

The DIALOGUE JOURNAL

— Culture, Diplomacy & Soft Power —



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EYO OF LAGOS

Guardians of Heritage.
Ambassadors of Culture.

*The Timeless Presence
of Lagos' Living
Masquerade Tradition.*

A THOUGHT-LEADERSHIP PUBLICATION OF THE

GOGE AFRICA CULTURAL DIALOGUE & DIPLOMACY SERIES





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FOREWORD

“Culture is a nation's most powerful, yet quiet, form of diplomacy. Long before tourism campaigns or trade agreements, culture shapes how a country is perceived.”

Twenty-five years ago, we stood before a camera for the first time and said the words that would define our lives: "Welcome to Goge Africa." We did not fully understand then what we were beginning. We knew only that Africa's stories deserved to be told and that someone had to tell them.

Over the quarter-century that followed, we travelled to more than 500 locations across the African continent and beyond. We produced over 500 documentaries. We sat with kings and custodians, artisans and elders, dancers and diplomats. We carried cameras into sacred spaces and came out carrying stories that would outlive us.

But documentation, we learned, is not enough. Culture must be preserved, yes. But it must also be projected. It must enter the rooms where policy is made, where trade is negotiated, where perception is shaped. It must be understood not only as heritage but as influence — as soft power, as economic value, as the language through which nations speak to one another.

That conviction is what gave birth to the Goge Africa Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series. This inaugural edition, anchored on the Eyo tradition of Lagos and convened in collaboration with the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC), is our answer to a question twenty-five years in the making: what happens when culture stops being an afterthought and becomes the conversation itself?

We believe the answer changes everything.

Welcome to the conversation.

Amb. Isaac O. Moses

Co-Founder & CEO, Goge Africa Worldwide Limited



FOREWORD

Culture as Compass

Rethinking Nigerian Foreign Policy through Heritage, Diplomacy and Sustainable Economic Activation



PROF. EGHOSA E. OSAGHAE.

At a time when the world is experiencing dire multilateral crisis, the theme of the Goge Africa Cultural Dialogue and Diplomacy Series speaks directly to the evolving nature of international relations. We live in a rapidly globalising world, where nations are increasingly defined not only by their economic or military strength, but also by their ability to project values, narratives, and cultural symbols that resonate beyond borders. This is the essence of soft power.

The dialogue's theme, “*Eyo, Culture and Soft Power: Driving Diplomacy, Integration and Economic Growth*,” is both timely and strategic. It draws attention to an often under-appreciated dimension of statecraft; the powers of cultural heritage to shape perceptions, build bridges between peoples, and contribute meaningfully to national development. Culture, for one, has increasingly emerged as a strategic resource through which nations, communities, and institutions articulate identity, build international partnerships, and exert influence beyond conventional political and economic instruments.

The growing recognition of cultural diplomacy as a pillar of soft power underscores the transformative potential of heritage, traditions, and creative expressions in shaping narratives, strengthening intercultural dialogue, and advancing mutual understanding among peoples. As such, for Nigeria, a country richly endowed with diverse cultural traditions, festivals, and artistic expressions, the potential for cultural diplomacy is immense. The *Eyo* masquerade tradition of Lagos stands as a compelling example of this potential. Beyond its aesthetic and ceremonial significance, it embodies discipline, continuity, identity, and collective memory. It is a cultural expression that communicates meaning across generations and, when properly harnessed, across nations.

This publication explores how cultural assets can be strategically deployed to advance diplomatic engagements, foster national and regional integration, and stimulate economic growth through tourism, creative industries, and cultural exchange. It also emphasizes the need for deliberate policy frameworks that integrate culture into Nigeria's broader foreign policy and development agenda.

As a research institute committed to knowledge production and policy-oriented scholarship, we understand that sustainable development requires a comprehensive understanding of the social and cultural forces that shape societies. We remain committed to advancing scholarship and policy discourse that positions Nigeria more effectively within the global system. We acknowledge too, that culture is not merely a reflection of history; it is a dynamic resource that influences contemporary realities and future possibilities. Harnessing cultural heritage responsibly requires deliberate frameworks that promote preservation, innovation, inclusivity, and global relevance.

This journal thoughtfully engages the complexities involved in cultural diplomacy and multilateral relations. The use of cultural heritage as soft power raises important questions about ownership, authenticity, and preservation. How do we globalize culture without commodifying it? How do we expand visibility while preserving community custodianship? These tensions are not obstacles but necessary considerations for a balanced and ethical



cultural diplomacy framework.

Ultimately, this volume makes a valuable contribution to debates on culture, identity, and power in Africa's global positioning. It invites us to see culture not as a relic of the past, but as a strategic resource for the future. It also affirms that Nigeria's global relevance will depend as much on its cultural confidence and projection as on its economic and political strength

I commend the contributors and organisers of this initiative for their intellectual depth and commitment to national development through cultural reawakening. I invite readers, participants, and stakeholders to engage with the ideas presented in this journal and to continue exploring how cultural assets such as *Eyo* can serve as vehicles for diplomacy, integration, identity formation, and economic growth.

It is my hope that the ideas contained in this journal will inspire policymakers, scholars, cultural practitioners, development actors, and other enthusiasts to reimagine culture not merely as heritage to be preserved, but as a dynamic resource to be harnessed for diplomacy, integration, and economic transformation.

Professor Eghosa Emmanuel Osaghae

Director-General
Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA)

FOREWORD

Culture, Policy and National Integration

The Unfinished Conversation

It gives me great pleasure to welcome readers to this special edition of *The Dialogue Journal*, dedicated to the inaugural series on Cultural Dialogue and Diplomacy, convened by Goge Africa in collaboration with the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA) and the Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC).

This publication represents a significant milestone in our collective effort to reaffirm the centrality of culture as a tool for dialogue, understanding, diplomacy, and sustainable development.

At CBAAC, our mandate has always been anchored on the preservation, promotion, and projection of the rich cultural heritage of Black and African peoples. We believe that culture, though a reflection of our past, has become a living force that shapes our identity, strengthens social cohesion, and provides pathways for engagement with the wider world. We no longer reserve culture as a luxury for moments of celebration, we believe it is the foundation upon which nations build their identity, confidence, and economic potential.

Across the globe, cultural assets have become powerful instruments of diplomacy, tourism development, creative enterprise, and international cooperation. For Africa, our heritage remains one of our greatest resources, offering opportunities to tell our own stories, amplify our voices, and foster meaningful partnerships across borders.

The documentation and preservation of our traditions, such as the historic Eyo Festival of Lagos, underscore the importance of safeguarding indigenous knowledge systems for present and future generations. These traditions carry within them the memories, values, philosophies, and creative expressions of our communities. By recording and promoting them, we ensure that the richness of our cultural inheritance remains accessible to generations yet unborn and continues to contribute to global conversations on identity and civilisation.

