REGION 5 COUNCIL OF MINISTERS MEETING

By Guilhermina Eduardo



Held under the theme **“A Progressive, Inclusive, and Performing Region,”** the event has brought together sports ministers, policymakers, federations, and representatives from the 10 member states: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

Opening the proceedings, Executive Director of the Ministry of Sport, Youth, and National Service, Mr. Erastus Haitengela, highlighted the transformative role of sports in fostering unity, youth empowerment, and economic growth.

He emphasized the region’s shared ambition to become a hub for innovation and sporting excellence across Africa.

“This gathering comes at a crucial time as we collectively shape the future of sport development in the region. These meetings serve as vital platforms for dialogue, shared learning, and strategic collaboration,” Mr. Haitengela remarked.

Namibia’s Minister of Sport, Youth, and National Service, Hon. Agnes Tjongarero, delivered the keynote address, underscoring the importance of compliance, governance, and inclusion in enhancing regional sports programs.

She positioned the meeting as a critical step toward the successful hosting of the 11th AUSC Region 5 Youth Games, which Namibia will host in July 2025.

“As Ministers of Sport, we must re-commit ourselves to ensuring that our athletes do not miss life-changing opportunities such as competing in the Region 5 Youth Games,” Hon. Tjongarero stated.

Namibia has signed the Protocol Agreement to host the 2025 Region 5 Youth Games and is deep into preparations to accommodate 2,552 athletes and volunteers. The Ministers is deliberating on key topics, including climate change, safeguarding, and the implementation of regional sports programs, ensuring that the Games are a resounding success.

This meeting highlights Namibia’s commitment to fostering regional collaboration and inclusion while reinforcing its role as a leader in regional sports development. With the 2025 Youth Games fast approaching, the nation is setting a high standard for innovation, governance, and unity in the world of sports.



NAMIBIA LAUNCHES INDEPENDENCE STADIUM RENOVATION PROJECT

By: Sophie Tendane



On December 2, 2024, the Minister of Sport, Youth, and National Service, Hon. Agnes Tjongarero, officially launched the renovation and upgrade project for the Independence Stadium in Windhoek.

This milestone marks a transformative moment in Namibia's sports infrastructure development, with the aim of elevating the stadium to meet the Confederation of African Football (CAF) Category 3 standards.

The upgraded Independence Stadium, with a seating capacity of 30,000, will position Namibia to host premier international events such as the Africa Cup of Nations and FIFA World Cup qualifiers, alongside national and international athletic competitions.

Hon. Tjongarero emphasised the project's significance, stating: "This renovation represents our commitment to providing world-class facilities for our athletes and spectators. It will solidify the Independence Stadium's role as the proud home of Namibia's national football teams and as a center for sporting excellence."

The Ministry appointed Marley Tjitjo Architects, in partnership with Denchi Consulting Engineers and Richard Frankle & Partners Quantity Surveyors, to spearhead the architectural, engineering, and quantity surveying services.

This decision followed a rigorous public procurement process conducted in accordance with the Public Procurement Act. The stadium renovation aligns with CAF's 2022 guidelines, ensuring compliance with international standards.

Features of the upgrade include enhanced seating, improved safety measures, and state-of-the-art facilities for players, officials, and fans.

The project reflects Namibia's broader strategy to boost the nation's sports profile and foster economic opportunities through high-profile events. It demonstrates the government's vision of turning the stadium into a beacon of excellence for sports and unity in the region.

As Namibia embarks on this ambitious project, the upgraded Independence Stadium will not only enhance the country's ability to host international tournaments but also inspire future generations of athletes, solidifying its legacy as a vital sports hub in Southern Africa.



NAMIBIA REPRESENTED AT THE 2024 COMMONWEALTH YOUTH FORUM IN SAMOA

By: Marvellous Shilongo



A high-profile Namibian delegation attended the 2024 Commonwealth Meeting in Apia, Samoa, to discuss pressing global challenges, including climate change, youth empowerment, and digital transformation.

The delegation was led by Hon. Peya Mushelenga, Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, alongside Hon. Doreen Sioka, Minister of Gender Equality, Poverty Eradication, and Social Welfare, and Hon. Dr. Emma Kantema, Deputy Minister of Sport, Youth and National Service.

Dr. Kantema represented Namibia at the Commonwealth Youth Forum, held under the theme: **“Navigating Our Course: Building Resilience for a Common Future”** from October 21–22, 2024.

During the Youth Forum, Dr. Kantema emphasized the critical role of young people in tackling the climate crisis. She highlighted Namibia's commitment to empowering youth through climate education and leadership, citing initiatives like EduVentures, which equips young people with practical skills in climate science and sustainability.

