COLLECTIVE ENTHUSIASM
With almost one month to an important meeting of the CAF Executive Committee and the official draw of the Africa Cup of Nations, I am obliged to acknowledge that eagerness is at its height.

The growing enthusiasm of all the presidents of national federations to live strong moments, enthusiasm of the executives and stakeholders of the Confédération Africaine de Football. The enthusiasm of our Egyptian friends of the Local Organising Committee and, of course, the hungry desire of tens of thousands of fans and supporters who will constitute the processions of enthusiastic spectators and experts of football on our continent.

At the same time, multiple actions and activities continue at CAF at a more sustained pace. This is the case with the organizational chart and the team dedicated to the organisation and preparation of the Africa Cup of Nations under the leadership and authority of the CAF Administrative General Coordinator.

This group of CAF executives operates in the form of several thematic groups in charge of all areas of the organization. They have been operational for more than a month, conducting multiple sessions, meetings, analyses, evaluation and fine-tuning. They work in close contact with their Egyptian counterparts and there has been great consistency so far.

As such, I recall the high expectation by the African people of the last day of qualifiers for AFCON 2019 to take place the last week of March. This will be the ultimate chance to access the holy grail of African football and participate in what is considered the greatest sporting event of our continent.

I remain confident on an exceptional mobilization for this very last day that we will all follow with a tight heart and a soothed soul.

CAF PRESIDENT
AHMAD AHMAD

AFCON 2019: 100 DAYS TO GO

It is exactly 100 days to the opening match of the Total Africa Cup of Nations in Cairo, Egypt. This 32nd edition is important in not only one way: it is the first to be organized under the watch of the new CAF administration, led by the Malagasy Ahmad Ahmad. Then, the biggest event in African football will gather for the first time 24 national teams; a bold decision despite the concerns of infrastructure in our countries.

Egypt, which hosts this competition for the fifth time, has a great experience in organization of sporting events. CAF could not find a better choice for this great event!

The cities chosen to host this African football festival (Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, Ismailia) intend to meet the challenge of organization.

The sporting challenge will fall on the teams. 24 national teams, as ambitious as each other and dream inevitably to go till the end of the adventure. Some will be making their debut at the big continental event, as in the case of Madagascar and Mauritania, waiting for other minnows who could snatch historical qualification on the last day of the qualifiers.

Qualifying for the AFCON finals has become the biggest goal for most African nations. In the absence of a final victory, they know the great welfare they can derive from it thanks to an exceptional performance.

The Africa Cup of Nations has its familiar faces namely Egypt, Nigeria, Morocco, Tunisia, Cote d’Ivoire, Algeria, Senegal, Ghana, Mali, Guinea ... etc, who have confirmed their tickets to Egypt, whilst winners of the last edition, Cameroon, slugs it out with ambitious and surprising Comorians in their bid to qualify. An open event that will have to locate the many observers who will be present in Egypt, on the Reality of African football.

After a very average World Cup in Russia, our football needs to reassure all those who think that despite so much potential, we still struggle to perform at the highest level.

The 2019 AFCON will be the place of all the hopes, for the "newcomers" as well as for the teams considered as the great favourites of this competition.

DEATH OF HUSSEIN SWALEH M’TETU

Hussein Swaleh Swaleh M’tetu, CAF Commissioner for the Match day 5, Ismaily vs TP Mazembe of Total CAF Champions League played on 8 March, was among the 157 on board who lost their lives lost in the Ethiopian Airlines 302 destined for Nairobi which crashed six minutes after take-off crashed between Addis Ababa and Nairobi.

CAF President Ahmad Ahmad send a CAF delegation consisting of CAF Executive Committee Member Leodegar Tenga, and Acting General Secretary, Mr. Essadik Alaoui, to Nairobi to present condolences on behalf of the CAF President. They also presented a financial support to the family of the deceased.

In memory of the victims of the Ethiopian plane crash and Hussein Swaleh M’tetu, a minute of silence will be observed before the kickoff of this weekend’s Day 6 matches of the Total CAF Champions League.
UNIFFAC: NDONG EDU, NEW PRESIDENT

The Union of Football Federations of Central Africa (UNIFFAC) held an Extraordinary General Assembly on 3-4 March 2019 in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea to elect new executives. Gustavo Ndong Edu, was elected president to replace Central African Republic’s Patrice Edouard Ngaïssona.

The new executive committee of UNIFFAC elected are as follows:
- President: Gustavo Ndong Edu (Equatorial Guinea)
- Vice-President: Seidou Mbombo Njoya (Cameroon)
- Members: Pierre Alain Mouguengui (Gabon)
  Jean Guy Blaise Mayolas (Congo)
  Celestin Yanindji (Central African Republic)

The new president of UNIFFAC thanked his colleagues for the confidence reposed in him and urged his colleagues to work on the peers to the resumption of activities within the zone for its evolution. The mandate of the president of the Equatorial Guinea Football Federation ends next July.

GROUND-BREAKING AS WOMEN REFEREES NOMINATED FOR U-17 AFCON

A trailblazing decision will for the first time see women referees handling games of the opposite sex on the continent, debuting at the Total U-17 Africa Cup of Nations Tanzania 2019.