The collaboration between Goge Africa, NIIA and CBAAC signals a renewed recognition that culture must occupy a strategic place in national development and international relations. Cultural diplomacy provides a bridge between peoples and nations, enabling us to engage beyond political and economic interests through shared values, creativity, and mutual respect.

As we celebrate this inaugural series and the publication of this special edition, I commend all contributors, partners, and stakeholders whose commitment has made this initiative possible. May this journal inspire deeper conversations, encourage greater appreciation of our cultural diversity, and strengthen the role of culture as a catalyst for peace, development, and global understanding.

CBAAC remains committed to advancing initiatives that preserve our heritage, empower communities, and position African culture as a vital force in shaping the future. I invite you to engage with this edition with an open mind and a renewed appreciation of the transformative power of cultural dialogue and diplomacy.

Dr. Aisha Adamu Augie
Director-General, Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilization (CBAAC)





THOUGHT LEADERSHIP

The following articles explore the themes at the heart of the Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series. Each piece is designed to deepen the conversation that the inaugural edition begins, and to signal the breadth of the intellectual territory this platform occupies.

Diaspora Engagement and Cultural Identity

Cultural IP: Nigeria and Africa's Untapped Assets

Culture as Soft Power

African Festivals as Global Cultural Assets

Creative Economy and Cultural Tourism

The Role of Youth in Cultural Continuity

Build Identity, Boost tourism

Culture and Corporate Responsibility

Communication, Cultural Soft Skills and Diplomacy

Diaspora Engagement and Cultural Identity

Harnessing Heritage, Strengthening Connections and Shaping Global Partnerships

Introduction

In an era characterized by unprecedented mobility, globalization, and digital connectivity, the concept of cultural identity has become both more dynamic and more significant than ever before. Millions of people around the world live outside their countries of origin, creating vibrant diaspora communities that serve as living bridges between nations, cultures, and generations. These communities carry with them traditions, languages, values, memories, and aspirations that transcend geographical boundaries, enriching both their host countries and their ancestral homelands. The theme “Diaspora Engagement and Cultural Identity” recognizes the transformative role that diaspora communities play in preserving heritage, strengthening national identity, fostering inter-cultural dialogue, and contributing to sustainable development. It acknowledges that cultural identity is not merely a reflection of the past but a dynamic force that shapes social cohesion, economic opportunity, diplomatic relations, and international cooperation.



AMB. DR. WALLACE W. WILLIAMS

Across the globe, governments, cultural institutions, development organizations, and community leaders are increasingly recognizing the strategic importance of engaging diaspora populations. Beyond remittances and investments, diaspora communities contribute knowledge, innovation, skills, networks, cultural capital, and global influence. They are often among the strongest advocates for preserving cultural traditions while simultaneously serving as ambassadors of their countries' heritage on the international stage.

As nations seek to strengthen their global presence and build inclusive societies, meaningful engagement with diaspora communities has become essential. The conversations emerging from the Thematic Dialogue Panel and the Diplomatic Roundtable provide an opportunity to examine how cultural identity can be preserved, celebrated, and leveraged to create lasting social, economic, and diplomatic impact.

The Importance of Cultural Identity in a Globalized World

Cultural identity forms the foundation of individual and collective belonging. It encompasses language, customs, beliefs, traditions, artistic expression, historical memory, and shared values. For diaspora communities, cultural identity often serves as a vital link to ancestral roots, enabling individuals and families to maintain a sense of connection despite geographical distance.

However, globalization presents both opportunities and challenges. While technological advancements have made it easier than ever for diaspora communities to remain



connected with their heritage, globalization has also accelerated cultural integration, adaptation, and transformation. Younger generations born outside their ancestral homelands may face the challenge of balancing multiple identities while seeking to understand their cultural heritage.

This evolving reality requires intentional efforts to preserve and transmit cultural knowledge across generations. Heritage preservation, cultural education, storytelling, language retention, and artistic expression all play critical roles in ensuring that cultural identities remain vibrant and relevant.

At the same time, cultural identity should not be viewed as static or exclusive. It evolves through interaction, exchange, and adaptation. The diaspora experience demonstrates that individuals can embrace multiple cultural influences while maintaining meaningful connections to their heritage. This dynamic understanding of identity creates opportunities for innovation, creativity, and crosscultural collaboration.

The Role of Policy and Institutional Support

Effective diaspora engagement requires supportive policies and institutional frameworks. Governments can play a significant role by creating programs that facilitate cultural exchange, heritage tourism, educational partnerships, and diaspora participation in national development initiatives. Policy discussions within the panel focus on strategies to strengthen cultural diplomacy, support creative industries, and encourage diaspora contributions to heritage preservation. Such policies can help transform cultural identity into a strategic asset that promotes social inclusion, economic growth, and international cooperation.

Tourism and Cultural Reconnection

Tourism has emerged as one of the most powerful tools for diaspora engagement. Heritage tourism provides opportunities for members of the diaspora to reconnect with their ancestral communities, explore historical landmarks, and gain deeper insights into their cultural origins.

Initiatives such as heritage festivals, cultural tours, commemorative events, and historical exhibitions create meaningful experiences that foster emotional connections between diaspora communities and their countries of origin. These experiences often inspire continued engagement through investment, philanthropy, education, and advocacy.

The success of initiatives such as Ghana's "Year of Return" and similar heritage-based programs around the world demonstrates the significant impact that cultural tourism can have on strengthening diaspora relationships and enhancing national visibility on the global stage.

Cultural Diplomacy in the Twenty-First Century

Traditional diplomacy has long focused on political negotiations, security concerns, and economic agreements. However, modern diplomacy increasingly recognizes the value of cultural engagement in building trust, mutual understanding, and lasting partnerships.

Cultural diplomacy leverages heritage, arts, education, language, and people-to-people interactions to strengthen international relationships. It creates opportunities for dialogue that transcend political differences and fosters greater appreciation of cultural diversity.

By promoting cultural understanding, nations can build stronger foundations for cooperation in areas such as trade, education, tourism, technology, environmental sustainability, and development.

Diaspora Communities as Diplomatic Bridges

Diaspora communities occupy a unique position within the global landscape. Their familiarity with multiple cultures, languages, and social systems enables them to act as natural bridges between countries. Members of the diaspora frequently facilitate business partnerships, educational exchanges, research collaborations, and cultural initiatives. They help foster mutual understanding while promoting positive perceptions of their countries of origin abroad.

The roundtable highlights the importance of empowering diaspora communities to participate more actively in diplomatic and development initiatives. Through structured engagement, governments can leverage diaspora expertise and networks to advance national interests while promoting global cooperation.

