

AFRICA SOFT POWER AT UNGA 80

On Tuesday, 23rd September, at the Citigroup Center in New York, Africa Soft Power (ASP) and African Women on Board (AWB) hosted our annual convening alongside the United Nations General Assembly. The event was charged with ideas and energy, centering on Africa's role in shaping the economies of tomorrow, especially against the backdrop of rapid AI growth.

We would like to extend a huge thank-you to everyone who joined us on the day, as well as the wider support that continues to be provided by our network, as together we continue to build our very own large language model for African success around the world.

Key quotes from ASP @ UNGA80

The breadth and depth of insights on offer on the day were truly inspiring, and for those who were not in attendance, we have here picked out some key quotes from the day to give you a flavour of the conversations that took place...

“For us, it's really important to have this convening. It's a conviction for us that African and diaspora voices must help shape the global agenda, whether it's security, health, or immigration. And now, with AI, our perspectives are critical.”

Dr. Nkiru Balonwu, Founder, Africa Soft Power Group





“Knowledge exists in integrated systems; we need to stop hoarding data in silos. We need to have a mindset shift towards data ecosystems to bring data together and to realize that having data does not make data valuable. It's the ability to extract timely insights from the data that makes data valuable.”

**Dr. Uyi Stewart, Vice President,
Inclusive Innovation & Analytics,
Mastercard Center for Inclusive
Growth**

“When we think about what Africa offers at the moment in the space of AI, we're thinking about youth, young people. Africa has the largest percentage of young people anywhere on this planet, but it's a resource that's not being augmented... How do we see youth, particularly as a strategic advantage as opposed to a population burden?”

**Renée Cummings, Assistant
Professor of Practice in Data
Science, University of Virginia**



“Whatever we're doing at the continental level, there's also an opportunity to replicate in leading countries with the biggest talent and strongest economies. The Basketball Africa League is exactly that - a sports and entertainment product that showcases African talent while creating opportunities for other parts of the creative industry to thrive.”

**Amadou Gallo Fall, President,
Basketball Africa League**



“What we’ll see in AI is that the barriers to becoming a global player and scaling talent will be dramatically lowered, creating opportunities for those ready to capitalize. But it’s not automatic, success depends on your ability to use the technology and platforms effectively, and on having the courage to invest the time to do so.”

**Tony Effik, Managing Director,
Google; Adjunct Assistant Professor,
Columbia University**



"I will say that while I’m an extreme optimist about the value AI brings, I tend to think that for creative artifacts (music, art, cooking), it can certainly augment the work of creators. However, I remain relatively pessimistic that true creative outputs, the foundational cultural artifacts, are likely to supplant human beings in their creative work."

**Dr. Haile Owusu Fmr. SVP, Data
Science & Machine Learning
Engineering, Warner Bros.
Discovery**

"A solution to talent wanting to leave the continent immediately is creating a community and a culture locally that celebrates our people. It’s about following their progress week in and week out, and building the world class systems they see out there. That celebration of talent at the earliest stages can be the difference between someone who makes it far and someone who doesn't."

