

A CASE FOR THE INTEGRATION OF ARTS AND CULTURE IN ZIMBABWE'S NEW FOREIGN POLICY STRATEGY

1. Executive Summary

Zimbabwe experienced a dramatic change of government in November 2017, which created some kind of hope for better fortunes for the country. Amongst the top priorities for the new government is economic recovery and reintegration of Zimbabwe into the international community of nations. The two priorities are intertwined, and they require Zimbabwe to rethink its foreign policy strategy. Zimbabwe needs a robust public diplomacy approach, which places arts and culture at centre stage. The country is endowed with cultural diversity and a booming creative industry. Drawing from international experience, this paper suggests the following as some of the measures which the Zimbabwean government can introduce or enhance in order to integrate arts and culture into its public diplomacy approach: increased direct collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the creative industry; establishment of a network of Zimbabwean culture centres alongside Zimbabwe's foreign embassies and consular offices; increased government support for artists to act as Zimbabwe's ambassadors on international tours; support for artists to participate in international cultural festivals and conferences; facilitation of cultural and educational exchange visits and the establishment of international broadcasting channels.

2. Introduction

This paper is a culmination of extensive literature review and interviews carried out with government officials and practitioners within the arts and culture sector in Zimbabwe.¹ The paper advocates the adoption of measures that place culture at the centre of Zimbabwe's public diplomacy. It can hardly be denied that Zimbabwe faces an international reputation crisis. The political crisis that has vexed the country in the last decade and a half has earned

¹ Some of the interviewees requested anonymity. However some were agreeable to be identified by their names and these are: Daniel Maposa, Tambudzai Madzimure and Farai Mpfunya.

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the country a negative international reputation. In some quarters, the country has been classified as a fragile state, while in some parts of the world it has earned the tag of a corrupt and pariah state.² The country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs therefore faces the daunting challenge of dealing with this reputation and re-positioning the country as a reputable, proud member of the international community. The new administration has made it a priority that it wants to turn around the economy through attracting foreign direct investment. Whilst a lot of policies have to be implemented locally in order to enhance international investors' confidence to do business with and in Zimbabwe³, a lot must also be done to market the country's brand abroad. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade carries the responsibility to spearhead the process of creating a positive image of the country, which would culminate in foreign capital inflow.

This paper argues that Zimbabwe can no longer solely rely on the traditional channels of diplomacy in order to market the country abroad. The traditional approach to diplomacy needs to be complemented by a public diplomacy strategy that uses arts and culture as resources to create an international image of Zimbabwe that is attractive to foreign businesses. Thus, the paper provides recommendations on what the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade can do in order to utilise culture in its public diplomacy strategy. In order to develop these recommendations, the paper explores and examines the intersection between culture, the creative industry and foreign policy.

3. Culture, arts and foreign policy

² In 2017, out of a total of 178 countries, Zimbabwe was ranked the 13th most fragile state by the internationally acclaimed Fund for Peace. See <http://fundforpeace.org/fsi/>. In the same year, the country was ranked by Transparency International number 154/176 on the corruption index. See <https://www.transparency.org/country/ZWE>

³ This includes reforms to strengthen the rule of law, respect for human rights and government transparency and accountability

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One of the national objectives under the Constitution of Zimbabwe, 2013, is the development of a foreign policy that promotes and protects the national interests.⁴ National interests include the pursuit of economic recovery and growth, peace and stability. This paper argues that the Government of Zimbabwe must deploy the creative industry as a strategic vehicle in its foreign policy in pursuit of economic recovery and growth. The major premise for this argument is that the creative industry can be relied upon as a partner to conduct cultural diplomacy in order to enhance the country's image abroad as well as establish economic ties with foreign publics.

The creative industry, or arts, is the expression of human creative skill and imagination, for example in a visual form such as painting or sculpture, producing works to be appreciated primarily for their beauty or emotional power.⁵ Music, literature, dance, drama, paintings, sculptures and poetry are amongst some of the most common subcomponents of the creative industry.

