

Research Article

## Rebranding Nigeria: Soft Power Challenges and Opportunities in Global and Continental Diplomacy

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| Article History                                                                                         | Abstract                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
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| <b>Received:</b> July 30, 2026<br><b>Accepted:</b> August 22, 2026<br><b>Published:</b> August 28, 2026 | <p>Nigeria possesses significant soft power resources through its vibrant cultural industries (Nollywood, Afrobeat, literature), large diaspora networks, and historical leadership in African peacekeeping and diplomacy. However, translating these assets into consistent global and continental influence remains challenging. Drawing on Nye's soft power theory and national rebranding concepts, this paper examines the structural and governance constraints—including institutional fragmentation, corruption perceptions, insecurity, and weak coordination—that undermine Nigeria's attractiveness. At the same time, it identifies emerging opportunities linked to the global rise of African popular culture, growing diaspora influence, and Nigeria's strategic role in the AfCFTA, ECOWAS, and the African Union. Using a mixed-methods approach combining policy analysis, elite interviews, and international media content analysis, the study proposes a Cultural-Diasporic-Institutional (CDA) framework. It argues that a coherent rebranding strategy integrating cultural, public, and diaspora diplomacy can reposition Nigeria as a major soft power actor. Soft power, in this context, is relational and process-oriented—an ongoing practice of engagement rather than a static asset.</p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Nigeria, Soft Power, Rebranding, Cultural Diplomacy, Diaspora Diplomacy.</p> |

### 1. Introduction

Nigeria's soft power acumen cannot be understood solely through state policy documents and diplomatic communiqués; it must be felt in the lived rhythms of streets in Lagos, the communal gatherings around Nollywood films, and the diasporic conversations that weave Nigerian identity across continents. Soft power, as Joseph Nye famously defined it, is "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payment" (Nye, 2004). This capacity to attract, through culture, values, and ideas, resonates deeply with those who have experienced Nigeria's cultural exports as joyful, poignant, and identity-affirming expressions of humanity (Nye, 2004).

For many Nigerians, the global rise of Afrobeat is more than a diplomatic talking point; it is a source of pride and emotional resonance. As Eze (2014) observes, music and cultural expression are embodied practices that evoke memory, belonging, and aspiration across migrant communities. The ubiquitous sounds of Fela Kuti and Burna Boy in diaspora cities testify to the affective power of culture to carry stories of resilience and creativity. Similarly, Nollywood, described by Haynes (2016) as "a cultural phenomenon that speaks to everyday lives", elicits laughter, grief, and catharsis among audiences who see their struggles and triumphs mirrored on screen. These cultural forms are not abstract assets; they are lived experiences that shape how Nigerians understand themselves and how the world perceives them.

But the paradox that animates this study emerges in everyday life: many Nigerians express frustration that the world often hears only narratives of insecurity, corruption, and crisis, rather than the stories of innovation and communal vibrancy that define daily existence. As Ogbur (2019) argues, global media representations frequently marginalise African agency, reinforcing stereotypes that undercut soft power potential. These

external narratives can strain the emotional labour of Nigerians who feel compelled to contest reductive portrayals while living the complexity of their realities.

Academic investigations affirm that structural and governance challenges, including political instability and institutional fragmentation, hinder the translation of cultural vibrancy into consistent diplomatic influence (Dakwa, 2010). Public diplomacy efforts, though well-intentioned, often struggle to capture the dynamic, affective dimensions of Nigeria's cultural life that resonate authentically with global audiences. As Mattern (2005) emphasises, effective soft power must integrate the everyday, the lived experiences and emotional connections that bridge national identity and global perception.

At the same time, the emotional investment of the Nigerian diaspora, described by Krings and Okome (2013) as "transnational cultural custodians", highlights opportunities for influence rooted in personal narratives of belonging and aspiration. These communities carry not only cultural products but also stories of perseverance and innovation that can challenge monolithic portrayals of the nation. This paper situates these human experiences within soft power and rebranding frameworks to argue that meaningful influence arises when states acknowledge and amplify the felt realities of their people as much as their policy prescriptions. Embracing the emotional depth and embodied expressions of Nigerian identity through coordinated cultural, public, and diplomatic initiatives, could aid Nigeria to craft a soft power strategy that resonates with both global audiences and the hearts of its citizens.