**Shola Akinlade, Co-founder & CEO,
Paystack; Founder, Sporting Lagos**

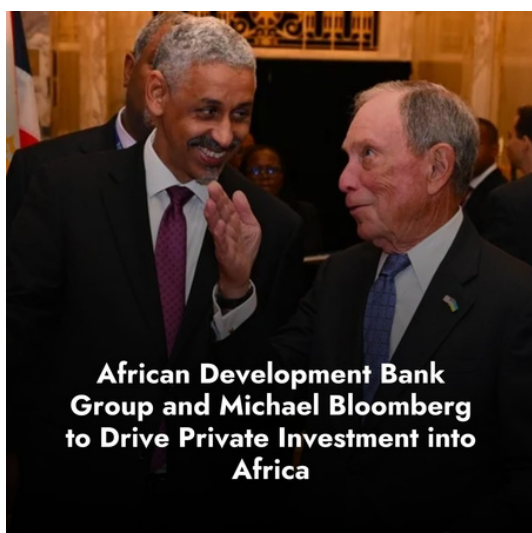
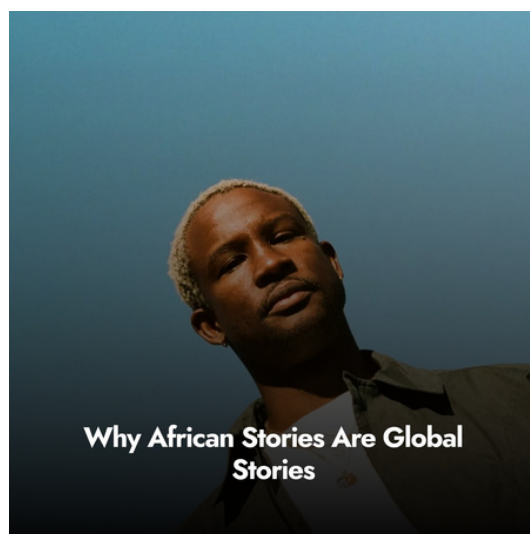
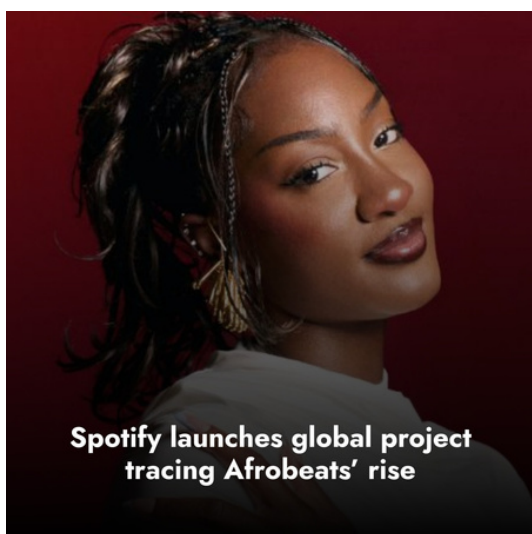


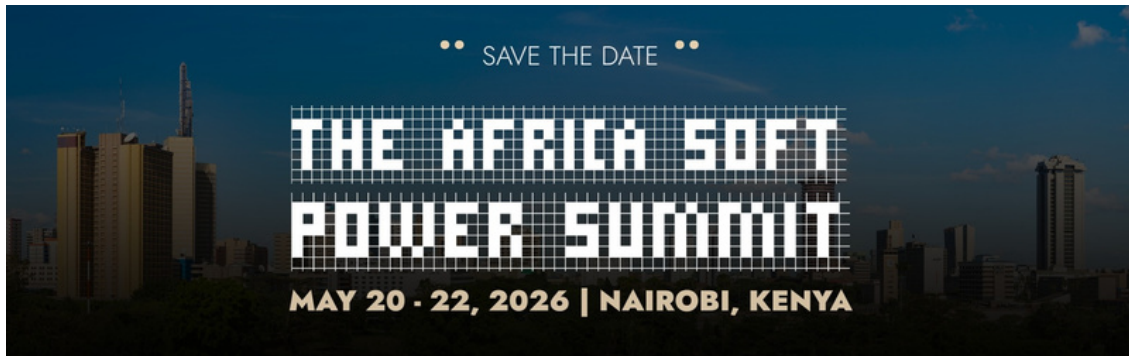


[Explore the official photo gallery from the event here.](#) In the coming days, we'll also share a post-event insights report highlighting the key themes and takeaways from the discussions.

African Soft Power In Press

Outside of our convening in New York, here are stories about African soft power that have caught our eye amongst the global headlines this week...





About The Africa Soft Power Group

We are the umbrella platform for three organisations (Africa Soft Power, African Women on Board & ASP Global) with mutual objectives. Our overriding mission is to mainstream vital – and all too often still unseen – African perspectives as a fundamental part of the global conversation in every aspect of life and economy.

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