There is a close relationship between the creative industry and culture. In order to understand this relationship, it is important to first appreciate what culture means. The term "culture" is often used to describe a way of life of a community or group of people. However, the 'way of life of a community' is not always straight forward and therefore, "culture" is a complex and dynamic concept. This has led some scholars to define culture as a "very complex concept made up of traditional patterns and derivatives of experience, a set of values and beliefs or ways of dealing with social situations that are communicated from one generation to another."⁶ Similarly, in international law, culture is defined as "a whole complex of distinctive, spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features that characterize a society

⁴ See section 12 (1) (a)

⁵ See British Council on <https://creativeeconomy.britishcouncil.org/guide/what-creative-economy/>

⁶ Stăncuța Ramona Dima-Laza 'Judging cultures: Intertwined sociological concepts' *Studii de știință și cultură. Vol 13.* (2017) p. 147.

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or a social group”.⁷ Thus the term “culture” captures and describes the changing identity of a people. One of the interviewees⁸ aptly described culture as “the negotiated process between generations, whereupon values and norms are assessed in terms of how they aid the development of the society. In the process, certain values are discarded while others are retained, and new ones are introduced, as generations seek to aid their own development.”

Aspects of a people’s culture include their religion, the manner in which their governance system is organized, their traditional morals, values and belief system. These aspects of culture are often expressed through arts, which is popularly referred to as the creative industry. Thus, the relationship between arts or the creative industry and culture is that it is through the creative industry that a people’s culture is conveyed, showcased or expressed. It therefore can be argued that art is a vehicle through which a people’s culture is communicated.⁹

If culture is showcased positively, it has the potential to present a positive image of its people. For instance, Zimbabwean people have hard work, compassion, honesty, love, unity and hospitality as some of their cultural values. If such values are showcased, they have the potential of creating a positive image of the Zimbabwean people to the outside world. What has this to do with foreign policy design?

Foreign policies are usually geared towards managing international relations and pursuing the country’s foreign interests. Traditionally, this is done through diplomatic channels such as ambassadors and consular officers. However, as Evan Potter¹⁰ rightly observes, “We are witnessing a fundamental shift in how nations manage their international relations. National

⁷ See UNESCO’s definition of culture on <http://www.unesco.org/new/en/social-and-human-sciences/themes/international-migration/glossary/cultural-diversity/>

⁸ Farai Mpfunya, who is the Director of the Culture Fund of Zimbabwe Trust.

⁹ All the interviewees supported this view.

¹⁰ In ‘Canada and the new public diplomacy’ *International Journal Winter 2002-2003* p. 43.

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interests are advanced abroad through events and actions that go well beyond the classic diplomacy of communiqués, démarches, and aide mémoires.” This “new” type of diplomacy is called public diplomacy. In order to understand what it means or entails, it is worth considering the views of some of the leading international relations scholars on this subject. Edmund A. Gullion, who is credited for coining the phrase “public diplomacy”, described it as a government effort to win the hearts and minds of foreign publics.¹¹ Sandy Vogelgesang¹² defines it as a form of government communication with and dissemination of propaganda to influence the opinion of foreign publics, while Rachael Maxwell says it is “the work of governments to initiate dialogue with foreign publics in order to gain favourable opinion. If successful, public diplomacy aims to influence the policy of the target nation to the advantage of the nation installing the public diplomacy program.”¹³ Hans Tuch defines it as “government’s process of communicating with foreign publics in an attempt to bring about understanding for its nation’s ideas and ideals, its institutions and culture, as well as its national goals and current policies.”¹⁴

Public diplomacy is different from traditional or classic diplomacy because the former involves government directly communicating with the members of the public in foreign countries, whereas the later is usually confined to government to government communications done through the traditional diplomatic channels.¹⁵ Although there is this distinction between public and traditional diplomacy, it is important to note that the two are

¹¹ See an essay written by Nicholas J. Cull. "Public Diplomacy Before Gullion: The Evolution of a Phrase", 2006 available on <https://uscpublicdiplomacy.org/blog/public-diplomacy-gullion-evolution-phrase> . Also see Sandy Vogelgesang. ‘Perspectives on Public Diplomacy: Vietnam to Iraq’ *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* vol 32:3 (2008) p. 102.

