

AFRICAN PUBLISHING REVIEW

A NEWSLETTER OF THE AFRICAN PUBLISHERS NETWORK (APNET)

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Group picture of the 2nd African Publishers Conference in Harare

MOROCCO

TO HOST THE 3RD AFRICAN PUBLISHERS CONFERENCE

- Ernest Oppong & Chief Cyril Uchenna Anioke (Ex-President, Nigerian Publishers Association)

The African publishing industry is set to converge once again, as the third edition of the African Publishers Conference is scheduled to take place in **Casablanca, Morocco**. Hosted by the Professional Union of Moroccan Publishers (UPEM), a member of the African Publishers Network (APNET), the event will run for three days from **23rd to 25th June 2025**. With the overarching theme “*Promotion of Books for National Development in Africa*,” this year's conference aims to bring together a wide spectrum of stakeholders including African publishers' associations, book industry professionals, partner organisations, and both African and international participants.

“The African Publishers Conference has steadily gained traction since its inception.”

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This gathering promises a rich blend of activities designed to stimulate conversation and collaboration. Attendees can expect panel discussions, presentations spotlighting developments in various African countries, breakout sessions in the form of roundtable discussions, engaging workshops, business meetings, and even a guided tour, all in a welcoming and interactive environment. A key feature this year is the submission of country reports by participating African delegates. These submissions will be compiled into a publication, highlighting diverse perspectives and strategies across the continent.

The African Publishers Conference has steadily gained traction since its inception. The inaugural edition was held in Côte d'Ivoire in 2023, hosted by the Côte d'Ivoire Publishers Association (ASSEDI) in Abidjan. It gathered dozens of participants from across the continent and APNET, the lead organiser of the Conference, was supported by global organisations such as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations (IFRRO). The theme of the maiden edition emphasised the role of the publishing industry in driving

economic growth in Africa. One of its major outcomes was the development of an action plan to guide collaborative efforts moving forward.

The second conference took place in Harare, Zimbabwe, in 2024, with support from ARIPO (African Regional Intellectual Property Organization), ZBPA (Zimbabwe Book Publishers Association), WIPO, UNESCO, and IFRRO. This edition focused on enhancing the capacity of Africa's publishing sector to promote literacy. The outcomes and resolutions from Harare were integrated into an updated action plan that continues to guide APNET and its partners in implementing strategic publishing initiatives.

The upcoming edition in Morocco is expected to draw even more participants and broaden the scope of discussion. The conference will address a variety of pressing issues in the African publishing ecosystem, including book policy development, copyright and reproduction rights, marketing, procurement, and the promotion of African languages in publishing.

The core objectives of the conference are manifold. It aims

to build the capacity of publishers and their associations at national and regional levels, bolster the legal and structural frameworks around copyright and reproduction rights, and foster advocacy for inclusive book policies. The event also seeks to enhance stakeholder knowledge, support innovative publishing research and projects, and empower participants to implement the strategies and insights gained upon returning to their respective countries.

Organisers have opened the door for additional participants, inviting any African publisher, stakeholder organisation, or interested individual to join the event at their own expense. Interested parties are encouraged to contact the APNET Secretariat via email for participation details. The conference stands as a testament to the growing unity and ambition within Africa's publishing landscape. Those who are interested to participate in the Conference at their expense should contact APNET Secretariat at info.africanpublishers@gmail.com

APNET ELECTS A NEW BOARD

On Thursday 28th November, 2024 the APNET Election Committee conducted elections for the APNET Board positions based on the constitution. The following persons constitute the new Board members. Visit: <https://apnet africa.org/our-board/>



·Chairperson
LAWRENCE NJAGI
(Kenya)



·Vice Chairperson
ASARE KONADU YAMOAH
(Ghana)



·Honorary Treasurer
LUKMAN DAUDA
(Nigeria)



·Honorary Secretary
MAUREEN LYNDAS MASAMBA
(Malawi)



·West Africa
KWABENA AGYEPONG
(Ghana)



·Central Africa
JOHN PAUL YOHANE
(Malawi)



·East Africa
KIARIE KAMAU
(Kenya)



·Northern Africa
AHMED ABOU
(Morocco)



·Southern Africa
MASIMBA TINASHE MADONDO
(Zimbabwe)



·French-Speaking Countries
FELIX ANGES N'DAKPRI



·Ex Officio Member
SAMUEL KOLAWOLE
(Nigeria)



·Executive Director
ERNEST OPPONG
(Ghana)

APNET ADMITS SOMALI PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION AS A FULL MEMBER



MR. ALI MOUSSE ADEN
(President, Somali Publishers Association)

APNET at its General Meeting on 23rd January, 2025, admitted Somali Publishers Association as a Full Member. The Membership Committee and the APNET Board confirmed that the Association had met all the necessary criteria and obligations to be admitted as a full member of APNET. There were no objections raised, and the Association was formally admitted as a member.



