

## Zakumi wows Brussels

Ahead of Spain's 2010 FIFA World Cup qualifying match against Belgium today, Wednesday, 15 October 2008 in the Belgian capital, the tournament's official mascot Zakumi paid the Spanish team a surprise visit, along with 2010 LOC CEO Danny Jordaan, yesterday, Tuesday 14 October.



Jordaan and Zakumi handed the Spanish captain Casillas and coach Vicente Del Bosque a specially made Spanish replica team shirt bearing the official emblem of the FIFA Confederations Cup 2009, for which the Spaniards have qualified following their triumph at Euro 2008 in Vienna last June. And the funky spotted yellow leopard with the green dreadlocks, who was three weeks ago unveiled as the official 2010 FIFA World Cup mascot, caused quite a stir as he received a rousing reception from the 500 or so boisterous Spanish fans who attended the team's training session.

"Zakumi's cool and a very nice mascot. We really look forward to the FIFA Confederations Cup 2009, which is a very important tournament for us. It will be a very tough competition, with very strong teams, but we look forward to the challenge. I really love South Africa. It's a beautiful country. I was there in 1997 for a junior tournament, the Meridian Cup, and I look forward to returning there next year," said Casillas.

Taking place in four South African cities 14 - 28 June 2009, the FIFA Confederations Cup features the champions of all six confederations, as well as the reigning FIFA World Cup champions Italy and the host: South Africa. European champions Spain are joined by the five other continental champions Brazil, Egypt, Iraq, New Zealand and the US in the lineup for the FIFA Confederations Cup 2009.



"We brought Zakumi to Brussels to meet the Spanish team and the response from the fans has just been wonderful. The reaction to Zakumi has been warm and welcoming and he certainly generates a lot of energy and excitement. If the response to Spain and Zakumi is anything to go by, we're sure to have a huge celebration in our country next year and during the 2010 FIFA World Cup," said Jordaan.

With three of the world's top six teams in the competitions and the biggest names in the modern game like Torres, Kaka, Robinho and Andrea Pirlo lining up, the FIFA Confederations Cup promises to be an exciting 2010 FIFA World Cup appetiser.

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