¹² Ibid at 102. Also see Rachael Maxwell “The place of arts and culture in Canadian foreign policy.” *Canadian Conference of the Arts* (2007) p. 4.

¹³ Rachael Maxwell “The place of arts and culture in Canadian foreign policy.” *Canadian Conference of the Arts* (2007) p. 4.

¹⁴ See Evan Potter. ‘Canada and the new public diplomacy’ *International Journal Winter 2002-2003* p. 3.

¹⁵ Ibid p. 47.

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complementary. One scholar¹⁶ branded public diplomacy as the “step child of diplomats”. By speaking directly to the foreign public, public diplomacy has the capability to create or sway the opinion of the foreign public towards embracing the policies of the government that is dispensing public diplomacy. Thus, in a way, public diplomacy can help to support the efforts of the traditional diplomats. But why can't traditional diplomats and consular officers be left to do their jobs alone without the help of public diplomacy?

The rise of independent media¹⁷ as well as social media means that governments no longer enjoy the monopoly to disseminate information about their policies to the foreign publics. There is a lot of information disseminated through these independent channels and the information has potential to either ruin or create a good public image for a country and its foreign policy. Therefore, governments can no longer confine themselves to communication through the traditional diplomatic channels. They have to constantly and directly address the members of the public in foreign countries in order to protect their image. The image that a country carries in the eyes of foreign publics is crucial for the achievement of its interests abroad. As Evan Potter argues:

Image counts for a lot in contemporary world politics. Whether a country needs to build international coalitions against terrorism, co-operate to protect the environment, attract foreign investment, or bring in foreign students, influencing foreign public opinion is critical to national success because, in the absence of substantial military or economic weight, most countries are the image or 'words' they project abroad. Their room to manoeuvre is affected by their image, or soft power, so that all points of

¹⁶ Ibid p. 1.

¹⁷ Such as Al Jazeera, Cable News Network etc

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contact – whether promoting policies or exporting – will feed off this general image in both positive and negative ways...¹⁸

In addition to creating and maintaining a positive image abroad, public diplomacy activities may be formulated in direct support of a particular foreign policy objective.¹⁹ The new political administration in Zimbabwe has announced that its foreign policy is geared towards attracting foreign direct investment in order to achieve economic recovery.²⁰ Whilst the ambassadors and consular officers will be charged with the role of implementing this policy in their interaction with foreign governments, there will be need for this to be complemented by public diplomacy. The efforts by the ambassadors and consular officers ought to be supported by dissemination of information targeted at winning the hearts and minds of foreign publics so that they can appreciate that it is a good decision to invest their capital in Zimbabwe.

This is where the role of culture and arts comes in. Public diplomacy requires massive content generation and dissemination. The information disseminated must be capable of winning the hearts and minds of the targeted foreign publics. As noted above, culture has the potential to carve a positive image of a people, if it is marketed well. The Zimbabwean culture is so rich and diverse that it can be relied on as an infinite source of information that can be packaged and communicated to foreign publics in order to project Zimbabwe as open to business and as a safe destination for foreign investment. The creative industry in Zimbabwe is capable of producing materials which project the Zimbabwean cultural values and belief system to the foreign publics in a way that attracts investors to the country. The use

¹⁸ Evan Potter. 'Canada and the new public diplomacy' *International Journal Winter 2002-2003* p. 43. A similar view has been expressed by Mark Leonard in "Public Diplomacy" (London: Foreign Policy Centre 2002); and in "Diplomacy by other means" (Foreign Policy, September/October 2002) p. 48-56

¹⁹ Evan Potter. 'Canada and the new public diplomacy' *International Journal Winter 2002-2003* p. 47.

