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**For immediate release**

**Excitement in Zanzibar reaching fever pitch ahead of Sauti za Busara**

**Dar es Salaam.** The 2020 edition of the Sauti za Busara is only days away and once again set to deliver African rhythms under African skies with a rich line up that celebrates the musical diversity of the Continent.

As with past editions, the main setting is the historic Ngome Kongwe (Old Fort), Stone Town, where revellers can experience unrivalled music performances across three different stages.

Speaking at a news conference in Dar es Salaam, festival director Yusuf Mahmoud said there was every reason to celebrate, given the diversity and opportunities the event continues to offer. This year’s edition joins efforts to promote love for live music whilst at the same time denouncing sexual harassment, an issue that continues to plague the music industry, and society at large.

Throughout the festival which runs from February 13 to 16, Mahmoud said this thorny issue will be tackled under the theme ‘Raise Your Voice, Say No to Sexual Harassment’.

“The ‘Paza Sauti’ campaign aims to change attitudes, promote dialogue, and encourage respect for women by raising awareness about sexual harassment. Currently in Tanzania, we see only a handful of women making original and amazing music. This is why for the Sauti za Busara 2020 edition we selected artists like Siti & the Band (Zanzibar), Thaïs Diarra and Mamy Kanouté (from West Africa), Pigment (Reunion), Evon and Apio Moro (Uganda) and others from the East Africa region. These are passionate women who use music to powerfully communicate and express themselves. At the same time, they're all great entertainers,” he said.

He admitted one festival alone cannot completely change society; however, he said the festival joins hands with like-minded partners, to promote dialogue, change attitudes and encourage action against sexual harassment.

He said African music is not only about entertainment; it can also be about sharing important messages. “We recognise the vital role artists can play in society, as spokespeople, storytellers, visionaries, activists and healers. The festival supports freedom of expression for musicians and provides a perfect platform for local and international artists to reach wider audiences with spaces that amplify their contributions to the community”.

Speaking on the upcoming event, festival manager Journey Ramadhan said for close to two decades *Sauti za Busara* has been at the forefront in promoting Zanzibar and Tanzania across the world, attracting international promoters and offering opportunities for musicians to share their work with global audiences.

” Since 2004 when the festival first opened its doors, our focus has been to showcase music that is unique and with cultural identity. We have consistently demonstrated there is a market and demand for new, exciting and original sounds that are uniquely local,” he said.

The line-up features music for all tastes and most will be performing on the Busara stage for the first time in their career. This includes **Mehdi Qamoum** (Morocco), **Oumar Konaté** (Mali), **Blinky Bill** (Kenya), **Guiss Guiss Bou Bess** (Senegal), **The Mafik** (Tanzania), **Ambasa Mandela & the Last Tribe** (Kenya), **Wakazi** (Tanzania), **Mamy Kanouté** (Senegal), **Onipa** (Ghana/ UK), **Thaïs Diarra** (Senegal/ Switzerland), **Mehdi Laifaoui Trab Project** (Algeria), **Sibusiso 'Mash' Mashiloane** (South Africa), **Nadi Ikhwan Safaa** (Zanzibar), **Siti & the Band** (Zanzibar), **Seun Olota** (Nigeria), **Pigment** (Reunion), **Mannyok** (Mauritius), **FRA!** (Ghana), **TaraJazz** (Zanzibar), **Apio Moro** (Uganda), **Ison Mistari aka Zenji Boy** (Zanzibar), **Kaloubadya** (Reunion), **Lulu Abdalla** (Kenya), **Mapanya Band** (Zanzibar), **SinaUbi & Zawose Spirit Group** (Tanzania), **Evon** (Uganda), **Rahat Zamaan Taarab Orchestra** (Zanzibar), **Mopao Swahili Jazz** (Tanzania) and more.

*The 17th edition of Sauti za Busara festival, 13 - 16 February 2020 is powered by Norwegian Embassy, Africalia, Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, British Council, Zanzibar Media Corporation, Zanlink, Memories of Zanzibar, Embassy of France, Emerson Zanzibar, Chuchu FM Radio, Mozeti, Music In Africa and more.*

Tickets and info: [**www.busaramusic.org**](http://www.busaramusic.org)

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**Notes to the Editor**

**For hi-res photos, see dropbox folder at** [**www.busaramusic.org/downloads**](http://www.busaramusic.org/downloads)

Sauti za Busara (‘sounds of wisdom’) is an African music festival held every year in February in Zanzibar, Tanzania at the Old Fort (Ngome Kongwe), with fringe events taking place concurrently around Stone Town - including the Carnival Street Parade, *Swahili Encounters, Movers & Shakers* and *Busara Xtra*.

Sauti za Busara is one of the top music festivals in East Africa, with several hundreds of artists participating each year. It showcases a diverse and dynamic programme of exclusively African music - 100% live - and has over the years provided a valuable stage for local Swahili talent, from taarab legends like Bi Kidude and Culture Musical Club, to home-grown Tanzanian pop and hiphop.

More info: [**www.busaramusic.org**](http://www.busaramusic.org)