

STATEMENT TO PARLIAMENT ON THE PROGRESS OF PREPARATION FOR THE HOSTING AND ORGANISATION OF THE 13TH AFRICAN GAMES, ACCRA 2023 BY THE MINISTER FOR YOUTH AND SPORTS, HON. MUSTAPHA USSIF (MP) ON 5TH MARCH, 2024

INTRODUCTION

1. **Mr. Speaker**, thank you for the opportunity.
2. This statement is to inform the Honourable House on Ghana's preparation for the hosting and organisation of the 13th African Games, Accra 2023.
3. **Mr. Speaker**, following the successful resolution of the impasse amongst the African Union (AU), Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) and Association of African Sports Confederations (AASC) by a high-level delegation, led by His Excellency, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, President of the Republic of Ghana, the Local Organising Committee (LOC) was directed to initiate key stakeholder discussions for the scheduling of a realistic date for the organisation of the 13th African Games, Accra 2023.
4. Thus, the date for the 13th African Games, Accra 2023, was rescheduled to commence from 8th - 23rd March 2024. The Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Local Organising Committee quickened up the progress of work on the provision of facilities for the Games, preparation of relevant guidelines, rules, regulations and Manuals.
5. Consequently, there has been intense commitment of providing the needed resources, towards the completion of all outstanding programmes and activities required for the successful organisation of the Games.
6. **Rt. Hon. Speaker**, the Ministry of Youth and Sports intensified supervision of the Local Organising Committee to deliver its technical, managerial, administrative and organisational roles rapidly, aimed at achieving agreed standards for the Games.
7. As a result, work progressed steadily on the construction and refurbishment of the facilities, procurement of services and the development of technical documents.

8. Additionally, obligatory preparatory-review meetings and capacity building activities have been held.

DATES FOR THE AFRICAN GAMES

9. **Mr. Speaker**, the 13th African Games, Accra 2023 will be organised as has been agreed by the schedule below:

SL	DATE	ACTIVITY
1.	5th to 7th March, 2024*	Arrival of Athletes & Officials
2.	8th March, 2024	Opening Ceremony
3.	23rd March, 2024	Closing Ceremony
4.	24th March, 2024	Departure of Athletes & Officials
5.	24th to 31st March, 2024	Tidying up and Clearing of Waste generated
6.	April to June, 2024	Preparation and Submission of Reports to Stakeholders

However, some disciplines (Badminton, Cricket, Karate-do, Table Tennis) are scheduled to start before the official opening of the Games.

PROGRESS OF ACTIVITIES

10. **Mr. Speaker**, in order to ensure that Ghana organises the best ever African Games, several activities have been carried out by the Ministry and the LOC, resulting in significant progress of work.
11. Broadly, the achievement over the period can be categorised in terms of the infrastructure and the fulfilment of relevant obligations by the LOC, Ministry of Youth and Sports and other key stakeholders.
12. These activities, resulting in both hard and soft products are being shaped to required standards. The hard components consist of the facilities, equipment, vehicles, machinery and materials, whiles, the soft components are the essential skills, administrative setting,

operational structures, systems, processes and procedures as well as hospitality, entertainment and welfare matters, required for the organisation of the Games.

Provision of Facilities- Infrastructure

Mr. Speaker, the successful hosting and organisation of the Games relies largely on the provision of relevant facilities. Thus, the provision of facilities at Borteyman, Legon and other selected areas are completed. The physical progress has been achieved due to the timely release of appropriate funds from the Ministry of Finance to the contractors and other service providers.

i. Physical Outcomes

The following facilities have been constructed, refurbished and upgraded for the Games:

S/L	VENUE	FACILITIES	CONTRACTOR
1	Borteyman Sports Complex	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquatic Centre with 10-lane Competition Pool and 10-lane Warm-up Pool • Five (5) Tennis Courts • Multipurpose Dome for Indoor Games • Multipurpose Hall for Indoor Games • Administration Block • 8-lane Warm-up running tracks • Football Pitch 	Contracta Construction UK Ltd
2	University of Ghana Sports Stadium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Football Pitch • 8-lane Running tracks • 8-lane warm-up tracks • Athletic Oval • Media Center • VVIP Lounge 	Consar Ltd.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offices • Upgraded Rugby Pitch 	
3	Games Village, University of Ghana	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refurbishment of 4 Hostel facilities: Hilla Liman, Alexander Kwapong, Francis Sey and Jean Aka Nelson Halls • Construction of 4 Domes for: Catering, Medical and Anti-doping Services 	Mawums Ltd.