²⁰ See President Mnangagwa's inauguration speech available at <http://www.zanupf.org.zw/president-mnangagwa-inauguration-speech/?print=pdf>

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of the creative industry as a tool for public diplomacy (to procure international support for foreign policies) is a strategy that has been successfully applied by other countries. In the following paragraphs, this paper will briefly describe how cultural diplomacy has been applied as part of public diplomacy by the United States of America, France and Britain.

4. The United States of America

Public diplomacy played a key role to influence how the United States was viewed by the world during and after the cold war. To make its public diplomacy more effective, the United States created the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) in 1950 and the United States Information Agency (USIA) in 1953. The two were part of the American public diplomacy to display art, literature and music that was directly opposed to Soviet dictates about what art should be.²¹ Through these two, art was used to showcase the freedom of American life which came with capitalism.²² Thus art was used to project and market the American capitalist lifestyle in order to dissuade countries from embracing communism.

According to the American Ambassador Cynthia P. Schneider, artists were “the most fitting ambassadors to send abroad to promote freedom, as they embodied the ideal of democratic societies, that being, freedom of speech.”²³ Scholar Rajan Menon echoes a similar sentiment by arguing that “...knowledge about American culture, whether acquired by participating in our exchange programs, attending our cultural presentations, or simply listening to the Voice of America, contributed to the death of communism.”²⁴

²¹ Rachael Maxwell “The place of arts and culture in Canadian foreign policy.” *Canadian Conference of the Arts* (2007) p. 8.

²² Ibid

²³ Quoted in Rachel Maxwell (Ibid) p. 8.

²⁴ See Helena Finn ‘The Case for Cultural Diplomacy: Engaging Foreign Audiences.’ *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (2003) p. 15.

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The United States funded USIA to the tune of over \$1 billion per year.²⁵ One of the strategic divisions under the USIA was the Office of Research. Its mandate was to carry out foreign opinion research, media reaction reporting, and special evaluations and analyses.²⁶ USIA had a fully-fledged media services department whose major programmes included: radio broadcasting into foreign countries;²⁷ directing and coordinating motion picture and television programming in support of the USIA missions in foreign countries;²⁸ producing and providing USIA posts in foreign countries with editorial materials, magazines, pamphlets, reprints from U.S publications, commissioned articles by American experts, photographs, cartoons, and picture stories;²⁹ collaborating with non-governmental agencies and other private corporate agencies whose work had capacity to create a favourable foreign opinion towards the American foreign policy objectives.³⁰ Later on, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs³¹ was introduced to organise and facilitate cultural and exchange activities with foreign publics targeted at influencing foreign public opinions towards capitalism and American society. Prominent United States musicians and artists were sent to tour the Soviet Union and other parts of the world where the US government needed to influence public opinion towards capitalism.³² Currently, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs funds programmes such as “the American Film Showcase”, which brings prominent contemporary American documentaries, independent fiction films to audiences

²⁵ See Helena Finn above p. 17.

²⁶ See USIA archives available at <https://www.archives.gov/research/foreign-policy/related-records/rg-306>

²⁷ Ibid. This was done through the Voice of America

²⁸ Ibid. This was done through the Motion Picture and Television Service (IMV) program

²⁹ Ibid. This was done through the Press and Publications Service (IPS) program

³⁰ Ibid. This was done through the Office of Private Cooperation (IOC)

³¹ During 1978-1999

³² It is reported that musicians who include Louis Armstrong were sent on government funded tours throughout the Soviet Union and to countries such as Iran, Iraq, Nigeria and Egypt. Rachael Maxwell “The place of arts and culture in Canadian foreign policy.” *Canadian Conference of the Arts* (2007) p. 8.

