

# Andrew Parsons, IPC President, Visits Egypt for the First Time in a Decade



## Andrew Parsons: Strengthening Egypt's Role in the Paralympic Movement

**A**ndrew Parsons, President of the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), is set to embark on a pivotal visit to Egypt, marking his first return in a decade. His visit comes amid efforts to strengthen Egypt's growing role in the Paralympic movement across Africa and globally. The trip will build on discussions held during the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games and include high-profile engagements with Egyptian officials and athletes.



### Continuing Dialogues Initiated in Paris

During the Paris 2024 Paralympic Games, Parsons met with Dr. Ashraf Sobhy, Egypt's Minister of Youth and Sports, and Dr. Hossameldin Mustafa, President of the Egyptian Paralympic Committee (EPC). The discussions centered on Egypt's ambitious plans to enhance its Paralympic infrastructure and influence.

Dr. Sobhy highlighted the country's remarkable progress under President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi, emphasizing initiatives to provide equal opportunities for able-bodied and para-athletes. «We ensure equality across bonuses, training camps, and prize money. This is complemented by our state-of-the-art Olympic village in the New Administrative Capital, spanning 5

million square meters,» Sobhy remarked.

Dr. Hossameldin Mustafa shared insights into Egypt's plans to foster young Paralympic talent. «We've reshuffled national teams to include nearly 40% new athletes, ensuring future competitiveness at events like Los Angeles 2028,» he explained. Mustafa also underscored Egypt's gender-diverse delegation, consisting of 18 women and 36 men.

Parsons praised Egypt's strategic approach, saying, «We need strong leadership in Africa, and that country is Egypt. With your expertise, facilities, and governmental support, you have the potential to lead the continent forward.»





### A Packed Itinerary in Cairo

During his three-day visit, Parsons will continue these dialogues, further solidifying plans for collaboration. Highlights of his agenda include:

#### 1. High-Level Meetings

- ◆ Meetings with Dr. Sobhy and Dr. Mustafa will delve deeper into strategic plans for the African Para Games and Egypt's bid to host the World Para Powerlifting headquarters.

- ◆ Discussions will explore enhancing Egypt's role as a training hub for African Paralympic athletes.

#### 2. Visits to Historic Locations and Sports Facilities

- ◆ Parsons will tour the Pyramids, the Grand Egyptian Museum, and the Citadel, reflecting Egypt's blend of cultural heritage and modern infrastructure.

- ◆ Site visits include the Hassan Mustafa Indoor Hall and the Maadi Olympic Center, where Egypt's national Paralympic teams train.

### 3. Engagement with Paralympic Stakeholders

- ◆ A special meeting with athletes, coaches, and officials will provide updates on IPC developments and gather feedback to strengthen the movement locally.

- ◆ Parsons will inspect the cutting-edge facilities at the New Sports City in the New Administrative Capital.

#### Ambitious Plans for Africa

Parsons reiterated the IPC's commitment to Africa, describing the region as a





priority for investment. «Africa is where we allocate the most funding through membership programs.» Parsons stated. He acknowledged the challenges in the region but highlighted Egypt's potential as a model for African nations.

Reflecting on the inaugural African Para Games in Accra, Parsons expressed hope for better-organized future editions, potentially hosted in Egypt. «Why not host the African Para Games alongside the African Games for able-bodied athletes in 2027? Egypt has proven it can manage large-scale events.» Parsons suggested.

### **VISTA 2025 and Beyond**

A major highlight of Egypt's growing Paralympic presence is the planned hosting of the IPC's VISTA Conference in 2025. Canceled last year due to regional conflicts, the conference aims to bring global Paralympic experts together for scientific and academic discussions. Parsons also commended Egypt's efforts in advancing sports science

and its integration with entertainment to broaden the appeal of Paralympic sports.

### **Egypt's Vision for the Future**

Egypt's plans extend beyond the Paralympics. Dr. Sobhy revealed aspirations to bid for the 2036 or 2040 Olympics and Paralympics, leveraging the infrastructure of the New Administrative Capital. He also outlined ongoing efforts to secure additional sponsorships for Paralympic initiatives, aiming to reduce dependence on government funding.

Dr. Mustafa echoed these sentiments, emphasizing collaboration with NGOs and international organizations. «We are committed to creating a legacy not just for Egypt but for the entire African continent.» he said.

### **A Transformative Visit**

As Parsons wraps up his visit, Egypt is poised to further solidify its standing as a Paralympic powerhouse. This trip represents a crucial step in fostering stronger ties between the IPC and Egypt while setting the stage for the nation to lead Africa's Paralympic movement into a promising future.