CALL FOR AFRICAN COUNTRIES TO EXPRESS INTEREST IN HOSTING THE 4TH AFRICAN PUBLISHERS CONFERENCE

The APNET Board invites all interested member-countries to bid for the hosting of the 4th African Publishers Conference.

All interested member-countries are required to send a letter of interest in hosting the next African Publishers Conference to APNET Secretariat.

APNET PARTICIPATES IN THE 2025 ABU DHABI INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR -Ernest Oppong

The 34th Abu Dhabi International Book Fair commenced on 26th April and ended on 5th May 2025 at the Abu Dhabi National Exhibition Centre (ADNEC). Sheikh Abdulla Bin Zayed, deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs under the patronage of UAE president, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan, opened the fair on Saturday, April 26. The 34th edition of this large, spacious fair is again led by the Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre, under the direction of Dr. Ali Bin Tamim, chair of the centre.

According to the Fair's organisers, last year's edition of the show saw 152,160 books sold by 1,350 exhibitors to 231,168 attendees. This year's ADIBF involved more than 2,000 events and as many as 1,400 publishing houses from some 96 nations. As many as 60 languages are represented, as is a group of 20 countries involved for the first time. This year's show is to feature 87 government entities and 15 universities.

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APNET TO CREATE AFRICAN BOOK CATALOGUE CENTRE

-Hermes Damian

APNET is undertaking a project to create African Book Catalogue Centre by collecting African book data to improve global visibility of African books and publisher information.

Business performance in today's digital era heavily relies on swift availability of comprehensive data about products over the internet. Such data is the backbone of intelligent, impactful and interactive business activities on

the internet including: discoverability, online sales, digital promotion, sale of rights and visibility of products in e-commerce platforms. Despite this critical requirement in today's business environment, African book data is scant and lagging behind other continents. It should be noted that, as of 2025, there exists over 80,000,000 comprehensive book information from around the

world except from 50 countries in Africa that is available over the internet and is used by major commerce services. (see map below).



Above not being online, African book information is insufficient as it lacks key details such as genre, suppliers and descriptions that would help potential customers to find the works easily.

One key challenge is that many African publishers either have not invested in maintaining their works over the internet or do not see the need to build their book data as per global standards.

In its efforts to represent publishers and their books better in the world, African Publishers Network has put forward a mechanism to collect comprehensive book data for Africa that will eventually be stored and used to improve the visibility and commercialization of African books in the global book trade. With this initiative, African publishers will be able to trade publishing and translation rights across the world, buy regional rights from each other and their books being easily selected for continental literary initiatives and projects.

Each African publisher is to provide information from 20 titles for an initial Africa book data portal

In the first phase of the project,

APNET urges publishers to submit book data for 20 non-school titles that could either be **Children books, Poetry, Plays, Novels, Short stories or non-fiction books**. Publishers are encouraged to submit information for books that they are willing to trade rights internationally for translation or publishing rights in specific regions. This information will be published in APNET's book data website and publishers will then be invited to upload more book data.

Publishers are required to do this by filling in this information in the excel file shared along with this call. If a publisher does not have information for any particular field, they can leave it blank.

"Each African publisher is to provide information from 20 titles for an initial Africa book data portal"

On its side, APNET will form a special team for analysing the book data for possible match making of publishers across the continent or world.

Benefits of the project

- Ensure African books are available and visible over the internet.
- Ensure African book data available over the internet

is rich, appropriately classified and presented using international standards so that global book data agencies can extract and use it to initiate e-commerce opportunities for publishers.

- Ensure that publishers from around the world can easily search for and access African book data for selection of books titles that they could be interested in for translation rights.
- Facilitate collection and storage of old book titles that have gone out of print but which form key cultural and historical resources.
- Pave the way for integration of African book data to print-on-demand (POD) and e-commerce services to facilitate trade of the books around the world.
- Help national publishers' associations in maintaining reliable list of publications and using the service to determine other useful information like new titles per year and number of authors and publishers.
- Provide African book sellers with pivotal data that can enable them to locate and order books from within Africa.

CANEX BOOK FAIR AND PUBLISHERS' ROUNDTABLE MEETING

Source: CANEX & APNET

The People's Democratic Republic of Algeria will be hosting the fourth edition of the Intra-African Trade Fair (IATF2025) which is being convened by African Export-Import Bank (Afreximbank) in collaboration with African Union Commission (AUC) and African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) Secretariat. IATF2025 is scheduled to take place from the 4th to 10th September 2025 at the Algerian Company of Fairs and Exhibitions Center (SAFEX), Algiers, Algeria.