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around the world.³³ The objective is to provide a view of American society and culture as seen by “independent” filmmakers.³⁴

In collaboration with a group of intellectuals, the United States also established the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) to be a cog in its public diplomacy machinery against the rise and spread of communism. The CCF’s aim was to establish and consolidate an anti-totalitarian and anti-communism intellectual community around the globe.³⁵ This was to be achieved through a series of programmes that include international conferences, where prominent speakers and artists denounced communism and Stalinism. CCF’s programmes also included cultural festivals where “the goodness” of American liberalism was showcased, while communism was denounced. The CCF also facilitated the publication of periodicals, which included *Encounter*, *Preuves*, *Der Monat* and *Minerva*.³⁶ By the 1960s, the CCF had developed into an important centre for prominent American and Western European intellectuals with an anti-communist stand.³⁷

In addition to these, the United States also established “American Centres” in strategic countries such as Turkey (Ankara) and Yugoslavia (Belgrade), which (amongst other purposes) functioned as sources of information about American culture and art. Most of them

³³ See <https://zw.usembassy.gov/education-culture/cultural-exchanges/>

³⁴ Ibid

³⁵ See Partrick Iber “The Spy Who Funded Me: Revisiting the Congress for Cultural Freedom (CCF) and its Connections to the CIA” *Global Research* (2017), available on <https://www.globalresearch.ca/the-spy-who-funded-me-revisiting-the-congress-for-cultural-freedom-ccf-and-its-connections-to-the-cia/5597981>

³⁶ See Elena Aronova. ‘The Congress for Cultural Freedom, Minerva, and the Quest for Instituting Science Studies in the Age of Cold War’ *Springer Science+Business Media* (2012) at 308. Also see Helena Finn ‘The Case for Cultural Diplomacy: Engaging Foreign Audiences.’ *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (2003) p. 16.

³⁷ See Elena Aronova (Ibid)

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had auditoriums and exhibition spaces, lending themselves to an extraordinary variety of cultural presentations.³⁸ According to Helena Finn:

The value these American Centres had in instilling positive perceptions of the United States abroad cannot be exaggerated. An extension of the American diplomatic presence in virtually every corner of the globe, these institutions not only functioned as libraries (although that alone would have justified their existence), but provided a venue for engagement between visiting American experts and local audiences on everything from foreign policy to family planning.³⁹

Similar centres exist in Zimbabwe today, with the US Public Affairs Section in Harare and “American Space” in Bulawayo, Mutare and Gweru to mention but three. The Public Affairs Section “manages the American Embassy’s media, cultural and educational programs”.⁴⁰ It describes its mission as “to tell America’s story to the world by sharing information, experiences and ideas.”⁴¹ The Public Affairs Section has a cultural affairs office, which offers different cultural and arts programmes “designed to enhance mutual understanding among the people of Zimbabwe and the United States of America”⁴². One of those programmes is the Ambassador’s Fund for Cultural Preservation, which “supports the preservation of cultural sites, cultural objects, and forms of traditional cultural expression in more than 100 developing countries around the world.”⁴³ The type of projects supported under this fund include “the restoration of ancient and historic buildings, assessment and conservation of rare manuscripts and museum collections, preservation and protection of important archaeological

³⁸ Helena Finn ‘The Case for Cultural Diplomacy: Engaging Foreign Audiences.’ *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 82, No. 6 (2003) p. 17.

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ See <https://zw.usembassy.gov/embassy/harare/sections-offices/public-affairs/>

⁴¹ Ibid

⁴² Ibid

⁴³ See <https://zw.usembassy.gov/education-culture/cultural-exchanges/>

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sites, and the documentation of vanishing traditional craft techniques and indigenous languages”. The idea behind this programme is to project a positive image of a United States of America that respects and helps preserve the cultures of other people.⁴⁴ Through this programme, the United States hopes to counter the negative narrative that the US is an over-dominating superpower that imposes its own culture on other people.