The landmark conclusion was the highlight of the CAF Referees Committee meeting held on 26 February 2019 at the CAF Headquarters in Cairo, and had in attendance CAF President Ahmad Ahmad.

The historic decision is a testament to CAF’s commitment to developing the women’s football. It will also give women match officials a bigger platform to expose their talents and also gain experience at the competitive level considering the limited matches and competitions, which often affects their progress and development.

In line with that, the trailblazers consist of Tanzanian referee Jonesia Rukyaa Kabakama, and assistant referees Mary Wanjiru Njoroge (Kenya) and Lidwine Rakotozafinoro (Madagascar) are among the preselected 29-match officials to undergo a training course in Rabat, Morocco from 31 March to 4 April 2019, to fine-tune for the tournament.

Fifteen (15) referees and 14 assistant referees from 25 Member Associations will undergo medical, physical and theoretical test to select the conclusive list of match officials for the final tournament scheduled for 14-28 April 2019 in Tanzania.

For the final tournament, host Tanzania, Nigeria, Angola and Uganda are in Group A, whilst Guinea, Cameroon, Morocco and Senegal constitute Group B. The semi-finalists will qualify to represent the continent at the FIFA U-17 World Cup.
CAF, LOC, PARTNERS DISCUSS AFCON PREPARATIONS

The first meeting between CAF and the Local Organising Committee (LOC) for the Total 2019 Africa Cup of Nations in Egypt was held in Cairo on Thursday, 7th March 2019.

With just three months to the start of the competition, CAF brought together all its major partners including Lagardère Sports, the exclusive agency commercializing CAF marketing and media rights, to its headquarters in Cairo to accelerate the intense preparations for Africa’s flagship football competition.

The meeting focused mainly on the draw of the 24-team tournament which will be held on 12 April next to the iconic Great Sphinx of Giza.

The participants deliberated on the organisational and logistical aspects for the ceremony to be broadcasted to a global audience of tens of millions.

AFCON 2019 UPDATES

• Port Said will no longer be one of the venues due to technical issues at the stadium. Al Salam Stadium and June 30 Stadium Cairo are the options.

Tournament director Mohamed Fadl said that LOC has named ten (10) stadia ready to host the tournament, to choose six of which as the final venues. Cairo International Stadium, 30 June Stadium (Cairo), Alexandria Stadium, Ismaïlia Stadium and Suez Stadium are all confirmed as tournament venues.

• Legends and celebrities have been invited for the official draw on 12 April 2019 at the iconic Great Sphinx of Giza.

They include FIFA president Gianni Infantino, and football legends like Diego Maradona (Argentina), Samuel Eto’o (Cameroon), Didier Drogba (Côte d’Ivoire), El Hadji Diouf (Senegal), Nwankwo Kanu (Nigeria), Mustapha Hadji (Morocco), Hatem Trabelsi (Tunisia) among others. Egyptian football icons like Hassan Shehata, Hossam Hassan, Hazem Elam, Ahmed Hassan etc are will be also present. In the showbiz industry, renowned Egyptian celebs such as Adel Elam, Amr Diab, Mohamed Mounir.

• The LOC has opened its new headquarters in Gezira, a suburb of Cairo. It was donated by Egyptian ministry of youth and sports, as a part of their social responsibility towards the continent’s flagship competition.
HISTORY AWAITS AS ESPERANCE TAKES ON RAJA IN DOHA

For the first time since its introduction in 1993, the CAF Super Cup is going to take place outside Africa, namely in Thani bin Jassem Stadium in Qatar’s capital Doha. 2018 CAF Champions League winners Esperance of Tunisia takes on North African neighbors and 2018 CAF Confederation Cup champions Raja Casablanca of Morocco on Friday (29 March 2019) as they both seek to add the annual cup to their trophy cabinet for the second time in their history, having won it each once before.

It will be Esperance’s fourth participation in the CAF Super Cup. The “Blood and Gold” side won the title in 1995, but failed to replicate the same feat in 1999 and 2012. On the other hand Raja is having their third appearance in the Super Cup, winning it in 2000 after losing the 1998 edition.

TICKETS FOR TOTAL CAF SUPER CUP 2019 GO ON SALE

The Local Organizing Committee (LOC) of the “Total CAF Super Cup 2019” is releasing on Friday the first batch of tickets for sale on the websites of the Qatar Football Association (QFA) at www.qfa.qa

Each fan can buy up to four tickets from either category 1 tickets (100 Q.R), category 2 tickets (50 Q.R) and category 3 tickets (20 Q.R). Category 1 ticket holders (Gold) will enter the stadium through gates 2-left and 12-right

The LOC has also revealed that print tickets will be made available to the public in shopping malls and clubs across Qatar starting March 15, ticket booths locations will include Villaggio Mall, Qatar Sports Club (gate5) and Al Gharafa Sports Club (gates 7 and 8).

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS

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<td>29.03.19</td>
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<td>AFCON Draw</td>
<td>12.04.19</td>
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