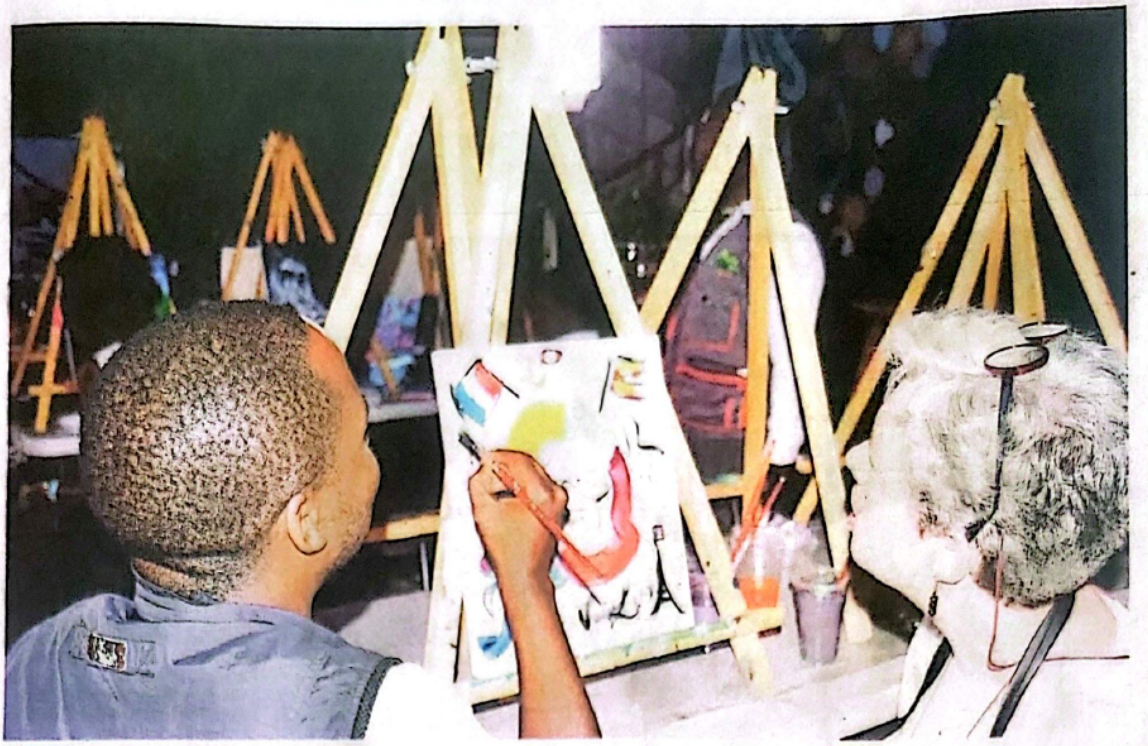


Ms Virginia Leroy, the Ambassador of France to Uganda (right), engages a guest as he paints a mural during the launch of the 2026 Francophonie Month celebrations at Alliance Francaise in Kampala City on Saturday night. PHOTO/STEPHEN OTAGE

# Embassy outs programme for Francophone month fete

The French embassy says the month-long celebrations will highlight the richness, diversity, and dynamism of the French language and Francophone cultures.

BY STEPHEN OTAGE

The Embassy of France in Kampala has released the programme for the events that have been lined up to celebrate this year's Francophonie month, which started on Saturday with a Paint and Sip dinner at Alliance Francaise in Kampala.

Ms Virginia Leroy, the Ambassador of France to Uganda, said globally, March is recognised as the Francophonie month, culminating in the International Day of the Francophonie

This worldwide celebration honours not only the French language, which is spoken by more than 320 million people across all continents but also the shared values that unite the Francophone community: democracy, human rights, cultural dialogue, mutual respect, tolerance, and a steadfast commitment to peace.

"French doesn't belong to one country. Majority of French speakers are in the African continent, which is the heartbeat of French. In the East African Community, French is an official language in Burundi, DR Congo, and Rwanda, where it is of strategic importance for diplomacy, regional integration, and trade," Ambassador Leroy said.

She explained further that world over, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has been recognised as one of the most prolific countries, adding new French words into the French dictionary. They are celebrating French because speaking it opens doors of opportunities to the speakers. Citing international organisations, she said French speakers consider it a cultural asset because it enables them get international jobs.

This year's celebrations kicked off on Saturday with a paint and sip dinner at Alliance Francaise where the guests were served French wine as they painted murals.

They also enjoyed Congolese food, a French Restaurant, Le Hamau, provided catering services, while a DJ played Latino and Cuban music for the guests. Ms Viginia said the organisers for this year's celebrations include the embassies of France, Burundi, Belgium, DRC, Egypt, South Korea and Rwanda. They have also been supported by leading Francophone institutions, including Alliance Française de Kampala, International French School of Kampala, Campus France Uganda, French Chamber of Commerce Uganda, the Association of Teachers of French in Uganda, the Uganda-France Alumni Society and the Association of University French Clubs in Uganda.

The celebration will highlight the richness, diversity, and dynamism of the French language and Francophone cultures.

## THE PROGRAMME

- Saturday, February 28: Paint and Sip Experience, celebrating art, wine, food (Burundi and DRC cuisine) and music at Alliance Française de Kampala.
- Saturday, March 7: Njogera Français inter-schools' competition awarding ceremony, where winning students receive French language proficiency certificates (DELF), at Sheraton Kampala Hotel.
- Saturday & Sunday, March 7&8: Swahili E-Sports Champions 2026, bringing together TEKKEN women gamers from East Africa, at MOTIV Kampala.
- Wednesday, March 11: Egyptian Iftar at Sheraton Kampala Hotel.
- Saturday, March 14: Job & Study Fair organised in partnership with FCCU, AFK and Campus France offers young Ugandan's career prospects with French companies and study opportunities in France, at the International French School Kampala.
- Sunday, March 15: Francophonie Brunch at Sheraton Kampala Hotel.
- Tuesday, March 17: Korean Food Night at Sheraton Kampala Hotel.
- Wednesday, March 18: a celebration of International Day of the Francophonie with French language certificate awards to UPDF soldiers, and honouring exceptional Ugandan women entrepreneurs and leaders.
- Friday, March 27: Belgian concert at the National Theatre.
- Friday, March 27: Francophonie festival highlighting the cultural diversity of the over 40 nations represented at the International French School of Kampala.
- Saturday, March 28: Francophonie concert showcasing Burundian and Rwandan troops and others, at Kingdom Kampala.
- Tuesday, March 31: Belgian Dinner at Le Château restaurant.
- March 6-29: Francophonie Film Festival all across Kampala.
- March 7 - 11 April: French learners' activities (debates, artistic performances, poetry, music, and interactive activities) in schools and higher institutions nationwide, organised by the Association of Teachers of French in Uganda.

These events offer the Ugandan public of all ages an opportunity to experience the diversity of Francophone cultures through music, cinema, gastronomy, training, and dialogue.

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