

2010 German team hotel's issue 'resolved'

 By [Issa Sikiti da Silva](#)

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The certification issue involving the Velmore Grande Hotel, where the German national team will be staying during the 2010 FIFA World Cup and which was threatening the 'good work' the organising committee has done so far, has been resolved, FIFA secretary-general Jerome Valcke told the media yesterday, Tuesday 1 June 2010.



"I am happy to tell you that the issue has been resolved, and that the hotel owners got a temporary certification, meaning the Germans are free to stay there without any restrictions," Valcke said, without providing further details.

"It is no longer an issue. In fact, we do not have any more issues and no more work, so we are now looking forward to welcome the fans and see the start of the world cup," he added.

The luxury five-star hotel, located in Erasmia, Pretoria, and built on a dolomite land, has been at the centre of the world cup controversy after it was discovered that the owners (Napaj Property Investment) did not have a proper permit to build it and that an environmental assessment was not done prior to the construction.

But it is believed that the owners yesterday paid a fine of up to R200 000 to the Tshwane City Council for not complying with the city's municipal building regulations and contravening the National Environmental Management Act, and have until October to come up with a solid documentation to strengthen their case.

The German national team arrives in South Africa next week Monday.

Last minute details

As the press briefing got under way at the Sandton Sun Hotel in Johannesburg, the 2010 Local Organising Committee board of directors was still meeting behind closed doors to iron some 'outstanding minor issues' as the 11 June kick-off draws near.

Minister of Home Affairs Nkosazana Dlamini-Zuma and CAF President Issa Hayatou also attended the meeting, with FIFA President Sepp Blatter making a special appearance to personally thank the organisers for the 'sterling' work they have done.

LOC Chairman Irvin Khoza said: "We have travelled this route for more than 13 years and now I can confidently say that we have delivered on our promises and we have met all the FIFA requirements, creating history in the process."

Vuvu's not banned

There was speculation that the LOC would announce a ban on the vuvuzelas at the briefing, but most international journalists seemed perturbed after LOC CEO Danny Jordaan said vuvuzelas will not be banned.

"This is a national instrument that will be part of this world cup as long as fans show respect during the singing of national anthems and show courtesy when officials speak," Jordaan explained.

Furthermore, the board discussed the much-anticipated opening ceremony billed as 'welcoming the world home', which will start at 2pm and manned by a cast of over 2000 members.

Transnet hold-up

One negative aspect that clouded yesterday's briefing was the complaint by a journalist working for AFP about his company's equipment (laptops, cameras, internet material and much more) still blocked at the harbour as a result of the Transnet strike.

"Come to see me after this meeting to seek ways of solving this problem," he was told by Jordaan.

ABOUT ISSA SIKITI DA SILVA

Issa Sikiti da Silva is a winner of the 2010 SADC Media Awards (print category). He freelances for various media outlets, local and foreign, and has travelled extensively across Africa. His work has been published both in French and English. He used to contribute to Bizcommunity.com as a senior news writer.

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