

SPEECH BY Ms DOMINIQUE OUATTARA FIRST LADY OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE
DOMINIQUE OUATTARA CUP EDITION 2023

OFFICE OF THE FIRST LADY

TUESDAY, JULY 11, 2023

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome you today to the headquarters of the Children of Africa Foundation for the launch of our traditional annual soccer tournament.

First of all, I would like to extend my warmest greetings to Minister Anne Ouloto, representing the Minister of Sports, and Ministers Mariétou Koné and Nassénéba Touré, as well as Minister Cissé Bacongo, who are with us this afternoon. Thank you all, dear brothers and sisters, for attending the event. We are pleased to have you here.

I would also like to welcome Mr. Malick Tohé, First Vice-President of the Ivorian Football Federation (FIF). Thank you, dear brother, for being here to support this event organized by the Children of Africa Foundation.

I also salute all the Mayors and representatives of the towns that will be hosting this tournament in their various localities, and I wish to thank them for trying to keep our children occupied in a healthy way.

I particularly salute the spokesman for the municipalities benefiting from the tournament, Mr. Bayolé Hypolite, Mayor of Tai.

I finally extend my greetings to all the personalities who are with us this afternoon. I offer a special greeting to our great international players:

- Alain Gouaméné
- Kalou Bonaventure,
- Abdoulaye Traoré a.k.a Ben Didi,
- Badra Aliou,
- Arouna Dindané,
- Franck Kessié,

who have accepted our invitation. And we're delighted to welcome them. Please give them a big round of applause.

I'd also like to greet my dear children, whom I congratulate on their performance earlier. I'm delighted to see you.

Thank you all for supporting this sport initiative by the Children Of Africa Foundation, for the benefit of our children during vacations.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Children Of Africa Foundation soccer tournament was launched in 2008 in the Commune of Abobo. Since then, we've been organizing it every year, starting in July, so that our children can have fun playing sports.

As 2023 has been declared the Year of Youth by my dear husband, President Alassane Ouattara, who asked me to extend his warmest greetings to you, we have decided to extend this tournament to a larger number of localities and involve as many children as possible in this competition.

That's why this year the event will be held in 70 localities across Côte d'Ivoire, instead of 50.

It should be noted that this soccer tournament is organized free of charge for the benefit of our boys and girls aged 7 to 15.

Through this friendly sport competition, we hope to contribute to the development of football-related values in the young participants, such as team spirit, cohesion, collective effort and to excel.

Soccer being one of the most popular sports in our country, the Children Of Africa Foundation's tournament generates a great deal of excitement at each edition for both organizers and participants.

It's also an opportunity to bring communities together around a healthy, convivial and festive event. So, as every year, I hope that this competition will take place in good conditions and in the spirit of fair play that we recommend.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The soccer tournament we are launching today will kick off in the coming days, and will end before the start of the next school year.

In each locality, the winning teams will receive the "Dominique Ouattara" trophy, 200,000 FCFA, as well as a full set of jerseys and balls. All finalists will also receive gifts.

It gives me great pleasure to present you with all these prizes today, and I sincerely hope that you enjoy the festivities.

Finally, I would like to thank all the personalities and organizations who will be hosting this competition in the different towns.

I know I can rely on everyone's dynamism and involvement to ensure that this Children of Africa Foundation soccer tournament takes place in the best possible conditions.

I wish you good luck in the competition and a wonderful vacation for our children.

Thank you very much.