FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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SASCOC CANNOT PRESCRIBE TO FEDERATIONS WHEN TO RESUME SPORTING ACTIVITIES

The South African Sports Confederation and Olympic Committee (SASCOC) takes the opportunity to disassociate ourselves from certain media reports suggesting that SASCOC has cast doubt over the possibility of any team sports resuming in the near future in the wake of the Corona Virus (COVID-19).

“In correcting that misrepresentation of SASCOC in that story, I state on behalf of SASCOC, that the protocol of resumption is the responsibility of each federation to determine when they are going to return to activity and on what basis. We cannot prescribe to federations when they should restart, just like we did not prescribe to them when they suspended or stopped their activities.

“The best we can say is that each professional and amateur sport federation must look at the safety protocols that will protect the health of their athletes, coaches, administration and all involved. So when they are happy, the health department is happy and the whole government is happy with the protocols they present, then SASCOC will also be happy. We are not a jack-of-all-trades,” explained SASCOC Acting President, Aleck Skhosana.

Dr Phathokuhle Zondi, who is extensively cited as the source of the information in that article, is the SASCOC Medical Chairperson. The publication has based the story on an alleged conversation between Dr Zondi and Danny Jordaan, the President of the South African Football Association.

Dr Zondi has pointed out the following inaccuracies:

- She has never had this alleged conversation with Danny Jordaan and neither does she have his contacts,
- That the contact she had with the Chief Medical Officer of SAFA Dr Thulani Ngwenya, was in a totally different context, where in common practice amongst medical professionals, she was approached by Dr Ngwenya to review some documents and offer her professional and independent opinion.

- Dr Zondi's fair understanding was that this was to only assist Dr Ngwenya's work in respect of the documents sent.
- Dr Zondi was misrepresented as her professional opinion to Dr Ngwenya was then portrayed as an official statement on behalf of SASCOC, which is factually inaccurate.
- Dr Zondi finds it unfortunate that she was not offered the courtesy of being informed that her opinion would be used as her contribution to SAFA objectives on the subject, including the disclosure of this information to third parties.
- The publication, unfortunately, did not give her the right of comment which would have assisted the story to capture context of her official position on the subject.
- Dr Zondi further refutes comments on the subject of yellow cards and seven-a-side football that are attributed to her in the story.

According to Skhosana: "SASCOC is opened to all federations, professional and amateur that need advice from us on these issues. We will then allocate the relevant medical professionals from our medical unit to assist accordingly and when they speak on behalf of SASCOC, they will pronounce the position of SASCOC as mandated.

"We further extend an invitation to all medical professionals and other medical entities within the professional and amateur federations, and those outside sports to look at how best safety protocols can be formulated and adapted to protect the health and lives of athletes, coaches, administrators and our respective communities around this pandemic."

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