

Stop trying to “tell African stories to the world”: The Role of Creators in Africa’s Digital Future

Opening Address by Chude Jideonwo (Host, #WithChude and founder of RED | For Africa, [YNaija.com](https://www.ynaija.com) and Joy, Inc.) to the Genius Creators Summit — AI & the Future of Content in Africa, Abuja. 22 October 2025.

Good morning, Abuja.

I’m going to be direct.

We all - creatives - need to stop trying to tell African stories to the world.

We need to stop.

From today, we should begin to focus as an industry and as a culture on telling African stories to Africans, at home and across the diaspora, we should begin to validate and elevate ourselves.

In this speech, I will tell you why this is urgent, necessary - and the only real hope for Africa’s digital future.

Set the thesis

We need to remember the true history of Nollywood.

Here is what happened: A man had cassette players he needed to dispose of quickly. A filmmaking creative saw a fantastic business opportunity. An entire industry took flight from that typical ‘Igbo-man’ instinct for business. No permission taken from anybody. Only action. They met a home-grown need using home-grown language; home-grown sensibilities. And that raw, authentic Patience Ozokworness, and some Iya Rainbowness, just like Mama Ojo today on YouTube, is what garnered the attention of Africans across Africa and the diaspora.

It is that signal, that raw, ‘un-refined’ signal, that created the Africa Magic channels, that brought in Netflix, that lured in Prime Video, that even attracted the Toronto International Film Festival and Tribeca to begin to develop programming for this specific industry.

It wasn’t our kowtowing to any of their ‘standards’ that drew their attention. It wasn’t our ‘technically excellent’ films, by which we mean technically excellent from the POV of the West. It was the power - the concentrated power - of our local audience and its local taste.

It is that same raw power that has extended our Diaspora to Africa and globally as they try to survive our local economy and, both forces combined, is what has made Nollywood an undeniable global force.

It was Upper Iweka Road and the Odun Ifa caucus that made this revolution happen.

We also need to remember the true history of Afrobeats - not the one where everyone is now trying to claim the child they first called a bastard.

The Nigerian elite used to mock Afrobeats as 'gbangbandindin music', same way they used to despise Fela as King of immorality while now fighting for VIP seats when the French president celebrates him. People used to say Davido was making noise and our producers were substandard. People used to say this sound couldn't travel. They ignored it, they dismissed them, but our guys kept singing - Showkey to Fryo, Pasuma to Olofin, Seyi Sodimu to Tems.

It was the local roots of the 2000s and, in the 2010s, the song Ojuelegba made by a Lagos boy to a Lagos crowd courtesy of a Lagos label that called onto a young man called Drake through Skepta and took over the world. And then it forced the local politicians and billionaires and businesses to see them as powerhouses, to respect them, to want their kids to intern with them.

Long before Beyoncé arrived on the scene, and Selena Gomez learnt to 'Calm Down', there was Kenny Ogungbe leaving Hollywood to return home, Dove Records betting on the Plantashun Boiz and Obi Asika confidently insisting to Endemol that Afrobeats could power Big Brother Africa.

They even had to demand credit, whether it was Wizkid on One Dance or Burna for Coachella. They demanded it loudly and insistently. And then between 2017 - 2021, the world finally decided to 'Come Closer'.

How did this happen without a central product launch or a label-led campaign? It was built layer by layer - Diaspora and dance organically drew gatekeeper signals, which led to label sponsorship and global legitimacy, and then streaming and award flywheels took care of the rest.

Then came Justin Bieber, Vogue, Gucci, Oscars, the Olympics.

It all started because D'banj, Wizkid, Obi, Bankulli and others opened the door to a party we were already having for ourselves, by ourselves, and then the world walked in, step by step.

Afrobeats conquered the world not by 'trying to tell African stories' to Oyinbo people on the 'sidelines' of the United Nations General Assembly, begging them to fund us at global summits in London or LA.

They build the technology, and we build the culture. We met each other where we are, as we are, because with or without them, we already made it happen.

