



## BOXING SOUTH AFRICA

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# I WISH I WERE A BOXER IN THIS ERA – BALOYI

Two-time former IBF Super Featherweight champion, Cassius Baloyi believes the Boxing Convention held in East London, 20-21 February 2025 will go a long way in taking boxing back to where it belongs, to the top. The boxing legend accepted invitation from Minister of Sport, Arts and Culture, Gayton MacKenzie joining the likes of Welcome Ncita, Vuyani Bungu, Jan Bergman, Phillip Ndou, Mbulelo Botile and other boxing legends and current World, National and Provincial Champions to what was a fruitful two days of robust dialogue in what is called, The Mecca of Boxing, East London.

The Boxing Convention, first one at the Ministerial level since, 'The Boxing Indaba' of 2013 was graced by close to 200 (two hundred) licensees, from Seconds, Ring Officials, Ring Announcers, Promoters, Trainers, Managers, and most importantly boxers.

Current world champions, Kevin Lerena and Phumelela Cafu also took time from their busy schedule to attend and addressed the Convention, raising pertinent matters the Convention must deliberate with regards to boxers' welfare.

Baloyi, (50) born in Malamulele, Limpopo affectionately known to his fans, as 'Hitman' was pleased to have graced the occasion to shape the sport for the future.

"I wish I was fighting in this era," he told Boxing SA Media after the proceedings on Friday afternoon.

"I take lot of positives from the two-day Convention and the current generation should be pleased to have leadership that looks to be so invested in the sport.

"I remember when I started, I won R200 that could not even book me a ticket to go back home. There is now hope for the future.

"Boxing is going to be great again. I was encouraged to hear the Minister (Gayton MacKenzie) speaking like that about boxing. Boxing is all the boxers know, and when you do not have a fight for a year it is not right. I am delighted that Boxing South Africa has been instructed to produce a plan in two weeks to change this around," said Baloyi.

Minister MacKenzie announced the launch of new boxing series, The Steve Tshwete Boxing Series that is going to be launched this year and be hosted across all provinces.

Steve Tshwete was the first Sports Minister under the democratic government of 1994 and he presided over a great era in sport with boxing having more than five world champions, Springboks World Cup triumph in 95' and Bafana Bafana capturing the hearts of the nation with superb victory in 96'.

Baloyi, known to be also shy said the honouring of Steve Tshwete was a highlight for him during the two-day convention, "The Steve Tshwete Boxing Tournament is going to be a game changer for boxers and for me the announcement is the highlight of my two days here.

Baloyi who was always alongside his best friend, Phillip Ndou will be hoping that the convention is a start of a new era for boxing in South Africa.