

# French consulate gives athletes special send-off

The French consulate, along with Caylix Sport, hosted some of the local para-athletes for a farewell before they left for the IPC Grand Prix in Paris.

Athletes in attendance included paralympians Anruné Liebenberg, Charl du Toit and Dyan Buis. Sprinters Arnu Fourie and Ilse Hayes were already overseas for races.

The Consulate General of France in Cape Town, Xavier d'Argoeuves, was the guest speaker at the event held at the Stellenbosch Academy of Sport (SAS).

"We are all very excited to see you compete in Paris," said D'Argoeuves.

"I wish you all the very best. This will be one of the events we will use to revive the Olympic spirit in Paris. We are one of the cities who bid to host the Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris in 2024. The last time Paris hosted the Games was in 1924."

Caylix Sport CEO Le Roux Conradie emphasised to guests the importance of events such as these, giving athletes and officials the opportunity to connect.

"This is something new and really special," said Paralympic champion Charl du Toit.

"It's a privilege to have the support of the local government and French consulate.

"I am looking forward to racing again. It hasn't been the best start to the year for me.

"I have been struggling with injuries, so to finally be ready to run again is exciting and, with my fellow athletes, I look forward to the international season.

Guests, including provincial minister of sport Anroux Marais, were also given a tour of facilities at the SAS after the farewell function..

ERIC STAMMUS - 1 JUNE 2019