

BY: Senator PARKER

COMMEMORATING the 54th Annual International African Arts Festival to be held from July 4-6, 2025, and recognizing its enduring contributions to cultural preservation and community enrichment

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to recognize and celebrate those longstanding cultural institutions and public events that affirm the rich heritage, artistic excellence, and social vitality of New York's diverse communities; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concern, and in full accord with its long-standing traditions, this Legislative Body is proud to commemorate the 54th Annual International African Arts Festival (IAAFestival), to be held from July 4-6, 2025, in Brooklyn, New York; and

WHEREAS, The IAAFestival began in 1971 as a modest cultural event and has since grown into one of the most anticipated celebrations of African culture in the nation, serving as a vibrant platform for traditional and contemporary expressions of African and diasporic identity; and

WHEREAS, The theme of the 2025 IAAFestival, "Dugagu - Resist," powerfully affirms the enduring spirit of cultural resistance and the necessity of preserving African heritage and autonomy in the face of systemic oppression, historical erasure, and ongoing injustice; and

WHEREAS, For over five decades, the IAAFestival has transformed public parks into outdoor cultural sanctuaries, offering dynamic programming in music, dance, spoken word, theater, visual arts, fashion, culinary traditions, and global marketplaces that uplift the legacy and future of African peoples; and

WHEREAS, The IAAFestival's stages have welcomed legendary performers including Fela Anikulapo-Kuti, The Mighty Sparrow, Blue Magic, Steel Pulse, KRS-One, Lauryn Hill, India.Arie, and countless others whose artistry has inspired generations and contributed to the global cultural landscape; and

WHEREAS, The IAAFestival's success is a reflection of the dedication of its board, consultants, seasonal staff, and volunteers who labor year after year to create a space for celebration, education, intergenerational dialogue, and economic empowerment; and

WHEREAS, Through its celebration of African resilience and resistance, the IAAFestival remains a vital force for cultural affirmation, racial justice, and communal pride within Brooklyn and beyond; and

WHEREAS, It is fitting that this Legislative Body recognize the 54th Annual International African Arts Festival for its commitment to the

arts, cultural sovereignty, and community enrichment; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 54th Annual International African Arts Festival and its 2025 theme, "Dugagu - Resist," and to commend all those who make this extraordinary celebration possible; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the organizers of the International African Arts Festival in recognition of its 54th anniversary and steadfast service to the community.