

VCB says Doha

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Jamaica's double Olympic 200 metres champion Veronica Campbell-Brown and Norwegian javelin star Andreas Thorkildsen in Monaco yesterday, supporting the Doha bid for the 2017 IAAF World Athletics Championships. - Photo courtesy of IAAF

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MONTE CARLO, Monaco:

The right to host the 2017 IAAF World Championships in Athletics is up for grabs and the two interested parties, London and Doha, have been pleading their cases to the 27 members of the ruling council here in Monaco, but for two-time Olympic gold medallist Veronica Campbell-Brown, the Middle Eastern city is more than deserving of the opportunity.

The global athletics family has gathered in Monaco for this year's IAAF Council and the International [Athletic](#) Foundation Grand Gala; the World [Athlete](#) of the Year award, but with a decision expected later today, all the talk so far has been on who will host the 2017 edition of the World Championships.

Campbell-Brown holds fond memories of the Qatari city, after winning gold in the 60m at last year's IAAF World Indoor Championships, and believes a Doha 'Worlds' will have significant benefit for the women in the region.

"As you know, I am a UNESCO ambassador for gender equality in sport, and I believe that if Doha is able to become the host country for the 2017 World Championships, that will bring awareness to women in the area and will show that female and male can train and compete on the same platform and be equally successful," said Campbell-Brown. "So this is a positive step towards the advancement of women in sport in that region.

"I believe that Doha has the vision to further develop our sport and I strongly believe that they have the capability to do so, and that is why I am endorsing Doha's bid for the 2017 IAAF World Championships in Athletics," Campbell-Brown added, before making reference to her 2010 World Indoor Championships experience.

"It's a special place for me. I have visited Doha on several occasions and the experience has always been great. They are very hospitable, very professional and the World Indoor Championships was a very good experience for me," Campbell-Brown noted. "They did such a great job with the indoor championships, I am certain they will also do an excellent job with the outdoor championships if the bid is successful.

"I am very supportive of the bid because I am aware of their vision and what they want to accomplish. The main thing is that they are not only interested in [hosting](#) the championships but they are very interested in helping to develop the sport," Campbell-Brown told **The Gleaner**.

Chairman of the Doha 2017 Bid Committee, Sheikh Saoud Bin Abdulrahman Al Thani, hailed his country's bid as one that promotes partnership with the IAAF and encourages the international reach of the sport.

Doha officials have offered to cover the entire prize money package for the 2017 World Championships if their bid is successful, something that Sheikh Al Thani believes gives them a real edge.

"This is something that we have put forward with the IAAF. The idea is that the prize money that the IAAF would normally spend could be used for the future development of athletics in the region and the council members of the IAAF can decide where to spend this money," said Al Thani.

Criticisms

Doha's bid has met criticism for the plans to stage the championships in late September, as opposed to its customary August start date, as well as the searing heat in the region.

However, Al Thani responded to those criticisms by stating: "If you want to open the door for a new region you have to be flexible, and that's what we will be saying to the IAAF about moving the meet to the end of September, and the end of September is not like July or August. The temperature is not a big difference to other countries in the world, so I think the IAAF will think globally so the sport can spread."

Norwegian javelin star Andreas Thorkildsen was also present and declared his support for Doha's bid. The host city for the 2017 World Championships will be announced at approximately 10:30 this morning (Jamaica time).