

The Namibia Karate Union (NAKU) was among 25 African Countries that participated at the 17th African Senior Karate Championships and 9th African Junior Karate Championships held in Kigali, Rwanda from 28 August to 2 September. A delegation of 16 attended the Championships with 8 Junior (2 girls and 6 boys) and 4 senior athletes (2 women and 2 men) competing for the honour of being crowned African Champion.

Namibia started well winning 4 medals on day one (1 silver and 3 bronze) and another junior medal on day two securing 5 medals in total and an overall standing of 9th in Africa. Competition was very tough, but the NAKU is very proud of the performance of the team. The team built on the achievement of coming 3rd at the Region 5 event held in Botswana earlier in the year and once again confirmed its position in the Region by finishing behind South Africa (4th) and Botswana (8th) at the African Karate Championships.

Namibia was one of only 15 countries to win medals out of the 25 countries at the event. Following the success of the karate athletes in Rwanda, NAKU is planning to send a small delegation to attend the World Karate Federation's Senior World Championships in October as part of its athlete development plan.

The President of NAKU commented as follows: "We are extremely excited about our achievements this year and the road ahead for karate in Namibia. With Karate an Olympic sport and being recently categorized by the Ministry of Sport as a Developmental Sport Code we have decided to participate at both continental and international events to evaluate our standard of karate.

We are therefore very pleased to say that Namibia is back on the African Karate scene. However, we are facing a real challenge to get a team funded for the World Championships and creating an opportunity for our athletes to gain valuable Olympic Qualifying points. The African Karate Championships results also count towards Olympic Qualifying and we hope to measure ourselves in October against the best in the world to see what training interventions need to be done to assist our athletes in being successful at continental and international events."