

CAF president Dr. Patrice Motsepe made the announcement in Morocco on Saturday, ahead of the 2025 edition of AFCON, which kicks off with Comoros taking on the hosts on Sunday.

Motsepe said the 2027 Cup of Nations to be hosted by Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania will go ahead as planned and that the following edition — originally scheduled for 2029 — will be moved forward to take place in 2028. The next AFCON after that will be in 2032.

This would allow the first African Nations League to take place in 2029. Motsepe said it would involve each of the continent's 54 members, divided into four geographical zones, with games in September and October before the finals are held in November.

"There's going to be a competition every year where the best African players who play in Europe and worldwide will be with us on the continent," Motsepe said.

Patrice Motsepe speaks to media in Rabat on Saturday, announcing major changes to CAF's tournaments.

He was unable to say when the 2028 AFCON could take place. Scheduling of Africa's premier national competition has been a consistent issue. This year's tournament was pushed back from a planned summer start so it wouldn't clash with FIFA's new Club World Cup competition.

"What's going to happen now is you'll have the equivalent of an AFCON every year," Motsepe said. "You'll have the best African players in the world participating and playing in African football at the highest level in the continent every year."

Motsepe, who was flanked by FIFA secretary general Mattias Grafström for the announcement, said CAF was "in discussions with all our stakeholders and taking into account the global fixtures."

Grafström called it a "historic decision" and said FIFA would coordinate with CAF.

"First of all, it's now up to CAF to decide where the [Africa Cup] competition will be played in 2028, and of course, to give the dates to us," Grafström said. "I want to stay in touch in order to coordinate as much as possible the dates, like we did for this edition as well. It took a bit of time, but in the end the compromise was found, which was accepted by everyone."

Switching the AFCON to a four-year cycle takes it in line with UEFA's European Championship, the next of which will also be in 2028.

"The AFCON now will take place once every four years," Motsepe said. "Because historically the AFCON was the prime focus where we could get resources to fund African football. In terms of this new dispensation, we will be getting resources every year."

Having no AFCON in 2029 also means it won't clash with the next Club World Cup competition.