

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Alix Saba, Executive Director, asaed@africanstudies.org

African Studies Association Announces 2026 ASA Samora & Graça Machel Presidential Fellows

PISCATAWAY, New Jersey – The African Studies Association (ASA) is pleased to announce the selection of the 2026 cohort of the **ASA Samora & Graça Machel Presidential Fellows**. This prestigious fellowship supports exceptional scholarship and academic exchange opportunities for Africa-based scholars in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

The 2026 fellows— George Gyasi Gyesaw, Naeema Reis, and Mbasughun Ukpi —were selected through a competitive process recognizing scholarly excellence, originality of research, and contributions to African Studies.

George Gyasi Gyesaw is head archivist of the J. H. Kwabena Nketia Archives at the Institute of African Studies, University of Ghana. He specializes in digital humanities applications including Geographic Information Systems (GIS) to map historical landscapes. Dr. Gyesaw also serves as secretary for the Broadcast Section for the International Association of Sound and Audiovisual Archive (IASA). He was awarded a Transnational Access Fellowship at Università degli Studi di Palermo. **Dr. Gyesaw was nominated by Dr. Bright Gyamfi and will be hosted by Rutgers University.**

Naeema Ahmad Ramadan Reis is a physiotherapist, researcher, and academic in the Department of Physiotherapy at the University of the Witwatersrand. Her research sits at the intersection of rehabilitation, disability inclusion, medical anthropology and health systems strengthening, with a strong emphasis on equitable access to care in low- and middle-income contexts. Dr. Reis was twice awarded an ASA-CCNY fellowship. **Dr. Reis was nominated by Dr. Julia Cummiskey and will be hosted by Johns Hopkins University.**

Mbasughun Ukpi is a post-doctoral fellow at the Makerere Institute of Social Research. Her research lies at the intersection of decolonial theory and the politics of memory, investigating these through material culture, social archives, West African cinema, migration, and affective labor. Dr. Ukpi was a Wenner-Gren Post PhD research fellow, and was awarded ASA-CCNY, Mellon Foundation, and NORHED II Program fellowships. **Dr. Ukpi was nominated by Dr. Bayo Holsey and will be hosted by Emory University.**

Fellows will attend the ASA Annual Meeting, visit U.S. institutions, collaborate with Africanist scholars, and present their research. The program aims to foster intellectual exchange and amplify emerging voices in the field.

The Fund was made possible by a generous gift from Allen and Barbara Isaacman, noted scholars of Mozambique and long-time contributors to African Studies. Named in honor of Samora & Graça Machel, the fellowship celebrates the legacy of these influential Mozambican leaders and their lifelong commitment to liberation, education, and human rights.

About the ASA

Established in 1957, the African Studies Association is the flagship membership organization devoted to enhancing the exchange of information about Africa. The ASA is based in the United States and aims to cultivate a better understanding of the continent, by providing access to path-breaking research and facilitating interdisciplinary exchanges with African scholars and institutions. The ASA Annual Meeting fosters global networks by convening people with scholarly and other interests in Africa, and ultimately broadens professional opportunities in the field. The organization publishes two leading journals on Africa, *African Studies Review* and *History in Africa* and promotes an informed understanding of Africa to educational institutions, the public, businesses, media, and other interested communities.

Enhancing the Exchange of Information About Africa Since 1957