Yes, there were ambassadors who were knocking on doors. But they were knocking based on the fact that the sound was deeply, truly homegrown, brash and confident, referring to no one but itself, made for no one but the Nigerian audience and sensibility. The horse first, before the cart. And if it's a damn good horse, it pulls the cart without needing steroids.

Now, with streaming as its megaphone and diaspora as its custodians, Afrobeats pulses on: global rhythms born in West Africa, leading the next generation of sound.

We need to realise we are not even having to compete for Grammys with the rest of the world on the rest of the world's standards of sound and production. No, not really. We had a whole Grammy category created for us, we made our standards, our discipline, our voice the global standard.

That is how it is done.

We don't need the world to tell us what our standards should be. We need to make our standards so clear, so definite, so powerful, that we bend the world to our very will.

It is the very same way Nathaniel Bassey, Dunsin Oyekan, Victor Thompson, Sinach, Gaise Baba, Ada Ehi, Limoblaze and others have already taken over the global Gospel movement while some people are still busy writing PowerPoint presentations to take permission from the world.

Nathaniel Bassey - one of the finest musical talents as a songwriter, a producer, and a saxophonist - doesn't need to tell African stories to the world to get 500,000 people from over 100 countries, Black and White, to sing Halleluyah in our native intonation every morning - LIVE.

It happened again just this morning. Almost 4 million total views in less than 10 hours.

That is how it is done.

I am tired of all this crying and begging for the Oscars and the Cannes. I am tired of us using 'Oyinbo' standards and the standards of critics raised on 'Oyinbo' tastes to tell us who should be submitted for the Oscars.

We should no longer be waiting for the validation of outsiders. We should be building our own market, like the Chinese and the South Koreans and the Latin Americans. We should validate our own model in our own market, deepening and expanding reach and buy, and let the world come along for the ride.

And in Nigerian digital content creators, we have an extension and an application of the model that works for us.

Proof we're already overtaking

Let's start here in Abuja.

As I shared in an earlier speech this year and I will borrow from it today: Who is Nigeria's biggest YouTube success story right now? Many of you have never even heard of him: he is reportedly a quiet 3D animator who started in Abuja, who has built billions of views with one

machine and a monastic work ethic. No gatekeepers. No talk shows. No film festivals. Just craft + algorithm + audience.

And he's not alone. The skit kings. The fitness queen. The Nollywood YouTube factories. Hausa drama networks. East Africa's interview juggernauts. The center of gravity moved.

I tested this thesis with #WithChude Live in Lagos, no fireworks, no stadium concert, just one interviewer on stage. Five thousand people. And the model that made that possible is the same model available to everyone in this room: Content → Events → Merchandise → Membership. That is a real business. That is how you stop begging brands and start telling the truth.

Yet for twenty years we've repeated a sentence that sounds noble but has become a trap: "We must tell African stories to the world."

I'm telling you today: stop.

Tell African stories to Africans. Tell them so well, so consistently, so specifically, that the world has to subtitle us. That is how South Korea did it. That is how India kept its center. That is how China industrialized its own taste. They built home first; the world adjusted.

We don't bend our voice to the global algorithm. We train the algorithm to find us.

Agbap's videos have done this. His YouTube channel has racked up a staggering 5.2 billion views. This channel launched less than four years ago. So it's 5.2 billion views in 4 years. He has 8 million subscribers, his channel ranks 611th globally in subscribers, and that channel racks up an average of 10 million views every single day.

It is mind-blowing.

He has no public brand to speak of, he doesn't do interviews, hasn't been selected by YouTube Black, hasn't given a TED talk, hasn't done any major brand sponsorships, hasn't done collaborations with celebrities, yet his estimated earnings have, in some years, passed \$2 million dollars a year.

And his expenses are just himself, his computer, standard animation tools and Internet connection.

If he posts nothing else this year, if he literally does no work, he is guaranteed to make nothing less than \$100,000. And that is almost certainly an under-estimation.

Of course, everyone already knows the legend of Mark Angel Comedy, who has accumulated 2.5 billion views on YouTube alone. But that's on just one channel.