5. France

France is another example of a western power that has developed and is implementing a robust public diplomacy programme to canvass international public support for her foreign policy. Her public diplomacy strategy is anchored on mass international broadcasting and international cultural exchange and cooperation. The international broadcasting thrust was initially pursued through Radio France Internationale (which receives half of its budget from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and broadcasts globally in 20 languages).⁴⁵ In 2008, the French Government bought France 24 to support its international broadcasting agenda. The TV channel broadcasts in French, English, Arabic, Spanish and Hindi reaching to a wide foreign public. Through its international broadcasting agencies, the French government is able to disseminate information that supports a positive image of France as well as canvassing public support for its foreign policy objectives and relations.

The international cultural and exchange element of the French public diplomacy is characterised by the setting up of *French Institute* centres around the world. Their purpose is to promote French culture abroad through artistic exchanges that include performing arts, visual arts, architecture and film.⁴⁶ The French Government also funds a similar institute

⁴⁴ See <https://zw.usembassy.gov/education-culture/cultural-exchanges/>

⁴⁵ Rachael Maxwell “The place of arts and culture in Canadian foreign policy.” *Canadian Conference of the Arts* (2007) p. 13.

⁴⁶ See <http://www.institutfrancais.com/fr/organigramme-0>

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called *Alliance Francaise*, which has since become the world's largest organisation teaching French and promoting French culture.⁴⁷ The organisation has 800 centres in 134 countries, serving an average of 500 000 people every year.⁴⁸ Through these centres, France strives to win the hearts and minds of foreign publics, endearing them to French culture and indirectly creating support for French foreign policy objectives.

6. Britain

Britain is another western power with a vibrant public diplomacy strategy. Her public diplomacy programme is implemented through a partnership between the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), the British Council and BBC World Service.⁴⁹ With centres dotted around the world, the British Council is the touchstone of British public policy. Reporting to the FCO, the British Council's mandate is to promote UK culture and education overseas.⁵⁰ The ultimate objective being to use culture as soft power to strengthen the UK's reputation and public image abroad. To achieve this objective, one of the British Council's strategies is to promote art as a tool for public diplomacy. According to the British Council:

Arts is a cornerstone of the British Council's mission to create a friendly knowledge and understanding between the people of the UK and the wider world. We find new ways of connecting with and understanding each other through the arts, to develop stronger creative sectors around the world that are better connected with the UK.⁵¹

⁴⁷ See <http://www.fondation-alliancefr.org/>

⁴⁸ Ibid

⁴⁹ See James Pamment. "British Public Diplomacy and Soft Power Diplomatic Influence and the Digital Revolution" (2016)

⁵⁰ See https://www.britishcouncil.org/?_ga=2.208463189.672765709.1515766716-1449172814.1515766716

⁵¹ See British Council website, available on <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts>

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The British Council organises festivals to promote art which showcases “a modern, vibrant and creative image of the UK.”⁵² Through these international art festivals, they “introduce millions of people around the world to the best of UK culture and innovation.”⁵³ They also create opportunities for foreign artists and organisations to work internationally and in the UK.

Within the Commonwealth, the United Kingdom also advances its public diplomacy strategy through the use of arts and culture. Accredited to the Commonwealth is the Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies (ACLALS) and the Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM). Through ACLALS, the Commonwealth is able “to promote and coordinate Commonwealth Literature Studies, organize seminars and workshops, arrange lectures by writers and scholars, publish a newsletter about activities in the field of Commonwealth Literature and hold one conference triennially.”⁵⁴ Through the Commonwealth Association of Museums, the Commonwealth promotes museums and their societies in the Commonwealth family of nations and globally.⁵⁵ Thus through ACLALS and CAM, the Commonwealth seeks to promote direct interaction between the publics and such interaction is through cultural events organised by the above mentioned institutions. Such interaction helps to keep relations warm between the publics and ultimately between the member states/governments themselves. Warm relations between member states reinforces and guarantees the existence and even the growth/expansion of the Commonwealth – which

⁵² See <https://www.britishcouncil.org/arts/seasons>

⁵³ Ibid

⁵⁴ See <http://thecommonwealth.org/organisation/association-commonwealth-literature-and-language-studies-aclals>

⁵⁵ <http://thecommonwealth.org/organisation/commonwealth-association-museums>

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is what the United Kingdom is primarily concerned about, especially in the post Brexit⁵⁶ dispensation.

