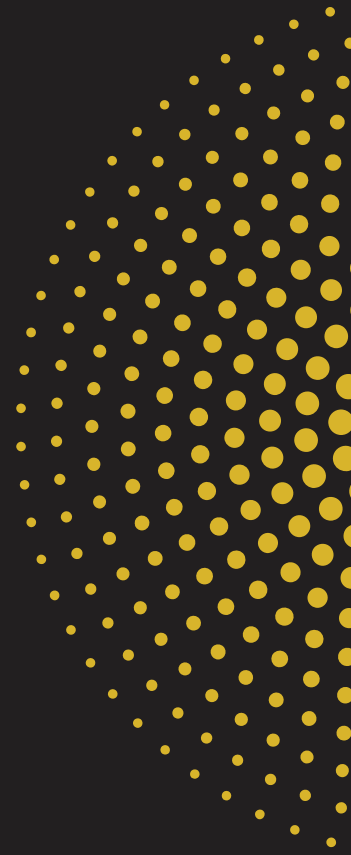


AFRICAN DIASPORA FORUM

20
25



PROGRAM REPORT

by



Bizim Afrika

For The African People in Türkiye
Pour Les Peuples Africains en Türkiye
لأجل الأفارقة المقيمين في تركيا

April 2025





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Executive Summary

The African Diaspora Forum 2025 (ADF'25), under the theme "Empowering the Diaspora as a Pathway to Sustainable Collaboration Between Africa and Türkiye", took place on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at Nişantaşı University, Sarıyer Campus, in Istanbul.

The program featured three thought-provoking panel discussions, two practical Diaspora Skills Lab workshops, and strong institutional representation including diplomats, scholars, entrepreneurs, and youth leaders. Throughout the day, participants explored themes of identity, economic integration, representation, and cultural diplomacy, laying the groundwork for future cooperation between Türkiye and African communities.

Prepared by
Bizim Afrika

Prepared for
Public Opinion



Executive Summary

Overview

The African Diaspora Forum 2025 (ADF'25), under the theme "Empowering the Diaspora as a Pathway to Sustainable Collaboration Between Africa and Türkiye", took place on Saturday, April 19, 2025, at Nişantaşı University, Sarıyer Campus, in Istanbul. The forum brought together nearly 190 participants from 35 African countries and 10 other nationalities across 20 cities.



+190

ATTENDEES

35

AFRICAN COUNTRIES

+20

CITIES OF TÜRKİYE

H.E. Mehdi Errami

Consul General of Morocco



ADF'25 served as a dynamic platform for engagement between African diaspora leaders, professionals, students, and Türkiye-based institutions.



High Level Guests Picture

ABOUT THE FORUM

Since its inception, ADF has aimed to amplify the voices and contributions of African diasporas in Türkiye. ADF'25 continued this legacy by creating an inclusive space for dialogue, learning, and strategic action. The forum responded to the growing need for sustainable Africa-Türkiye partnerships, while promoting leadership, entrepreneurship, and collective responsibility among diaspora members.

This edition came at a moment of renewed interest in Africa within Türkiye's public and private sectors, and highlighted the diaspora's role as a bridge for sustainable international collaboration.

The African Diaspora Forum serves as a moment for reflection on the challenges facing the African community and a platform to explore pathways for collaboratively addressing these issues.

The 2nd Edition of the African Diaspora Forum focused on the practical contributions of the African Diaspora to Türkiye-Africa relations across various sectors. The forum hosted approximately 200 participants, including African citizens residing in Türkiye, students, professionals, and entrepreneurs.



1. **Enhancing the Role of the African Diaspora in Türkiye–Africa Relations**

The African Diaspora plays a crucial role in Türkiye's growing engagement with Africa. By strengthening the contributions of diaspora communities, we aim to reinforce their position as key actors in fostering deeper economic, social, and diplomatic ties between Türkiye and African nations. This forum will highlight the diaspora's impact and explore ways to maximize their influence in shaping the Türkiye–Africa partnership.