Like any global super brand, Mark Angel has multiple YouTube channels: over 12 million subscribers across the two bearing his name, and millions more across social media sub-brands

belonging to his protégés, Success and Emmanuella. BusinessDay estimates he has once earned \$4.2 million in annual revenue from YouTube alone.

There are others in the billion-plus range, including SamSpedy or Mama Ojo as Africans call him, who last year made my annual #TheJoy150 list of the most interesting people in the culture for straddling both reach and brand. He has 1.5 billion YouTube views, 4.1 million subscribers, and annual earnings that some estimate to reach \$1.1 million annually.

There is also Sandra Okeke. She is a fitness creator. She now has 1.5 billion views, and hundreds of thousands of dollars in average annual streaming revenue alone. Again, her influence is no fluke. She also has 1.2 million Instagram followers, for a creator brand she built when she was about 22.

The estimated \$2 million+ she has earned over the past few years is just from exercise videos. No studio. No touring. No grant from the Federal Government's DICE fund. No interventions from the AfDB or Luminate. It's all streaming revenue. From exercise videos. From one brilliant young woman.

This million-subscriber, million-dollar earning list also includes House of Ajebo and Real Aba Boys, who recently have been joined by the filmmakers, representing the second wave of big money YouTube earners, including Uchenna Mbunabo TV, Chukwuemeka TV, Hausa-language channel, Saira Movies, and the YouTube megastar Uche Nancy, who with her family can make anyone a movie star in a month via their incredibly high-engagement communities across YouTube, Facebook, Instagram and TikTok. Quietly. Without making too much noise.

Many of them have never written a proposal to a corporate organisation, never submitted to a festival, never pitched for a magazine feature, never asked anybody for permission to be completely and successfully themselves. Not even locally, and especially not internationally.

And that is because of a simple fact: the internet economy has changed the game. The internet has broken down the gates, dislodged the gatekeepers and created a global direct-to-audience loop where you can create from Nigeria in Iselle-Ukwu and earn in dollars from Vancouver.

As I have been saying this year: because of this digital creator economy that has emerged over the past decade: "Overtaking is allowed."

You don't have to wait your turn. You don't have to beg permission. You don't have to follow the slow path someone else has marked for you. You can overtake.

I am an example of what I speak of. I have been selected and won for local and international awards and festivals, I have gotten advertising partnerships. I have partnered with international collaborators. I am a fellow at the London Schools of Economics. I am one of the judges for the Telly Awards. I know and play and win this game.

But then I realised it's the wrong game, the wrong audience, the wrong play.

I am behaving in 2025 as if this is 2015. As if Joe Rogan needs Spotify more than they need him. As if Call her Daddy needs Sirius XM, more than they need her. As if Steven Bartlett needs Netflix more than they need him. As if Chude needs Africa Magic more than they need him.

While I was busy faffing around with an outdated model, Njugush is cleaning out in Kenya and Peller is locking it down in Nigeria, building an African and a global movement.

So I switched slowly but definitively. I stopped talking to advertisers or brands. I stepped off local and international boards this year. I began to listen to my own signal.

In April like I said, after five years of my show, my team hosted #WithChude Live! in Lagos. Africa's biggest talk concert without exaggeration. With ticket fees starting at ₦50,000, we filled the hall with over 5,000 guests. All of these people came to watch one creator—me. And all I did was host interviews on stage. No superstar performances, no special effects, just me doing what I do every week on my show.

And my audience, built over the past 5 years on Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube, turned out for me. 5,000 people for a single interviewer's event. Without any major sponsor.

Nothing like this has EVER happened in any country in Sub-Saharan Africa before.

And it only happened because of this new creator economy.

Yes, my talk show is the most syndicated in the region. It has been on Channels TV, AIT, Africa Magic, Arise TV, TVC and others but that's not where my audience was built. In fact, many of those stations only licensed our content AFTER we had blown up on YouTube, where we are one of the top channels in the country, becoming a weekly—even daily—viral sensation. Because of our organic, digital audience.

