

Motto: Actuated towards Africa's advancement

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NIGERIAN DIASPORA ARE ESSENTIAL OR THE NATION DEVELOPMENT

– Mazi Godson Azu

His name is Mazi Godson Odoamalam Azu, he is an Ibo man by tribe, from Abia State, (God's own State), he grew up in Lagos State, where he had his early years of education. He is a political analyst, PR/Media Consultant, Author & Publisher, he studied International Relations and Politics at both University of London and London Metropolitan University London where he completed his postgraduate (MA), in 2017.

His company, Cater and Merger Consult is incorporated in the United Kingdom under the company registration act with the Company House London. The company is registered and established by Mr. Godson Azu MA. FOSHA as a limited liability company in the year 201 with company registration number 1146232 . While he is the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the company, funding for the business is from his income contributions, which covers the start-up expenses and providing a financial cushion for the business operation. The company plans to build on strong market position within the community and our intended wider market, as a result of our industry experience and experts with mild competitive advantage within the defined market environment.

According to him, whenever you request for services such as image protection, brand protection, cooperate and personality profiling, event publicity and campaign strategies, conference and summit management, your targeted audience would always be those miles away from your local reach, which means that your audience would be unlimited so at C&M, through our wide network, on-line platform, television programs, print media and extended media coverages, they would guarantee that your interest or expectations will be promoted with utmost care and value to a wider audience and market reach, at a fraction of what it would cost to project image and product branding on any other media platform.

We would create Face and Voice that would reach your expected audience with a greater marginal responsive result. And on this note, we welcome our guest on this Voice forum on Face to Face chat in this edition of The Voice News magazine



TV What do you do for a living?

Mazi Godson Azu I started my media and political work experience as a political analyst and public commentator with the first ethnic black African television station in the UK, Ben Television London, in 2012, and then progressed to become head of politics current affairs desk in 2014.

In 2014, I stood as a Councillorship candidate of All Peoples Party (APP), at the UK Local Council Elections of 2014, for Brentford Ward in Her Majesty Borough of Hounslow, and in 201 stood as a CLP Candidate for the Greater London Assembly Mayoral Election May 201 , representing Haringey Enfield Constituency CLP in North

London.

In 2014, while about to release my first book, I decided to set up CaterandMerger company, as a political and media consultancy outfit, to promote my ideas and concepts of political communication and media profiling, as I hoped to provide professional services to people in the field of political management, leadership and civil governance.

TV What motivated you to go into creating media platforms?

Mazi Godson Azu I was motivated into creative media writing and book publication, as a result of my interest in sharing my deep and rational thinking about political issues and social challenges, as I read or observe critical national events happening around my immediate environment, and or the global arena, I have so far authored two complete books, the first is titled; Campaign Strategies Political Success. In 2014, this was launched in London by the Nigerian High Commissioner, Sen. Dr Dalhatu Sarki Ta da O R. C R, and then in Abuja by the Minister of Information, Hon Labaran Maku; the second is titled; Nigerian Democracy and Political Personalities 201 , this was launched by then, Deputy Secretary General (Political) Commonwealth Nations, Ambassador Dr Josephine Ojiambo; the Vice Chancellor of London Metropolitan University, Prof. John Raftary, and the Nigerian High Commissioner, Ambassador George A. Oguntade C R CON. I am about to complete the publication of my third

book, focussing on Brexit and Post-Brexit, this would be ready and out soon. My books could be ordered on Amazon Stores online.

TV What line of business company are you running now?

Mazi Godson Azu My company CaterandMerger is a consulting firm, involved in political research, management, campaign methodology and media publicist in the UK, and across Africa. We strive to pursue informed knowledge and shape creative leadership in governance, through strategic consultation and engagements, of which we have been able to manage few high profile activities in London, and Nigeria.

TV Your Company is involved in different aspects of human endeavors, talk us through major activities that you do?



M a z i Godson Azu CaterandMerger consultancy provides services to both corporate individuals, organizations, and government institutions.

TV You live in the United Kingdom. But where are you originally from and what is your relationship with your country of birth?

Mazi Godson

Azu As I earlier mentioned here, am an Igbo man by tribe, from Abia State, born and grew-up in Lagos, am married to a Yoruba woman from Egba, Abeokuta in Ogun State Nigeria. My relationship with Nigeria is great, as I have my extended family and childhood friends over there, across the country. I have been visiting the country twice a year, for the past 10 years, both for family issues, then for social and economic intervention projects.