Advancing People-to-People Diplomacy

One of the most effective forms of diplomacy occurs not between governments but between individuals and communities. Educational exchanges, cultural festivals, youth leadership programs, artistic collaborations, and professional networks all contribute to stronger international relationships.

People-to-people diplomacy encourages dialogue, reduces stereotypes, and builds lasting connections that endure beyond political cycles. Diaspora communities are particularly wellpositioned to facilitate these interactions, creating opportunities for collaboration across sectors and regions.

Conclusion

Diaspora engagement and cultural identity are deeply interconnected pillars of national development and global citizenship. Together, they create opportunities to preserve heritage, strengthen belonging, promote economic growth, and foster international understanding.

The discussions emerging from the Thematic Dialogue Panel and Diplomatic Roundtable demonstrate that culture is far more than a reflection of history—it is a strategic resource capable of shaping the future. By empowering diaspora communities, supporting cultural institutions, and embracing culture as a tool for diplomacy and development, nations can build stronger connections across borders and generations.

Ultimately, the preservation of cultural identity and the meaningful engagement of diaspora communities contribute to a more inclusive, interconnected, and prosperous world—one where heritage serves not only as a link to the past but also as a pathway to shared progress and global cooperation.

- Amb. Brig. General Dr. Wallace W. Williams

International Diplomat, Entrepreneur, Academia, Public Speaker,
& Pan-African Reform Advocate.

Cultural IP: Nigeria and Africa's Untapped Asset

Owning the Narrative, Seeing Ourselves Clearly

We carry within us the origin of everything. That is not rhetoric — it is history, and it is the starting point of one of the most consequential economic arguments Africa has yet to make. Before we can build the cultural IP empires the world will one day accept, we must first do something that sounds simple but has been made extraordinarily difficult: we must see the value in ourselves.

Our wealth is not buried in the ground. It is encoded in our stories, our sciences, our calendars, our scripts, our medicines, and our cosmologies. These are not folkloric curiosities. They are the original data, the intellectual property of civilisations that were practising mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and philosophy when much of the world was still finding its footing.

The mathematics of what we have surrendered are sobering. *Pokémon* is worth \$150 billion, built on Japanese folk mythology. *Marvel's* Cinematic Universe, drawing on Greek and Norse legend, is valued at \$35 billion. Ancient Egypt earns \$16.7 billion annually in tourism revenue driven almost entirely by Pharaonic history. Meanwhile, Nigeria — whose Yoruba cosmology is actively practiced in over 40 countries, whose *Ifa* Odù corpus contains 4,096 distinct sacred narratives, whose Nok civilisation predates much of the ancient world — generates approximately zero in licensed IP income from any of these assets. Brazil's Yoruba-rooted cultural economy alone is estimated at \$250 billion. Nigeria earns nothing from it.



The gap is not accidental. It is structural, sustained by what I call colonial dissonance: a learned habit of devaluing our own heritage, retreating behind imported frameworks, and seeking validation in external narratives while our own treasury sits unguarded.

Consider what that treasury contains. The Igbo-Ukwu bronzes of the ninth century — the world's earliest copper alloy art. The *Dogon* of Mali, who mapped the binary star system of Sirius B without telescopes, centuries before Western astronomy confirmed it. *Sango*, whose thunder mythology preceded Thor by millennia and is now worshipped on four continents. *Nsibidi* — an ancient Nigerian writing system that crossed the Atlantic in the consciousness of enslaved people and survives today in Haiti's voodoo symbols and Cuba's *anforuana*. This is not mythology. This is intellectual property, and it belongs to us.

The trans-Atlantic slave trade stripped our ancestors of everything material. But it could not confiscate their music, their herbs, their stories, their cosmologies. Those survived. They became jazz, blues, gospel, reggae, hip-hop, and Afrobeats. They became *Candomblé*, *Santería*, *Vodou*. The Black Atlantic has been building out Nigerian IP for 250 years. It is time for Nigeria to join that conversation — as the source, not the spectator.

If Africa's cultural IP captures just one percent of the global market, that is worth \$23 billion annually; at five percent, \$71 billion. The mathematics is not the obstacle. The obstacle is the mirror and what we have been taught not to see when we look into it.

The African century will not begin with a policy or a summit. It will begin with a story — our story — told in our aesthetic, with our full selves present on the world stage. Nigeria is finally preparing to deploy capital to back itself. The only question is whether we are ready to begin.

— **Obi Asika**, Director-General & CEO,
National Council for Arts and Culture (NCAC)

Culture as Soft Power

The Quiet Instrument

To the uninitiated, soft power is a conundrum. It is a puzzle because both words appear to be direct opposites, yet they are the buzz words for now and the go to concept for the future. When you introduce culture (itself often intangible) into the mix and ponder at a deeper level, the idea of culture as soft power could be seen as a veritable trap.

Let us however look at culture as a way of life, as seen through language, traditions, values, beliefs, food, clothing, music or architecture; foundational pillars that bind people together and create patterns of behaviour that are learned, accepted and practiced as identifiable characteristics in any given society.

These pillars, unknowingly or by design, directly affect the senses. Culture, either lived or as a memory, enables us to touch, see, taste, smell or hear those aspects of life that are in our conscious and subconscious minds, holding us to ransom, time and time again.

Now that we can see how powerful culture really is, let us interrogate the possibility of it being soft rather than aggressive. Let us consider how to persuade or attract positivity (which is soft power) to achieve our aims and objectives. How do we make the most of Harvard scholar Joseph Nye's concept, of exercising influence without the use of forceful or financial deterrents?

For our purpose, Goge Africa's Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series is a perfect way to utilise the best tools that soft power can offer culture.

They have spent 25 years, documenting, broadcasting, exposing the cultural assets of the world's countries in a colourful, entertaining way that ignites interest and boosts tourism. That is cultural soft power.

They have controlled the narrative about these destinations, creating story lines that shape perception, and invite engagement. That is narrative soft power.

They have highlighted historical artefacts that inform and enlighten viewers about ancient traditions and indigenous systems, promoting research and enhancing knowledge. That is educational soft power.

They have made a huge effort to build the credibility of Nigeria by positively interfacing and influencing international relations through fashion, music, the environment and the arts. That is diplomatic soft power.

They have, as individuals and a couple, engendered credibility and trust by their consistency, despite venturing into a dimension that was hitherto untapped. Their unbroken 25-year track record is the price they have paid for the value add that they bring to this Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series, whose staging and outcome will undoubtedly elicit more understanding, appreciation, respect and admiration for the linkages between culture and diplomacy.

