

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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### **NOMINEES UNVEILED AS VOTING STARTS FOR THE PRESTIGIOUS REGIONAL ANNUAL SPORTS AWARDS (RASA 2019)**

Fledgling and accomplished athletes from across nine Southern African countries are set to battle for honours in the fourth edition of the Regional Annual Sports Awards (RASA 2019) following the unveiling of nominees.

The voting process of the awards hosted by African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5, begin today ahead of the grand ceremony scheduled to take place in Windhoek, Namibia on the 25 May 2019.

Nine of the 10 member countries who have entered the winners of their national sport awards as nominees for RASA 2019 include Angola (coming for the first time) Botswana, Lesotho, Eswatini, Malawi, Namibia, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

Stanley Mutoya, the AUSC Region 5 CEO says he is excited to see the RASA brand grow in the manner in which it has since its inaugural edition in 2016.

“Today we have 9 member countries taking part in the fourth edition. We welcome Angola into the RASA in this edition as they have had their own domestic awards, making Angola eligible for the 2019 edition of RASA. We celebrate this exponential growth given that at inauguration in 2016 we only had five member countries taking part. This is an indication that we have a good product to commercialise,” he said, adding that the awards ceremony is also an opportunity for corporates.

“We therefore present this product to the corporates in our Region who are interested in associating with excellence and innovation in line with our theme - Celebrating Excellence, Inspiring Innovation,” Mutoya said.

As per the AUSC Region 5 Awards Rulebook, the primary mandate of the AUSC Region 5 is to encourage all ten member countries to host national sport awards preceding the RASA.

The winners at country level are automatically entered as RASA nominees. All these nominees are already winners in their own right, and now it’s all about triumph at the regional level.

Since the inaugural edition in 2016, the RASA event and the excitement it brings has grown at country level during the hosting of national awards. Winners of national sport awards look forward to be paired with. There are talks to have more activities during the RASA week to further

give this event more excitement and opportunities for the nominees and corporates interact with local hosting country's citizens by giving back in a social responsibility initiatives.

From this year starting with Namibia, the hosting of RASA is on rotational basis, and member countries will host in an alphabetical order.

**ENDS**

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DISTRIBUTED ON BEHALF OF THE AUSC REGION 5 SIYABONGA SANGWENI FOR ANY MEDIA QUERIES CONTACT:

Mr. Siyabonga Sangweni

Project and Marketing Manager, AUSC Region 5

Tel: +267 391 4960

Cell: +267 76 990 999/ +27 82 597 0091

Email: [siyabonga@auscregion5.org.bw](mailto:siyabonga@auscregion5.org.bw)

Email: [siyabonga@yaya-africa.com](mailto:siyabonga@yaya-africa.com)

**EDITORS NOTE:**

The African Union Sport Council Region5 (AUSC Region5) is the sports arm of the African Union, which was once the Organisation of African Unity. It was formed in the 1960s, and its headquarters is based in Yaoundé, Cameroon.

The main aim of the AUSC is to use sports to achieve peace, integration and unity in Africa i.e. sport as a vehicle of encouraging people to develop and come together, irrespective of colour, economic status, political, class, or gender.

The AUSC divided Africa into seven competition zones due to the vastness of the continent and for financial prudence. The main consideration was the countries' geographical positions. It is from this that AUSC Region was born.

**BACKGROUND OF THE AFRICAN UNION SPORTS COUNCIL (AUSC) REGION 5**

The African Union Sports Council (AUSC) Region 5 is one of the five Regions entrusted with the responsibility to develop sport under the African Union. This follows the dissolution of the Supreme Council for Sport in Africa (SCSA), under which the Region 5 was known as SCSA Zone

VI.

Members of the Region comprise of: Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, ESwathini, Zambia and Zimbabwe.

The AUSA Region 5 is the Continent's most organized Region and a trailblazer in implementing sports programmes and activities. Among the top programmes that the Region runs are the Region 5 Under 20 Youth Games held every two years (2020 Games scheduled for Lesotho from December 2020), Sport Education and Accreditation Systems (SEAS), Museum, Regional Marathon, Regional Awards, Medals of Honour, Confederations Assistance Programme as well as Women in Sport and Sport for People with Disabilities programmes.

The SCSA was established on the 14 December 1966 and served as a specialized agency of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for the coordination of the Africa Sports Movement and to utilize Sport in the struggle against colonialism and apartheid on the continent. Invariably, the SCSA was essentially a political organization which furthered the aims and objectives of the OAU through Sport.