## **2. Nigeria's Soft Power Assets and Historical Context**

In this section, I explore the multifaceted soft power resources that Nigeria possesses, tracing their historical roots and examining how they have shaped the country's influence across Africa and beyond. By engaging with cultural industries, diplomatic initiatives, peacekeeping contributions, and the diaspora, I aim to situate Nigeria's soft power within both historical and contemporary contexts, highlighting the opportunities and challenges that emerge when attempting to translate these assets into global and continental influence.

I have often been struck by how Nigeria's cultural industries resonate not only within Africa but also across the diaspora and the wider world. Nollywood, for example, is not just an industry to me; it is a lived experience that mirrors the humour, resilience, and social realities of everyday Nigerians. I see in these films a reflection of communal struggles, celebrations, and moral dilemmas that make Nigerian society both relatable and compelling to international audiences. The rise of Afrobeats music on the global stage is a testament to the power of culture to carry stories, critique systems of power, and foster global dialogues about African identity. When I listen to these songs in diaspora communities, I perceive their influence not as abstract statistics but as tangible forms of connection, pride, and shared cultural memory. Nigerian literature, from Achebe to Adichie, reinforces this influence by offering narratives that engage readers emotionally and intellectually, presenting Nigeria as a site of creativity, moral reflection, and historical significance.

Nigeria's historical leadership in African diplomacy forms another dimension of its soft power. In my view, the country's role in supporting decolonisation, advocating for regional integration, and participating in continental institutions like the African Union and ECOWAS has long signalled Nigeria's ambition to lead by example (Dakwa, 2010). I find that this history is not simply ceremonial; it is embodied in Nigeria's contributions to peacekeeping missions in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Mali, which reflect both moral commitment and strategic influence (Akinola, 2024). Observing these efforts, I am reminded that soft power often emerges from the intersection of ethical leadership and tangible action.

I also see the Nigerian diaspora as a vital vector of soft power. In conversations with diasporic Nigerians, I witness how their professional achievements, cultural initiatives, and advocacy efforts amplify the country's global presence in ways that formal diplomacy cannot always achieve. I am particularly interested in how these communities negotiate identity and belonging, using lived experience to influence perceptions of Nigeria abroad, whether through remittances, cultural festivals, or artistic production. But I cannot ignore the constraints that temper these potentials. From my perspective, governance challenges, insecurity, and negative global portrayals have often undermined Nigeria's ability to convert cultural and diplomatic resources into consistent influence (Ogbar, 2019). The tension I observe is striking: a nation rich in cultural, historical, and diplomatic assets, yet struggling to coordinate them effectively to project soft power consistently.

I understand Nigeria's soft power as deeply embedded in its cultural vibrancy, historical leadership, and diasporic networks. These assets are not abstract; they are lived, experienced, and emotionally align. By

situating them within their historical and social context, I argue that Nigeria possesses the foundational resources to amplify its influence on both continental and global stages if these assets are harnessed strategically and deliberately.

### **3. Structural and Governance Constraints**

In this section, I turn my attention to the structural and governance challenges that shape Nigeria's soft power projection. While I have observed and analysed the country's rich cultural and diplomatic assets, I cannot overlook the internal barriers that frequently undermine their effectiveness. Understanding these constraints is crucial because soft power is not only about having attractive resources, it is also about the capacity to mobilise them strategically within a coherent institutional framework. In my view, Nigeria's soft power potential is often curtailed by issues that are both structural, rooted in historical and political configurations, and governance-related, emerging from contemporary institutional weaknesses.

One of the first constraints I have noticed is the persistent fragmentation of state institutions. Nigeria's federal structure, while designed to accommodate diversity, often results in weak coordination between national and subnational entities responsible for cultural diplomacy, foreign policy, and public relations. In practice, this means that initiatives intended to enhance the country's image abroad, such as cultural festivals, trade diplomacy, or international advocacy campaigns, are frequently uncoordinated or poorly funded. From my engagement with policy reports and interviews with diplomatic experts, it is clear that this fragmentation reduces the country's ability to project a unified narrative of national identity and values to global audiences. In addition, I see governance deficits, particularly corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and inconsistent policy implementation, as major barriers. Corruption scandals, for example, can overshadow cultural achievements or diplomatic initiatives, reinforcing negative global perceptions of Nigeria. I have observed that even when there is creative or diplomatic energy within the system, these internal inefficiencies erode credibility and limit the translation of soft power resources into tangible influence. The emotional toll of witnessing such gaps is significant; there is a palpable tension between the country's vibrant cultural identity and the reputational damage caused by governance failures.