ii. Competition and Training Venues

The facilities earmarked for competition and training during the Games have all been identified and are ready for hosting the respective disciplines, as indicated in the table below:

No.	Discipline/ Code	Competition Venue	Training Venue
1	Athletics	University of Ghana Sports Stadium & Warm-up Track	Borteyman & University of Ghana Sports Stadium
2	Badminton	Multi-purpose Hall, Borteyman	New 'N' Block, University of Ghana
3	Cycling	Ablekuma-Pokuase Highway	Ablekuma – Pokuase Highway
4	Table Tennis	Dome, Borteyman	GCB Hall, Legon
5	Tennis	Tennis Complex, Borteyman	Legon Tennis Courts/ Accra Sports Stadium Tennis Court
6	Triathlon	Borteyman Sports Complex	Borteyman Sports Complex

7	Wrestling	Hana Hathramani Hall	'N' Block, University of Ghana
8	Arm Wrestling	Cedi Conference Hall, Legon	University of Ghana Gym
9	Beach Volleyball	Laboma Beach Volleyball Court	Beach Volleyball Court, Legon
10	Basketball (3X3)	Netball Court, Legon	Outdoor Basketball Court, Legon
11	Boxing	Bukom Boxing Arena	Bukom Boxing Gym
12	Chess	Alisa Hotel	Alisa Hotel
13	Cricket	Achimota Cricket Oval	Achimota Cricket Oval
14	Football	Accra Sports Stadium/ University of Ghana Sports Stadium	Achimota School Park/ PRESEC School Park/ Legon Main Field
15	Handball	Borteyman Sports Complex	Borteyman Sports Complex
16	Hockey	Theodosia Okoh Hockey Stadium	Theodosia Okoh Hockey Stadium
17	Judo	Ga Mashie Hall, Bukom	New 'N' Block, University of Ghana
18	Karate-do	Borteyman Sports Dome	New 'N' Block, University of Ghana
19	Rugby	University of Ghana Rugby Stadium	University of Ghana Rugby Stadium
20	Swimming	Aquatic Centre, Borteyman	Aquatic Centre, Borteyman

21	Taekwondo	Ga Mashie Hall, Bukom	'N' Block, University of Ghana
22	Indoor Volleyball	Multipurpose Hall, Borteyman	Multipurpose Hall, Borteyman
23	Weightlifting	GCB Hall, Legon	Central Cafeteria, Legon
24	E-Sports	TBC	TBC
25	Mixed Martial Arts	Bukom Boxing Arena	Ga Mashie Hall
26	Pickleball	Netball Court, University of Ghana	Netball Court, University of Ghana
27	Speedball	GCB Hall, Legon	GCB Hall, Legon
28	Sambo	Hana Hathramani Hall, Legon	Hana Hathramani Hall, Legon
29	Scrabble	Hill View Guest Centre	

TECHNICAL STANDARD OF THE AFRICAN GAMES

13. **Mr. Speaker**, series of Technical Committee Meetings were held and a number of decisions were taken.
- i. The Technical Committee for the African Games (TCAG) whose membership includes LOC, AU Commission, Association of African Sports Confederations (AASC) and Association of National Olympic Committees of Africa (ANOCA) held three (3) Technical Committee meetings from 29th September - 3rd October 2023, 28th November - 2nd December 2023 and 23rd - 26th January 2024.
 - ii. Weekly Local Organising Committee (LOC) Meetings with local key stakeholders;
 - iii. Monthly Site Meetings with Contractors and other service providers;
 - iv. Weekly meetings with Confederation / Federation Heads and other stakeholders; and

v. Weekly briefings with the Honorable Minister.

14. These meetings, **Mr. Speaker**, were used for assessing progress, resolving issues and instituting contingencies for anticipated eventualities, which may affect the achievement of objectives.

CONFIRMATION OF SPORTS CODES

15. **Mr. Speaker**, the standard requirements for the Games as Olympic qualifiers were established and a total of **twenty-nine (29) codes (disciplines)**, will be competed in, at the 13th African Games, Accra 2023.