The IATF is a vital platform for advancing economic growth, collaboration, and innovation across Africa. Within the IATF Programme, CANEX at IATF 2025 will spotlight the creative and cultural industries by uniting key continental and global players to showcase and exhibit their products and services. This vibrant platform aims to explore business and investment opportunities within the burgeoning creative economy, and will catalyse collaborations, unlock new markets, and elevate Africa's creative sector on the global stage. Over seven days, CANEX at IATF 2025 will be the largest gathering of its kind, providing unparalleled business-to-business and business-to-government networking opportunities across various

sectors, including music, film, fashion, visual arts, literature, sports, gastronomy, and more. Building on the success of previous events, including CANEX WKND 2024 in Algiers which attracted over 3,000 delegates from across the continent and diaspora, CANEX at IATF will provide an even larger platform to promote African and Diaspora creatives through:

- CANEX Market and Exhibition
- Industry focused Masterclasses, Roundtables and Workshops
- Topical conversations, panel discussions and one-on-one fireside chats with industry experts
- Live performances and

entertainment showcases

- Gastronomy & Culinary Arts demonstrations
- Visual arts installation
- Luxury Fashion Exchange
- CANEX Book Factory
- CANEX Film Shorts
- CANEX Market and Exhibition
- Industry focused Masterclasses, Roundtables and Workshops
- Topical conversations, panel discussions and one-on-one fireside chats with industry experts
- Live performances and entertainment showcases
- Gastronomy & Culinary Arts demonstrations
- Visual arts installation
- Luxury Fashion Exchange
- CANEX Book Factory
- CANEX Film Shorts



CANEX BOOK FAIR – interested African publishers and African publishers' associations are requested to register for exhibition stands.

PUBLISHERS' ROUNDTABLE – CANEX in partnership with APNET is organising the Publishers' Roundtable which will take place on September 5, 2025. The meeting involves lead presentations and discussions by highly experienced African publishers on the following topics:

- Development and Legislation of National Book and Reading Policy – Brian Wafawarowa (Lead speaker, South Africa)
- Expansion and sustainability of African Book Fairs: A catalyst for the promotion of intra-African trade in books. – Mr. Asare Konadu Yamoah (Lead speaker, Ghana).
- Promotion of books in African languages - Mr. Lawrence Njagi (Lead speaker, Kenya).

The Publishers Roundtable seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. To advocate with a sound working document/report for the development of National Book and Reading Policy by African governments.
2. To promote intra-African book trade for national and continental development.
3. To build a strong public-private partnership at the national and continental levels to advance and sustain the African book industry.
4. To initiate and develop building blocks for literacy development and promotion in Africa including African languages.

Expected Outcomes

It is expected that the following outcomes will be achieved during and after the event:

- i. Comprehension of the state of the African book publishing industry relative to the critical areas of discussion.
- ii. Strong partnership, understanding and commitment between the public and private sector on the way forward.
- iii. The political will to develop National Book and Reading Policy by both the public and private sector to help develop, promote and sustain literacy, books and the book publishing industry.
- iv. A working paper (conference report) to Ministries of Education/policymakers, participating institutions and other stakeholders as a starting point of action.



The APNET collective stand exhibited about 100 books from 20 African countries. “The theme *Knowledge Illuminates Our Community*, speaks not only to the power of books to inform and inspire, but also to their unique ability to bring people together- across cultures, languages, and generations. In the 'year of community,' we continue to champion the Arabic language, while also celebrating literature's enduring role as a universal source of inspiration and a guiding light for our collective future.

APNET collective stand at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair

PANEL DISCUSSION: PUBLISHING HERE AND THERE - DIFFERENT EXPERIENCES.

On 30th April 2025, at the Abu Dhabi International Book Fair (UAE), APNET Executive Director Ernest Oppong was a speaker in the panel discussion titled: Publishing Here and There - Different Experiences. The discussion was centred on the opportunities and key challenges of publishing, printing, distribution, and copyright. It was also extended to how Arabic publishers and Sub-Saharan publishers can promote trade.

The discussion was moderated by Amna Al Harmoodi (extreme left in the above picture) – Contracts and Archiving Officer, Creative Content Department, Abu Dhabi Arabic Language Centre, UAE.



Panel Discussion at the Abu Dhabi Int. Book Fair

(extreme right in the picture)
- (Asst. to the Editor-in-Chief, The Arabic Edition of China Today Magazine, China Media Group).

- Bayan Kabydash – Speaker, Kazakhstan - Director, Nomad Culture Foundation.

Other Panellists were:

- Nan Beibao - Speaker, China

1ST AFRICAN CHILDREN'S BOOK PUBLISHERS FORUM (FEJA) ORGANISED IN TOGO



Lire au Togo under the Presidency of Simon de Saint Dzokotoe and the International Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF) with international coordination by Agnès Debiage (ADCF Africa) organised the 1st Forum for African Children's Book Publishers (FEJA). The Forum took place in Eda Oba Hotel in Lomé, Togo from March 6 to 8, 2025.

