

Letter to the Youth of Congo

A call to the Congolese youth: building a new Congo through training, competence and discipline.

JOSHUA NKOMBE · FEBRUARY 2026

I have a vision of a new Congo, where its youth is on the move. Not ideal, but alive. Not celebrated, but in the process of being formed. A creative, brilliant, inventive youth that transforms constraint into resource, lack into invention, ruins into workplaces, dust into future.

I see an agile, quick, awakened youth that does not wait to be authorized to learn, that trains itself without school when school is lacking, that creates without capital when means are absent, that moves forward despite the absence of frameworks.

Your reality is this, and it is of this that I speak. For I come from a generation shaped by the same lacks, the same fractures, the same institutional deficiencies. And yet, you continue to search, to repair, to understand, to try to build something in an environment that does not prepare you to succeed.

My words are addressed first to you, the conscious youth who have not given up, who work and reflect without witness. They are also addressed to those who have gone astray, to those who have slipped towards violence, wandering, futilities, not by nature, but by default of a credible alternative.

This is not a condemnation. It is an observation. A failing State produces derailed paths. When the State offers no path, the street invents one. When work is lacking, idleness becomes a school. When knowledge is pushed aside, noise becomes a value. When the scientist is ignored, the thug is applauded.

But no derailed path is a fate. There is always a point of return. There is always a moment when one can stop, look, and choose to take another direction. This truth also holds for those who have drifted away.

I speak to the Congolese youth scattered across the world, trained, exposed, sometimes cut off from the country. History has not forgotten you. It is calling you. Not out of nostalgia, but out of necessity. You have not left the history of our country. You carry a

part of it beyond its borders. Your exile is not a betrayal. But your absence cannot become a final abdication.

A country is not rebuilt only with those who stayed. It rises again when its scattered forces agree to reconnect with the common path. Listen closely to the sound of this bell, which does not ring loudly, but which is already ringing. As I listen to it, I hear a call. Not a mystical call, but a historic one.

At the beginning of our modern history, Congo carried a calling to greatness. Not a greatness of domination, but a greatness of dignity. Not a greatness of speeches, but a greatness measured by the ability to feed its children, to educate its minds, to make a respected voice heard in the world. This calling has not disappeared. It was blocked, diverted by failing structures, by cycles of instability, by systems unable to turn momentum into institutions. But what was blocked can be taken up again. Youth, it falls to your generation to take up this broken thread. But that requires understanding that anger is not a strategy, that indignation is not a policy, that revolt without method only produces more ruins. Cynicism is the last victory of failing systems. It turns clear-sighted people into spectators.

The future is not received. It is built. And it is built neither by enthusiasm alone, nor by revolt without discipline, but by patient training, acquired competence, and constancy in effort. Turning raw energy into know-how. Turning scattered talent into a trade. Turning frustration into the capacity to build.

I see you carrying the inner strength that comes before outward influence. I see you becoming sources of influence, beacons among the nations, bearers of landmarks when landmarks blur.

Recovery will come neither from a slogan nor from collective improvisation. It will come from a structuring framework, a method, a shared discipline. A country does not rise again because its youth is talented. It rises again when its youth becomes competent, organised and able to last.

Let everyone understand that they do not build for themselves alone, that their effort is part of a chain longer than their life, that their work, even unseen, can become a stone in the architecture of recovery. You are not building in a void. You are preparing what others will inhabit.

Understand this. Your hands will build the new Congo. Your minds will invent solutions. Your hearts will carry the vision.

Youth, rise up, knowing that you are sons and daughters of a great Nation, destined to serve not fear, but the future.

I see this blessed and intelligent youth taking shape, lifted in spirit and sanctified by high standards, carrying within it the power of transformation. A youth bearing renewal, the architects of tomorrow's Congo, the guardians of the national flame.

The framework exists. The method is set. The path is open.

A generation does not choose the era into which it is born. It only chooses whether it agrees to be worthy of it.

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English translation of the original French text. joshuankombe.com