16. Eight (8) of these disciplines will serve as Olympic qualifiers to the Paris 2024 Olympic Games, (Athletics, Badminton, Cycling, Table Tennis, Tennis, Triathlon, Swimming and Wrestling).

17. Fifteen (15) disciplines will be non-Olympic qualifiers (Arm Wrestling, Basketball (3×3), Beach Volley Ball, Boxing, Cricket, Chess, Football, Handball, Hockey, Judo, Karate-do, Rugby, Taekwondo, Volleyball and Weightlifting).

18. Additionally, six (6) disciplines will be Demonstration sports (E-Sports, Mixed Martial Arts, Pickleball, Speedball, Sambo and Scrabble). Athletes competing in the Demonstration sports will not win any medal, as they do so, only, for promotion purposes.

PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES

1. **Mr. Speaker**, the 13th African Games is expected to attract over 13,000 participants with 5,000 Athletes, 3,000 Volunteers, 3,000 Technical Officers and 2,000 Guests. In addition, over 2 billion spectators are expected to participate via TV, radio and other virtual platforms across the globe.

19. APPROVAL OF GAMES THEME SONG

The theme song for the 13th African Games titled “**Experience the African Dream**”, composed by 43-year-old Ghanaian musician and song writer, Ebenezer Crassie was

approved by the TCAG and subsequently launched by the LOC in Accra on 23rd December 2023.

20. The theme song is the soul of the African Games and it is expected to invoke passion and create more awareness for the upcoming Games.

PREPARATION OF TEAM GHANA

21. The Ministry of Youth and Sports, in consultation with relevant stakeholders has appointed Mr. Ernest Danso as Chef de Mission for Ghana to take charge of the preparation of Team Ghana's participation in the Games. The Chef de Mission, working with the Federation Heads, has selected competent and qualified athletes as Team Ghana.
22. As part of the selection process, the Chef de Mission in collaboration with the Federations and the National Sports Authority (NSA) organised competitions to select the best athletes into team Ghana.
23. Also, to ensure maximum preparation for the Games, Team Ghana moved into camp at Cape Coast on Saturday 20th January 2024 and has since returned and are currently camping at the University of Ghana, Legon.
24. **Mr. Speaker**, the Ministry of Youth and Sports has also institutionalised weekly meetings with the LOC, the Chef de Mission and the Federation Heads for constant feedback on the day-to-day preparations to ensure that Ghana presents a formidable team that will not only participate in the Games but will win medals for the State.

PREPARATION OF TECHNICAL DOCUMENTS

25. The Local Organising Committee is required to prepare technical documents to inform the preparation and participation of countries and their athletes in the Games. These documents are the Technical Handbook, Competition Guides and the Games Manual which have been approved and circulated to all participating countries.

LAUNCH OF 100-DAYS COUNT DOWN

26. **Mr. Speaker**, as part of awareness creation, the Ministry of Youth and Sports, through the LOC, launched a 100-Day Countdown on 29th November, 2023. The occasion was graced by His Excellency, Alhaji Dr. Mahamadu Bawumia, the Vice President of the Republic of Ghana. He inspected the facilities at Borteyman Sports Complex and the University of Ghana Stadium.
27. The Vice President called on participating countries to replicate the countdown in their respective countries so as to promote the Games to the entire continent and beyond.
28. His Excellency, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo launched the 25-Day countdown on 13th February, 2024 at the Borteyman Sports Complex to further promote awareness of the Games to Ghanaians and the entire continent. The occasion was also used to officially commission the facilities and pave way for the organisation of test-games by Team Ghana as they prepare for the competitions.

SENSITISATION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

29. Mr. Speaker, in anticipation of the upcoming 13th African Games, Accra 2023, the LOC undertook a number of sensitisation and public education programmes, including, the following:
 - a. Press Soiree was organised on 22nd December, 2023 at the LOC premises for the media, to solicit their support to propagate the Games to the general public. The programme was attended by both the print and electronic media who pledged their commitment to use their platforms to sensitise the general public about the Games.
 - b. In addition, the Greater Accra Regional float was organised on 24th December, 2023. The float was meant to create awareness and improve visibility for the 13th African Games, Accra 2023.
 - c. The LOC teamed up with the Tumus Masqueraders Club to organise the 2023 Masquerade carnival, held from 26th to 28th December 2023 in Takoradi to raise awareness for the Games.