This event brought together 51 children's book publishers from 16 countries Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroun, Djibouti, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Ghana, Mauritius, Kenya, Madagascar, Mali, Morocco, Nigeria, Senegal, Togo and France.

This professional program aimed at:

- o Promoting the discovery of African children's literature production,

- o Fostering connections between publishers and linguistic regions,
- o Enabling rights transactions,
- o Initiating co-publishing projects,
- o Exchanging information on trends in various African markets,
- o Enhancing professional skills through three focus areas.

The Forum had two main sessions: Training and Trade sessions.

Training session – the workshops for the participants involved the following:

- o Children's book co-publishing in Africa: Best practices, Rights Management, and collaboration strategies – Raphaël Thierry (Ægitna Literary Agency)

- o Developing a relatable local character for young readers: The example of Tikoulou – Pascale Siew (Vizavi Publishing, Mauritius).
- o Be Creative – Dela Avemega (Fish and Plankton, Ghana)
- o Digital book distribution worldwide: 10 key questions to take action successfully – Stanislas Padzunass (De Marque, Quebec)
- o Book Metadata: A key to improving digital discoverability. Why? How to Do It? – Clara Ferrari (YouScribe, France)
- o Listening, or reading differently – Ama Dadson (AkooBooks Audio, Ghana) and Eliane Hazoumé (FCAudioEdit, Togo)



School Education Minister, Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi, reading an African book in APNET Stand at the 2025 Chennai International Book Fair

- o A publisher's digital strategy – Joan Onyando & Will Clurman (eKitabu, Kenya)

Trade session – Conference space roundtables were also available for B2B meetings, group exchanges, especially for co-publishing projects to advance the above aims of the Forum. The APNET Executive Director, Ernest Oppong, represented APNET at the Forum and most of the African publishers had meetings with him on how to connect to other African publishers with their books and to undertake co-publishing projects and trading of rights.

APNET encourages and embraces more of such trade meetings to establish business relations and networking among African publishers, promote book trade and publishing projects as well as building the capacity of publishers through training. APNET commends the organisers for such a relevant programme.

APNET RECEIVES GLOBAL PUBLISHING AWARD AT CHENNAI INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR (CIBF 2025), INDIA

The CIBF is the business-to-business (B2B) edition of the iconic Chennai Book Fair, a prestigious event that has been a cornerstone of the Indian literary calendar for the past 48 years. It is organized by the Ministry of School Education under the Government of Tamil Nadu. The 2025 edition emphasises the theme “*Taking Tamil to the World and Bringing the World to Tamil*”, fostering global collaboration by promoting Tamil literature internationally and welcoming diverse literary works into the Tamil community.

Chennai International Book Fair (CIBF) in collaboration with African Publishers Network (APNET) selected and extended an invitation to African publishers to participate in the Chennai International Book Fair. This esteemed event was organised from **January 16 to 18, 2025**, at the **Chennai Trade Centre, India**, offering a vibrant platform for literary, educational, and cultural exchanges.

APNET received the prestigious CIBF 2025 Global Ambassador Award in recognition of the Network's extraordinary achievements in establishing direct publishing connections across 40 African nations. APNET Chairman, Lawrence Njagi, received the award for APNET.

Inaugurating the event, School Education Minister Anbil Mahesh Poyyamozhi said: “In the first year of the event, 24 countries had participated and about 355 Memoranda of

Understanding (MoUs) were signed. In the second year, over 40 countries took part and 750 MoUs were signed. The CIBF is growing every year, with 64 countries participating this year. We expect 1,000 MoUs to be signed this time.”

The CIBF guest of honour was the Bologna Children's Book Fair from Italy. Stating that Tamil Nadu was central to linguistic treasures of the world, Guest Director, Bologna Book Plus, Italy, Jacks Thomas said, “Through the Translation Grants Programme, Tamil books can travel to the international audience, and the world's literature has the opportunity to be translated into Tamil.”



The following benefits were available for the participating publishers from many countries:

- Guaranteed translation grant to publishers for translating Tamil books into other languages. Access some of their catalogues from the CIBF website under Rights Hub: <https://chennaiinternationalbookfair.com/>
- Some publishers may be selected as co-publishers for the Tamil Nadu Textbook & Educational Services Corporation's Children's Literacy Exchange Program. Likewise literary works of African countries would be considered for translation into Tamil.
- The profiles of the literary works would be promoted at international book fairs, expanding their reach to a global audience.
- Opportunities to network and hold business-to-business (B2B) meetings with participants from many countries.