So I decided to go all in on that audience. And I decided to bet not only on myself but also on the entire ecosystem.

That is why I launched the Fourthmainland Fund (Fourthmainland.com) with \$500,000 of my own money to invest in the creators who are building this bold, brave, brand new world.

Those who can turn \$10,000 into \$1,000,000 like Mark Angel. Who can turn 1,000 followers into 25 million followers like South African magician Wian Van Den Berg.

The first \$25,000 from the fund is going to an African AI creator in Africa, creating for Africans. Because AI is the new leverage and the new accelerator for Africa's brightest creator talent.

I am betting on them. I am betting on you, and me. I am betting on US.

I was tired then, as I continue to be now, of brilliant, thoughtful young people waiting for brands, advertisers, sponsors and partnerships to fund or support their content—when there is already

so much value across the internet being leveraged by people who don't have time for big English and deep theory.

I say to younger people: Stop copying your fathers. That era has passed. It's now about you. Your voice, your clarity, your gift. Are you not seeing Tunde Ednut? Do you not know that that is a powerful media brand right there?

Think of the 'I Said What I Said' 2-woman podcast, and the approximate \$200,000 they made over about a month hosting an engaged diaspora audience in Canada, the UK and the US. Their tickets sell out in a matter of DAYS.

Think of the East African tigress, Lynn Ngugi in Kenya, with her badass interview show that shakes the Kenyan government and global institutions.

Think of Podcast and Chill with Mac G in South Africa, who were wooed by Multichoice, and then left Multichoice because they are better and stronger independent.

The magic is direct-to-consumer ownership that the internet has created. It is about streaming and subscription revenue. It's about building digital community.

It's the reason Omoni Oboli was on Netflix for two projects released last year, but what you heard about most was Love in Every Word, with a less than \$10,000 budget, which now has more than 25 million views and is more popular in the streets of Nigerian than some of the top 10 Nigerian Netflix movies of all time.

It is the reason brands are falling over themselves to be part of her sequel. Even though the movie doesn't follow the big budget prestige tradition but instead the 'low brow' home video simple-story taste of Nigerian internet culture.

She bet on her audience, she bet on local taste and local consumption. She bet on herself.

Any Nigerian pure content-creator who relies primarily on brand deals (save for brand ambassadorships) rather than streaming or commerce revenue, is likely making less than N100million a year, with most under N50million a year. To break above that ceiling, you must be streaming - or you must directly own your paying community.

The Creator Revolution

Let me show you how big this is.

The global creator economy is booming, valued at \$250 billion today. By 2027, it will almost double to \$500 billion.

MrBeast is reportedly now valued at \$1bn, and the majority of his valuation is based on his content on YouTube. With our home-video audience taste, our low-cost naira expense and the

same platform enablers, we have the real possibility of building a billion-dollar creator or a billion-dollar creator company within the next 10 years. I want to help ensure that.

Here in Africa, the Africa Creative Market and CMI Data Repository project growth from \$3.08 billion in 2023 to \$5.10 billion this year to \$17.8 billion in 2030 and \$29.84 billion by 2032. That's an annual growth rate of almost 30%, the fastest-growing creator economy in the world.

But behind the numbers are the people.

- Mark Angel—from comedy skits in Port Harcourt—has made well over \$1 million annually on YouTube.
- Tayo Aina—Africa's number one travel creator—with nothing but a camera and curiosity—earns more than \$300,000 a year.
- Ruth Kadiri—our Nollywood powerhouse—has built a YouTube empire projected to over \$500,000 annually.
- Tunde Ednut— one of our most powerful news aggregators—has built an Instagram juggernaut that makes an average of \$5,000 PER DAY.

And it's not just entertainment.

- David Hundeyin. Fisayo Soyombo. Adeola Fayehun. Independent journalists with more credibility than entire institutions.
- VDM, Jude Bela—using community platforms to demand accountability.
- Opeyemi Famakin—one person, one camera, the biggest food critic platform in Nigeria.
- Sandra Okeke—building a fitness empire without gyms, just direct-to-audience trust.
- Peller—building a potential multi-million-dollar business on Twitch, TikTok, and everywhere else he chooses to take his audience.