Indeed, we don't need to go any further. It is crystal clear that Goge Africa's inaugural outing, supported by the Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, (NIIA) and the Centre for Black and African Arts & Civilisation (CBAAC), is irrefutable evidence that culture is a soft power. When institutions partner with private initiatives like this, it can be for no other reason than their recognition of an appealing, admirable and inspiring concept which embodies intrinsic value, and presents opportunities for longevity, through various spinoffs.

That is the beauty of cultural soft power.

— **Bimbo Oloyede**, Veteran Broadcaster, Author & Executive Coach



BIMBO OLOYEDE

African Festivals as Global Cultural Assets

Beyond the Spectacle



AMB. NNEKA ISAAC-MOSES

Twenty-Six plus years ago, Isaac and I carried a camera into our first festival. We were not tourists. We were witnesses — and what we witnessed changed everything we thought we knew about the word, "festival."

We have since documented cultural celebrations across more than 500 locations on the African continent: from the sacred waters of Osun-Osogbo to the electric streets of the Calabar Carnival; from the ancient rites of the *Vodun Days* in Ouidah (Benin Republic) to the charge of Argungu fishermen casting their nets on the *Matan Fada* River, down to the thundering hooves of horses at Durbar festivals across Northern Nigeria. From the extraordinary reed dances of Eswatini to the spiritual majesty of Timkat in Ethiopia, we have stood inside moments that no tourism brochure can prepare you for — moments of collective memory, of intergenerational transmission, of a people saying to the world: *we are still here, and we are magnificent.*

And in every single country, in every single location, across every single tradition we have documented, Isaac and our production team have been received with warmth, openness, and a generosity of spirit that has never ceased to move us. Chiefs have opened their palaces to us, custodians have shared sacred knowledge, communities have welcomed our cameras into their most intimate ceremonial moments, not because they were performing for us, but because they trusted us to carry their story with honour.

That hospitality, offered freely and consistently across the length and breadth of this continent, is itself a form of African soft power. It is the quiet diplomacy of a people who have always known that their culture is worth sharing. What the world calls a "festival," Africa has always known as something far more consequential.

African festivals are not events. They are systems of governance, of spiritual order, of economic activity, of diplomatic exchange. They carry knowledge that predates written records. They settle disputes, consecrate transitions, honour the departed, and bind communities across bloodlines and generations. They are, in the truest sense, the living constitutions of our civilizations.

Consider what Nigeria alone carries. The Eyo Festival of Lagos is not a festival in the Western sense; it is a ceremonial institution activated by specific, sacred circumstances: the passage of a king, a chief, or a distinguished citizen. When the white-robed masquerades fill the streets of Lagos Island and the *Opambata* staff strikes the ground, Lagos speaks in its oldest and most authoritative voice.

And then there is the Osun-Osogbo Festival, one of the most spiritually profound festivals on the African continent, and one of the first African cultural celebrations to receive UNESCO World Heritage inscription. Every August, the sacred Osun Grove in Osogbo (Osun State) becomes the heartbeat of the Yoruba world. Thousands of devotees, diaspora returnees, diplomats, artists, and pilgrims from Brazil, Cuba, the United States, Trinidad, and across the globe converge on this ancient grove to honour Osun, the Yoruba goddess of the river, of fertility, of love, and of creative power. Osun-Osogbo is living proof that a festival, properly protected and projected, becomes a global pilgrimage destination.

Then there is the *Ekpe* masquerade, rooted in the *Nsibidi* ancient script tradition of the Congo basin, including Cameroun, Akwa Ibom, Cross River and parts of Abia state. One of the oldest indigenous writing systems in Africa, its symbols crossed the Atlantic in the memories of enslaved people and survive today in Haiti's veve and Cuba's anaforuana. *Ekpe* is not performed — it is activated. It is intellectual property of the highest order, an entire legal and spiritual framework

encoded in performance.

And there is the *Ijele*, the biggest masquerade in Africa, from the Igbo heartland of Eastern Nigeria. Standing over twelve feet tall, draped in thousands of intricate decorations, the *Ijele* appears only in the most profound ceremonial moments. It does not entertain, it presides: ancient, sovereign, and awe-inspiring, the *Ijele* is a living monument, a civilizational statement that dwarfs anything the Western world has manufactured as spectacle.

These are not curiosities. They are the intellectual, spiritual, and diplomatic infrastructure of entire peoples — and they deserve the policy frameworks, investment, and international projection that their weight demands.

Across the continent, the evidence is overwhelming. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Abissa festival of the N'Zima people — now UNESCO-inscribed — functions as a living system of restorative justice and communal renewal that predates any Western legal framework. In The Gambia, the Roots Homecoming Festival draws the African diaspora home to Juffureh, making cultural tourism and diaspora diplomacy inseparable.

Eswatini's Reed Dance draws tens of thousands to the event, anchoring an entire region's identity. Tanzania's Zanzibar International Film Festival projects the Indian Ocean world's cultural complexity onto a global stage. Ethiopia's Timkat — a UNESCO heritage ceremony — draws international pilgrims into the streets of Lalibela and beyond in their thousands.

Morocco's Fès Festival of World Sacred Music has made an ancient medina into one of the world's most recognized platforms for interfaith diplomacy. Egypt's El-Gouna Film Festival has repositioned a country at the cultural crossroads of Africa and the Arab world. In Central Africa, Brazzaville's FESPAM pan-African music festival explicitly frames music as continental diplomacy.

The pattern is unmistakable. In every case where a festival has been projected with intention and supported by policy, it has delivered — in tourism revenue, in diplomatic goodwill, in national identity, in economic activity. Africa has more festivals than any continent on earth. We have older traditions, deeper cosmologies, and richer ceremonial systems than any civilization that has successfully monetized and projected its heritage.

What we have not yet built is the policy architecture to make it sustainable.

That is not a cultural failure. It is a governance gap — and one that can be closed. What is required is the recognition, at the highest levels of government, that a festival is not a celebration to be budgeted for once a year and forgotten. It is infrastructure. It is soft power in motion. It is one of the most powerful instruments a nation possesses, when handled with the seriousness it deserves.

Isaac and I built *Goge Africa* on that conviction. We are sowing the seeds of the Goge Africa Cultural Dialogue and Diplomacy Series on that same conviction. The world is thirsting to witness what Africa has always had and always known. The only question is whether we are ready to own it — and govern it.

— **Amb. Nneka Isaac-Moses**
MD Co-founder *Goge Africa*

Creative Economy and Cultural Tourism

– *From Heritage to Prosperity*

The increasing recognition of culture as a driver of economic growth has elevated a conversation long overdue: what happens when a nation's heritage becomes its most productive asset?

