

FIFA Secretary General Fatma Samoura to receive inaugural AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award

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The Africa Women Innovation and Entrepreneurship Forum (AWIEF) is pleased to announce that FIFA's first female and non-European secretary general, Fatma Samoura, has been selected as the recipient of the inaugural AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award.



Image credit: FIFA

Fatma Samoura will be presented with the AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award at the ninth edition of the annual AWIEF Conference and Awards, taking place on 9 and 10 November 2023 at the Kigali Convention Centre, Kigali, Rwanda.

Senegal-born Fatma Samoura, who will be concluding her role in December 2023, is the first-ever African, and woman to hold the role of Secretary General at FIFA in its 116-year history.

As head of FIFA's administration, Fatma Samoura has been instrumental in driving unprecedented growth in women's football. Under her leadership, a new and fully developed Women's Football Division has flourished. The FIFA Women's World Cup 2023™ was the biggest in the competition's history, providing a fitting send-off for the FIFA secretary general when she steps down in December 2023.

Prior to joining FIFA in 2016, Ms Samoura spent over two decades working for the United Nations in senior roles across the Republics of Djibouti, Cameroon, Chad, Guinea, Niger, Madagascar, and Nigeria.

The AWIEF Lifetime Leadership Award is bestowed in recognition of Fatma Samoura's outstanding leadership and contributions to the world of sports and is a tribute to her inspiring impact and accomplishment on a global scale.

Fatma Samoura will receive the award at a special ceremony and gala dinner in Kigali on 10 November 2023, where the winners of the 2023 AWIEF Awards will also be announced.

Fatma Samoura says, "I am delighted and humbled to receive this award from the AWIEF. It is a mark of recognition for the work my team and I have done over the last seven years, and which I have no doubt will continue with the same energy and diligence in the future. If I have been able to inspire others by breaking down barriers that stood for over a century, then I am truly happy and thankful."

AWIEF founder and CEO, Irene Ochem, says, "Fatma Samoura has shown exceptional leadership in such a male-

dominated sector as sports, and in particular, football. She is an inspirational role model for other women, and we are excited about honouring and celebrating her.”

Fatma Samoura will also feature as a keynote speaker during the two-day AWIEF 2023 Conference, to share her leadership insights and nuggets in a fireside chat that will be moderated by Darren Allan Kyeyune, the Ugandan award-winning global sports broadcast journalist.

The AWIEF Conference has become Africa's leading entrepreneurship and innovation event, bringing together thought leaders, policymakers, development partners, and stakeholders in the African entrepreneurship ecosystem for high-level discussions on Africa's economic development challenges and solutions.

By bringing together a diverse group of business owners, leaders, and communities from across Africa and beyond, the AWIEF event serves as a powerful catalyst for promoting intra-Africa trade, highlighting innovations and achievements, and fostering networking opportunities.

Tickets for the AWIEF2023 Conference and Awards are still available at <https://www.awieforum.org/awief-conference-2023/>.

For media enquiries:

Riana Andrews

info@awieforum.org

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