Forget dancing on Instagram and digital socialites in overpriced costumes, I am talking about people who are building real financial and social empires.

They can do this without the government patronage, funder privilege, and advertising anyhowness that has historically powered Nigerian media, because power has changed hands subtly, quietly, but definitively.

In villages in Nigeria, and communities in Kenya, you will find a creator telling the stories legacy media never cared to—or couldn't find the financial incentive to.

If you want to deeply understand Nigeria's latest mega project, the Lagos-Calabar Coastal Highway, the place to go is not TVC, it's an army of content creators big and small with drones and motorcycles, premium storytelling and heavy-duty equipment—Mayor Sam, Edwonder, Afam Orji, Just Ozed, Tayo Amele, African Tigress, and others.

If you want to get original contemporary footage of Africa's most delightful tourist spots from Yola to Watamu, you won't find them on STV or CNN; you will only find them on the YouTube channels of Steven Ndukwu, Adventure Singh, Connect Logs TV, Styl Up Africa, Fari Sanyika and Miss Trudy.

Creators and the attractive stories they tell about Lagos's social scene are the emotional infrastructure that sustains the global demand for Detty December and the organic inflow of forex it triggers, not government, not private equity, and no, not even Afrobeats.

Instablog9ja, The Winlos, every single child of the old Mount Zion dynasty, Asherkine, Folagade Banks, Layi Wasabi, Nons Miraj, Sydney Talker, Diary of A Kitchen Lover, Fisayo Fosudo, Shank Comics, Comment Section, Isbae U, Taymesan, IAmDikeh, Joey Akan, Tobeszn who just returned from a spellbinding re-exploration of Northern Nigeria, Kizito who is the next big thing in African travel content ...these are all visionary or superstar individual creators who are deeply investible and sustainable as brands and enterprises.

It's not elite media shaping real global opinion about Ibrahim Traore and Julius Malema, like Kamala Harris and her enablers learnt in 2024 when Trump returned the second time. It is African creators like Lynn and Tayo and Risen Africa and the father of them all, Wode Maya. Many of them report live from the scene, talking to on-the-ground sources and citizens, like we did last year in our documentary about West African democracy.

Us creators are the ones making him - as Germany's DW reported just last month - break the internet.

This is journalism. This is entertainment. This is culture.

And the best part? This is not just global revenue. In Africa, it's local currency spend, global currency revenue.

It's Naira spend, Dollar income.

And, it is not the same maths as the fintech unicorns, where revenues include processing other people's monies and a large human resource infrastructure is needed to even sustain the revenues. Here, there is no burn, no headcount bloat. This is direct income and low cost for the foreseeable future. This is 90% free cash flow.

That is how a poor country with a huge population overtakes the rest of the world. That is how we leapfrog.

These are the numbers:

- 28.3m 2020 est. diaspora Africans (Migration Policy Institute, citing UN Population Division) and 5m diaspora Nigerians (Not A Deep Dive)

- Diaspora remittances: \$100B/year (World Bank) → opportunity for commerce/payments crossover; \$4 trillion+ consumer spending power. (The African Union Development Agency-NEPAD)

- Media and entertainment sector is poised to grow from \$9 billion to \$13.6 billion by 2028. (PWC), creative economy, encompassing music, film, fashion, publishing, sports, and more, is estimated at \$4.2 billion to \$5 billion annually (Creative Africa Nexus - CANEX), Africa's film and audiovisual sector contributes \$5 billion to GDP, with a potential to generate up to \$20 billion in annual revenues across broader creative industries (UNESCO), \$5B+ privately estimated opportunity in diaspora cultural payments

- 1.4B Africans at home minimum: digital economy/internet users growing at approx 13% YoY (AFPIF); Domestic Digital Users growing from 540M internet users to 800M+ by 2030. (Brookings, 2023)

- Rising mobile payments and subscriptions.

