

## **MOPA HOLDS A SUCCESSFUL NATIONAL FOOTBALL ELECTIONS CANDIDATES' GRAND DEBATE**

In keeping with its mission of holding public officers accountable, and the constitutional provisions under Chapter 6 on integrity, MOPA organized a successful debate to help key stakeholders vet contestants in the forthcoming national football elections.

Kenya's football has remained in an extended – but certainly undeserved - state of limbo. It is MOPA's and AfriCOG's premise is that the dismal performance of football as a sport in Kenya in the past two decades has been caused neither by a lack of talent nor the lack of resources but the yawning deficits of good governance and a culture of accountability on one hand, and the infection of football leadership by the mediocrity of our national politics. Characterized by endless squabbling, corruption, and endless court cases, officials have had little time if any to attend to developmental needs of the game. Simply put, at the core of this mess is a crisis of leadership.

It is for this reason that on Friday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2011, MOPA held a ***National Football Election Candidates' Grand Debate*** at Strathmore University, Nairobi. By giving aspirants an opportunity to articulate and defend their vision of football in Kenya with 200 key stakeholders, this first ever event of its kind aimed to contribute towards, and enable the election of qualified, credible and visionary leaders committed to being accountable to football stakeholders in Kenya. Specific objectives of the event were:

- i. to provide candidates for Chairperson with a platform to share with key football stakeholders their understanding of the current state of the game and their vision of the future of football in Kenya;
- ii. to provide an enabling environment for sober reflection and debate on the future of soccer in Kenya, and the value each candidate, if elected will add to football management in Kenya.
- iii. to enable informed voting, and hence positively influence the election outcome by enabling actual voters to listen to, evaluate and interact with candidates for Chairperson;

As noted in AfriCOG's report, *Foul Play: the crisis of football management in Kenya (2010)*, we believe that the crisis in the management of football and the resultant deterioration of the sport in Kenya is symptomatic of an acute shortage of good effective leadership and the pervasive culture of impunity as freedom from accountability. This inaugural forum was an important step towards holding elected leaders accountable to standards, promises and commitments they make.

The grand debate was the finale related to football management and accountability including a *Grassroots Football Stakeholders' Forum* and a *National Sports Journalists' Workshop*.

**Invited Stakeholders included: KPL, FKL and KFF; the three main leagues (Premier League, Nationwide and, Nationwide Division II.); representatives of women's soccer, institutional sponsors of teams, national coaches and referees; sports journalists; SuperSport; universities and colleges; football fans and; football players.**

## The Grand Debate in Pictures



ABOVE; (L) Candidates: Hussein Mohammed and Elizabeth Shako seem to confer before taking the hot seat and, (R) Twaha Mbarak and Sam Nyamweya during the **Grand Debate**. BELOW; Stakeholders keenly follow proceedings during the Grand Debate



ABOVE; (L) Nakuru All Stars representatives and (L) Legendary soccer star, Kadenge makes a point. BELOW; Candidate Rachier makes his case