The creative economy — encompassing economic activities derived from creativity, cultural knowledge, and intellectual capital — and cultural tourism — travel motivated by the desire to experience the arts, heritage, traditions, and lifestyles of a people — are not separate conversations. They are two expressions of the same truth: that culture, when properly harnessed, generates livelihoods, builds destinations, and sustains communities.

Cultural tourism has evolved far beyond sightseeing. Today it encompasses immersive experiences in local festivals, traditional crafts, indigenous cuisine, music, film, and historical heritage. When a visitor travels to witness the Eyo procession in Lagos, they are not simply attending an event. They are participating in an economy. Artisans, tailors, traders, hoteliers, transporters, and guides all benefit. The festival generates what no marketing campaign can manufacture — authentic, living culture that people will cross continents to witness.

This is the power of the creative economy viewed through the lens of cultural tourism. Cultural festivals, museums, performing arts, fashion, and gastronomy attract visitors and generate revenue. They enhance destination branding, encourage local entrepreneurship, stimulate investment, and create employment. They also do something less quantifiable but equally important: they strengthen community pride and deepen cultural identity.

Yet significant challenges remain. Inadequate funding, weak policy implementation, poor infrastructure, limited digital capacity, and insufficient marketing continue to constrain growth across Africa. Perhaps most damaging is the commercialisation of cultural assets at the expense of authenticity — the risk that in packaging culture for consumption, we hollow out the very thing that makes it valuable. Intellectual property violations and inadequate documentation of living heritage compound these risks, threatening the long-term sustainability of our cultural tourism products.

The pathway forward is clear, even if the journey demands commitment. Stronger policies supporting creative and cultural industries, increased investment in heritage conservation, digital innovation, and global marketing of cultural products are essential. So too are deliberate public-private partnerships and sustained capacity building among cultural practitioners and tourism stakeholders.

The creative economy and cultural tourism are mutually reinforcing sectors capable of driving sustainable growth, preserving heritage, and building competitive destinations. Nigeria — with its extraordinary cultural wealth, its 250 ethnic groups, its living festivals, its *Nollywood*, its fashion, its music — has everything it needs to lead this transformation on the continent.

What is required now is not more evidence. It is the will to act.

Dr. Ola Awakan, DG, Nigeria Tourism Development Authority



DR. OLA AWAKAN

The Role of Youth in Cultural Continuity

The Inheritance Question

The beautiful thing about time is that it passes. The sad thing about time is the realization that every race must end, at least for the person who is running it. But it need not end fully if the baton is passed to someone who has been trained and equipped to continue the race.

One anchor for this movement, this transition from old to new, is culture: the way of life of a people, how we adapt to our environment, learn from it, and shape it. Culture continues to evolve, and this dynamism strengthens its dyadic, deeply communal nature. I am because we are, from the individual to the collective and from the collective back to the individual.

Who and what shapes this evolution? The stories about times gone by, the stories that shape how we dress, how we play, eat, travel, how knowledge is passed across every facet of human life: the millions of stories give that life its meaning.

As the continent with the youngest demography on earth, Africa has more than half of its population under 25. The future of cultural heritage, our sense of place, being and belongingness, will be determined by the stories we give to our young people, and how early we provide them. The transmission of culture is as intimate as it is institutional, and it is precisely where our most urgent work lies.

Tourism is essentially about storytelling: stories about people, heroes, ways of life, adventure, mystery, excellence, lessons. Think of any destination around the world. The feeling it evokes will have everything to do with memory of the stories about the place. Stories bring destinations to life.

Chinua Achebe understood the power of stories. His life's work was, an act of restoration: a commitment to recasting African stories, so that its children might understand themselves, their people, and their place in the world. If we do not tell our stories, someone else will, as we have seen. Ngugi wa Thiong'o, speaking about the specific, irreplaceable knowledge that travels between generations called language, "the collective memory bank of a people's experience in history." When that transmission is interrupted, it sometimes disappears, forever.

I find that the destinations with the most sustainable cultural economies are those whose knowledge is kept alive in the population, through their philosophy, heritage, and the stories behind the way they live. When young people can speak about a place with fluency and pride, the stories they carry become an asset. Given the pivotal role of youth in the continuity of culture, values and identity, investing in young people from an early age transmits to them a deep sense of identity, directly relevant to the strength of their future.

Cheikh Anta Diop spent decades arguing that African civilizations are the foundation of an unbroken intelligence that the continent is yet to fully claim. This claiming begins with children. If we invest in them early and seriously, then they become the ambassadors of African culture, the youth who continue the race, passing the baton, strongly and proudly, to others.



DR. ADUN OKUPE

— **Dr. Adun Okupe**, *Principal Red Clay*

Build Identity, Boost Tourism

Reclaiming Nigeria's Cultural Architectural Identity

In 1999, President Olusegun Obasanjo created the Federal Ministry of Culture and Tourism. It was created from two ministries: Ministries of Information and Culture, and Commerce and Tourism. That was in 1999. Today, that ministry has further evolved and is now the Federal Ministry of Arts, Culture, Tourism and the Creative Economy.

It is important that we see the connection between brand identity and culture. I call it Cultural Branding. If we are serious about turning our 'rich cultural heritage' into a huge tourism revenue earner and job creator, we should adopt Cultural Branding. Let's take a quick trip to Dubai. In that city, you will find many iconic buildings including the incredible Burj Khalifa. Every year, these buildings attract millions of tourists to Dubai. But there is one striking element that gives Dubai's iconic buildings their unique identity. They are mostly inspired by ancient Arabic Architecture. From the incredible Atlantis the Palm to the breathtaking Burj al Arab, Dubai's most iconic buildings carry that distinctive feature of Arabian architecture.



MUYIWA KAYODE

This is not a strange concept as far as Nigeria is concerned. In the early 70s, we had national buildings that incorporated our cultural identity. In fact, it was a regular feature and I will give a few examples. The National Theatre was one of the most recognizable iconic buildings we had. Even though the shape was inspired by the Palace of Culture and Sports in Varna (Bulgaria), the edifice was lavishly embellished with Nigerian art and craft. The legendary Erhabor Emokpae, one of the greatest artists to ever come out of Africa, was commissioned to embellish the building. The works he did in, and around, the edifice remain some of the most valuable treasures of Nigerian Art till today. As an undergraduate in the 80s, I would go to the national theatre and spend the whole day just walking around and marvelling at these masterpieces!

Many of us remember the NET Building on the Marina. Thankfully, it is still standing. It is not necessarily an architectural marvel, but it was iconic and made more so by that famous drummer sculpture, made by none other than the incredibly legendary Professor Ben Enwonwu, one of the greatest artists this country and indeed Africa has produced. The drummer is very significant in our culture, because we use the drum for communication and celebration. It was such an apt concept for the then Nigeria External Telecommunications, NET.

