



SPEECH OF CAF PRESIDENT AHMAD AHMAD AT THE 12TH EXTRAORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY - 30 SEPTEMBER 2018

The President of FIFA,
The General Secretary of FIFA,
The Minister for Youth and Sports,
Representatives of Egyptian Authorities,
Representatives of UEFA,
Members of the CAF Executive Committee,
Ladies and Gentlemen of National Associations,
Dear friends of the press,
Honourable guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Here we are gathered, for the Extraordinary General Assembly, in this charming seaside resort of Sharm El Sheikh, of Peace, to comply, above all, with the statutory obligations of our Confederation.

The goal is obvious: it is to fill up the vacancy created by our friend and brother - Mr. Kwesi Nyantakyi, who resigned from his position as a member of the FIFA Council. We shall thus proceed with a new election.

I therefore make recourse to the principle of democracy, which has guided all my actions since taking office on 17 March 2017.

Although the statutes give me the right, I can propose appointments to the Executive Committee (art.23, section 5 of the Statutes of the CAF) but I give you all the latitude to do so because I wish to get back to you for a political and important decision.

This is not a slogan if I should remind you at all times that you are the only holders of the rights and thus the powers. I will never betray this trust. I will never stop upholding it.

How even can I stray away from this rule of trust, meanwhile I keep affirming and reiterating before you and before third parties that many of you solicited and encouraged me to run up as a candidate, despite the complexities at that time. I accepted with honour, modesty, simplicity and a firm desire to go all the way.



It is what is causing us today to gather over the values of our union and the sincerity of my commitment.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I also wished to seize this opportunity to talk about what happened in Moscow, in Russia, just two months ago. Even before the competition was officially launched, FIFA held its Congress, and may I on behalf of you all, heartily congratulate FIFA for the choice of the procedure of the designation of the host country for the 2026 World Cup. It was a novelty and it was crowned with a historic success.

But let us not be frightened by words: it was equally a lesson to learn, which will prompt us to reflect on our own methods of designating host countries of our competitions, especially the Africa Cup of Nations. Let's not be ashamed: We should be able to learn from these innovations and from such a success. Even the World Cup competition itself was equally a brilliant success.

I believe that no one, no where, had anything to question about this famous World Cup. I say famous, however it should be called historic, incomparable, exceptional. This particular hosting would remain distinguished in the annals of the great history of the World Cup.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of you all, I would like to congratulate President Gianni and Mrs Fatma Samoura on this tremendous achievement that will remain engraved in our memories and in the most beautiful pages of world sport.

We hope that each one of us would have been inspired by it, and should hold a vivid memory of souvenirs to recollect. And that notwithstanding, in this World Cup, we Africans have issues over which to be disappointed and discontented about: Unfortunately, none of our five representatives went beyond the second round. It is a hard fact to digest.

We had wanted to understand what happened, and immediately the World Cup was over, we held an evaluation seminar in Rabat the technical staff and Presidents of the federations of the five African representatives that were present in Russia.



The important evaluation seminar produced some extremely detailed analyses and technical reports; for two days, national coaches and their staff tried to explain the root causes of the general failure.

We are just from discussing about it in our Executive Committee meeting and I call on our Deputy Secretary General in charge of Development and Football, Mr. Anthony Baffoe to present to you a copy of this excellent report. You would find major explanations and complete statistics in it.

Concerning the evaluation, I will finally add that the "Russia 2018" World Cup was once again, as from the semi-finals, marked by the supremacy of European countries. This situation should prompt us to reflect on the development work that awaits us.

That is why we have started without any hesitations to launch some very important projects. Such as youth football.

Qualification matches for the U-17 confided to zones are vivid proofs that we are not making a mistake with this approach.

It is decentralisation which, in effect, has brought to light the gains in relegating management to the zones, and in highlighting their ability in promoting youth football. Spectacle gained grounds, for the stadia were full and fanfare was rife.

I seize this opportunity to thank FIFA through its Forward programme, and UEFA with its ASSIST programme for having supported the zonal tournaments. The continuation of this experience will be a guarantee for the future.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Our CAF needs you.

It needs men and women fired up for football. CAF needs to depend on its strengths.

And just as I always say, CAF needs a new push that will enable it to focus on doing a thorough and attentive work in order to bond again with the values of this African football that we all love.



Dear friends,

I once again request of you a little more attention:

Remember, during the closing speech of FIFA's Congress in Moscow, our friend Gianni Infantino declared his wish to run for a new mandate at the helm of our Institution, FIFA.

There are many of you who, in good conscience, sent letters of encouragement for his candidature.

I feel it is my duty, during our General Assembly, to solemnly announce Africa's support.

But given that I am not a voter, I would ask a President of a National federation, the President of the Royal Moroccan Football Federation to make the official announcement. Please, Mr. Faouzi.

Thank you.

Before I end my speech, I would like, with utmost respect, to thank the authorities and the Egyptian Football Association for having us in this superb venue and for deploying every means necessary for a smooth tenure of this Extraordinary General Assembly.

Mr Hani Abou Rida, I also personally thank you for all your efforts and contribution in bringing our great family together.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank all of you for making out precious time during this back-to-school period, to take part in our sessions. Our warm thank you is equally directed to all our guests, our faithfuls and our friends.

Once more I say thank you to the entire team of CAF.

Thanks for listening.

Long live the African Continent.

Long live African Football.

Long live the Confederation Africaine de Football.