



OPENING REMARKS

LESLIE RICHER

DIRECTOR OF INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

CENTRE STAGE AFRICA

A Candid Conversation with
Africa's Leading Creators

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Excellency, Dr. Ayodele Odusola, Resident Representative, UNDP South Africa and Hub Manager, UNDP Africa Sustainable Finance Hub

Dr. Jide Okeke, UNDP Africa Regional Programme Coordinator

Esteemed Panellists, Representatives of the African Union, European Delegation to the African Union and UNDP, DISTINGUISHED GUESTS, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, all Protocols Observed.

It is my great pleasure to join you today to discuss the next great frontier sector, the Culture and Creative Economy and its potential to deliver on Africa's Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

The culture and creative industries (CCIs) generate annual global revenues of up to US\$ 2,250 billion dollars and exports in excess of US\$250 billion. This sector currently provides nearly 30 million jobs worldwide and employs more people aged between 15 to 29 than any other sector and contributes up to 10% of GDP in some countries.

Africa's creative economy whether it be film, theatre, music, gaming, fashion, literature or art, is gradually gaining importance as a sector that must be taken seriously and which at a policy level, decisions must be made to invest in, nurture, protect and grow the sectors. The covid pandemic provided an opportunity to re-examine the continent's socio-economic priorities, including the role of cultural workers, towards contributing to building stronger and more resilient economies. The CCIs in Africa have embraced digital media and as we saw during the Covid lockdowns innovation became a key for survival in the sector due to increased digitisation, highlighting the nexus between technology and economic development. The CCIs are also redefining what we perceive as sectors within the creative economy with emerging sectors such as animation, gaming and VFX creating new opportunities for African youth. In 2019 the globally animation, gaming and VFX sector generated revenues of US\$ 264 billion and this is expected to grow to US\$ 642.5 billion by 2030, a CAGR of 5.2%. Whereas, the sector is still in its infant stages on the continent, we see evidence of its potential as a tool for fast and effective messaging used both in education and entertainment. Let's

recall African produced animation movies such as Khumba and Adventures of Zambezia which generated US\$26 million and US\$35 million respectively and became blockbusters. In fact, the African audio-visual sector, including the production of films and television shows has the potential to generate more than US\$20bn in revenue and over 20 million jobs in the coming years.

When it comes to the CCIs we have an advantage; we have the oldest and most diverse cultural heritage (which means we have not even scratched the surface on the stories we can tell or any other content we can produce), all this coupled with a growing middle class, a young population and the adoption of technology - ingredients for a large consumer market and high industry investment potential.

None of us here today are in doubt about the potential of the CCIs and from our discussions in the next couple of days it is my hope in terms of outcome, that we will be able to lay the foundations on how to develop Africa's creative economy by addressing the following questions:

1. First- How can we establish collective action and voice for the players in the Creative Economy to advocate for changes in policy that will ensure investment in the sector by both public and private sector. Why is this important
 - i. Collective and united action is necessary to get African governments to implement the legislative actions that will drive commitment and investment in the sector and
 - ii. There is an urgent need to establish the cultural connectivity and infrastructure to facilitate integration of the creative economy regionally and in a global context
2. Secondly - How do we move become more data centric when discussing the potential of Africa's Creative Economy and for that matter developing robust and reliable data systems on goods and services produced within the creative economy – we all remember the adage you can't manage what you can't measure and we certainly can't grow what we can't measure; we need data to support investment in the creatives sector
3. Third- Within the context of regional trade and the regime of the African Continental Free Trade Area

- i. How do we go about establishing standards that are sustainable to promote the quality of goods and services produced in the creative sector.
 - ii. How do we gain a better understanding of the entire value chains in the various sub-sectors as well as subsidiary industries that can grow from a robust African creative economy such as law vis a vis entertainment/ copyright/intellectual property rights; education and the role of TVETs; raw materials and commodities; manufacturing etc
 - iii. How can CCIs take up the role of driving the knowledge and awareness about the AfCFTA through content creation in the context of edutainment.
4. Lastly - How do we build the institutional capacity that is necessary to preserve and protect intellectual property rights which in and of itself can impact on investment and financing of the sector. And beyond this capacity building establishing continental wide public services such as tribunals that provide access to information and services to support workers in the creative economy.

As we look to address the issues I have mentioned above; I would also like to share with you what we are doing at continental as the African to support the development of the CCIs:

1. The Charter for African Cultural Renaissance has been established as a foundational treaty to guide the policy direction in investment in the Culture and Creative Industries however, whereas 34 countries have signed the treaty, only 18 have ratified it – ratification and legislative action is necessary to provoke commitment to the sector;
2. Secondly, The African Union (AU) Plan of Action on Cultural and Creative Industries provides an enhanced framework for the development of the CCIs as key contributors to economic growth. Key elements of this plan include an increase in national budgets and resources allocated by Member States to CCIs by 5% within the first 10 years of implementation (reference CAADP 10% to agric & rural devpt); increasing the innovative use of technologies in Africa's creative sector; increasing copyrights compliance in Member States; Expanding Africa's Cultural and Creative Industry Markets; Education and Capacity Building; Finance and Investment; Intellectual Property Rights; Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs); and Cultural and Creative Industry Statistics



3. The development of the AU Model Law on the Protection of Cultural Property and Heritage;
4. The Establishment of the African Audio-visual and Cinema Commission (AACC) (which is currently hosted by Kenya);
5. The establishment of language and oral history institutions namely the African Academy of Languages (ACALAN) and the Centre for Linguistic Studies and History through Oral Traditions (CELHTO)
6. The Great Museum of Africa – a flagship project of Agenda 2063 which is hosted in Algeria and the temporary site was launched in June this year.

These efforts as well as laudable initiatives such as the platform provided today by UNDP Africa are laying the foundation for a strong and vibrant creative economy for Africa.

In closing as we assemble in South Africa the homeland of the late Hugh Masekela let us remember his words **“I've got to where I am in life not because of something I brought to the world but through something I found - the wealth of African culture.”**

Ladies and Gentlemen let us recognise today that the wealth of African culture is probably the most powerful underutilised tool we have to achieve and transcend our vision for Africa's social and economic development.,

Thank you once again for this opportunity and my sincere appreciation to UNDP for convening this session and I wish you fruitful deliberations.

Thank you