I will also mention the infamous NEPA (National Electric Power Authority) building. Their Head Office at Marina had a gigantic statue of the mythical *Sango*, god of thunder and lightning. Then, of course, there was, and still is, the Murtala Muhammed International Airport. When it was opened, it was a bold statement in cultural identity with the lavish murals that adorned it. In those days, public buildings usually had elements of our arts and culture. This added beauty, uniqueness and value to the buildings.

When we had the opportunity to build a new federal capital in Abuja, one would expect our leaders to draw up a master plan with strong cultural identity which would make public buildings more iconic. But what did we see? A bland federal capital. You can look at Lagos and you will see in the former federal capital more iconic buildings than you will see in Abuja. The public buildings in Abuja lack character and uniqueness. They tell no stories. They're simply boring! I cannot point to any building in Abuja that people want to visit and pose for pictures around it. Even the

Presidential Villa is not iconic. It is just plain, white and boring! This is the Presidential Villa of the World's largest Black Nation for goodness sake! We all know how iconic the White House is. And of course, Buckingham Palace! Imagine when these buildings were built! Yet here we are, in the 21st Century and see what our Presidential Palace looks like!

When we tell our stories and promote our cultural identity through our spaces, places, public monuments and destinations, it becomes easy for our digital story tellers to draw content from these iconic monuments and project our identity to the rest of the world. In my animated series, ***Turtle Taido***, each of Nigeria's 36 states is featured, while the stories focus on the cultural diversity to be experienced across the nation.

— ***Muyiwa Kayode***, CEO, USP Brand Management



Culture and corporate Responsibility

Africa's Next growth Story is Hidden in its Culture

For generations, Africa's economic promise has been measured mainly by what could be taken from the ground: crude oil, solid minerals, raw agricultural commodities and other finite resources. That model has been adjudged to have produced wealth, but it has also left the continent exposed to price shocks, weak value retention and limited control over the stories that shape investment, reputation and influence.

It is no longer news that the global economy now rewards knowledge, creativity, identity and trust. Africa is sitting on a far more renewable resource: its culture. Culture is no longer a decorative add-on, a festival sponsorship line or a soft corporate social responsibility gesture. Properly harnessed, it helps companies earn trust, understand people, create relevant products and build reputations that can travel across communities and borders. It influences how people choose, belong, consume and connect with brands.



Across music, film, fashion, cuisine, technology and design, African identity has become a powerful global force. Afrobeats, Nollywood, Afro-futurism and the wider “Made in Africa” movement have moved beyond recognition into influence. The next frontier is ensuring that corporate strategy reflects the cultural confidence Africa is already demonstrating. The task before industry is to move beyond cultural pride as a nice slogan or tag and translate it into relevant products, stronger customer loyalty, wider market access, investor confidence and long-term resilience.

For African companies, the question is no longer whether culture matters. It is whether they are prepared to treat it with the seriousness, investment and discipline it deserves. Africa's cultural wealth is not sentiment: it is economic infrastructure. And that wealth is vast, including – but not limited to – festivals, art, languages, philosophies, indigenous enterprise systems, communal intelligence, trade traditions, craft and storytelling.

In today's markets, heritage functions as soft power: the ability to influence preference, build trust and shape behaviour without aggression. When the Eyo masquerade moves through Lagos, it is more than ceremony. It is pageantry, civic memory, symbolism and place-branding in motion.

The Afro-Renaissance Paradox's *The 2026 Brand Africa 100: Africa's Best Brands* report points to a telling contradiction: African optimism and cultural pride are rising, but African brands still account for less than 15 per cent of the continent's most admired brands, while the top ranks remain dominated by global non-African companies. Africans increasingly believe in Africa, but this new reality has yet to translate into stronger African brands, deeper loyalty and continental scale.

Nigeria must treat creativity as an economic priority, and urgently too. Africa's most populous nation cannot build long-term resilience on crude oil dependence in a world shaped by energy transition, price volatility and fiscal pressure. Diversification must move from intention and policy design to practical investment in sectors where Nigeria holds a competitive advantage.

Our rich cultural heritage offers that advantage. The renewed pride in our identity is youth-led, digitally scalable, globally visible and resilient even without structured support. Nollywood, Afrobeats, fashion, cuisine, festivals, publishing, gaming, design and heritage tourism already prove that Nigerian creativity travels. The harder work is to structure, finance and grow that creativity into durable businesses that create jobs, exports and national pride.

The inaugural *Goge Africa Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series* is a timely reminder that Africa's true wealth lies not only beneath the ground, but within its people, its creativity, its memory, its enterprise and its shared history. In a difficult global economy, cultural heritage offers Africa a credible platform for reputation, integration and growth. African corporations share the responsibility to help define our value, interpret our identity and tell our story.

— **Victoria Uwadoka**

CEO and Lead Consultant, HighStakes PR Professionals



Culture, Cultural Soft Skills and Diplomacy

Reclaiming Nigeria's Cultural Architectural Identity

Communication is not merely the transmission of information. It is the sharing of meaning and a meaning-making activity of collaborative intentions for socialisation, development and prosperity. As humans most important resource for survival, communication is the means of sharing ideas, information, knowledge, and to express love, persuade and influence behaviour, and therefore for social reality formation.

All humans use communication to express behaviours in verbal or non-verbal forms but children particularly use nonverbal forms – gestures, pointing, pantomiming – in their pre-linguistic years before they start to piece words together for exchange of feelings in more intelligible forms.

When we communicate, we are in a space of 'shared intentionality' – the transmission of 'intentional signals' that enable us to share intentions, create joint attention and migrate us to a common ground to accomplish mutual goals. So, communication is fundamentally a cooperative process of enhancing mutual understanding, cultivating relationship, building trust, and enabling the accomplishment of goals that benefit us, the people with whom we communicate and the larger groups we belong.



OMONIYI IBIETAN

Like language and communication, culture is socially constructed. It is a creation of the human society. Therefore, culture represents everything we do that is often socially acceptable and gives meaning to our existence, enhancing cooperation, understanding, survival, stability, peace and prosperity. So, culture naturally connects with language and communication because communication is an instrument of transmission and reproduction of culture and therefore an enabler of cultural learning.

Every society, particularly the African society – the birthplace of humanity – is noted for cultural practices that characterised its civilisation. Soft skills, culturally speaking, are intelligences that are oriented in culture and shaped by cognition, interaction and relationship management capabilities that enhance ability to communicate effectively with people, especially from other cultures.

Such cross-cultural communication aptitudes enhance understanding, foster collaboration, relationship building, inclusiveness and psychological safety, and trust that can open floodgates of cooperation and foreign direct investment to enhance growth, development and prosperity of nations whose citizens are arm with sufficient cultural intelligences.

