

**Kite Foil Competition Prize Giving Ceremony at Preskil Hotel on Wednesday
31 August at 18:30 hrs**

**Hon. Stephan Toussaint, Minister of Youth Empowerment, Sports
and Recreation**

Mr. Florian Bethuel, President of the Mauritius Yachting Association

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Participants of the 2022 African and Middle East Kite Foil Competition

Ladies and gentlemen

It gives me a great pleasure to be with you for the last day of this Open Africa-Middle East Championships of Foil Kitesurfing 2022 which have been held for the first time in Mauritius.

I shall begin by saying Congratulations to today's winners! Congratulations also to today's losers !!

Eighteen elite surfers comprising both men and women from 11 countries (Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, China, France, Italy, Monaco, Switzerland, Turkey, USA and Mauritius) have competed in the different events. They have been cruising effortlessly above the waves of Pointe D'Esny for the last four days. Whether you have won a medal or not, you are all winners. Winning or losing in sports is not at all important, but the happiness originating from the participation is a highly cherished trophy.

It has been a pleasure to welcome participants from different countries since Sports, being part of the universal culture, is an important instrument for combining different people in the world. It is an activity that contributes to world peace. Nelson Mandela famously said, *“Sport has the power to change the world. It has the power to inspire. It has the power to unite people in a way that little else does. It speaks to youth in a language they understand...”*

Sports and physical activities have significant potential to drive social and economic returns for a country. The Government of Mauritius aims at positioning the country as a regional sports hub by developing Mauritius into a vibrant and growing sport economy that would have spillover effects on the services sector including the tourism industry.

Government has implemented a national physical activity policy. The health of the population is a priority and Government is investing in the setting up of sports infrastructure around the island to ensure that the population remains healthy

Mauritius is being promoted as an international centre for the hosting of international multi-disciplinary sports events. The country is now equipped with state-of-the-art facilities.

Côte d’Or National Sports Complex is a state-of-the-art, fully integrated sports and entertainment multiplex. It is rated in the top five sports hubs in Africa. The football ground with its artificial turf of the fourth generation (4G) which is referred as one of the major innovations in the world of football has been used so far for regional competitions.

This Complex is teeming with activities- national, regional and international. Earlier this year, the 22nd African Championships with the participation of the gratin of African athletics were held there.

Furthermore Mauritius will host the 12th edition of the CJSOI games for youth aged between 14 and 17 years from 4 to 11 Dec 2022 at Côte d'Or.

I seize this opportunity to extend my warmest congratulation to our athletes who have participated in regional and international games during this year, including the Commonwealth Games, and have brought back medals.

Ladies and Gentlemen

This is not an occasion for a long speech, I shall conclude by acknowledging the efforts of all those who have worked hard to make of this Competition a success.

Finally, I extend once more my congratulations to all the participants, with special mention for the medalists.