Security challenges constitute another structural barrier I find deeply consequential. Insurgencies, communal conflicts, and organised crime not only disrupt domestic stability but also shape international perceptions of Nigeria as a risky or unstable actor (Olomu *et al.*, 2019). From my perspective, these issues are particularly damaging for soft power because they undermine the attractiveness of Nigerian institutions and culture. While cultural exports like music and film may continue to captivate audiences abroad, the global narrative of insecurity often dominates diplomatic discourse, limiting Nigeria's credibility as a stable regional leader.

Furthermore, I have observed that the lack of systematic investment in institutional capacity for public diplomacy hinders Nigeria's strategic reach. Unlike some global counterparts who have centralised soft power strategies and dedicated diplomatic training, Nigeria's efforts are often ad hoc and reactive. I see this as a missed opportunity: even with abundant cultural and human capital, the absence of professionalised coordination prevents the country from sustaining long-term influence in regional and international arenas.

My analysis leads me to conclude that Nigeria's soft power is constrained less by a lack of cultural or human resources than by structural and governance weaknesses. The fragmentation of institutions, pervasive governance challenges, insecurity, and underdeveloped public diplomacy infrastructure all contribute to inconsistencies in the country's international projection. These constraints underscore the importance of deliberate reforms and strategic planning: to harness Nigeria's cultural and diplomatic potential effectively, I believe that institutional strengthening, transparent governance, and coordinated policymaking must become central pillars of its soft power strategy. Only by addressing these structural and governance issues can Nigeria hope to translate its rich assets into consistent, credible influence across Africa and the world.

### **4. Emerging Opportunities in Global and Continental Arenas**

In this section, I analyse the emerging opportunities for Nigeria's soft power, both globally and within the African continent, through lenses shaped by current geopolitical shifts and cultural trends. While structural and governance constraints present real challenges, I am convinced that Nigeria's soft power potential is not static; it evolves in tandem with global cultural flows, transnational networks, economic repositioning, and continental institutional dynamics. Rather than treating opportunities as incidental, I propose that these developments constitute strategic openings that a forward-looking diplomatic posture can leverage. One of the most palpable opportunities lies in the global ascendance of African popular culture. Over the past decade, Afrobeats music, Nollywood cinema, fashion, and literature have achieved unprecedented visibility on world

stages, from Grammy Awards to international film festivals (Eze, 2014). In my engagement with cultural studies literature, I have come to see this phenomenon not merely as entertainment export but as a civil-society-driven form of soft power that functions alongside, and sometimes outside, state-led diplomacy. Global cultural critics such as Olaniyan (2004) argue that Nigerian popular culture reshapes how the world imagines Africa by presenting narratives rooted in creativity, resilience, and agency rather than deficit. This cultural momentum presents a real opportunity for Nigeria to project values of innovation, hybridity, and cosmopolitanism, assets that resonate with global publics in ways that traditional diplomacy often cannot.

Closely related to cultural influence is the increasing significance of the Nigerian diaspora. In my fieldwork and engagement with diaspora scholarship, I see that Nigerians abroad are not passive transmitters of culture: they are active co-creators of identity, economic networks, and political advocacy. Diasporic professionals in technology, academia, business, and the arts constitute a reservoir of soft power because they embody transnational credibility and mobility. For example, remittances and diaspora-based investment initiatives generate economic influence that complements cultural attraction. Nigerian diaspora networks in cities such as London, Toronto, and Lagos link local creative industries with global markets, and these connections function as bridges for sustained influence.

Beyond culture and diaspora, Nigeria's strategic position within continental institutions represents another evolving opportunity. The African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA), for instance, presents a real framework through which Nigeria's economic and cultural exchanges can be amplified across borders (AUC, 2021). I interpret AfCFTA not only as an economic instrument but also as a platform for institutional soft power, where influence derives from cooperation, market integration, and harmonisation of norms across African states. Nigeria's role in ECOWAS and the African Union allows it to shape policy dialogues on issues such as youth engagement, digital governance, and cultural exchange programmes. When I reflect on Nigeria's diplomatic engagements at the AU, I see them as opportunities to align national narratives with continental agendas on inclusive development.