The Deputy Minister called attention to Namibia's ambitious climate goals, including its target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 91% by 2030, despite contributing only 0.003% to global emissions. She stated, “Youth are pivotal to driving Namibia's green transition, and their leadership is essential for shaping a sustainable future.”

Dr. Kantema underscored the importance of integrating climate adaptation into national policies and fostering partnerships with international organizations.

She praised collaborative efforts such as the British High Commission's support for Namibia's Model UN conference, which provides a platform for youth to engage in policy discussions.

The Deputy Minister also highlighted insights from Alka Bhatia of the UNDP, who stressed the need to integrate climate adaptation into development strategies to build resilience. Namibia is aligning its policy frameworks to encourage youth-led innovations in green technologies and sustainable practices.

Namibia's youth representatives, Luciano Kambala and Nadia Araes, actively participated in the forum, sharing their perspectives and contributing to discussions on sustainability and youth leadership. Their involvement reflected Namibia's focus on nurturing the next generation of changemakers.

In her closing remarks, Dr. Kantema urged stakeholders to empower youth to become champions of climate action. She said, “By equipping young people with the tools and opportunities they need, we can amplify their voices and ensure they lead us toward a sustainable and resilient future.”

Accompanying the delegation were Mr. Mbumba Haitengela, Executive Director of the Ministry of Sport, Youth and National Service, and Mr. Nicolars Tembwe, Director of Youth Development, who supported Namibia's mission at the forum.

Namibia's active participation in the 2024 Commonwealth Youth Forum underscores the country's dedication to global collaboration and its commitment to empowering its youth to lead the charge for a sustainable future.



EMPOWERING COMMONWEALTH YOUTH THROUGH AI AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

By Marvellous Shilongo

Namibia showcased its progressive approach to digital transformation at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa, during a side event titled **"Empowering Commonwealth Youth through AI and Digital Transformation."** Hon. Dr. Emma Kantema, Deputy Minister of Sport, Youth and National Service, highlighted the nation's initiatives in leveraging artificial intelligence (AI) to advance youth empowerment.

Speaking at the event, Dr. Kantema emphasised how Namibia is embedding AI into education, policy frameworks, and entrepreneurship to unlock opportunities for young people. She highlighted the integration of AI into Vision 2030 and the National Development Plans (NDP5), underscoring digital skills as critical to achieving sustainable national development.

Dr. Kantema outlined Namibia's successful efforts to build a robust foundation for youth-focused digital transformation, including:

- **Education and Training:** Namibia has introduced coding and robotics programs in schools through collaborations with the Namibia University of Science and Technology (NUST) and local NGOs. These programs are sparking youth interest in technology and innovation.
- **Entrepreneurship Ecosystem:** Initiatives like the Namibia Business Innovation Institute (NBII) are fostering youth-led start-ups by providing technical support, funding opportunities, and mentorship programs.

- **Strategic Partnerships:** The Ministry has established collaborations with tech companies and international organizations to expand digital literacy and access to AI tools for young people.
- **Community Engagement:** Through workshops and outreach programs, Namibia is ensuring that digital transformation is inclusive and reaches rural and underserved communities.

Dr. Kantema highlighted the transformative role AI plays in Namibia's economic development, particularly in enhancing its participation in the African Continental Free Trade Area.

By empowering youth with AI skills, the country is better positioned to capitalize on opportunities within AfCFTA, driving innovation and regional trade competitiveness.

In her concluding remarks, Dr. Kantema reaffirmed Namibia's commitment to equipping its youth with the skills needed for the digital economy. She stressed the importance of inclusivity and collaboration in harnessing AI's potential for national development.

"Empowering young people with digital skills is not just an investment in their future but a crucial step towards achieving sustainable growth and resilience for our nation and the Commonwealth as a whole," she stated.

Namibia's participation in the event highlighted its dedication to positioning youth at the forefront of the Fourth Industrial Revolution, paving the way for a more innovative and inclusive future.



HON. AGNES TJONGARERO APPOINTS LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE FOR THE AUSC REGION 5 YOUTH GAMES 2025

By Sophie Tendane



In a pivotal move to ensure the success of the African Union Sport Council (AUSC) Region 5 Youth Games, Hon. Agnes Tjongarero, Minister of Sport, Youth, and National Service, has officially appointed the Local Organising Committee (LOC). The 17-member committee will oversee all preparations and execution of the Games, which are scheduled to take place in July 2025.

