(Place and date) xxx, xxxx 2022

Dear members of the jury of the Princess of Asturias Award for Literature2022:

As xxxx, I want to express my support to the Princess of Asturias Award for Literature 2022’s nomination of Donato Ndongo-Bidygo Makina, proposed by Casa África, one of the most famous writers in Guinean and Spanish literature who has been living in Spain for more than four decades.

With this letter I want to show my support to the nomination of this writer, whose work and role in the promotion of Spanish and of equatorial-Guinean literature in Spanish has been rightfully worthy of this recognition. His professional career is not limited just to his talent as a literature creator, which rises no question, but also, he has been remarkable in journalism, communication and on the field of Spanish philology. As well as an academic, researcher and historian.

He was born in Niefang, Equatorial Guinea, in 1950. He was a writer and journalist and an assistant director of the Hispanic-Guinean Cultural Center in Malabo, deputy of the EFE Agency in Central Africa, and director of the African Studies Center in the University of Murcia.

His extensive work in spreading Africanism in Spain is unanimously recognized. In academic circles, he is considered the greatest advocate and most notable creator of written literature in Equatorial Guinea, and one of the most significant African writers.

Author of numerous articles on the Spanish Press and of many narrative, essay and poetry books, he has published, amongst others: *Historia y tragedia de Guinea Ecuatorial* (1977), *España en Guinea* (1998), and novels such as [*Las tinieblas de tu memoria negra*](http://www.diariosigloxxi.com/texto-diario/mostrar/72827/) (1987, translated into English by Swan Isle Press and into French by Gallimard), *Los poderes de la tempestad* (1997) and *El metro* (2007).

The novel *Las tinieblas de tu memoria negra*, with an autobiographic theme, even though the author considers it more like an autobiography of his generation, shows a child in the Muni River during the final years of Spanish colonization. The innocent vision of the child gives the author an ironic and scathing vision of the contradictions of the colonial regime.

From his first stage is the story *El sueño*, published in the 1970s, which addresses the African migration to the opulent Europe, because of the economic and social crisis in which African countries have found themselves after independence because of neo-colonialism. The story *La travesía*, written under the pseudonym Abeso Nguema Also, is also from this early period, and it tackles slavery, focusing on the narrative from capture to captivity in a slave ship’s hold waiting to be transferred to an unknown destination.

He is also the author of the essay *Historia y tragedia de Guinea Ecuatorial* (1977), the first book on the history of the country written by an Equatoguinean. This reference work has been revised, updated, and published in 2020 in Casa África's History and Politics Collection. It was published in collaboration with the publisher Bellaterra. He is also co-author of *España en Guinea* (1998).

His work in Hispanic philology is also really important. In that field he is considered a great expert on Equatoguinean literature in Spanish. His anthology *Antología de la literatura guineana* published in 1984 was a milestone in his field and is considered the foundational work of Guinean literature written in Spanish. Between 2005 and 2008, he was a visiting professor at the University of Missouri-Columbia (USA).

Author of *Poemas rabiosos*, deeply rooted in the suffering of his people, Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo has published a poem collection called *Olvidos* and stories titled *El sueño y otros relatos.*

Because of his significant creation work; because of his long, extensive and admirable career as a researcher; because of his constant spreading of Guinean literature in Spanish around the world; and because of his decisive contribution to the consolidation of the Spanish language in Equatorial Guinea and its expansion in Africa. Because of all of that we consider that our sponsored, Mr. Donato Ndongo-Bidyogo Makina, possesses qualified intellectual merits, outstanding professional and academic work and personal virtues that make him worthy of the Princess of Asturias Award for Literaturein the present call. The Award given to Mr. Ndongo-Bidyogo would also be a recognition to the efforts of all Equatorial Guinea’s writers, the only Hispanic country in sub-Saharan Africa.

It is a recognition that would come at a time when African authors' voices are receiving prestigious international literary awards, especially in the last year: The Camões Prize went to Mozambican writer Paulina Chiziane, the Nobel Prize for Literature went to Tanzanian author Abdulrazak Gurnah, the Neustadt Prize went to Senegalese Boubacar Boris Diop, his compatriot Mohamed Mbougar Sarr won the French Goncourt Prize and South African Damon Galgut, the Booker Prize. It would be fantastic to also recognize this Equatoguinean author and intellectual, who has contributed so much to the greater splendor of African literature written in Spanish, with the prestigious Princess of Asturias Award for Literature.

Yours sincerely,