

01 APR 2014

HUGE MEDIA PRESENCE FOR WORLD CUP #2 PRESS CONFERENCE IN CAIRO

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The UIPM World Cup #2 opening press conference was held yesterday at the packed 5-star Sonesta Hotel with both local and international media out in force to cover the highly anticipated competition.

Following the recent unrest in the country, the Egyptian Federation of Modern Pentathlon (EFMP) has worked extremely hard to bring the event to its shores. This gathering of international stars from all four corners of the globe has ensured a huge media interest with the competition lasting from 2-6 April.

The Press Conference was led by Sharif Elerian, President of the EFMP with Khaled Abdel-Aziz, the Minister of Youth & Sports; Hesham Zazou, Minister of Tourism; and Sameh Guemeih UIPM Executive Board Member and President of the African Modern Pentathlon Confederation, all sitting at the top table.

They were joined by EFMP board members and other sports dignitaries as well as Egypt's top male athletes Amro El-Geziri, Omar El- Geziri and Islam Hamed.

The event started by a welcome speech by the event's Media Director, followed by a speech by Mamdouh El-Shehstawy, the EFMP technical Director.

El-Sheshtawy briefed the audience on the importance of the event to Egypt being the first official international event to be held in Cairo since 2011. He also illustrated Egypt's readiness to host the event which has attracted the top athletes and the strongest nationals from around the world, making it "an extravagant, tough and exciting championship", he said.

The competition will be held at the Police Academy, which has provided the organisers with top class facilities that El-Sheshtawy declared, "would bring out a successful and spectacular event."

EFMP President Sharif Elerian then welcomed his distinguished guests for attending the Press Conference. He thanked the UIPM for supporting the Egyptian bid and for their vote of confidence which has enabled the EFMP to host World Cup #2.

Accordingly, the EFMP President promised to prove to all that Egypt and the EFMP are ready to host one of the greatest UIPM events of the year.

"We have worked hard to prove to you all that Egypt, after two revolutions in three years, is still the same beautiful country as it used to be. Through our competition, we want to show the world the true Egyptian spirit, friendliness and generous hospitality", he declared.

Elerian also thanked both Egyptian ministers, the Minister of Youth & Sports and the Minister of Tourism, "first for supporting the EFMP bid then for their moral and financial support to the event which helped acquire all necessary tools and equipment needed for the competition and to ensure that all participants enjoy their stay in Egypt."

President of the Confederation Africaine Penathlon Moderne Sameh Guemeih spoke next. He congratulated the Egyptian Modern Pentathlon for making an impressive comeback to the world of Modern Pentathlon as one of the leading countries and best organizers for such big events.

"I want to congratulate them for their remarkable return and wish all of you a wonderful time in that very special part of Africa, the land of the pharaohs".

Minister of Tourism Hesham Zazou was glad to take part in the press conference and contribute as a ministry in the success of the World Cup 2 in Egypt. He revealed that sports and tourism are two major resources and sectors that have a positive impact on the national economy of any country and that when working together they create the 'Sports Tourism' which generates huge funds and revenues.

He said, "Hosting such a prestigious event as the Modern Pentathlon World Cup is a message to the whole world that Egypt is still a safe country, able to secure a world-class event as the World Cup. If teams can come and participate here then return back safely carrying good memories about Egypt, then I don't see why governments wouldn't lift the touristic ban from Egypt and allow tourists to come and visit Egypt again. I believe the UIPM World Cup 2 will definitely help in reviving Egyptian Tourism."

The Minister of Youth & Sports concluded the press conference by congratulating the EFMP for the upcoming event which is scheduled to launch on Wednesday.

“When the EFMP president first approached me at a National Olympic Committee meeting and revealed his intention to bid for hosting the World Cup in Egypt, I showed full support to the idea and encouraged him to go on with the bid with the ministry’s full backing. I am confident of the success of the tournament and that we will also witness the thrilling and fierce competition that would be displayed by the world’s top athletes. We hope all teams the best of luck in their competitions and may the best wins. The Ministry of Sports will continue its cooperation with the ministry of youth in drawing the future vision that would help restore Egyptian Tourism”.

The action get underway in Cairo with the Women’s Qualification stages on Wednesday with the Final scheduled for the Friday. The men get going on Thursday with their Final set for Saturday. The competition culminates with the Mixed Relay on 6 April where UIPM, EFMP and Peace & Sport will join forces to celebrate the International Day of Sport for Development and Peace.