

PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release***Sauti za Busara 2026 Concludes with Powerful Displays of Unity, Music, and Resilience***

Sauti za Busara 2026 has officially come to a close, marking another extraordinary chapter in Zanzibar's celebration of African music and culture. This year's edition brought together artists and audiences from across the continent for four unforgettable days filled with rhythm, inspiration, and shared humanity.

Outstanding performance highlights included Atanda & Afrojazz Messengers (Nigeria), Ancestors (Togo), Lindigo (Reunion), Kara Sylla Ka (Senegal), Pilani Bubu (South Africa), Labdi (Kenya). Man Fongo (Tanzania), Sousou & Maher Cissoko (Sweden / Senegal), Magomamoto Group (Tanzania), Abdel Grooz (Algeria), Man Kifimbo (Tanzania), Hammer Q (Zanzibar) and many more ...

The spirit of unity shone brighter than ever. Thousands gathered in Stone Town to dance, connect, and celebrate Africa's powerful musical tapestry - demonstrating once again that music can heal, uplift, and bring people together even in difficult times.

A Heartfelt Note on the Absence of Salif Keita

One of the most anticipated moments of the festival was the scheduled appearance of Salif Keita, "the Golden Voice of Africa." His non-appearance was a profound disappointment felt by fans, artists, and the festival team alike. As shared in his video message, Salif is facing a serious health condition and was unable to travel. His wellbeing remains the top priority.

Festival organizers extend their sincere gratitude to the audience for their compassion and understanding during this unexpected and emotional moment.

We are deeply thankful to **Hawa Kasse Mady Diabaté**, **Madou Kouyaté**, and Salif Keita's "daughters" **Aicha Mariko** and **Fatoumata Soubeiga**, who stepped in with grace to honour Salif's voice and legacy. Together with the Salif Keita Electric Band, they delivered a once-in-a-lifetime performance that carried Salif's spirit across the grounds of Mnazi Mmoja, touching hearts and uniting the festival community through music.

Statement from Salif Keita's Management

"Dear all. First of all thank you to Sauti Za Busara Festival for an amazing work bringing beautiful music from the African continent and bringing people together for magic musical days. We prepared Salif Keita's performance in Zanzibar for almost a year, and he was looking so much forward to visit his beloved island.

Sadly he got ill last week and had to go to hospital. We kept the hopes that the doctors would let him travel, until last minute. Unfortunately in the end, he was not allowed to travel as it could worsen his condition.

He asked his 'daughters' Aicha Mariko and Fatoumata Soubeiga, to sing his songs with 'his children', the rest of Salif Keita electric band. We invited the legendary griot singer, Hawa Kasse Mady Diabate, to sing three songs from her multi awarded album 'Toumaro', released last year on One World Records, together with the virtuoso Ngoni bass player, Madou Kouyate, and to join Salif Keita's band performance, presenting a historical show, with music that could reach all the way to Bamako, to heal our legend.

We are more than grateful for the amazing reception from the audience and for the understanding of why Salif could not be here this moment. Salif Keita is sending his warmest greetings and he thanked God that Hawa Kasse Mady Diabate could replace him.

Thank you to all of you for accepting the surprise production we managed in a short time. Thank you to everyone who called us from around the world to wish Salif Keita a speedy recovery.

With heartfelt greetings and prayers.

Carolina Vallejo, One World Records, Manager of Salif Keita."

Deep Appreciation to the Partners, Sponsors, Festival Crew and Staff

Sauti za Busara extends immense gratitude to its partners, sponsors, dedicated crew, volunteers, and staff. Their tireless work—through long days, late nights, and countless challenges—made this edition possible. Their professionalism, creativity, and commitment are the backbone of the festival, and their efforts ensured that the magic of Busara lives on.

Looking Ahead

As we reflect on Sauti za Busara 2026, we are reminded that resilience, music, and unity can carry us through even the hardest moments. This year, more than ever, the festival proved that Africa's heartbeat is strong, and its music continues to inspire the world.



Sauti za Busara thanks all artists, partners, supporters, and festivalgoers for their unwavering love and support. Together, we stood strong—and together, we will continue to elevate African music for generations to come.

Asante sana, thank you, and see you at Sauti za Busara 2027

The 24th Sauti za Busara edition is scheduled from the 19th – 21st March 2027, due to the shifting lunar calendar of Ramadhan. For African musicians interested to participate, the festival's next Call for Artists will be announced in March 2026.

#sautizabusara #letthemshine #busarapromotions

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