Each member brings expertise to their specific portfolio, contributing to Namibia's commitment to delivering an exceptional event. The appointed LOC members and their respective roles are as follows:

- Dr. Ndeulipula Hamutumwa – Chairperson
- Mr. Johan Muller – Vice Chairperson and Head of Audit
- Dr. Emilia Salomo – Head of Accommodation
- Mr. Josua Andries Hoebe – Head of Accreditation
- Mrs. Malan Elago – Head of Catering
- Mr. Isak Hamata – Head of Ceremonies and Entertainment
- Mrs. Leonie van Wyk – Head of Finance, Investment, and Procurement
- Adv. Jesse Schickerling – Head of Legal
- Chief Inspector Muatara – Head of Security
- Mr. Evaristus Evaristus – Head of Infrastructure, Equipment, and Game Service
- Mrs. Simon Kavanga – Head of Health, Medical, Emergency, and Anti-Doping
- Mrs. Elizma Theron – Head of Marketing and Public Relations
- Dr. Donavon Zealand – Head of Technical and Sports Programme Committee
- Mr. Nande Amakali – Head of Transport
- Mr. Benhard Kaanjuka – Head of Volunteers

- Mr. Simon Uirab – Head of Protocol
- Mr. Connie Samaria – Head of Games Village

Their responsibilities span critical areas, from logistics and infrastructure to marketing, finance, health, and legal compliance. This organized approach demonstrates Namibia's preparedness to host athletes, officials, and visitors from the ten member states.

The LOC's term began on November 1, 2024, and will run until October 31, 2025, as outlined in Cabinet Decision No. 20th/12.11.24/007. The AUSC Region 5 Youth Games will host young athletes from ten Southern African nations: Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. The event is an opportunity to celebrate athletic excellence while fostering regional integration and collaboration.

The AUSC Region 5, operating under the African Union Sports Council, was established to drive sports development and strengthen unity across Southern Africa. The biennial Youth Games serve as a cornerstone of this mission, providing a platform for youth to showcase their talent, build cross-border friendships, and contribute to regional growth.

As preparations progress, Namibia eagerly anticipates welcoming the Region 5 nations to celebrate the unifying power of sport and youth development. The LOC's leadership will play a crucial role in ensuring the Games reflect the spirit of excellence and collaboration that defines the AUSC Region 5 Youth Games.

With less than a year remaining, Namibia's LOC is committed to showcasing the nation's passion for sports and fostering a spirit of unity and excellence throughout the region.

LOCAL ORGANISING COMMITTEE ASSIGNED RESPONSIBILITIES FOR REGION 5 YOUTH GAMES 2025

By Guilhermina Eduardo

On December 6, 2024, the Ministry of Sport, Youth, and National Service officially welcomed the 17-member Local Organising Committee (LOC) tasked with preparing for the AUSC Region 5 Youth Games, scheduled to take place in July 2025.

During a training session, Executive Director Mr Erastus Haitengela formally handed over responsibilities to the LOC, signaling the commencement of intensive preparations for this prestigious regional event.

The committee members, drawn from diverse sectors, are expected to work collaboratively to ensure the Games' success.

The AUSC Region 5 Youth Games will unite young athletes from ten Southern African nations—Angola, Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.

This event not only showcases athletic excellence but also fosters regional unity and sportsmanship among the youth.



The Ministry emphasized the significance of the Games in promoting youth development, regional collaboration, and Namibia's commitment to hosting a world-class sporting event. The LOC is poised to deliver an unforgettable experience for all participants and stakeholders.

As the countdown to July 2025 begins, Namibia looks forward to hosting this grand celebration of sports and camaraderie in the region.



CHEFS DE MISSION MEETING SETS THE STAGE FOR REGION 5 YOUTH GAMES 2025

By Guilhermina Eduardo



The Ministry of Sport, Youth, and National Service convened the Chefs de Mission (CDM) and General Team Managers (GTM) meeting on December 7, 2024, at the Avani Hotel and Casino in Windhoek, marking a critical step in preparations for the 11th AUSC Region 5 Youth Games, scheduled for July 2025.

Deputy Minister Hon. Emma Kantema delivered a keynote address highlighting collaboration, sustainability, and excellence as the pillars for delivering the Games, which aim to set new standards through climate-neutral and sustainable practices.



The meeting covered essential aspects such as venue assessments, the Youth Games Master Plan, and accreditation processes, emphasizing the growing global influence of sports and the importance of strong organizational capabilities. Despite economic challenges, Namibia remains committed to hosting cost-effective and high-quality Games.