Roundtable Discussion – The Role of APNET in promoting world literature

APNET Chairman, Lawrence Njagi & Executive Director, Ernest Oppong were speakers in a roundtable discussion titled: “The Role of APNET in promoting world literature”. The session was supported by Lukman Dauda (APNET Honorary Treasurer and President of Nigerian Publishers Association) and Elias Wondimu (Ethiopia). APNET Chairman talked about the relevance of African languages

and book translation. He commended the organisers and also talked about APNET. APNET Executive Director also highlighted the role of APNET in promoting African and world literature. APNET Honorary Treasurer was asked to talk about the Nigerian International Book Fair while Elias talked about the state of publishing in Ethiopia and ongoing collaborations to promote global literature.



APNET Chairman speaking in the Roundtable meeting

APNET AND IFRRO PUBLISH A SURVEY REPORT ON COPYRIGHT AND RROs IN AFRICA

The African Publishers Network (APNET) and the International Federation of Reproduction Rights Organisations (IFRRO) have conducted a survey on copyright and Reproduction Rights Organisations (RROs) in Africa. This effort will help achieve one of the key objectives of the African Publishers Conference to strengthen

copyright and existing Reproduction Rights Organisations (RROs) and establish new RROs in Africa.

The purpose of this survey is to provide information on the state of copyright and RROs in Africa to help direct efforts, investment and support. The survey will comparatively provide knowledge on what has been

done and the industry needs to be met.

Reproduction Rights Organisations (RROs), which refer to collective management organisations (CMOs) in the text and image sector, are normally set up and governed jointly by authors and publishers and have become increasingly relevant for authors, publishers and other

publishing professionals. The state of copyright and RROs in Africa is gradually improving. It is important to state that national copyright offices, RROs and associations including APNET have quality partnership and support from continental and global organisations such as IFRRO, World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), The African Regional Intellectual Property Organization (ARIPO), African Intellectual Property Organization (OAPI) (OAPI) among others to address the aforementioned objective. Some accomplishments have been achieved in terms of the promotion and strengthening of copyright advocacy and capacity building through training for authors and publishers as copyright owners of literary works. There is the formation of new RROs and existing RROs require some support to make them functional and sustainable.

RROs or multipurpose (or multi-repertoire) CMOs managing reprographic and similar reproduction rights have been formed in 25 out of 54 African countries. Of this total 12 (just under ¼) of the continent's countries already collect remuneration for such use, with nine also having systems in place for distributing reprographic fees to authors and publishers. This means that more than half of the countries in Africa do not have RROs or multipurpose/ multi-repertoire CMOs which administer reprographic and similar reproduction rights.

UNESCO TO LAUNCH THE SURVEY ON AFRICAN BOOK SECTOR AT UNESCO HEADQUARTERS

UNESCO conducted a survey on the African book sector since 2024. According to UNESCO, the survey report is in the final stage of production of the publication which is expected to be launched on **18 June at UNESCO Headquarters (Paris)** during the tenth session of the Conference of Parties to the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions and in the framework of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention. This global launch might be followed by regional launch events in Africa organized by UNESCO Field Offices based on arising opportunities. A presentation of the Survey Report will also be done and launched at the 3rd African Publishers Conference in **Rabat, Morocco, 23rd - 25th June, 2025.**

SNAPSHOTS OF AFRICAN BOOK FAIRS HELD – CAIRO, TUNIS, ABIDJAN, NIGERIA AND GUINEA.

Cairo International Book Fair Celebrates its 56th Year!

Source: Submissions Editor

The Cairo International Book Fair recently wrapped up its 56th edition! Held at the Egypt International Exhibition Center, the event welcomed over 1,300 publishers from 80 countries. The Cairo International Book Fair is the largest book fair in the Arab world and the second largest in the world.

This year's fair centred on the theme “Read ... In the beginning was the Word.” The organisers insist that this is “not just a slogan”: ...it is a practical call for every individual to make reading a part of their daily life as reading not only nourishes the mind but also opens up new horizons for



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people and enables them to be active in building a knowledge society, making it the cornerstone of any cultural or civilizational renaissance.

The fair offered seminars and talks around the topics of “Reading the Future”, “Exhibition Personalities” (including seminars on Dr. Ahmed Mustajir and writer Fatima Al-Maadoul), “Strategic Issues” (discussing regional and international strategies), and “With Thought...” (fostering intellectual debates).

Participants also engaged with global literary figures from countries like China, Spain, and Senegal. The fair celebrated Egyptian authors who won literary awards in 2024 and Guest of Honour Oman highlighted its rich literary heritage. The fair also featured poetry evenings and children's activities such as storytelling workshops. The fair introduced a new discounted books hall featuring offerings from a number of Egyptian and international publishers.

