

MY SPEECH AT THE GONDWANA FESTIVAL (LAUGHTER FESTIVAL)

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very happy to be with you this afternoon, for the inauguration of the first edition of Laughter Festival (Festival du Rire) in Abidjan, called "Abidjan capital of Laughs".

I would like first of all to congratulate Mr. Maurice Bandaman, Minister of Culture and the Francophony, regarding the efforts he provides to make Côte d'Ivoire a reference in Africa and around the world in terms of cultural development.

I also commend Mrs. Afoussiata BAMBA-LAMINE, Minister of Communication and all those present on our side.

I would also like to welcome the crews of RFI and Canal +, who made the trip to Abidjan, especially Mr. Juan GOMEZ, whom we hear every morning and who knows Africa very well.

I congratulate especially our dear Mamane, President of the "Very Very Democratic Republic of the Gondwana" and architect of this great initiative. Through him, I pay tribute to the work of the professionals of "Montreux Comedy Festival", leader of comedy festivals in Europe, who agreed to support this project, who have accepted to support and make this festival of laughter a success.

Finally, I greet all our talented Ivorian comedy, among whom one of the pioneers present here with us today, Mr. Leonard Groguehet, I ask you to applaud loudly. I also welcome, artists and entertainers, from all backgrounds to participate in this great celebration of humor and laughter.

I wish you all, the traditional "Akwaba" in Côte d'Ivoire.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I agreed with pleasure to respond to your invitation to express my full support for this festival of culture and humor. Indeed, I am convinced that this event

will contribute to the promotion of Abidjan as the capital of laughter and good humor.

In this joyful time of preparation of the holiday season, the three-day show, will end 2015 with joy. I wish all festival fans who stop at the Palace of Culture, to spend pleasant relaxing moments, with value artists who will follow one another on stage.

I strongly encourage this initiative and I express the wish that it perpetuates because such an event not only involved in the promotion of Culture and Francophonie, but also to the values of friendship and brotherhood, dear to our country.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I declare the first edition of the "Abidjan Capital of Laughter Festival" open.

Good festival to all and everyone.

Thank you.