2. **Addressing Challenges and Amplifying Voices of the African Diaspora**

The African Diaspora in Türkiye faces unique challenges that need to be acknowledged and addressed. This forum provides a platform to discuss common struggles such as integration, representation, and access to opportunities. It will also serve as a space for diaspora communities to share their experiences, perspectives, and aspirations, ensuring that their voices are heard and considered in policy discussions and decision-making processes.

3. **Fostering Economic and Professional Networking for Sustainable Growth**

Building strong economic and professional connections is essential for unlocking business and investment opportunities. This forum will encourage networking between African professionals, Turkish stakeholders, and African nations to facilitate collaboration in trade, entrepreneurship, and investment. By creating synergies and fostering partnerships, we aim to enhance economic integration and professional growth within the African Diaspora in Türkiye.

4. **Promoting Knowledge Exchange and Strategic Action for the Future**

Sharing ideas, experiences, and best practices among diaspora members and key stakeholders is vital for strengthening Türkiye–Africa relations. This forum will facilitate discussions on innovative approaches to diaspora engagement while developing actionable strategies to enhance their involvement in bilateral cooperation. By fostering dialogue and collaboration, we seek to create sustainable solutions that will contribute to the long-term success of the Türkiye–Africa partnership.

Program Flow & Format



Keynote addresses from African diplomatic missions and prominent Turkish institutions helped frame the discussions and highlight the broader significance of the forum.



Opening Speeches

01.

The Forum was honored by the presence of distinguished guests, including **H.E. Moustapha Sokhna Diop**, Ambassador of the Republic of Senegal to Türkiye, **H.E. Prof. Dr. Ayşegül Komşuoğlu Çıtıptıoğlu**, Rector of Istanbul Nişantaşı Üniversitesi, **H.E. Mehdi Errami**, Consul General of the Kingdom of Morocco in Istanbul, **Mr. Zeki Güvercin**, President of GR Events World / DEİK Türkiye-Senegal Business Council, and representatives from multiple African embassies and consulates.

02.

The one-day event featured three panel discussions and three workshops aligned with the overarching theme. Each panel brought together experts and representatives from diverse sectors and institutions, offering insights and fostering dialogue on pressing diaspora-related issues.





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PANEL 1

The African Diaspora in Türkiye: Identity, Integration, and Contributions

This panel examined the lived experiences of African diaspora communities in Türkiye, focusing on integration, social inclusion, and their contributions to various sectors. It addressed challenges in representation, identity, and engagement with Turkish society.



Panelists

Moderator: Dr. Kemal Bendjafer, Lecturer at Marmara University-Journalist

Speakers:

- Ms. Damaris, COO, Rockman Logistics**
- Dr. Döç. Murat Yiğit, Academician, Writer**
- Fatih İlhan, Businessman, Co-Founder of AfroAnatolian**



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PANEL 2

ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT AND PROFESSIONAL INTEGRATION: STRENGTHENING BUSINESS AND TRADE OPPORTUNITIES

This panel explored how the African diaspora contributes to economic and trade relations between Türkiye and Africa. It examined the role of diaspora entrepreneurs, business leaders, and professionals in fostering economic opportunities, securing investments, and facilitating trade partnerships.



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Panelists

Moderator: Dr. Therenice Atabong, Scholar and Author, CEO of Atabs Consultancy

Speakers:

-Dr. Daniel Ayodele (hc), Founder/ Executive Director, MEEI Program

-Mr. Mohamed Alitine, Founder of FURNISSA Dış Ticaret Ltd Şirketi

-Mr. Prince Sam Onuegbunam, General Director of Ikenga Türkiye

PANEL 3

REPRESENTATION, ADVOCACY, AND CULTURAL DIPLOMACY: SHAPING THE NARRATIVE AND INFLUENCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

This panel will address the role of the African diaspora in advocacy, policymaking, and public diplomacy. The discussion will cover representation in Türkiye's political and diplomatic landscape, the role of diaspora organizations in shaping policies, and strategies to amplify the voices of African communities in Türkiye



Panelists

Moderator: Ms. Kardellas Rababe:
Journalist, PhD Candidate

Speakers:

- Mr. Mac Hamidou Camara, English Teacher, Entrepreneur
Founder of English Nights
- Mr. Tuğrul Oğuzhan PhD candidate and News Producer, TRT Afrika
- Mr. Iddi Ahmed, Diplomat

DIASPORA SKILLS LAB WORKSHOPS



WORKSHOP 1:

Business & Entrepreneurship



WORKSHOP 2:

Leadership & Community Engagement

These workshops equipped participants with tools to lead community projects and launch or scale diaspora businesses.

