

# GOTHAM GOVERNMENT RELATIONS LAUNCHES THE FIRST 'AFRICA PRACTICE'

NEW YORK CITY, NY, UNITED STATES, March 30, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Former Sierra Leone Ambassador Sidique Wai to Lead Strategic Initiative Connecting African Governments, Diaspora Leaders, and U.S. Institutions at Critical Inflection Point for U.S.-Africa Relations

[Gotham Government Relations](#), a leading New York-based government affairs and strategic advocacy firm, today announced the launch of [the Gotham Africa Practice](#), a comprehensive platform designed to serve African governments, diaspora communities, and institutional stakeholders seeking effective engagement with Washington, New York, and U.S. policy institutions. The [Gotham Africa Practice](#) is the first Africa focused initiative by any major lobbying and government relations firm to be established and headed by a seasoned and distinguished African diplomat in the United States.



Gotham Government Relations-The Africa Practice -David Schwartz, Ambassador Sidique Wai, Arthur Aidala, Shai Franklin

The practice will be led by Ambassador Sidique Abou-Bakarr Wai, the distinguished former Ambassador of Sierra Leone to the United States and one of the most influential African diplomatic voices in Washington over the past decade. Ambassador Wai brings more than 35 years of leadership in international relations, public policy, and strategic partnerships to this role.

"Africa represents a continent of 1.5 billion people with the youngest population in the world and rapidly expanding demand across critical sectors, including minerals, agriculture, energy, infrastructure, and transportation," said Ambassador Wai. "Yet many African governments and institutions lack the institutional access, narrative alignment, and discreet facilitation required to

operate effectively in the U.S. policy and business environment. The Gotham Africa Practice is designed to close that gap."

The launch comes at a pivotal moment for U.S.-Africa relations. With the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) extended to 2026 and new tariff structures fundamentally reshaping trade dynamics, African nations face unprecedented challenges, and opportunities, in their engagement with Washington. The United States remains 100 percent import-dependent on twelve critical minerals, many of which are abundant across the African continent, while over \$1 billion in U.S. Development Finance Corporation investments are flowing into African infrastructure and mineral supply chain projects.

Ambassador Wai served as Sierra Leone's Ambassador to the United States from 2018 to 2025, with concurrent accreditation to Canada and seven other nations across North and South America. During his tenure, he was unanimously elected by all 16 West African ambassadors in Washington to lead the ECOWAS collective secretariat, positioning the region as a unified diplomatic community for U.S. investment. He successfully laid the groundwork for Sierra Leone's \$480 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact for energy infrastructure, one of the largest U.S. development commitments on the continent.

Prior to his ambassadorship, Wai served as President of the United African Congress, the pan-African umbrella organization representing 3.5 million continental Africans in the United States, and as Senior Adviser to the New York City Police Commissioner, where he pioneered the police body camera program and established the department's first Muslim Advisory Council.

The Gotham Africa Practice will offer a full spectrum of government relations and strategic advisory services across four core pillars: Market Entry & Expansion, creating credible market access and business development opportunities in selected African markets; Diaspora & Political Capital, working with credible African diaspora professionals and policy influencers who maintain strong ties to their countries of origin; Institutional Partnerships, engaging organizations and institutions that can advance shared development, governance, and investment goals; and Strategic Advisory, translating diplomatic credibility, political access, and market intelligence into measurable outcomes for African governments and Africa-focused stakeholders.

"Ambassador Wai's combination of high-level diplomatic experience, deep relationships across the African continent and diaspora, and proven track record navigating Washington makes him uniquely qualified to lead this initiative," said David Schwartz, President of Gotham Government Relations. "At this critical inflection point for U.S.-Africa relations, we are positioned to translate diplomatic credibility, political access, and market intelligence into tangible results for our clients."

Gotham Government Relations will host a Diaspora Engagement Summit in New York on Friday, June 26, 2026, bringing together diaspora leaders from across the United States and Africa to

meet the Gotham Africa Practice team and explore partnership opportunities.

## ABOUT GOTHAM GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

Gotham Government Relations, headquartered in New York City, offers clients a comprehensive suite of advocacy services combining skilled attorneys, communications experts, government relations professionals, and media specialists. The firm serves Fortune 500 companies, trade associations, international governments, and emerging enterprises across sectors including energy, healthcare, financial services, real estate, and international affairs. Gotham is FARA-registered for international client representation and maintains offices in New York and Washington, D.C.

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