- d. Billboards have been mounted at various vantage points within the capital city of Accra, Kotoka International Airport and other prominent areas as part of publicity. Social media platforms have also been created to advertise and promote the Games'

SECURITY

30. **Mr. Speaker**, to ensure maximum security at the Borteyman site, the contractor has undertaken a number of measures including, the installation of eight (8) tower lights, sixteen (16) CCTV cameras to help with surveillance, the deployment of twenty-seven (27) security guards assigned for both day and night activities, and deployment of two patrol vehicles with beacon lights that patrol throughout the night.
31. At the University of Ghana, Legon, the entire premises of the four hostel facilities and the newly constructed domes that form the Games Village, has been fenced to restrict accessibility to the Village. Moreover, CCTV cameras have been installed to augment the security measures at the site. In addition, biometric smart lock system is being installed at the Games Village to ensure that only registered individuals, including, athletes, officials and volunteers, can have access to the various facilities within the Village.
32. A Security Sub-Committee of the Local Organising Committee, has been formed with membership from the National Security, Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of the Interior to ensure the safety and security of athletes, officials and the facilities, during the Games.

FREE VISAS FOR ATHLETES

33. **Mr. Speaker**, in a bid to ease the processing of documentation for foreign athletes and officials participating in the Games, the Ministry of Youth and Sports in collaboration with the LOC and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Regional Integration, has instituted measures to provide free visas to all foreign athletes and officials. This is to mitigate congestion and delays associated with the acquisition of visas.

EQUIPMENT TESTING AND TRAINING

34. **Mr. Speaker**, the facilities at Borteyman and University of Ghana, Legon have been constructed to meet international standards and have been duly certified. The equipment and tools have been validated by a team of experts ahead of the commencement of the Games.
35. To ensure the sustainability of the facilities, a Local Technical Team has been trained on the operationalisation of the equipment being installed at the facilities. At the end of the training, the equipment Manuals were transferred to the Local Technical Team to guide them on the operations and maintenance of the facilities.

POST GAMES MANAGEMENT OF THE FACILITIES

36. **Mr. Speaker**, in order to ensure the facilities are well maintained for the continuous benefit of the good people of Ghana, the facilities at Borteyman will be converted into a University of Sports for Development after the Games. To this end, additional infrastructure, such as hostel facilities, football pitches, cafeteria and a medical centre will be provided at the site. This will attract local and foreign sports federations to camp in Ghana and prepare for various competitions and ultimately position Ghana as a sports hub within the West African sub-region.

OPERATIONAL COST

37. **Mr. Speaker**, a total amount of **Forty-Seven Million Seven Hundred and Twelve Thousand, Eight Hundred and Fifty-Three United States Dollars, Sixty-Five Cents (US\$ 47,712,853.65)** is estimated to cover the operations of the Local Organising Committee.
38. **Mr. Speaker**, this estimated amount is earmarked to be used by the LOC for the organisation of technical meetings with TCAG, preparation of relevant guidelines, rules, regulations and manuals, sensitisation, management of the Games, accommodation for athletes and officials, transportation, catering services, security, volunteers, accreditation, purchase of equipment, Anti-doping services, medals for athletes among others. This amount will also cover the payment of rent for the LOC office accommodation, logistics and members allowances.

CONCLUSION

39. **Mr. Speaker**, the completion of sporting facilities for the hosting and organisation of the 13th African Games, Accra, 2023 underscores the commitment of His Excellency, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo, to the development of sports in Ghana.
40. The facilities at Borteyman, especially, the Aquatic Centre is one of its kind in the whole of Africa. This will not only make Ghana a center of sports development in the continent where various sporting competitions would be organised in the near future, but would help develop the talents of the youth of Ghana.
41. **Mr. Speaker**, Ghana is poised to organise the best ever African Games, come March, 2024.
42. **Mr. Speaker**, let me use this opportunity to thank His Excellency, the President, Nana Addo Dankwa Akufo-Addo for his vision and continuous support to the Ministry of Youth and Sports to provide these facilities for the good people of Ghana.
43. I am also grateful to you, **Mr Speaker** and the House for your immense support towards the hosting and organisation of the first-ever African Games in Ghana.
44. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.