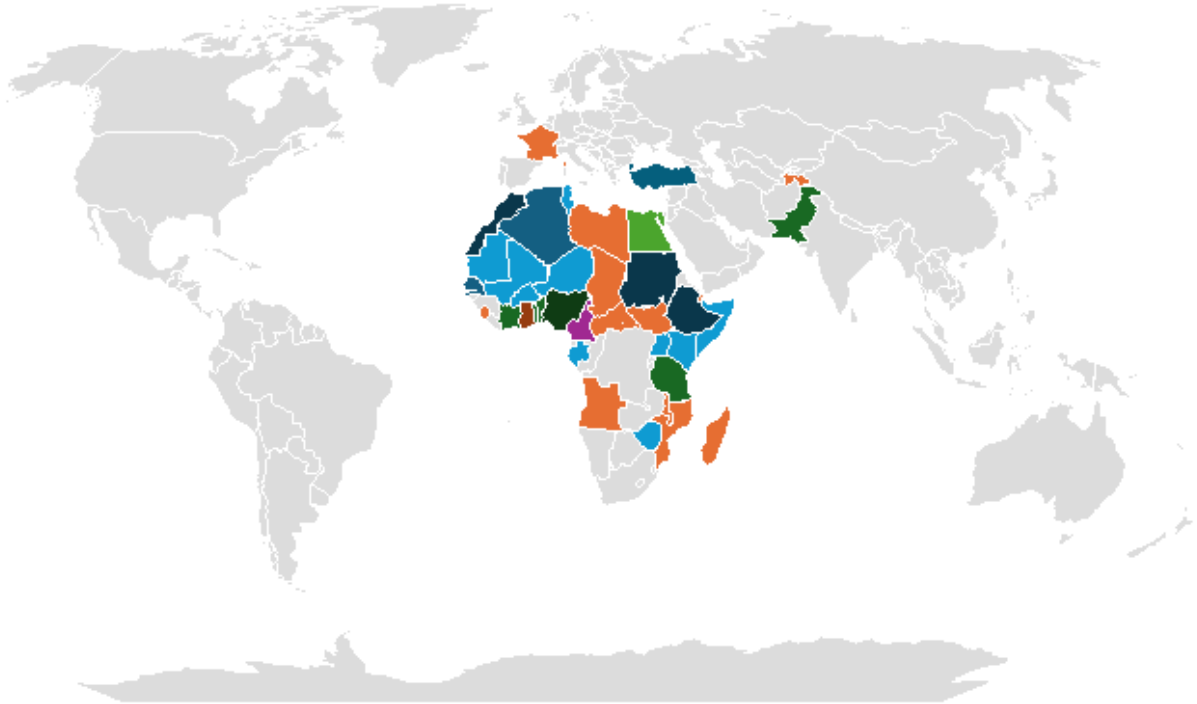


Participation & Reach

Countries Represented



A total of 190 participants attended the African Diaspora Forum 2025. Of these, 109 identified as male (57.4%) and 81 as female (42.6%), reflecting a strong gender balance and inclusivity. The diversity in gender representation highlights the forum’s appeal and accessibility across different segments of the African diaspora community in Türkiye.



Participation & Reach

Participants Profiles



Students: 28%

This includes undergraduate, master's, PhD, and other higher education students from diverse academic backgrounds.

Professionals and Others: 72%

Encompasses entrepreneurs, engineers, academics, teachers, business owners, health professionals, public relations officers, architects, journalists, and other working professionals.