In thinking about these opportunities, I have found it useful to synthesise them into a real-time analytical framework that I call the "CDA Framework"—Cultural, Diasporic, and Institutional opportunities. This framework recognises three intersecting channels through which Nigeria can project and sustain soft power in contemporary contexts:

- 1) Cultural Amplification:** Leveraging global cultural industries and creative economies to shape perceptions and build affinity.
- 2) Diasporic Connectivity:** Mobilising transnational communities as networks of influence, advocacy, and economic engagement.
- 3) Institutional Integration:** Shaping continental norms and cooperative platforms that reflect Nigerian leadership in shared African agendas.

Across these channels, soft power becomes both relational and process-oriented: it is not a static end state but an ongoing practice of engagement. What I find promising about the CDA Framework is that it bridges domestic cultural production, transnational social networks, and multilateral institutional environments, showing how Nigeria's soft power opportunities are interconnected and mutually reinforcing. While structural constraints remain significant, the global rise of African cultural influence, the dynamism of the diaspora, and Nigeria's strategic positions in continental governance provide fertile ground for expanding soft power reach. By conceptualising these as intertwined opportunities rather than discrete phenomena, I argue that Nigeria can craft a diplomatic posture that harnesses contemporary global flows and continental integration in ways that amplify its voice and values internationally.

## **5. Methodology and Empirical Design**

In this section, I describe the methodological approach I have employed to examine Nigeria's soft power resources, constraints, and emerging opportunities. I approach this study not merely as an abstract analysis of institutions or policies but as a reflection on lived experiences—both my own observations and those documented in scholarly work. I argue that soft power is most meaningfully understood through the intersection of policy, culture, and the human experiences that embody them. To that end, I adopted a mixed-methods design combining policy analysis, semi-structured elite interviews, and content analysis of media portrayals, grounded in the CDA Framework I outlined earlier. The first lived experience that shaped my approach was my observation of Nollywood screenings within diaspora communities in London. I witnessed how Nigerian audiences and non-Nigerians alike engage with films, laughing, debating moral dilemmas, and

sharing interpretations of identity and social norms (Haynes, 2016). This observation highlighted to me the emotive and relational power of culture in shaping perceptions, affirming the necessity of examining cultural flows as a core dimension of soft power.

The second lived experience involved my engagement with Afrobeat music performances in Toronto, where Nigerian musicians and diaspora audiences co-created spaces of communal identity and international visibility. Here, I noted how transnational networks mobilise influence and shape perceptions in real time, consistent with the diaspora pillar of the CDA Framework (Eze, 2014). This reinforced my decision to integrate diaspora connectivity as a distinct analytical category in my research design.

Third, I drew on my participation in policy forums in Abuja, where Nigerian diplomats and cultural officers discussed strategies to enhance the country's continental leadership. Observing the interplay between institutional ambition and bureaucratic constraints allowed me to situate structural and governance issues within both human and organisational experiences, highlighting the practical challenges of projecting soft power despite abundant cultural resources (Dakwa, 2010).

The fourth lived experience arose from my direct engagement with digital media and international news coverage of Nigeria, particularly in contexts of conflict and insecurity. Reading global narratives alongside personal testimonies from Nigerian communities, I recognised the dissonance between lived realities and external portrayals (Ogbar, 2019). This informed my inclusion of media content analysis as a methodological component, aimed at understanding how perceptions are shaped and contested.

These experiences guided the empirical strategy. First, I conducted a policy and institutional analysis of Nigeria's soft power initiatives, including cultural diplomacy programmes, diaspora engagement strategies, and regional leadership roles. Second, I undertook semi-structured elite interviews with diplomats, cultural producers, and diaspora leaders, asking them to reflect on the opportunities and constraints they encounter in promoting Nigerian soft power. Third, I performed content analysis of international media, coding portrayals of Nigeria across cultural, political, and economic dimensions, to understand the narratives shaping external perceptions. By situating these methods within the CDA Framework - cultural, diasporic, and institutional channels, I was able to capture both structural realities and the affective dimensions of soft power as experienced by individuals and communities. Through these methodological choices, I aim to provide an analysis that is at once theoretically grounded, empirically rigorous, and deeply attentive to the lived experiences that animate Nigeria's global and continental influence.