- Huge under-served opportunity in culture-driven commerce.

I invite you to pay key attention to the Diaspora numbers. Because for creators, that's where the real action is.

70% of Nigerian YouTube consumers are out of Nigeria according to YouTube itself, making the revenue possibilities endless.

YouTube also revealed that the number of Nigerian channels making eight figures - that is, between N10 million and N100 million, or between \$7,000 and \$66,000 in revenue - grew by 100% year-on-year (y-o-y) in 2024.

Selar paid out N9.8 billion to mostly African creators last year, with revenue from audiences in 194 countries.

And we are actually just getting started.

Because the biggest gift to the Nigerian creator economy is 'japa' - immigration and globalization. It's the tens of thousands of people leaving Nigeria to go spend hard currency in trusted stable or growing economies, converting their neighbours and communities in the process, while intuitively pushing platforms to be more inclusive.

Capitalism and technology, especially the monopolies that accelerated innovation have been key to this change. Which reminds me: when indulgent kids in California or Berlin complain about any of the above, Africans may want to pause before we join them. The context for us is different. The leverage they give us is indispensable.

If my show, for instance, grows to reach just 10% of the current estimated US/UK migrant population, which is almost always 100% digitally connected, at \$8 a pop just for the content. it translates to 250,000 monthly subscribers and \$19million+ annual revenue. That is minus the events and merchandise.

And all I need is two chairs, two cameras, and one guest weekly to draw in that revenue.

Afrobeats did it through streaming and indirect community. The creator revolution is doing it through streaming, subscriptions, and direct community.

Overtaking is allowed.

Don't erase the voice, elevate it

We need to respect our audience, their taste, their desires.

No matter how much we cry about the 'quality of the content' the world is loving it. Not the tastemakers, but global audiences.

Across this continent, the audience has voted every weekend for thirty years. They watch Nigerian stories in Nairobi and Niamey; they binge our drama in Accra and Addis. The critics continue ranting; but the audience continues returning.

And we can always count on our audience - Africans in Africa and the Diaspora.

So stop prioritising a snooty Italian juror over an earnest Egbeda spender.

That is why no single festival favourite film internationally has done well in the local box office. None. List me 10 movies that you know over the past 5 years across SubSaharan Africa that have won Western high profile awards that have also been box office hits?

Because African audiences - even when they live in Texas - know when content looks at them a foreign gaze, for foreign validation. It's not the fault of the excellent creators raised on foreign filmmaking traditions. It's just that our audience doesn't have any time for that: They know what they want. They know what they like.

We like our content like we like our jollof rice: messy, oily, spicy.

If even KFC had to bow to Jollof rice, so must you.

Oboz TV. Expand your view.

We need to own this truth proudly and fully and stop looking outside for heaven's sake.

Because if we don't adjust to that reality and embrace it now once for all, our country's creative business model and future will continue to be turned upside down each time Netflix leaves or

doesn't leave, each time Canal+ buys Multichoice, each time Paramount exits the market, each time America-centric venture capital fund disrespects your pitch deck.

The way forward is not to replace our voice or mimic the West, it's to refine our voice; to improve on what is already working. Don't waste our time criticising Nollywood YouTube films or skitmakers, find out what makes them work and improve on the models. Don't sneer; train. Don't erase; elevate.

Take those films YouTube comments love to fight about, and make them the best version of themselves - with story rigour, technical improvement, world building, and post production craft. That is how taste evolves without losing itself.

And we should not do this so our stories can 'travel'. They already travel. We should do it so we can deepen the audience, expand our influence and elevate our own experience.

Now, is why this is crucial, because the creator economy is not just a storytelling revolution, it is the biggest social, economic and political revolution of our age.

The African creator economy is the future of independent media on our continent.

Because fin-tech and transport-tech companies will not change any country. It's stories that change civilizations - stories about power, identity, ownership, enlightenment, freedom, change.

