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Your Excellencies, distinguished leaders, honored guests, ladies and gentlemen,

Our next Laureate reminds us that the power of the diaspora is not measured only by what we send home—but by **what becomes possible when we connect our knowledge, our relationships, our resources, and our dreams.**

The story of **Almaz Negash** began with a question.

Years ago, while participating in international meetings about Africa, Almaz noticed something troubling: **Africa was often being discussed, but Africans themselves were too often missing from the table.** She began asking: What if the extraordinary talent of Africans in the diaspora could be connected—not simply as individuals giving back, but as a community capable of investing, innovating, collaborating, and shaping Africa's future? ([African Diaspora Network](#))

That question became a movement.

In 2010, Almaz founded the **African Diaspora Network**, which has grown from a grassroots idea in Silicon Valley into a global platform connecting diaspora leaders, entrepreneurs, investors, scientists, philanthropists, and partners across the world. Its programs have engaged thousands of people from more than 100 countries and supported African entrepreneurs and innovators. ([African Diaspora Network](#))

At the heart of her vision is a powerful idea: **the diaspora can go beyond remittances.** We can bring not only financial resources, but knowledge, mentorship, investment, networks, innovation, and human capital—and we can bring them together for transformational impact. Today, that vision continues through initiatives including the African Diaspora Investment Symposium and the African Diaspora Innovation Fund. ([African Development Bank](#))

Her leadership has also been recognized nationally and globally. Almaz was selected as one of the inaugural members of the **U.S. President's Advisory Council on African Diaspora Engagement**, helping bring the voice and potential of the African diaspora into conversations about stronger connections between the United States and Africa. ([State Department](#))

This is what it means to be a Global Diaspora Laureate: to see the diaspora not simply as people who left home, but as bridges connecting worlds—and as catalysts for what can come next.

Today, we honor a visionary, a connector, an institution-builder, and a woman who has spent years reminding us of something fundamental: **we can accomplish far more together than any of us can accomplish alone.**

Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, please join us in celebrating and welcoming to the podium an Inaugural Global Diaspora Laureate—Almaz Negash, Founder and CEO of the African Diaspora Network. ([African Diaspora Network](#))



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