



An AfCFTA Forum and Festival  
on Tourism, Creatives and  
Cultural Industries

# Creatives Connect Afrika Daily Bulletin



24-26 NOVEMBER 2025



LA PALM ROYAL BEACH HOTEL, ACCRA, GHANA









## **GOOD MORNING, AFRICA!**

Welcome to Day One of Creatives Connect Afrika – the continent’s premier forum and festival uniting Film, Fashion, Music, Tourism, Policy and Culture. Yesterday was remarkable, and today promises even deeper connections, insights, and opportunities for creatives across Africa.

## **MASTERCLASSES SET THE STAGE AS AFRICA’S CREATIVE LEADERS CONVERGE IN ACCRA**

### **DAY ONE OPENS WITH ENERGY, IDEAS & PAN-AFRICAN CREATIVITY**

Creatives Connect Afrika 2025 kicked off on Monday 24th November at the La Palm Royal Beach Hotel, Accra with an atmosphere buzzing with colour, movement, and cross-continental creativity. Delegates from more than 20 countries converged for a power-packed opening featuring film, fashion, music and a vibrant cultural showcase – setting the tone for an event designed to accelerate Africa’s creative economy.

## **HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DAY**

### **1. A DYNAMIC OPENING SESSION**

Opening the forum on behalf of the Secretary-General of the AfCFTA, Emily Mburu-Ndoria, Director of Trade in Services, Investments, Intellectual Property Rights and Digital Trade, welcomed delegates to the maiden edition of the Creatives Connect Afrika. She highlighted the event as a milestone for Africa’s creative and cultural sectors, emphasizing the potential of film, music, fashion, design, digital content, gaming, animation, heritage, and tourism to generate jobs, drive inter-African trade, and promote authentic African stories globally. Mburu-Ndoria underscored the importance of cross-border collaboration, policy engagement, and digital trade in unlocking opportunities for creatives across the continent, while acknowledging key partners and stakeholders whose support made the forum possible.

Welcoming delegates, the Africa Tourism Partners CEO, Mr. Kwakye Donkor, set the agenda with an energising call for collaboration across borders. His remarks emphasised the continent’s need to connect markets, exchange cultural experiences, and unlock new creative pathways.

Rex Owusu Marfo (Rex Omar), Coordinator at the Black Star Experience Secretariat noted that Ghana was proud to host the maiden Creative Connect Afrika event in fulfilment of President Mahama’s campaign promise to support the creative sector in Ghana. He noted





that the Black Star Experience Secretariat was set up to make Ghana a home of African creative expression and believed that this event will give help remove barriers that hinder African creatives to derive the best from their efforts.

## 2. SCENE-SETTING PRESENTATION ON AFRICA'S FILM VALUE CHAIN

Founder & CEO of Hyphen8 Media Partners, Fela Oke, delivered a passionate breakdown of how Africa can leverage AfCFTA to strengthen audio-visual industries, live events, artist mobility and IP systems.

**"We must stop letting others tell us how to sell Africa. Our stories are ours — build them, own them, finance them here."**

## 3. MASTERCLASS: THE BUSINESS OF FILM

Award-winning filmmaker **Joel 'Kachi Benson** led one of the day's most engaging sessions, exploring new financing models, distribution gaps, and the need for a continental ecosystem that enables filmmakers to scale beyond single-market limitations.

## 4. SPOTLIGHT ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS

**Esther Maureen Fondo**, Head of Copyright and Related Rights at ARIPO, unpacked the essentials of copyright, performers' rights, publishing, licensing and the evolving legal frameworks shaping Africa's creative industries.

## 5. FASHION MASTERCLASS — FROM RUNWAY TO RETAIL

Fashion innovators analysed Africa's growing influence in global style, exploring sustainable production, brand consistency, continental cross-trading and building equity through identity and storytelling.

## 6. MUSIC MASTERCLASS — TALENT, TECH & MONETIZATION

Experts in the music sector drove into rights management, live events, digital platforms and international collaboration, highlighting the urgent need for stronger intra-African mobility and unified licensing systems.

Ms. Khadijat El-Alawa, Head of Music and Talent for AfroFuture, delivered a compelling deep dive into Africa's music landscape, stressing the urgency of continental connectivity. She highlighted how African songs often chart globally before reaching neighbouring countries, pointing to weak intra-African mobility, fragmented licensing systems and poor metadata as major challenges.







She underscored the impact of Africa's youthful population, rising streaming numbers and the need to strengthen local platforms like Uptown to retain revenue. With 85–87% of young Africans discovering music through YouTube and over 70% through TikTok, she emphasized the growing dominance of visual content and the opportunity for artists to build audience pathways through culturally aligned digital tools.

Her message was clear: Africa must build its own systems, from metadata integrity to streaming regulation to keep value on the continent. "We can't leave money on the table. If we connect our markets, strengthen our platforms and build what speaks to us, we can protect our culture, scale our artists and secure the future of African music."

Building on this, Mr. John Sande, CEO of Mediakits, Kenya, addressed the financial barriers faced by creators. He outlined how traditional banking fails to serve African creatives due to unpredictable income, fragmented revenue streams, and the informal nature of the creative economy. He proposed solutions including alternative financing, digital credit scoring, automated income pooling, AI-driven financial management, and interoperable cross-border payment systems. By providing tools for clear income analytics, invoice automation, campaign reporting, and standardized pitching, creatives can operate as full-fledged entrepreneurs, monetize effectively, and participate seamlessly in Pan-African digital trade under AfCFTA.

Ms. Huguette Umutoni, Creative Economy and Global Partnerships Leader, Rwanda, highlighted the importance of clear communication, strategic networking, and branding. She stressed that success comes from building trust, forming strong partnerships, and explaining your creative business in a single, crystal-clear sentence ensuring opportunities and funding follow naturally.

## 7. CULTURAL PERFORMANCE ELECTRIFIES THE ROOM

A vibrant cultural showcase brought delegates to their feet. Drums, dance and rhythm filled the Lotus Hall, weaving together the continent's shared stories and igniting a wave of excitement ahead of the afternoon sessions.





## QUOTE OF THE DAY



## ATTENDEE REFLECTIONS

Delegates shared the sense of renewed purpose:

- "Today reminded me that Africa's creativity is its strongest currency."
- "The sessions on IP and financing were eye-opening."
- "This is the kind of platform we've been waiting for — practical, honest and future-focused."

## KEY TAKEAWAYS FROM DAY ONE

- Africa must control, commercialize and protect its own creative IP.
- Pan-African licensing, mobility and distribution remain the biggest bottlenecks.
- Collaboration between film, fashion, music and tourism is essential for building a unified creative economy.
- Talent should be treated as equity holders, not just service providers.
- Cross-border networks are indispensable for scaling creative products.





## WHAT TO EXPECT ON TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2025

Day Two will open with sector-focused masterclasses, marketplace networking, content co-creation sessions, and deeper dives into IP, financing, branding and distribution. Delegates should prepare for an action-oriented programme designed to accelerate deals, partnerships and project pipelines.

## PARTNERS & SUPPORTERS



## CLOSING NOTE

Thank you for joining this session.

As we continue shaping the future of Africa's creative economy, we invite you to stay engaged:

Connect with fellow delegates and industry leaders

Network and build meaningful collaborations

Explore the exhibitions and discover remarkable creative talent

Prepare for the evening showcases ahead

We look forward to welcoming you to the next experience.

Creatives Connect Afrika — Advance. Create. Connect.







SCAN TO REGISTER



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Signed by:

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