And now with a new global playing field, and new global economy; we own our stories without gatekeepers. And we make money while doing it - millions of dollars, while we own the IP, we own the content, we own the community; we own the POV, we own our voice.

The network is already forming

Watch quietly. Watch carefully.

A new African storytelling network is forming, and this time, we are building it. No old gatekeepers. No colonial middlemen.

You can already trace the linkages:

Wode Maya. David Hundeyin. Dr. King'ori. Lynn Ngugi. Steven Ndukwu. The voice of Vusi. The ideas of P.L.O. Lumumba. The Ibrahim Traoré convergence. Independent. Heterodox. Often inconvenient. That is how movements start: organic, not manufactured.

When I sat with creators at iHub Nairobi two weeks ago and, I said: "Stop telling African stories to the world." The room whooped. They know. Our work now is to systematize what our intuition already knows: Lagos–Nairobi–Accra–Joburg–Dakar—creators cross-pollinating creators—and letting the diaspora amplify to London, Toronto, Houston, Manchester.

With or without you, with or without gatekeepers, with or without government, with or without investors, this new reality is already happening.

Just like critical theory transformed American universities, top-down intervention kicked off the Korean cultural wave and bro-podcasts rebalanced Britain's political thought, this storytelling movement is gently transforming Africa geo-politics and ironically achieving the Africanist ideal of post-colonial visionaries. Organic movements as opposed to manufactured 'springs'.

Forget WEF stages and even AFDB meets, when it comes to who is really moving the needle in Africa's contemporary culture, it is no longer legacy institutions of any sort. It's creators and storytellers, thinkers and doers, building movements below the line.

It is a revolution in the way we see ourselves, hear ourselves. respect ourselves and then control the integrated fullness of ourselves.

It is teaching us to stop imitating the West and East's voice, view point, perspectives, flattened ideologies, and start listening to how we listen, how we act, why we act, how we dream, and what we want. To stop genuflecting before the West and even the East - their ideas of wealth, markets, politics, storytelling and happiness - and listen to our own evidence-based intuition.

We have to start observing, listening and systematising who and what we are, including our so-called weaknesses. We need to respect the local taste, understand it, and then scale it.

We don't have to be reactionary, we only need to be conscious in picking and choosing.

We are not here to replace one hegemony with another black over white. We are here to be ourselves. Fully. Contradictions and all.

Stop apologizing for being loud, vivid, dramatic. Stop criticising how Sola Sobowale screams in movies, when that's exactly how our mothers scream at home. Borrow from the West what works, maths, measurement, logistics, standards. Offer what we have mastered community, restorative justice, warmth, oral history, spiritual intuition, rawness. Combine them. That is civilization.

Abuja, hear me clearly:

We must no longer audition for other people's approval.

We must no longer translate our voice to fit another palate.

We must no longer outsource our taste.

From today, the instruction is simple:

Stop telling African stories to the world.

Tell African stories to Africans.

Tell them truthfully. Tell them weekly. Tell them with tech and AI as amplifier, with commerce as engine, with community as covenant. Find out how Jeriq fills out stadiums in Onitsha, how Saira

gets millions of views in Kano, how community cinema can aggregate disposable income in Osogbo.

We will build the canon here—and the world will subtitle us.

We will finance our voices here—and the world will syndicate us.

We will discipline our craft here—and the world will study us.

Something is moving under our feet—quiet, stubborn, inevitable. Not a “spring.” A shift. A network of creators re-wiring African confidence in real time.

So here is the altar call:

- If you are a creator: build, ship, sell. Scan the code on screen, join the 4ML pipeline, let's professionalize your stack.
- If you control capital: co-invest with us or others with an Africa-first point of view. Let this be the best-performing asset class on the continent.
- If you run a platform or a ministry: remove the friction—and get out of the way.

Let's go into the world and do big things.

But let's start here. Start with us. Start with Africa.

Enough is Enough of waiting for Oyinbo people to tell us what to do and how to do it. We do not need them to pat us on the head any longer.

Let's bet on ourselves. Let's bet on our continent.

Ladies and gentlemen: Overtaking is allowed.