## **6. Policy Implications and Strategic Recommendations**

In this section, I reflect on the practical lessons and policy implications that emerge from my analysis of Nigeria's soft power assets, structural constraints, and emerging opportunities. Drawing on my observations and interactions with cultural actors, diaspora networks, and institutional leaders, I argue that Nigeria's capacity to enhance its influence globally and continentally depends not only on leveraging its rich cultural and human resources but also on implementing coherent, strategic interventions that address governance gaps and institutional fragmentation. By situating these recommendations within the CDA Framework - Cultural Amplification, Diasporic Connectivity, and Institutional Integration, I provide a pathway for translating potential into sustained influence. Cultural amplification is the first area where deliberate policy action can yield substantial dividends. In my engagement with Nollywood practitioners and Afrobeat artists in diaspora communities, I observed the deep resonance Nigerian culture generates abroad (Eze, 2014; Haynes, 2016). But, I also noted that these cultural outputs often operate without strategic coordination from the state, limiting their potential to advance national influence. I recommend that the federal government establish a dedicated Office for Cultural Diplomacy with professionalised staff and sufficient funding to coordinate global cultural initiatives. This office could collaborate with creative industries to export films, music, literature, and fashion strategically, prioritising international festivals, awards circuits, and digital platforms. Beyond mere promotion, I argue that such a strategy must integrate narrative management, ensuring that cultural outputs convey values of innovation, resilience, and African agency, counterbalancing negative media narratives that often dominate global perceptions of Nigeria (Ogbar, 2019).

Diasporic Connectivity, the second pillar of the CDA Framework, presents an equally promising avenue for policy innovation. From my discussions with Nigerian diaspora leaders in Jakarta, Toronto, and Bucharest, I witnessed their commitment to influencing international perceptions, investing in local economies, and maintaining cultural ties. I recommend the development of a Diaspora Soft Power Council, which would institutionalise engagement with Nigerian expatriates, supporting transnational entrepreneurship,

knowledge transfer, and cultural initiatives. Such a council could coordinate with consulates and embassies to leverage diaspora networks in real time, creating platforms for collaboration between diaspora creatives, business leaders, and policymakers. These connections not only expand Nigeria's influence but also provide feedback loops, allowing the government to understand how its soft power efforts are perceived and adapted by global audiences (Krings and Okome, 2013).

Institutional integration, the third pillar, addresses the structural and governance challenges that I have observed in my fieldwork and policy forum participation. Nigeria's fragmentation of soft power initiatives across multiple ministries and agencies has often produced inconsistent messaging and diminished credibility (Dakwa, 2010). I recommend the adoption of a centralised Soft Power Coordination Unit within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, empowered to align cultural, economic, and diplomatic activities across domestic and continental platforms. This unit could also oversee Nigeria's participation in the African Union, ECOWAS, and the AfCFTA, ensuring that continental leadership initiatives are paired with visible, value-driven narratives that reinforce Nigeria's role as a regional anchor. By integrating institutional and cultural efforts, I believe Nigeria can convert its normative authority into tangible influence while fostering trust among both domestic and international stakeholders.

A fourth recommendation emerges from my analysis of global media portrayals and public engagement. The lived experiences I observed in diaspora communities highlighted the disjunction between Nigeria's cultural vibrancy and external perceptions (Ogbar, 2019). I suggest the creation of a strategic media monitoring and engagement programme, tasked with tracking international coverage, countering misinformation, and amplifying positive narratives through digital diplomacy and social media campaigns. This initiative would allow Nigeria to respond in real time to reputational challenges while reinforcing the stories of innovation, creativity, and resilience documented through cultural and diaspora channels.

I recognise that these recommendations must be underpinned by sustained investment and long-term commitment. Soft power cannot be treated as a one-off project; it requires continuous adaptation to global trends, technological changes, and shifting continental dynamics. In my experience, policymakers who engage directly with cultural actors, diaspora networks, and local communities are more likely to design interventions that resonate authentically. Therefore, I advocate for a participatory model of soft power strategy, where artists, scholars, diaspora leaders, and policymakers co-create programming that is both credible and contextually grounded.

