

*79th FIDE Congress
17-25 November
Congress Centre, Dresden, Germany*

**Continental Meeting for Africa
MINUTES
22 November 2008**

Chairman: D. Buthali (BOT)

Present: C. Goessese (ETH), I. Babu (KEN), M. Kefiwe (BOT), N. Elhaj (LBA), H. Bhowathany (MRI), A. Ambasi (KEN), E. Price (RSA), O. Esau (RSA), B. Hoareau (SEY), L. Ncube (ZAM), G. El Sahhan (EGY), E. Ellapen (RSA), G. J. R. Pinto (ANG), N. Freeman FIDE, A. Elnami (LBA), Q. Johnson (USA), H. Khaled (EGY), M. Chikoko (MWI), C. Bontsi (BOT), B. Keintyatse (BOT), K. Belachew (BOT), J. Mtine(ZAM), Manuel da ilba (ANG), D. Buabazz (USA), A. Herbert – CACDEC, L. Mazouz (FIDE), B. Akinola (NIG), S. Djuric (SRB), M. Sani (NIG),

African Continental Meeting:

1) Welcome Remarks:

ACU President Dabilani Buthali welcomed delegates to the meeting and emphasized the importance of having a businesslike approach to the meeting. He also introduced the FIDE Vice President Lewis Ncube, FIDE Vice President Nizar El Haj and FIDE Treasurer Mr Nigel Freeman. He informed the meeting that the Treasurer had requested for a slot to address the delegates on number of issues that affected most members of the African continent while the CACDEC Chairmen was requested to attend in case there are issues for which he could provide guidance.

a) Address by FIDE Treasurer

In his address Mr Nigel Freeman raised the following issues:

- Need to notify him on time regarding financial challenges member countries are facing rather than keep quiet for long time.
- FIDE arrears stands at about Euro 12000 but currently the share for Africa is less than Euro 4000.
- Importance of paying FIDE fees since these are later recovered as rebates when members pay tournament entry fees
- Decision by FIDE regarding support to the continental championships
- Dispensation for Africa (and the Americas) to bid for World Youth Championship
- Reminded delegates of the 2007 Executive Board decision that 20 percent of CACDEC budget be spent on enhancing the capacity of women

b) Questions & Comments:

A number of federations made comments and sought clarity on the address by the Treasurer. Among other things some delegates expressed displeasure regarding the way in which the Treasurer seemed to be insensitive to challenges faced by member federations.

2) ACU President Report: By President Dabilani Buthali:

Presenting his report, the African Continental President highlighted the need for ACU member countries to:

- Have some introspection regarding their role in the continental confederation as well as within FIDE
- Collectively contribute towards building a positive profile and image for the continent.
- Manage expectation since FIDE's role is largely to provide a platform and basis for chess development rather than provide solutions
- Acknowledge that while Africa is bedevilled with lots of challenges, the solutions to the chess problems lies within African, given the wealth of brains the continent is endowed with.
- Acknowledge that CACDEC support is not enough and will never be enough but of importance is that it serve as an important basis for capacity building
- Seize opportunities whenever they arise, citing the example of the World Youth Championship after 2011.
- Develop a strategic plan and be strategic in approach.

Thereafter the ACU President referred to the typed report (attached). Among other things he highlighted communication challenges between member countries and the Olympiad Organisers as well as the difficulties faced by many federations in securing visas for Germany.

3) Comments by Members:

Members echoed the same sentiments regarding challenges in securing visa. This being a perpetual problem with every Olympiad, members acknowledged that whilst there are no immediate solutions it is useful to involve foreign affairs ministries rather than have organisers put pressure on embassies, an option which has not borne fruit in the past.

Daa'im Shabaaz – American Journalist and owner of The Chess Drum, raised a concern that Africa's problems emanates largely from the continent being seemingly invisible. Africa, he noted, is not marketing itself in spite of the opportunities at its disposal.

FIDE Honorary President Florencio Campomanes – made a contribution wherein he noted that Africa is at the threshold of bigger things but the continent ought to do more – put at least 90 percent of own effort and only expect 10 percent support.

Angola – underscored the need for a chess program in Africa, especially hosting its own big tournaments. The programme, he further noted, must incorporate and also enhance Chess in Schools.

Egypt – FIDE top leadership must visit the African countries to encourage and help push government to get sponsorship for chess.

CACDEC Chairperson Mr Allan Herbert – noted the huge costs connected to international travel to major chess events and emphasised the need for Africa to host big tournaments.

4) Proposals:

a) *Chesscube.com* - South Africa, through Mr Eddie Price, presented a proposal on Chesscube.com on behalf of Mr. Mark Levitt. The Chesscube offers many opportunities for championships through the internet, especially if independent arbiters are appointed at different sites.

In response to the proposal members appreciated the initiative and noted that the Chesscube would indeed allow gaining of chess titles, but these will only be correspondence chess titles.

b) African Junior Chess Championship review – South Africa came up with a proposal to review the regulations with the idea to provide clarity on a number of areas, one of which is norms gained from the African Junior Chess Championships.

Delegates were unanimous on the need to review relevant clauses in the statutes and the ACU President is to spearhead the process.

c) Zone regrouping - Ethiopia presented a proposal to regroup Zone 4.2 especially to take into account homogeneity, ease of travel and resources optimisation.

Delegates agreed with the need to regroup, not only Zone 4.2 but adopt a holistic approach especially with the view to align the zones to the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA) zones. The meeting was informed that already the issue of zone re-structuring is on the FIDE agenda following proposal by Asia and the Americas. The meeting noted that whilst the process may take time, Africa needs to initiate its zone review immediately. Suggested zone regroupings should be tabled at the Continental Assembly at the next Congress.

5) Bidding of Events:

a) African Youth Championship (2009) – South Africa's bid to host the event in 2009 was affirmed and was accepted by the Continental Assembly.

b) African Individual Championship (2009) – Libya made a bid to host the event in August 2009.

c) African Team Championship (2009) – Kenya made a bid to host the event in November 2009.

d) African Junior Chess Championship (2009) - Egypt made a bid to host the event in December 2009. Meanwhile the first option to host the 2010 Africa Junior Chess Championship was given to Angola. The meeting was also informed that preparation for the 2008 African Junior Chess Championship was on track, with the event taking place from 28 December 2008 to 6 January 2009, in South Africa.

6) Remarks by Mr Lewis Ncube – FIDE Vice President

FIDE Vice President addressed the Continental Assembly and among other things highlighted the following:

- Need to improve communication system
- Importance of inter-federation assistance
- Need to share information

7) Closing Remarks

The ACU President concluded by thanking delegates for a fruitful meeting.

The meeting closed at 18h00.

Dabilani Buthali