TV Our path crossed at an event organized by the Nigerian Diaspora organization. Are you involved with the organization and what do you do exactly there?

Mazi Godson Azu I joined NIDO UK chapter in 2007, and have remained a full financial and active member of the organization to date, I have been part of the diaspora delegation for homeland development and in commemoration of the annual Diaspora Day activities in Nigeria, since 2009. In 2014, I was in Nigeria to launch my first book Campaign Strategies for Political Success, at the Radio House Abuja. In 2017, I led a team of social investors, from the UK, Europe,

and US to support the launch and tag-off a social intervention project called, Youth of the Street, in Benin City; I have been part of a team of Abia State indigenes in diaspora UK, that have been working with the state government, on establishing the Diaspora Village project in the state, since 2013, which would soon tag-off with the allocation of over 100 hectare of land; in 2019, I led a team of Diasporas for a week-in-Nigeria community project.

TV Follow up to this question, how is the Nigerian Diaspora organization contributing to the advancement of the country?

Mazi Godson Azu My involvement with the Nigerian In Diaspora Organization, (NIDO), and my full membership of the UK South Region Chapter, was key to my homeland motivation and passion. From 2012-2017, I was elected to serve as the General Secretary of NIDO-UK-SOUTH, in 2018. I was elected as the Welfare, Social and Event Officer for Nigerian in Diaspora Organization Europe, Board of Trustee, I am also the Vice Chairman of Abia State Indigenes In Diaspora Association UK Ireland.

I have worked with other leaders of NIDO, and relevant stakeholders in the diaspora community to project the core values of the organization, in terms of governing and harmonizing diaspora organizations and communities, as an all inclusive body representation, I was involved in the long agitation and pursuance of the Diaspora Bill, which eventually created the Nigerian Diaspora Commission.

TV How will you access the progress made at NIDO over the years?

Mazi Godson Azu I am of the opinion that Nigeria Diasporas, have come of age and potentials, in terms of the capacity development of its fourth generational transition, presently with an estimated worldwide diaspora population of over 1 million, and human capital resources cutting across all spectrum of knowledge, experts, economy, politics, and technology. Based on this huge acquired resources by many Nigerian Diasporas, over the years during the annual Diaspora Day, key technical expert knowledge and skills transfer and exchange programs have been carried-out and achieved.

Nigeria Diasporas network over the past 20 years, has consistently maintained a measurable economic force, with its powers of remittance, according to the world bank records, Nigeria Diasporas have been remitting between, 20-24 Billion Dollars per-year since 2014, which amounts to around 10% of Nigeria GDP, what an immense contribution to the socio-economic growth of the country. At the moment NIDOE is working with the Nigeria Central Bank to monitor and evaluate the actual impact of key remittance in flow to the country economy, through the major remittance agencies. We are also working with partnering government agencies, for instance on the capturing of Nigerians in diaspora data, and ID card registration as we continue to pursue the Diaspora Voting Right. NIDOE is also in a positive engagement on

the government Housing sector, with serious diaspora investors, with the vision of developing social and affordable housing schemes, with huge job creation in Nigeria. As mentioned earlier here, we already have one particular housing project about to take-off in Abia state, for over 2000 housing and essential facilities scheme, Abia Diaspora Village, by Abia Diasporas.

TV In your opinion, is Nigeria ready for Diaspora engagement in doing business or exchanging ideas that could bring development to the country?

Mazi Godson Azu Is Nigeria ready and open for diaspora engagement, I will probably say yes, with a hindsight although the country is gradually catching up with the reality in terms of understanding the greater values of diaspora contribution to homeland development. Over the years, since the gazetting of Diaspora Day celebration by the administration of former president Obasanjo to celebrate our diaspora heroism and achievements, the event has attracted on average 00 diaspora delegates from around the world to mark the 2th of July annual week-long activities in Nigeria.

This annual event has resulted in various consultative engagements, projects and policy implementations, that has led to the strengthening of NIDO formations in many countries and the continental structures as an umbrella body of Nigeria diaspora platforms; the collective pursuance of the Diaspora Bill, which brought about the establishment of Nigerian Diaspora Commission, (NIDCOM). As part of ongoing diaspora engagement, at state levels, and to prove the seriousness of government engagement, there was a strong push for the creation of a Diaspora Desk of cer at state levels, which led to the appointment of Special Adviser or Assistance on Diaspora Affairs to the Governor's, and today we are proud that few state governments have adopted this concept to bring diaspora issues to the state levels, few diaspora individuals are now benefiting from this open opportunity, without the knowledge of how it started or came to existence.