It is also interesting to note that the United Kingdom continued to use cultural diplomacy through the Commonwealth to pursue its policy towards Zimbabwe even after Zimbabwe withdrew from the Commonwealth. For instance, the United Kingdom through the Culture Cluster of the Commonwealth Organisations Committee on Zimbabwe (COCZ), hosted a number of cultural events to “showcase the Zimbabwean culture.” Zimbabwean artists were hosted in the United Kingdom to showcase their work and talent.⁵⁷ Although these events did a lot to promote Zimbabwean culture in the United Kingdom, they were also a vehicle through which the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth would remain engaged on the Zimbabwean crisis and pursue their policy of exposing human rights violations in Zimbabwe, without being seen as meddling in the affairs of a sovereign state. For instance, as part of the Culture without Borders programme in 2013, artists were hosted to provide solidarity with victims of torture in Zimbabwe.⁵⁸ The cluster also organises exchange visits by artists from Commonwealth countries – again a way of connecting the publics through culture and arts within the Commonwealth.

7. Policy recommendations for Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Zimbabwe has a Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, as indicated earlier. The establishment of this Ministry signifies a shift from the previous administration where the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was solely responsible for international political relations and cooperation. Under the new administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is now

⁵⁶ Britain’s exit from the European Union

⁵⁷ For example, see “Storytelling with Chenjerai Hove and the Zimbabwe Association gardening group”, which was held in the Spitalfields City Farm Yurt on 25 June 2013, as part of the Culture Without Borders program.

⁵⁸ See <https://www.thesouthafrican.com/culture-without-borders-a-series-of-zimbabwean-cultural-events/>

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responsible for promoting international trade, in addition to managing foreign political relations. This paper suggests that the Ministry must incorporate the use of arts as part of cultural diplomacy aimed at projecting and selling Zimbabwe as a profitable and safe investment destination for foreign capital. In developing this strategy, Zimbabwe does not need to reinvent the wheel but adopt and adapt some of the strategies employed by other countries, as discussed in the preceding paragraphs. The following are then suggested as broad policy measures or mechanisms which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade ought to consider:

i. Increased development and preservation of culture

Zimbabwe's ability to integrate culture in its foreign policy strategy will very much depend on the richness and diversity of its culture. There is no doubt that Zimbabwean culture is diverse. However, there is concern regarding whether the government is doing enough to preserve and develop arts and culture locally. As Farai Mpfunya said during the interviews:

The integration of arts and culture in Zimbabwe's foreign affairs strategy should be anchored by a robust domestic policy which values and develops arts, culture and heritage. Currently, there seems to be little understanding of what arts, culture and heritage is. The three are misunderstood and conflated by government officials. Art is conflated with culture as people think that art is culture, while at times culture is conflated with heritage. Whilst these three concepts are interrelated, they are different. Culture is the negotiated process between generations, whereupon values and norms are assessed in terms of how they aid the development of the society. In the process, certain values are discarded while others are retained, and new ones are introduced, as generations seek to aid their own development. Heritage is what a generation inherits from the past generations. Heritage is therefore created by the society's forbearers and

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it exists in various forms. For instance, Great Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwean bird, mbira, national flag, literature etc. It is important [for government] to understand properly these terms/concepts in order to then develop domestic policies which values, preserves and develops these.

The creative industry is often misunderstood [by government] as the entertainment sector. Whilst it is true that the creative industry plays an entertainment role, it should be noted that it serves more than one purpose. It has a cultural design and heritage design in the sense that it reflects and gives identity to the culture and heritage of a society. Arts is also business. For instance, the British have earned billions out of Shakespeare, whose literature is an embodiment/reflection of British language and culture. The Americans have made a lot of money out of pop music which is sold internationally, itself a reflection of American lifestyle. How much is Zimbabwe earning from its heritage such as mbira and literature?

