



EUROPEAN UNION

Delegation to South Africa

Pretoria, 11 June 2010

Press Release

.../for immediate release

Open letter from Commissioner Andris Piebalgs to the people of Africa

Dear friends across Africa,

Starting 11 June 2010 South Africa and Africa will be under the spotlight for some 30 historical days!

As European Development Commissioner, I am committed to placing Africa high on the European Union's agenda. The power of sport and a world-wide passion for football will be a unique ally to me in that endeavour. For this reason alone I can say with conviction that I am very excited that, for the first time, the tournament will take place on African soil. Today, South Africans and all the people of Africa can be proud of their achievements.

This World Cup means much more to South Africa and the African continent than just a football tournament. Millions of people from across the globe will be looking your way as media from all over the world congregate to cover the World Cup.

This will be an occasion to see the true face of Africa today: a dynamic growing continent with too many untold success stories; a kaleidoscope of countries whose people are ready to grasp their future with both hands as they strive for growth and prosperity.

Most importantly, this World Cup will build a momentum of hope and enthusiasm for Africa. I trust that Africa will be able to harness this positive energy in its march toward peace, growth and development. But Africa will not have to play this match alone - the European Union remains committed to continue to support Africa.

I look forward to enjoying the World Cup matches. If you want to know which team I will support, well, of course I'm usually a European supporter ... but this time, I wish an African team will win the World Cup!

Phambili Africa, Phambili!

Andris Piebalgs
Commissioner for Development

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