

**REMARKS BY UGANDA CHESS FEDERATION PRESIDENT, VIANNEY LUGGYA,
AT THE CLOSING OF THE AFRICA INDIVIDUAL CHESS CHAMPIONSHIP HELD AT
TICK, HOTEL IN KAMPALA ON TUESDAY 26 JULY 2016**

**The Continental President,
Officials from the embassies of Egypt and Algeria,
Zonal Presidents for Zone 4.1 and Zone 4.4,
Participants,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen**

It gives me great pleasure to address you at the closure of a successfully concluded Africa Individual Chess Championship, the first to ever be hosted by Uganda.

On behalf of the Uganda chess fraternity, I thank all who have played a part in making this event a success, right from honoring our invitation to actively participating through play, arbitration, volunteerism and participation in the FIDE Arbiters' Seminar, among others.

I would like to congratulate the winners and all the participants in the event for creating history by producing one of the most competitive Africa Individual Chess Championships ever. We have witnessed this in the three way tie at the top in the ladies category and the half point lead in the Open, a demonstration of tight competition and a high level of play.

The icing on the cake is the fact that in spite of having three Grandmasters in the Open category, the eventual winner (Hesham Abdelrahman) is not a GM, and this has presented him with the opportunity to acquire the much coveted GM title. That is great news for Egypt and the continent as the number of Grandmasters is now growing each year and this enhances competition. Congratulations also to WGM Wafa Shrook who has not only won the ladies category of this event but also took the top prize in the 2016 Zone 4.2 held earlier this year in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

A total of 53 players from 12 countries including Nigeria, Egypt, Angola, Algeria, South Africa, Kenya, Botswana, Zambia, Somalia, Ghana, South Sudan and Uganda participated in the event whose timing has enabled them to adequately prepare for the World Chess Olympiad due to be played from 1-14 September 2016 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

I commend the Chief Arbiter and his team for a job well done. He excellently ran the show while leading a dedicated team and also conducted training for the FIDE Arbiters Seminar in an equally professional manner. This also happened to be the first FIDE Arbiters Seminar to be held in Uganda and it attracted 22 participants from Kenya, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Uganda.

Profound appreciation goes to the sponsors of the event including but not limited to FIDE and the African Chess Confederation, Smile Communications who provided internet to the players in the Halls and rooms, Nile Breweries (which provided all the water that players took during games - 85 cartons), Civil Aviation Authority (five million Uganda shillings), National Council of Sports (NCS) and Tick Hotel Ltd for subsidizing the rates.

The total cash prize of 19,400 US Dollars that are going to be given out to the winners in this event is the biggest to be given out in Uganda Chess Federation's history. We hope that this has set the ball rolling for even higher prize moneys in subsequent chess events to be held in Kampala.

Having previously hosted the Africa Junior Chess Championship in 1999, Zone 4.2 Africa Chess Championship in 2015 and now the Africa Individual Chess Championship in 2016, Uganda is more than ready and now looks forward to an opportunity to host even bigger chess events in future.

Mr. President, please permit me to suggest that ACC considers a request to the FIDE titles Commission to reconsider award of more titles to players who score above 50% in the Continental event. Considering that the event is the biggest on the continent and attracts the cream of Africa, a 50% percent score or higher (66%) ought to be worthy of a title, just like the case is with the zonals. The level of play in a continental event of this nature is so high, which renders it worthy of more automatic title awards based on performance.

The success of the event has been a result of team work and on this note I commend the team of organizers (local and international) that closely worked together to pull this off under your guidance, Mr. President.

I once again congratulate all those who have participated in this event for you are all winners. I hope you have all enjoyed your stay in Uganda and we look forward to seeing you again.

Thank you for listening to me.