72 HOURS OF THE BOOK IN CONAKRY, GUINEA



APNET Vice Chairman, Asare Konadu Yamoah delivering a speech for APNET

The organisers of the 72 Hours of the Book marked its 17th edition from April 23 to 25, 2025, in Conakry, Guinea. This year's edition was dedicated to the theme “*The Power of Women*”, celebrating the outstanding contributions of women in literature, culture, and society.

APNET supported the organisers in identifying and inviting 5 African publishers and 5 African writers to participate in the event. The Book Fair involved book exhibitions and many workshops and seminars.

APNET Vice Chairman, Mr. Asare Konadu Yamoah,

delivered a solidarity message for African Publishers Network at the opening ceremony on April 23, 2025. In his address, he indicated that, “From the pioneering works of Buchi Emecheta, Ama Ata Aidoo, and Mariama Bâ, to the contemporary brilliance of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Tsitsi Dangarembga, Leila Aboulela, Elizabeth Baitie, and many others, African women writers have been weaving narratives that challenge injustice, celebrate womanhood, and explore the nuanced identities of the African experience. Through novels, poetry, plays, and essays, they amplify the voices of the marginalized and remind us all of the transformative power of storytelling.”

Mr. Yamoah further stated that, “The African Publishers Network (APNET), an indigenous platform for the congregation of African Publishers to promote the art of book making unique to the African culture and identity has survived many years of challenges. At this point let me call by name one of the pioneers of the Network who is a native of this country. Mr. Aliou Sow - Former Chairman of APNET, CEO of Editions Ganndal and the current President of National Association of Publishers of Guinea. The path they set is still leading many African Publishers to an assertive destiny that has brought great strides in the Book industry of Africa with positive influences on the global book industry.”

The three-day event was successful and the participation interest of students and the general public was impressive.



Book exhibition at the 72 Hours, Conakry

39TH TUNIS INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

The 39th Tunis International Book Fair (TIBF) is held from April 25 to May 4, 2025, at the International Exhibition Center in Kram, Tunis, with China participating as the Guest of Honour.

Founded in 1982 and organised by the Tunisian Ministry of Culture, TIBF annually hosts participants from Arab countries such as Jordan, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia, as well as from Europe, Latin America, and organisations such as UN agencies and entities under the Arab League's educational, cultural and scientific sectors. With an average annual attendance exceeding 150,000 visitors, it is a major international book fair in Africa.



Picture Credit: www.saba.ye

15TH ABIDJAN INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

The 15th edition of SILA, the Abidjan International Book Fair, took place from May 6 to 10, 2025, at the Abidjan Port-Bouët Exhibition Center, Ivory Coast. Livre Racines (Book Roots) is the chosen theme for the 2025 edition, a call to history and memory as well as a return to the roots and values that inspired this choice.

Building on international partnerships established in recent months, SILA hosted its English-speaking counterparts, including APNET, Ghana International Book Fair (GIBF) and the Nairobi International Book Fair (NIBF). APNET Chairman, Mr. Lawrence Njagi, represented APNET while the Chairman and Director of the NIBF represented

NIBF. Ms. Yvonne Bossman, the Director of the GIBF also represented the GIBF at the Abidjan International Book Fair. This historic rapprochement between Francophone and Anglophone African book markets will foster a dedicated platform for book rights acquisition and licensing.

Mr. Charles Pemont, in his closing remarks, expressed appreciation to the more than 125,000 visitors who participated in the 15th edition of SILA 15, participants from Africa and beyond.



24TH NIGERIA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR DARE OLUWATUYI (CHAIRMAN, NBFT)

The 24th Nigeria International Book Fair (NIBF 2025) was held from Wednesday, 7th May to Friday, 9th May, 2025 at Balmoral Convention Centre, Sheraton, Ikeja, Lagos State. Nigeria International Book Fair was held for the first time at Balmoral Convention Centre, Sheraton, Ikeja, Lagos State. The center is strategically located and has good ambience for international events. It is also in close proximity to the international airport in Lagos State.

All the foreign exhibitors and trade visitors who attended the book fair commended Nigerian Book Fair Trust for choosing the center.

Both local and international organisations within the book

ecosystem exhibited their goods and services at NIBF 2025. We have foreign exhibitors and trade visitors from The United Kingdom, Canada, Turkey, India and Cameroon. Over 70 local and foreign organisations exhibited at the book fair.

The book fair also attracted book lovers, both young and old, across Nigeria. Book publishers, booksellers, printers, authors, librarians, government functionaries, as well as schools came in large number to attend the book fair. Over 10,000 people registered online and onsite to participate in the book fair.

