

A Symbol of Healing, Heritage and Hope

*Victor Mooney's Mission to Repatriate
Congo Free State Artwork*

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, October 9, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Victor Mooney, the Goree Challenge rower who has retraced one of the harrowing routes of the transatlantic slave trade (The Middle Passage) on a fourth try, is set to embark on an inaugural visit to Belgium this month with a decisive goal: to repatriate a significant artwork depicting the brutal era of the Congo Free State.



Royal Museum for Central Africa - Brussels, Belgium

This initiative is intended to serve as a powerful symbol of healing, heritage, and hope for the Central African nations of the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, and Burundi, and their former colonial powers. The ownership of the artwork irrevocably outlined as the property of these African nations.

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This act of cultural return aligns directly with Mooney's ambitious proposal presented during the Eightieth Session of the United Nations General Assembly last month: the establishment of The Central African Museum of Enslaved Africans (TCAMOE) in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea.

Modeled as a vital repository for remembrance, education, and reconciliation, TCAMOE seeks to illuminate the often-

overlooked history of enslaved Africans' arduous trek through the deep forests to the Gulf of Guinea.

Mooney's unique history of cultural and humanitarian diplomacy began profoundly in 1994 during the groundbreaking NBA South Africa Tour, where he forged a bond with the Democratic Republic of Congo born, basketball icon and renowned humanitarian, Mr. Dikembe Mutombo. This pivotal meeting catalyzed a significant cultural bridge: with the subsequent blessing of

former NBA Commissioner Mr. David Stern, Mooney founded the New York Knicks Fan Club Soweto, even arranging for its newly named President to meet legendary Knick, Mr. Patrick Ewing, who joined the historic traveling delegation.

This foundational engagement established a decades-long commitment to grassroots international relations, culminating most recently in a high-profile diplomatic moment at the 2024 Korea–Africa Summit, where Mooney presented a symbolic stone to the Republic of Korea. The formal significance of this gesture was highlighted during the unveiling ceremony in New York, performed by H.E. Mr. Zéphyrin Maniratanga, the Permanent Representative of the [Republic of Burundi](#) to the United Nations and then-Chair of the Africa Group for the month of May.

Mooney's endeavors, which bridge spiritual faith with historical activism—have garnered high-level ecclesiastical support. After cycling around Poland and coordinating two solemn memorials at [Auschwitz-Birkenau and Majdanek](#), both former German Nazi concentration and extermination camps, Pope Leo XIV received Mr. Mooney and strongly affirmed his mission with the echoing word: "Unity" during the Jubilee of Sports General Audience - Pilgrims of Hope at St. Peter's Basilica.

The repatriated artwork will first be unveiled at [The Central Africa International Tourism Fair](#) (FITAC-GE) in Equatorial Guinea which runs from October 27 through November 2, with the Lufthansa Group serving as the official airline. Following its exhibition, the piece will be formally handed over to the government for safe keeping, marking a definitive step in restoring cultural artifacts and historical narrative to the region.

Central Africa International Tourism Fair, a vital platform designed to showcase the immense natural beauty, rich cultural heritage, and burgeoning hospitality sector of the region. This fair aims to attract international investors, travel operators, and tourists, fostering economic growth, promoting sustainable tourism, and ultimately, building a stronger regional identity through shared cultural experiences and collaborative development.

Concurrently, Mr. Mooney's critical mission highlights another facet of international cooperation and cultural assertion. He will be continuing his journey to Germany for the second leg of retrieving invaluable pieces of artwork, a testament to the global movement for the restitution of cultural patrimony. These efforts are not merely about historical archives; they are about repatriating national treasures that hold deep cultural and historical significance for their countries of origin.

Upon completion of this crucial phase in Germany, Mr. Mooney will then head to Equatorial Guinea. These initiatives, while distinct in their immediate focus, collectively paint a picture of a Central Africa actively shaping its future—economically through tourism, and culturally through the restoration of its past.

Tags: #HumboldtForum #AfricaMuseum #TCAMOEa #healing #heritage #hope #unity
#Lufthansa #CentralAfrica #Equatorial Guinea #Germany #Belgium #UNESCO

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