

**SPEECH BY THE FIRST LADY
OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE
OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY
OF THE IVORIAN DAY
EVORA FESTIVAL
PORTUGAL
JULY 28TH 2018**

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very pleased to be with you today, at the historic center of your beautiful city, on the occasion of the « **Festival Evora Africa** ».

First of all, I would like to extend my greetings to **Mrs Alexandra DE CADAVAL**, who took the initiative to organise this beautiful festival that highlights in a very original way African art in all its diversity.

Dear Alexandra, thank you for inviting me to the **first edition of the Festival Evora Africa**. I am delighted to be here, and I am very pleased to discover your beautiful city, listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1986.

I extend my warmest greetings **to my dear friends, Princess Diana d'Orléans and to Duchess Claudine de CADAVAL**, who open the doors of the Cadaval Palace to us.

Once again, I would like to greet **Mr Carlos Pinto DE SA, Mayor of the city of Evora, as well as all the officials present here.** Thank you for the warm welcome and attentions we have received since we landed.

Allow me to introduce to you members of my delegation, namely, **Mr. Maurice BANDAMAN, Minister of Culture and Francophonie of Côte d'Ivoire** , he has enabled our talented artists to participate in this festival ; **Mr Fana KOFFI, Ambassador of Côte d'Ivoire to the Republic of Portugal** ; and **members of my foundation, Children of Africa**, who made the trip with me.

Finally, I extend my greetings to **all the personalities** gathered here, as well as **all the actors from the art world** who came from several African countries, specifically from Côte d'Ivoire.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Evora Africa Festival is a great initiative that highlights the cultural richness of Africa, through exhibitions, concerts and conferences held at the majestic Cadaval Palace. For three months, artists from all over Africa will show to the public the richness of our rhythms and traditions. I would also like to thank **Mr Alain WEBER, Artistic Director of this beautiful festival.**

This morning, we are inaugurating **the Ivorian day**. Indeed, This day dedicated to Côte d'Ivoire is a beautiful link between our two cultures, our two countries and our two continents. This is a great opportunity for **a rich and diversified intercultural dialogue**, which I hope will enable us to strengthen lasting ties between our two nations.

Tonight, we will also have the pleasure of enjoying in this same place, the works of sixteen artists among the most prestigious painters of the continent, as part of the "**African Passions**" exhibition. This beautiful exhibition by **Mr. André MAGNIN**, will include unpublished works by **Mr. Frédéric Bruly BOUABRE, one of the greatest contemporary artists of Côte d'Ivoire.**

This place full of history will also vibrate during the evening to the rhythms of the **Zaouli dance, a traditional dance from Côte d'Ivoire, also classified as UNESCO world heritage.** We will also see the dance performance of women from Côte d'Ivoire.

In addition, we will discover beautiful **Ivorian outfits** made **by our designers LOZA Lucienne and KAMISSOKO Ibrahim.** You will also **taste our chocolate made with cocoa from Côte d'Ivoire,** and the different varieties of **Ivorian dishes.**

As First Lady, I am very proud to see my country being celebrated in a beautiful way beyond our borders. Thank you very much dear Alexandra !

At this point, I would like to congratulate and encourage all the African craftsmen, designers and artists representing their country at this festival. You are doing an amazing job. Indeed, your originality, your creativity and your know-how have given you the opportunity to be here. I urge you to work hard to make your country shine wherever you are.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, I would like to congratulate the organizing team of the **Evora Africa Festival**, for your contribution to the promotion of African art and culture in the West.

I wish you every success in this excellent initiative.

Have a great festival, everyone.

Thank you.