The following programmes were organized during Nigeria International Book Fair 2025:

- Tertiary Education Summit
- Business Networking Dinner (Maiden Edition)
- Schools & Children's Activities (Inclusive of various competitions)
- Stakeholders' conferences & workshops
- Capacity Building Programme for Schools

NIBF 2026

NIBF 2026 will be the 25th Anniversary of the annual book fair. It's going to be glamorous. There will be a lot of benefits for APNET and her members at the event.



*Dare Oluwatuyi, Chairman, Nigeria Book Fair Trust (NBFT),
exchanging pleasantries with international exhibitors*

TRIBUTE TO PROFESSOR NGUGI WA THIONG'O

By Brian Wafawarowa



Prof Ngugi wa Thiong'o at the 29th IPA Congress in Cape Town

A giant tree of the African literary forest has fallen, and its reverberation is felt across the globe. Professor Ngugi wa Thiong'o was a global literary phenomenon with roots solidly anchored in Africa and buttressed across the world. From his insistence on writing in his mother tongue, Gikuyu, to being translated into more than 30 languages for most of his works, across the world, Ngugi's love of the continent, its people, languages and cultures was apparent in his craft, teaching and publishing choices. Professor wa Thiong'o was a key supporter of African indigenous languages and local publishing, who proved that indeed one could become global

by publishing in one's own language and through local publishing. I remember him telling my son on one of his visits that obsession with English by non-English speakers is like chopping off one's legs and hopping around life on borrowed crutches. As the book and publishing sector, we have lost a champion, and we owe a great debt of gratitude to his commitment to African languages and African publishing.

His contribution to African political consciousness and liberation through his work and activism is immense. From the earlier works, which were critical

of the colonial condition, including *Weep not Child* and *A Grain of Wheat*, to resistance, including the *Trial of Dedan Kimathi* and *Petals of Blood*, to the excesses of the post-colonial order, including *Devil on the Cross*, *Matigari* and *The Wizard of the Crow*, Ngugi's work is a catalogue of the continuous struggle of the African people from the shackles of colonialism to today's struggle with the greed and excesses of African leaders. His characters are vivid agents of positive change, a vividness that blurred the line between reality and fiction. Bizarrely but not surprisingly, after the publication of *Ngaahika Ndeenda/I will Marry When I want*, he was imprisoned and kept

in solitary confinement, leading to him being included as an Amnesty International prisoner of conscience, and the Kenyan security agents going out to look for Matigari, a fictional character in the novel *Matigari*, believing that the character indeed existed.

Ngugi is difficult to contain by genre as he was comfortable and effective in all genres, including **Novels** - *Weep Not Child*, *The Perfect Nine: The Epic of Gikuyu and Mumbi*, *Devil on the Cross* and many others; **Short story** - including *A Meeting in the Dark*, *Secret Lives and Other Stories* and *Minutes of Glory and other stories*; **Plays** - including *The Black Hermit*, *The Trial of Dedan Kimathi* and *Mother Sing for me*; **Memoirs** - including *Detained: A Writer's Prison Diary* and *Dreams in a Time of War: A child's Memoir*; **Non-Fiction and Critical Essays** - including *Decolonising the Mind*, *Globaletics: Theory and the Politics of Knowing*, *Moving the Centre: The Struggle for Cultural Freedoms* and **children's books** - including *Njamba Nene and the Cruel Chief* and *The Upright Revolution, or Why Humans Walk Upright*. Ngugi was among great African writers



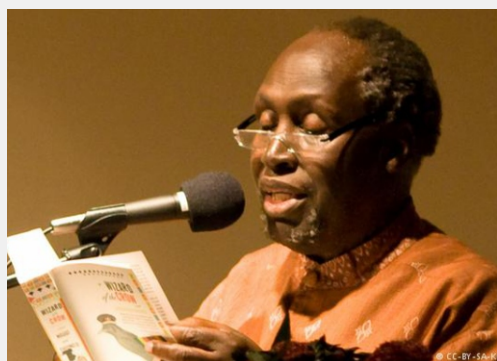
who contributed to the most prolific era of African literature, including Chinua Achebe, Buchi Emecheta, Sembene Ousmane, Mariama Ba, Dambudzo Marechera, Ayi Kwei Armah, Wole Soyinka, Ama Ata Aidoo and Njabulo Ndebele, to mention a few. Ngugi took advantage of modern technology, particularly simultaneous translation, to write in his mother tongue and still reach the rest of the world. *The Upright Revolution, or Why Humans Walk Upright* was published simultaneously in multiple languages and ended up being available in 100 languages.

He was the most nominated author for the Nobel Laureate prize, an accolade that both Achebe and Soyinka got. Like many others, including leading literary critics and academics, I remain baffled that he never got it.

