

## PRESS RELEASE

### Full Line-Up for Flagship Africa Day Festival at Farmleigh – Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> May

#### Main Stage

Ireland's foremost Afrobeat group **Colours Afrobeat Foundation** and rising gospel stars **No Limits** are the newest additions to the Main Stage at the event, which is sponsored by **Lycamobile**. They join **Stone&Jezreel**, **Gypsy Rebel Rabble**, **The Amazing Few** and **Madu** for a day-long programme of soul, pop-punk, bluegrass, reggae and rap.

**The Multiverse** – the latest project from virtuoso Congolese guitarist **Niwel Tsumbu** – will also perform. Drawing on jazz influences to deliver spaced-out afro grooves, the group sees Niwel joined by Shane O'Donovan and Peter Erdei. The always rousing **Discovery Gospel Choir** will perform the closing set.

#### Stage 2

The second stage at Africa Day Dublin – sponsored by **Moneygram** – will have a strong focus on urban music, featuring a host of rappers, DJs and hip-hop artists of African / Irish origin. Those performing will include: **DJ Wax**, **ShoBiz**, **Graciano Major**, **Funzo** and **DJ Me**.

#### Pop-Up Performances

As well as the two dedicated music stages, a range of 'pop-up' performances will take place throughout the grounds of Farmleigh. These will include traditional African drummers and singers; interactive salsa and Afro-Cuban dance sessions; and demonstrations of Bokwa, a South African exercise, influenced by light boxing and the Kwaito style of dancing.

#### Speakers' Corner

The Speakers' Corner will host interactive workshops over the course of the day. The first – kicking off at 12pm – will see radio presenter, actor and stand-up comedian **Dil Wickremasinghe** host a discussion on 'the changing relationship between Africa and Ireland'. Panellists will include **Denise Charlton**, Chief Executive of the Immigrant Council of Ireland; **Itayi Viriri** from the International Organisation for Migration; **Hailuu Netsiyanwa**, who was born in Zimbabwe and moved to Ireland in his early teens; and **Raymond Johnson**, Africa Director with the Irish Exporters' Association.

At 1.15pm, broadcaster **Orla Barry** will host the [Africa Day Book Club](#) discussion, focusing on the novel 'How to Read the Air' by Ethiopian / American author Dinaw Mengestu. TV presenter **Diana Bunici**; travel writer **Manchán Magan**; South African children's author **Thabi Madide**; and **Pauline Conway**, former Irish Ambassador to Ethiopia will share their views, and audience-members will also be invited to contribute.

The Minister for Trade and Development, **Joe Costello TD**, will be one of the panellists for a discussion on 'Celebrating 50 Years of African Unity: Achievements of the African Union' at 2.45pm. Chaired by Irish Times Foreign Policy Editor **Paddy Smyth**, this workshop will also feature contributions from **H.E. Catherine M. Mwangi**, Kenyan Ambassador to Ireland and Dean of the African diplomatic corps; **Salome Mbugua**, Director of AkiDwA,

the migrant women's organisation; **Síle Maguire**, former Irish Ambassador to the African Union; and **Dr. Carol Newman**, Assistant Professor in Economics and a Fellow at Trinity College Dublin.

The final workshop at Africa Day will focus on active citizenship and the inclusion of members of Ireland's African diaspora communities in politics and civic society. This session, which will commence at 4pm, will be chaired by **Sylvia Gavigan**, Ugandan Consul to Ireland; and will feature contributions from **Emer Costello MEP**; **Reginald Okoflex Inya** from the New Communities Partnership; and **John Kelly** from the Department of Justice, Equality and Defence.

### **African Bazaar**

One of the focal points of the Africa Day Dublin event will be the outdoor African Bazaar. This will house 40 different groups, showcasing the culture and traditions of numerous African states, ranging from Ethiopia, Kenya and Uganda in East Africa to the Western states of Nigeria, Guinea and Ghana, and Tanzania, Malawi and Botswana in the south.

Activities on offer will include free face-painting and henna hand-painting; traditional coffee-making ceremonies; displays of arts and crafts; and children's treasure hunts, quizzes and games.

Some of Ireland's leading development NGOs will be present, offering fun, interactive activities. Visitors will have the chance to contribute a message, story or photo to an Africa Day 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday card; measure their 'virtual water' footprint and find out how they can be more eco-friendly with their water use; have their family photographed as part of an international photography project; or sit in a typical African fishing boat to play a simple 'fishing' game.

### **Sports and Play Zone**

The Sports and Play Zone adjacent to the African Bazaar will be officially opened at 11.30am by the world-renowned Kenyan athlete **Wilfred Bungei**, who won the 800-metre gold medal at the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

The Football Association of Ireland will then run a fun skills zone until 2pm, where sports enthusiasts of all ages and abilities can test their dribbling, running, passing and shooting skills.

From 2pm to 5pm, traditional African games will be on offer, as well as a giant 'snakes and ladders' game and amusement rides for children.

The anti-racism charity Show Racism the Red Card will also be on hand with its mascot 'Jeff the Ref', informing children how to harness the power of sport to combat racism.

### **'Best Dressed' Competition**

One of the highlights of Africa Day Dublin promises to be the 'best dressed' competition: visitors are being encouraged to deck themselves out in their most colourful African finery before coming to the event. Those who consider themselves in the running for a prize can enter at the 'Best Dressed' stall in the African Bazaar, and a parade of finalists will take place through the grounds of Farmleigh before the winners are announced at 4.15pm.

Other elements of Africa Day Dublin will include:

- A welcome zone, in which the embassies of Ethiopia, Kenya, Lesotho, Morocco, Nigeria and South Africa will showcase their countries' culture and customs.
- An indoor Kids' Zone with free storytelling sessions; music and dance; face-painting; and art activities.
- A 'Bang the Drum with Irish Aid' tent, where visitors can participate in an African drumming circle.

African-inspired food will be on sale throughout the venue, and visitors are also encouraged to bring picnics on the day.

Africa Day events in Ireland are supported by [Irish Aid](#) at the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Further information is available at [www.africaday.ie](http://www.africaday.ie).

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**Note for Editors:**

- Africa Day, which falls on 25<sup>th</sup> May annually, is the official day of the African Union and marks African unity. In Ireland, events to mark Africa Day celebrate African diversity and the cultural and economic potential of the continent, in addition to raising awareness of the development challenges that remain and the progress that is being achieved.
- Irish Aid is the Government's programme for overseas development. It is managed by the Development Cooperation Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Further information is available at [www.irishaid.ie](http://www.irishaid.ie).