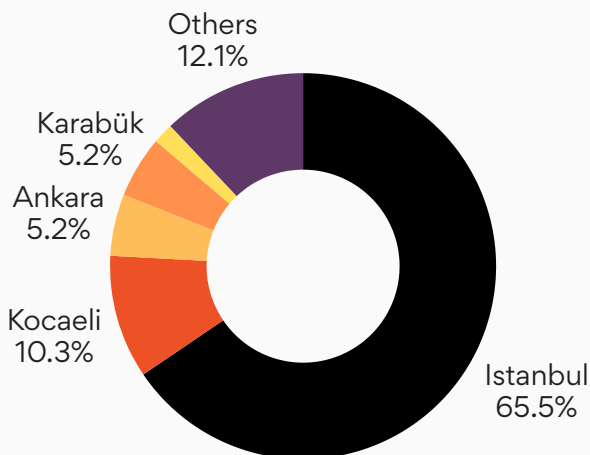
Participants

■ Students ■ Professionals

28%

72%

Cities



Professions

Entrepreneurs

Student

Health Professional

Academic / Researcher

Journalist / Media

Public Relations & Communication

SME Growth

Sales & Trade

Key Outcomes



- Renewed collaboration frameworks between African missions and local actors
- Practical skills transfer for youth and professionals
- Clear interest in sustaining diaspora-based economic and cultural initiatives
- Foundation for long-term institutional partnerships between Africa and Türkiye



Challenges & Lessons Learned

- Need for improved early-stage coordination with diplomatic missions
- Technical and space constraints during high-attendance sessions
- Importance of streamlining logistics for simultaneous panels and workshops



Partners & Supporters



YTB



TÜRKİYE
SCHOLARSHIPS
BURSLARI

İSTANBUL
NİŞANTAŞI
UNIVERSITY
NEW



ALSELAM
DERNEĞİ



Bâb-ı Âlem
Uluslararası Öğrenci Derneği
International Student Association
جمعية الطلاب الدولية



ROCKMAN
LOGISTICS



TISUP
TÜRKİYE INTERNATIONAL STUDENT UNIONS PLATFORM



Recommendations

Building on the outcomes of ADF'25, several strategic steps are recommended to strengthen the long-term impact and sustainability of the African Diaspora Forum.

First, ADF should be institutionalized as an annual platform supported by a permanent secretariat structure to ensure continuity, structured follow-up, and stronger coordination with stakeholders.

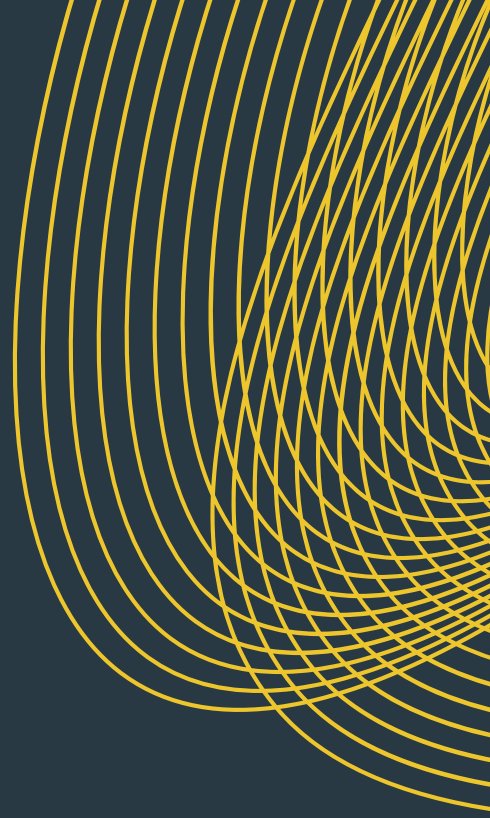
Secondly, the creation of a diaspora mentorship network composed of former ADF speakers, partners, and experienced professionals would provide guidance, professional support, and knowledge-sharing opportunities for young diaspora members and emerging leaders.

In addition, future editions of the forum should broaden their thematic scope to address emerging and cross-cutting issues such as migration dynamics, climate-related challenges, and digital transformation, all of which increasingly shape Africa-Türkiye relations and diaspora engagement.

Finally, stronger coordination should be established with local municipalities and chambers of commerce in Türkiye to enhance economic integration, facilitate business linkages, and create more structured pathways for diaspora-led initiatives and investments.



THANK YOU



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