It is thus critical as a starting point that the government of Zimbabwe should develop a domestic policy which seeks to preserve but also to develop arts and culture. This means a shift of government's perception/attitude towards arts and culture as argued aptly by Farai Mpfunya above. This paper cannot provide ideas on this subject as it is outside of the scope of the study. However, it is critical for government to engage the arts and culture sector to obtain ideas on this subject.

ii. Enhanced collaboration between Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the creative industry

This paper acknowledges that there are existing channels for collaboration with artists. This has largely been done through the ministry responsible for cultural affairs. However, if culture is to be embedded in the foreign affairs strategy and be utilised as a resource for

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public diplomacy, there must be enhanced direct collaboration between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the creative industry. Therefore, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade should establish partnerships with the creative industry in Zimbabwe. With the help of such creative civil society organisations as Nhimbe Trust, the Ministry can reach out to the various stakeholders in the creative industry. The purpose for establishing these partnerships is to develop a common understanding on the vision and goals of Zimbabwe's public diplomacy approach, and the role which the creative industry will play.

iii. International broadcasting

The government should consider ways of establishing mechanisms for international broadcasting. Admittedly, this may be an expensive venture for Zimbabwe's economy. To navigate around that challenge, the Government should consider partnering with private players or entering into partnerships with other broadcasters to ensure that there is international broadcasting, which showcases Zimbabwean culture to the world, as a means for nation branding. The possibilities offered by social media should also be explored for this purpose.

iv. Establish a network of culture centres alongside foreign embassies and consular offices

The government should consider establishing a department whose mandate would be to lead the process of strategizing around how culture and arts can be coordinated and deployed as part of the public diplomacy strategy. Over time, the cultural affairs department should establish centres across the globe, beginning with those geographical locations that are of strategic interest to Zimbabwe's foreign policy. The purpose of these culture centres would

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be to promote Zimbabwean culture to the world and to attract foreign artists to Zimbabwe. These culture centres should be located within and function in collaboration with Zimbabwe's foreign embassies and consular offices. Some of the activities which these centres can implement in order to strengthen Zimbabwe's foreign reputation include: organising cultural and business expos in their host countries; disseminating information on Zimbabwean culture; facilitating education and cultural exchange programmes between the people in their host countries and Zimbabwe. The culture centres can also organise skills development training seminars/workshops where they bring artists and art entrepreneurs from Zimbabwe to share skills with artists in the host foreign country.

v. International festivals, business and cultural expos

In collaboration with the Zimbabwe creative industry, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Trade should consider playing a more active role in organising and promoting the holding of a series of international festivals where Zimbabwean arts and culture are showcased to introduce the world to Zimbabwean culture. Currently, international festivals of this nature (for example the Harare International Festival of Arts) are conducted by the private sector with little direct involvement of government. In addition to international festivals held in Zimbabwe, the Ministry should consider supporting artists to participate in similar festivals that are held in foreign countries where Zimbabwe has strategic interests.⁵⁹ Furthermore, the Ministry should consider supporting artists to embark on world tours to promote "brand Zimbabwe", particularly in countries where Zimbabwe has strategic interests.

⁵⁹ For instance countries such as Australia, Egypt, India, the USA, Britain, German and Sweden are partners for the Harare International Festival of Arts. See HIFA website on <http://www.hifa.co.zw/partners>

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8. Conclusion

Public diplomacy is a necessity for the Government of Zimbabwe especially in this “new era” where the nation is trying to re-engage with the international business community of investors. So much has to be done locally to improve the ease of doing business in order to make sure that foreign investors develop confidence in Zimbabwe as an investment destination. However, a lot has also to be done to market Zimbabwe internationally, in order to appeal directly to the foreign publics. Zimbabwe has to carve a certain image abroad, which is attractive to investors. This can be achieved through developing and executing a public diplomacy strategy which integrates arts and culture. This is important especially because Zimbabwe is rich in cultural diversity which should be utilised as a resource for a robust public diplomacy offensive.