So, I believe that with over \$24b diaspora remittance power and huge technical experts, in our knowledge transfer, in relation to with the establishment of NIDCOM the Nigerian government at all levels is gearing up for a potential and positive diaspora engagement and its massive added values to nation building.

TV We see that you are also engaged in media activities, are you into publications like newsprint or broadcast journalism?

Mazi Godson Azu Well as a political analyst and public commentator, in the UK, I spent most of my time following

up on what is happening around the political world, most especially in the UK, Africa and the US. And, as required by any local or international media channels, I make commentary contributions and at the same time write a few articles for my website.

TV On your website, you organize London Political Summit! What is this event all about and how regular do you organize it?



Mazi Godson Azu For over four years, we have been organising the London Political Summit and Awards in collaboration with the London Metropolitan University, who are our academic partners and other media partners. The main purpose of the annual summit is to bring together political leaders of thought, academicians, students, media and the public to a discourse on critical socio-political and economic challenges of the time. We had the Rt Hon Raila Odinga, the former Prime Minister of Kenya, as our 1st Keynote Speaker, in 201 , since then there have been various top personalities honouring our invitation to speaker at our summits, this includes the Hon. Speaker of Uganda Parliament, Rt Hon Dr Rebecca Kadaga in 2018

TV You also organize awards under the same name. Who are these awards meant for and what is the motivation behind the awards?

Mazi Godson Azu With regards to the Awards aspect, this was carefully added, just after the historic event in Nairobi, with the peace Accord Handshake action between, President Uhuru Kenyatta and Rt Hon Raila Odinga, leading to the relative political peace in Kenya. The summit decided to honour their efforts with awards in recognition of leadership and peaceful resolutions in politics. On this ground we recognize and award political leaders, and public personalities that are contributing to a

peaceful democratic growth in their countries.

TV A lot of things are happening right now with the global pandemic, has this affected your operations and what is the impact so far.

Mazi Godson Azu It is rather very unfortunate that the world is confronted with this highly conspiracy health-missile, coronavirus, called covid-19 by WHO, I am fully convinced that this is a misguided laboratory experiment of chemical infusion that was contracted by human in Wuhan, China that went out of control, and then used a socio-economic spike, by China to drive their mistrust on the geopolitical power game with the US, which the whole world is painfully paying the death price.

The impact of coronavirus pandemic is greatly devastating, both socially and economically around the world, with the challenges of various government lockdowns, social or physical distancing, and breakdown on economic activities. We are at the moment facing a tough time deciding on holding the summit awards this year in view of the travel restrictions

TV Is your interest only on Nigeria or the rest of Africa



and how do you work in those countries?

Mazi Godson Azu CaterandMerger consultancy interest on Politics-to-Business, which in real time is about bridging the engagement gap between those in politics and the business community on potential opportunities for economic growth and social development, for an assured, secured and peaceful society. We work through countries in Africa, across Europe and other developing countries. Helping on this are our summit Ambassadors, in the persons of Ambassador Dr. Josephine Ojiambo, the former Deputy Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations, who is our Global Ambassador; and then Ambassador Dr.



Baroness Neena Richie, the Minister for League of Arab Africa Affairs UK EU, who is our Arab Ambassador.

TV What future plans for your business interests organizations?

Mazi Godson Azu The future plans of caterandmerger, is to expand our ability and capacity to help manage and sustain a positive political-media campaign platforms for political groups, or individual; we are also working on an all inclusive political leadership and governance training programme; and nal offering a comprehensive service on biography and political book publications for up-coming writers or authors.

TV What else would you share with our readers?

Mazi Godson Azu As is literally understood in the politically developed world, according to the two great Greek political philosophers, Aristotle, who stated that, 'Man is a Political Animal', being a social creature, with the power of speech and moral reasoning, (thinking-mind); and Plato, who stated that, 'A political life, is life in the polity'. Which simply means that our day-to-day life, in any organized society is ruled by a political order, as such there is a concerted need to be politically enlightened and aware of the state and process of political governance

at all times. Covid-19 is one clear example of the forces of political power.

TV How does business or person interested in what you do contact you?

Mazi Godson Azu Mazi Godson Azu. MA. BA. (Hons).

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