As breakthroughs and improvement in transportation, particularly in aviation, and enormously in communication technologies are causing uptakes in connections among people of different orientations and cultures, travellers and operators in the transportation, tourism, entertainment, immigration, customs administration and other contiguous industries and sectors network for business, educational and other purposes, we need to be more intentional about how we relate with people because every action is a communicative behaviour.

Thus, being culturally aware, civil, patient, empathetic, adaptable and agile, as well as ability to listen and focus during communication without allowing disruptions to attentional resources are key communication and ambassadorial skills that help to strengthen individual, corporate and international relationships.

We sometimes forget that the most important infrastructure for effective communication and

cultural diplomacy is value placement. What value do we place on other people that we relate or communicate with? We must reckon with others in the relational loop or conversation space as 'cooperative agents.'

Martin Buber (1937), one of the most insightful philosophers of dialogue, was emphatic that “When we encounter another individual truly as a person, not as an object for use, we become fully human.” He insisted that in communicating with other people we must make them feel seen, valued, confirmed, loved and respected through what Tomasello (2008) would later describe as 'intentional signals.' That way, connection is formed as foundation for effective communication.

While countries expend huge sums of money on advertising, commercial marketing or infomercials through the media systems of communication, we often forget that our cultural, humanistic soft skills are more effective in communicating intracultural, intercultural or cross-cultural standards.

Indeed, when we encounter others (as travellers on a flight or passengers in a public transport system, drivers on the road, customers in a restaurant, co-workers in a workplace, during workouts and in sports arena, in the school, at the hospital, in the mall, and so on) we serve in ambassadorial capacities as purveyors of the values held by our families, organisations, communities, countries and cultures.

— **OMONIYI IBIETAN**, *PhD,fnipr*

THE PULSE NIGERIA MOMENT

"Meet the Couple That Walked So Travel Creators Could Run"

— *Pulse Nigeria*, 2026

In the week the Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series was announced, *Pulse Nigeria* — one of West Africa's largest digital media platforms — published a feature that would trend across Nigerian social media and surpass 286,000 views in its first 24 hours.

The headline: "Meet the Couple That Walked So Travel Creators Could Run."

The piece told the story of Ambassadors Isaac Moses and Nneka Isaac-Moses — and of *Goge Africa*, the platform they built together over twenty-five years. It traced the journey from a television debut on Nigerian Television Authority (*Africa's largest TV network*), AIT, MITV and DBN on the 1st of October, 1999, through more than 500 documentaries and 500 locations across Africa, to a body of work that *Pulse Nigeria* recognized as the foundation on which the entire Nigerian travel and culture content industry was built.

The response was extraordinary. Not only in the numbers — though 286,000 views in 24 hours on a single post speaks for itself — but in what the comments revealed. Viewer after viewer acknowledged what the feature confirmed: that long before influencers, before reels, before algorithms, two people had been quietly carrying African culture to the world with nothing but cameras, conviction, and a belief that the stories mattered.

The timing was not planned. But it was not coincidental either.

The *Pulse Nigeria* moment and the Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series are expressions of the same truth: that the work *Goge Africa* has done for over twenty-five years was never just content. It was infrastructure. It was the groundwork for a moment when culture would stop being the thing Africa celebrates on weekends and start being the thing Africa uses to shape its future.

That moment is now.

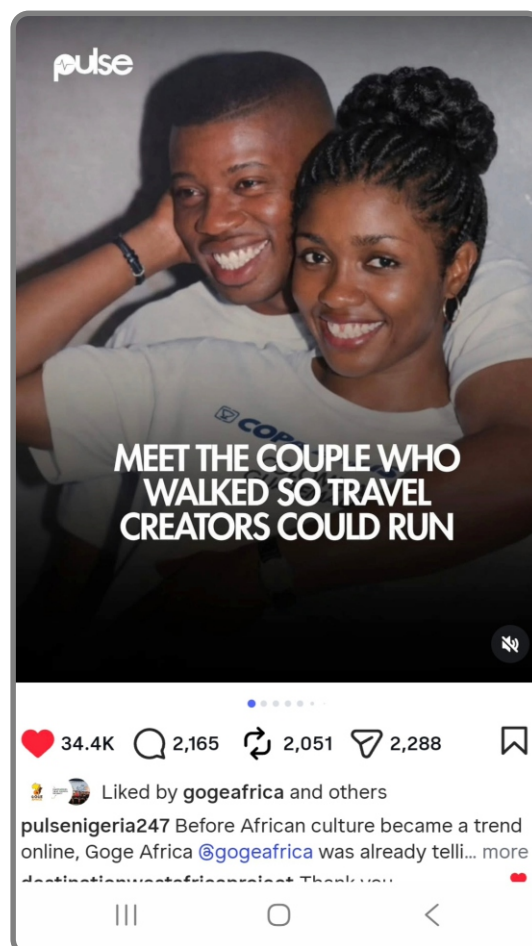
From Virality to Vision

The difference between a viral post and a cultural institution is sustainability. A viral post trends, peaks, and fades. A cultural institution endures — producing knowledge, convening stakeholders, shaping policy, and building the intellectual scaffolding that ensures the next generation inherits not just tradition but a framework for using it.

The Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series is *Goge Africa*'s answer to the question the *Pulse Nigeria* moment implicitly asked: if these are the people who walked so others could run, where are they running to?

The answer is here: co-convened cultural-diplomacy platform that gathers diplomats, policymakers, and traditional rulers in one room; a premium documentary screening, a diplomatic dialogue, a published journal of thought leadership and a tradition as profound as the Eyo at the centre of all of it.

This is where over twenty-five years of walking leads.



PARTNER PROFILES

Goge Africa Worldwide Limited

Founded in 1999 by Ambassador Isaac Onyemaechi Moses and Ambassador Nneka Isaac-Moses, Goge Africa is a multiple award-winning pan-African storytelling, tourism, and cultural-diplomacy platform. Over twenty-five years, Goge Africa has produced over 500 documentaries, visited more than 500 locations across the African continent and beyond, and built one of Africa's most recognised cultural media brands. The Goge Africa Foundation, co-founded in 2007, has delivered heritage education and career guidance to thousands of Nigerian youth. The Destination West Africa Project (DWAP), a Goge Africa initiative, promotes intra-regional travel, trade, and business within West Africa — working to lower travel barriers and boost the local tourism economy across the region. Goge Africa is the lead convener of the Cultural Dialogue & Diplomacy Series.

Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA)

The NIIA is Nigeria's foremost Research and Advisory Think Tank on Foreign Policy and International Affairs. Established in 1961, the Institute serves as a strategic and prestigious platform for global leaders to share ideas and contribute to knowledge which has advanced Nigeria's global interest through proactive exploration of its interfaces between domestic and international affairs in cutting edge research, seminars, lectures and publications.

Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC)

The Centre for Black and African Arts and Civilisation (CBAAC) is Nigeria's foremost Pan-African cultural agency established as the legacy institution of the historic Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and Culture (FESTAC '77). The Centre is mandated to preserve, promote, and project Black and African arts, culture, heritage, and civilisation across Africa and the globe. Through research, documentation, exhibitions, publications, cultural diplomacy, and strategic partnerships, CBAAC advances the preservation of cultural heritage and the development of the creative and cultural sectors. Under the leadership of Hon. Aisha Adamu Augie, the Centre's co-convening role brings cultural authority, institutional credibility, and a strong heritage perspective to the programme, while highlighting culture as a vital instrument of cultural diplomacy, international cooperation and engagement.

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LAGOS STATE GOVERNMENT

24th June, 2026

The Manager Director
GOGE AFRICA,
Old Plot 2, New 36,
Aderibigbe Shitta Street,
Maryland – Ikeja.

GOODWILL MESSAGE

The Lagos State Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture extends its warm congratulations and best wishes to the Managing Director and Co-Founder of Goge Africa Worldwide Limited, Ambassador Nneka Isaac-Moses, on the occasion of the Goge Africa Cultural Dialogue and Diplomacy Series 2026.

We commend your unwavering commitment to the promotion of Nigeria's rich cultural heritage and your remarkable contributions to advancing cultural diplomacy, tourism development, and creative enterprise across Africa. Through the Goge Africa platform, you have consistently championed initiatives that showcase the beauty, diversity, and economic potential of African culture to the global community, which align with Mr. Governor's THEMES+ Agenda.

Your passion for preserving cultural heritage and fostering meaningful dialogue continues to inspire stakeholders within the tourism, arts, and culture ecosystem. The Cultural Dialogue and Diplomacy Series serves as a valuable platform for strengthening partnerships, promoting intercultural understanding, and exploring innovative pathways for sustainable growth within the creative and tourism sectors.

As a Ministry, we are proud to identify with this laudable initiative and remain committed to supporting programmes that promote cultural exchange, heritage preservation, and the creative economy. Our Ministry's Masterplan is anchored on:

1. Culture & Heritage
2. Film Development & Entertainment

MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE



MINISTRY OF TOURISM, ARTS AND CULTURE

3. Business & M.I.C.E (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences & Exhibitions)

4. Beach & Leisure

5. Nature & Adventure

6. Medical & Wellness

We are confident that the conversations, collaborations, and ideas emerging from this year's edition will further reinforce Lagos State's position as Africa's leading hub for tourism, arts, culture, and entertainment.

On behalf of the Lagos State Government, I congratulate you on this important initiative and wish you a highly successful and impactful outing.

May the 2026 Goge Africa Cultural Dialogue and Diplomacy Series inspire meaningful engagements, foster strategic partnerships, and contribute significantly to the advancement of cultural diplomacy and sustainable development across Africa.

Lagos is proud of your accomplishments and celebrates your continued dedication to promoting African culture on the global stage.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Toke Benson-Awoyinka", is written over the printed name and title.

Toke Benson-Awoyinka

Honourable Commissioner

Lagos State Ministry of Tourism, Arts and Culture

GOGA AFRICA CULTURAL DIALOGUE & DIPLOMACY SERIES 2026 PROGRAMME

Date: Thursday, 2nd July 2026

Venue: Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Kofo Abayomi Street, Victoria Island, Lagos

Theme: Eyo, Culture & Soft Power: Driving Diplomacy, Integration & Economic Growth

Master of Ceremonies: Dr. Godwin Ichime

TIME	PROGRAMME
9:00 – 9:30	Arrival, Registration, Cultural Immersion & Exhibition Viewing
9:30 – 10:00	Arrival of VIPs, Diplomatic Guests & Traditional Rulers — Protocol Reception & Media Moments
10:00 – 10:20	Opening Ceremony National Anthem (2 mins) Welcome Address — NIIA DG (5 mins) Institutional Remarks — CBAAC DG (5 mins) Opening Statement — Goga Africa (5 mins)
10:20 – 10:45	Goodwill Messages Government Representative Royal Fathers & Traditional Institutions Diplomatic Representatives Strategic Partners & Sponsors
10:45 – 11:00	Fireside Conversation: <i>From Storytelling to Cultural Diplomacy: The Goga Africa Journey</i> Amb. Isaac Moses & Amb. Nneka Isaac-Moses
11:00 – 11:10	Keynote Address <i>Culture, Diplomacy & Nigeria's Soft Power Agenda</i>
11:10 – 12:15	Diplomatic Dialogue <i>Culture as Policy — Global Cultural Policy Insights</i> Five Diplomatic Representatives Audience Q&A
12:15 – 12:40	Documentary Premiere <i>Eyo: Culture, Memory & Power</i> Introduction by Goga Africa 5-Minute Premiere Screening Cultural & Policy Reflection
12:40 – 13:50	Thematic Panel Session <i>Eyo, Culture & Soft Power: Driving Diplomacy, Integration & Economic Growth</i> Six Panellists Moderated by Aduke Gomez Structured Audience Intervention (70 mins)
13:50 – 14:00	Special Presentation <i>White Lagos</i> Special Edition — Presented to Diplomats, Panellists & Selected Dignitaries
14:00 – 14:15	Cultural Interlude & Refreshments
14:15 – 14:25	Rapporteur's Summary & Key Takeaways
14:25 – 14:40	Closing Remarks & Vote of Thanks
14:40 – 15:00	Official Group Photograph
15:00 – 16:00	Networking & Refreshments Exhibition Viewing Departure

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We are deeply grateful to our distinguished contributors, whose thought leadership gives this Journal its voice and its weight. Your willingness to commit your knowledge and your name to this inaugural edition means more than we can adequately express.

To NIIA and CBAAC — our institutional co-conveners — thank you for lending this platform your authority, your networks, and your unwavering belief that culture belongs at the highest tables of governance and diplomacy.

To the Lagos State Government, our sponsors, our strategic partners, and every member of the diplomatic community who said yes to this conversation — your support has made this historic first edition possible, and we are profoundly grateful.

To the Goge Africa team — whose dedication, long hours, and unshakeable belief in this vision carried this Journal from concept to print.

And to everyone who said yes — thank you.

Amb. Isaac O. Moses & Amb. Nneka Isaac-Moses
Co-Founders, Goge Africa Worldwide Limited
Lagos, 2026

The Dialogue Journal — inaugural edition — is a publication of Goge Africa Worldwide Limited.



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