



ECOWAS SUPPORTS DAKAR 2026 YOUTH OLYMPIC GAMES WITH A \$300,000 DONATION

On the sidelines of the ECOWAS Youth Assembly, the National Youth Forum of Senegal, held in Dakar, Senegal, on November 26 and 27, 2024, the ECOWAS Commission, through its Youth and Sports Development Centre, presented a check for \$300,000 to the National Olympic and Sports Committee of Senegal (CNOSS) in support of the organization of the Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games. This symbolic gesture reflects significant financial support and ECOWAS's commitment to assisting Senegal in the success of this global sporting event, aimed at empowering youth and promoting the universal values of Olympism.

The official handover ceremony, led by Professor Fatou Sow Sarr, ECOWAS Commissioner for Human Development and Social Affairs, took place in Dakar, in the presence of Ms. Khady Diène Gaye, Senegalese Minister of Youth, Sports, and Culture. His Excellency Francis Chuks Njoaguani, Director of the ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre and Acting Resident Representative of ECOWAS in Burkina Faso, along with several other high-ranking officials, also attended the event.

This partnership demonstrates ECOWAS's commitment to sports and youth development while upholding the principles of equal opportunity. The allocated funds will support the organization and promotion of this global sporting event, which will be held for the first time on the African continent.

In her speech during the check presentation ceremony, Prof. Sow Sarr congratulated Senegal on this historic achievement, which she said makes the entire ECOWAS region proud and provides athletes from the Community's Member States the opportunity to compete internationally. She assured the Senegalese government of ECOWAS's continued support for the successful execution of this activity. The National Olympic and Sports Committee of Senegal, represented at the ceremony by its First Vice-President, Mr. Momar Mbaye, and its Secretary-General, Mr. Seydina Omar Diagne, warmly welcomed this initiative. Mr. Mbaye emphasized the importance of supporting young talent and promoting sports at all levels. According to him, these Games, although organized in Senegal, represent the entire African continent. He expressed his gratitude for this significant contribution from ECOWAS, essential to ensuring the success and quality of the competition's organization, while providing an unforgettable experience for all participants.

The Dakar 2026 Youth Olympic Games, organized under the auspices of the International Olympic Committee, will bring together young athletes aged 14 to 17 from around the world. This event, which ensures perfect gender parity, embodies a unique opportunity to strengthen



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regional unity through sports while celebrating the excellence and diversity of African youth talent. This financial contribution from ECOWAS is part of the implementation of a partnership agreement signed in 2022 between the ECOWAS Commission and the National Olympic and Sports Committee of Senegal.

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About ECOWAS

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) was established when the ECOWAS Treaty was signed by 15 West African Heads of State and Government on the 28th of May 1975 in Lagos, Nigeria. The ECOWAS region spans an area of 5.2 million square kilometres. The Member States are Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, Senegal and Togo.

Considered one of the pillars of the African Economic Community, ECOWAS was set up to promote co-operation and integration, leading to the establishment of an economic union in West Africa to raise the living standards of its peoples, and to maintain and enhance economic stability, foster relations-among Member States and contribute to the progress and development of the African continent.

In 2007, ECOWAS Secretariat was transformed into a Commission. The Commission is headed by the President, assisted by a Vice President, and Five Commissioners, comprising experienced bureaucrats who are providing the leadership in this new orientation. As part of this renewal process, ECOWAS is implementing critical and strategic programmes that will deepen cohesion and progressively eliminate identified barriers to full integration. In this way, the estimated 300 million citizens of the community can ultimately take ownership for the realization of the new vision of moving from an ECOWAS of States to an **“ECOWAS of the People: Peace and Prosperity to All”** by 2050.