

President's Message at the End of the 1st International Scientific Symposium on Traditional Games and Sports of the AAJST

Dear Vice-Presidents

Dear Presidents of the Zones

Dear Presidents of the Member Associations and Supporters of the AAJST Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of our African Association of Traditional Games and Sports, I would like to express my deep gratitude to all those who contributed, directly or indirectly, to the resounding success of the 1st International Scientific Symposium on Traditional Games and Sports, held from May 16 to 17, 2025.

This major event, the result of the partnership between AAJST and INEFC-AEJSTITSGA, was a historic milestone in our commitment to the revaluation, preservation, and promotion of traditional games and sports, not only in Africa but also globally. Thanks to the exemplary mobilization of the trio Madame Zhaira, Monsieur Antoine Koffi and myself, we have finally brought together professors from different universities, researchers, practitioners in the field, institutional managers and connected enthusiasts from various backgrounds, to exchange, share, reflect and build together the future of our recreational and sporting heritage.

The conference featured:

Presentations from high-level scientific and institutional speakers, who highlighted the cultural, educational, and identity-building importance of traditional games; interactive panels addressing contemporary issues: intergenerational transmission, school integration, institutional recognition, etc.; and PowerPoint presentations demonstrating traditional African games and sports practices, which sparked enthusiasm and pride.

Now, more than ever, we must transform this remarkable success into a sustainable dynamic.

This conference is not an end, but a starting point.

We therefore call for collective remobilization:

1. Associations and independent individuals who are members of the AAJST, under the close management of the zone presidents (Mr. Malam Barka, Mr. Hoosain Naker, Mr. Sydool Mwigaya, Mr. Raveloson Mamitiana, Mr. Emmanuel Songo Leky, Mr. Ezzedin Bouzid) to strengthen our network, share our practices, and support our regional and local initiatives.
2. The Secretary General of the AAJST (Mr. Josef Blaise Nonganonga) and the Secretary General of the African Forum for Traditional Games and Sports (Mr. Amisi Kapongo) with a

view to reinventing ourselves to provide us with an administrative framework that promotes smooth and productive coordination between the different entities of the AAJST and around our projects and actions to be carried out.

3. Partner institutions, to support our efforts with appropriate means and official recognition.
4. The academic world, to continue research, document, and transmit this knowledge.
5. Younger generations, so that they can embrace this heritage with pride and creativity.

Major announcements for new perspectives for the AAJST around specific projects are currently being developed and will be discussed in a major plenary meeting via Zoom, which will be scheduled through our organization's official channels.

We are firmly committed to pursuing our mission with determination, rigor, and passion. We will work to implement the recommendations from the conference, organize regular inter-African and international meetings, and develop strategic partnerships.

I conclude by reaffirming that traditional games and sports are powerful vectors of cohesion, memory, education, and peace.

Together, let us continue to keep them alive and flourish.

President of the African Association of Traditional Games and Sports (AAJST) Joseph Rashidi Salumu