

Media invited to scrutinise 2010 prep in China

By [Simangaliso Zwane](#)

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CHAOYANG, BEIJING: A contingent of international and local media representatives has been invited to put preparations for the 2010 FIFA World Cup under the microscope in Beijing on Thursday, 21 August 2008, the Department of Sport and Recreation said in a statement late last week.

Media representatives from major international and South African news agencies will have access to high-ranking members of the Local Organising Committee (LOC), FIFA and the government of the Republic of South Africa in a 2010 FIFA World Cup face-off to be held this Thursday at Ekhaya Hospitality Centre, Westin Chaoyang Hotel.

“South Africa is offering the world's media congregated in Beijing a unique opportunity to gain first hand, up-to-date and frank insights into what the world can look forward to enjoying when the World Cup kicks off in Johannesburg in June 2010,” Sport and Recreation said.

SA well-poised

Government spokesperson Themba Maseko said South Africa is well-poised to use Beijing's hosting of the Olympics to communicate South Africa's state of readiness to host the 2010 World Cup.

“These Olympics also present an opportunity to profile our readiness to host the 2010 FIFA World Cup and for this reason,” said Maseko.

China and South Africa recently celebrated 10 years of diplomatic relations.

Major scrutiny is expected to fall on areas such as safety and security, stadiums and transport among others.

A panel consisting of South African deputy minister of finance Jabu Moleketi, LOC CEO Danny Jordaan, police commissioner Andre Pruis and FIFA secretary general Jerome Valcke will face probing questions from prominent Chinese sports journalist Yan Qiang, who will be chairing the discussions. FIFA boss Joseph Blatter is also expected to attend.

Question panel members

Members of the media in the audience will also have a chance to put questions to the panel members.

South Africa, the government in particular, has spent billions to ensure that preparations to host Africa's first ever FIFA

World Cup are on track and that all guarantees that the government signed in agreement with FIFA's requirements are delivered on time.

Last month SAPS concluded and submitted a detailed safety and security plan to FIFA. The plan details how the police force will spend R665 million on tools and R640 million in deploying tens of thousands of police officers whose work will be to patrol and police crucial venues during the tournament.

Earlier this year and in months that followed, various South African security personnel carried out simulated make-believe training exercises aimed at preparing them for any security eventualities in 2010 around the country.

On track

Deputy finance minister Jabu Moleketi said on Wednesday 13 August that South Africa is on track to deliver on all of FIFA's requirements ahead of the world cup.

"Construction is on schedule and our deadlines remain. All 10 stadiums required for hosting the 2010 FIFA World Cup will be ready for the final inspection date which is December 2009, while the Confederations Cup matches' four venues will be completed by mid-December 2008," he said.

ABOUT SIMANGALISO ZWANE

Simangaliso Zwane is the website content manager for the official 2010 FIFA World Cup country website in South Africa (www.sa2010.gov.za). He is a journalism post-graduate, specialising in online publishing and content, and website development. He has won numerous awards in the online publishing industry and has worked for various online publication and companies including e.tv, Independent Online (IOL), Thunda.com and DITonline. Email him at simangaliso@gcis.gov.za.

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