Hon. Kantema urged participating nations to meet deadlines and financial obligations while also sharing plans to upgrade facilities, including the Tennis Center and courts at the University of Namibia.

The gathering, attended by 64 officials, fostered a collaborative spirit among stakeholders, reinforcing commitment to making the Region 5 Youth Games a resounding success.



HON. AGNES TJONGARERO OPENS 19TH ANNUAL AFRICA ZONE VI RADO MEETING

By Guilhermina Eduardo



Swakopmund, Namibia – The 19th Annual Africa Zone VI Regional Anti-Doping Organization (RADO) Member Country Representatives (MCRs) Meeting was officially opened by the Minister of Sport, Youth, and National Service, Hon. Agnes Tjongarero, on 22 November 2024, at the Plaza Hotel.

In her opening address, Hon. Tjongarero highlighted the critical importance of regional collaboration in advancing Clean Sport initiatives.

“Operating in silos or in an uncoordinated manner is not only wasteful, but it also denies us the advantages of working together,” she stated, emphasizing the need for integrated anti-doping programs that span from grassroots to elite levels.

Her remarks underscored the role of such programs in safeguarding athlete welfare and preserving the integrity of sport across the continent.

The event brought together prominent figures in the anti-doping community, including:

- Mr. Andrew Kamanga, RADO Manager
- Mr. Fahmy Galant, Vice Chairman
- Mr. Sameh Elray, WADA Africa Manager
- Ms. Joan Smit, ANOCA Representative
- Delegates from various RADO member countries

The meeting also coincided with the 25th anniversary of the African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5, marking a significant milestone in fostering ethical sportsmanship and reinforcing collaborative efforts within Africa.

Discussions during the meeting focused on the harmonization of anti-doping measures, capacity building, and the promotion of fair play to ensure sustainable progress in the fight against doping in sports.

The event reaffirmed the commitment of RADO member countries to upholding Clean Sport principles and building a future where athletes can compete on a level playing field.



SOUTH AFRICA DOMINATES 2024 AFRICA NETBALL CUP

By: Sophie Tendane



The Africa Netball Cup 2024, hosted in Swakopmund, Namibia, from December 9–14, 2024, saw a competitive field of teams from across the African continent. South Africa's netball teams claim the top spot in both the men's and women's categories, reaffirming their dominance in African netball.

South Africa's women's team secured the gold medal, with Uganda taking silver and Zimbabwe earning bronze, showcasing the exceptional talent in women's netball across the continent.

In the men's category, South Africa triumphed with another gold, followed by Eswatini with silver, and Zimbabwe claiming bronze, highlighting the growing competitiveness of men's netball in Africa.

Namibia's teams, the Desert Jewels (women) and the Desert Stallions (men), gave spirited performances on home soil. The Desert Jewels clinched a well-deserved 5th place, overcoming Zambia 54–46 in a thrilling match.

The Desert Stallions finished 6th out of seven teams, demonstrating growth and potential despite the fierce competition. The Ministry of Sport, Youth, and National Service commended all teams for their dedication and extended heartfelt congratulations to the Desert Jewels for their remarkable efforts.

The tournament not only celebrated Africa's burgeoning netball talent but also highlighted Namibia's potential to host international sporting events. With their resilience and determination, Namibia's teams are poised to achieve greater heights in future competitions.

As netball continues to gain traction across the continent, the Africa Netball Cup 2024 stands as a testament to the sport's ability to unite nations and inspire athletic excellence.

The women's competition comprised of eight teams from Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Uganda, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. In the men's competition, the team comprised from Eswatini, Kenya, Lesotho, South Africa, Zambia, and Zimbabwe.



WELCOMING OUR NEWLY APPOINTED TEAM MEMBERS

The Ministry of Sport, Youth, and National Service is pleased to announce the appointment of two outstanding individuals to our team. It is our honor to introduce them to our internal and external stakeholders.

Mr. Hillary Imbuwa has been appointed as Deputy Director of Resource Coordination and Programmes in the Directorate of Youth Development, effective 02 December 2024.

Ms. Hendrina Hambunda has been appointed as Senior Accountant: Reconciliation in the Directorate of General Services, effective 02 December 2024.

We are confident that their expertise, enthusiasm, and innovative perspectives will greatly contribute to the Ministry's mission and objectives.

We trust they will find their new roles both rewarding and inspiring.

Let us all extend a warm welcome and offer our support as they settle into their positions and begin making an impact.

Welcome aboard!



Mr. Hillary Imbuwa



Ms. Hendrina Hambunda



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