Beyond shaping our consciousness as students of African literature, as young free products of the colonial order, confused about the contradictions of our post-independent reality and

struggling with the Fanonian contradictions of liberation today, those who had the privilege of meeting and engaging Ngugi will attest to his boundless love for the continent and its people, its cultures and prospects. What I will remember most was Ngugi's genuine love, compassion, affirmation of others and his humility. He had time for everyone that he met and genuinely desired to know them more, often leaving me to wonder if he was ever aware that he was Ngugi wa Thiong'o.

Though you are gone, we will constantly return to the source, your works, to find inspiration in your undying love for and belief in the continent, as we continue to negotiate our place in this very complex world. As you summed it up in the parts of *Petals of Blood*, we keep ***Walking towards Bethlehem, to be born again.*** ***Aluta continua.***





3RD AFRICAN PUBLISHERS CONFERENCE



CONFERENCE DATE:
**MON. JUNE 23RD –
WED. JUNE 25TH, 2025**



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APPART IN CASABLANCA,
MOROCCO**



THEME:

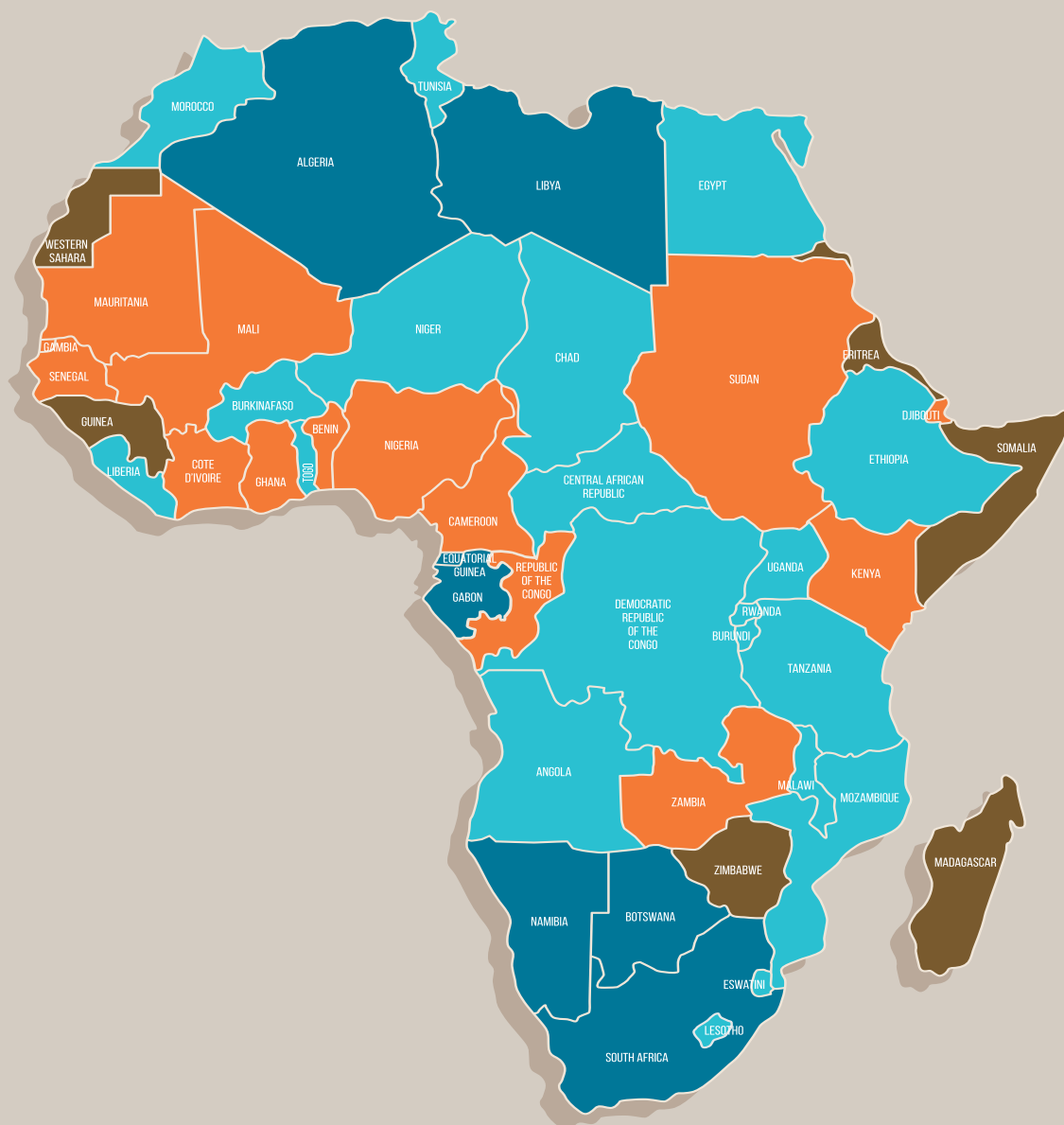
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