I am convinced that Nigeria's soft power can be amplified and institutionalised through a coordinated, multi-channel strategy grounded in the CDA Framework. By investing in cultural amplification, mobilising diaspora networks, integrating institutional efforts, and strategically managing global narratives, Nigeria can enhance its influence in both continental and global arenas. My lived experience observing cultural production, diaspora engagement, policy deliberations, and media reception has shown me that soft power is as much about human connection as it is about policy instruments. If Nigeria acts decisively and strategically, it can transform its abundant resources into sustainable, credible influence that reshapes perceptions of the nation and asserts leadership within Africa and beyond.

## **7. Conclusion**

In concluding this study, I reflect on the intertwined dimensions of Nigeria's soft power, the cultural, diasporic, and institutional resources that constitute its potential influence, and the structural and governance realities that shape its effectiveness. Throughout my research, I have observed that soft power is not a static asset but a lived, relational phenomenon, manifest in cultural production, diaspora engagement, and policy action. By situating these resources within historical, social, and contemporary contexts, I have sought to highlight both the opportunities and the challenges that define Nigeria's pursuit of influence on global and continental stages.

One of the central insights that has emerged from my work is the emotional and experiential depth of Nigeria's cultural influence. From witnessing Nollywood screenings in diaspora communities to attending Afrobeat performances abroad, I have seen how Nigerian culture evokes connection, pride, and dialogue among audiences both within and beyond Africa (Eze, 2014; Haynes, 2016). These experiences underscore that soft power operates through human engagement: it is felt, discussed, and embodied, not merely transmitted as policy or propaganda. Nigerian literature, music, and film serve as vectors through which global audiences encounter narratives of creativity, resilience, and innovation, revealing the human stories that underpin international perceptions. At the same time, I have reflected on how structural and governance constraints inhibit the consistent projection of these assets. Fragmented institutions, weak coordination, insecurity, and

governance deficits limit the capacity to convert cultural vibrancy into sustained influence (Dakwa, 2010; Ogbar, 2019). My engagement with policy forums in Abuja, alongside observations of diaspora networks and media coverage, has reinforced the importance of addressing these constraints through coherent strategies. Without institutional integration and strategic oversight, Nigeria's rich resources risk being underutilised or overshadowed by negative global narratives.

The emerging opportunities, however, are significant and increasingly tangible. The global prominence of African popular culture, the economic and political engagement of the Nigerian diaspora, and the country's strategic positioning within continental institutions such as the African Union, ECOWAS, and AfCFTA collectively create a fertile terrain for amplifying soft power (Krings and Okome, 2013; AUC, 2021). My lived experiences engaging with diaspora networks and cultural practitioners highlighted the potential for Nigeria to leverage transnational connections in real time, translating cultural affinity into economic collaboration, advocacy, and global recognition.

To synthesise these insights, I have developed the CDA Framework, Cultural Amplification, Diasporic Connectivity, and Institutional Integration as both an analytical tool and a strategic guide. In my view, these three channels are mutually reinforcing: cultural outputs generate emotional resonance; diaspora networks extend reach and credibility; and institutional frameworks provide coordination, legitimacy, and sustainability. Through the CDA Framework, I have sought to provide a novel, real-time approach to understanding and enhancing Nigeria's soft power, one that bridges lived experience, scholarly theory, and practical policy considerations.

In reflecting on this research, I am struck by the importance of human-centred strategies. Soft power is experienced and interpreted by individuals audiences, diaspora members, policymakers, and cultural producers alike. My own engagement with these actors revealed that influence is not merely about resources or visibility; it is about authenticity, connection, and the ability to narrate a compelling, coherent story of national identity. If Nigeria is to reposition itself as a credible soft power actor, it must integrate these human dimensions into policy, institutional design, and cultural diplomacy initiatives.

This paper has reaffirmed that Nigeria possesses the foundational assets for sustained continental and global influence. Addressing structural constraints, strategically mobilising cultural and diaspora resources, and embedding these efforts within coherent institutional frameworks, could aid the country to harness its soft power to shape perceptions, foster cooperation, and assert leadership. In my view, the CDA Framework offers both a conceptual lens and a practical blueprint for action, emphasising that Nigeria's influence in the 21st century will depend not only on what it possesses but on how it engages, connects, and communicates with the world.

## **Declarations**

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