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PRESS RELEASE

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COSON CRISIS: MPAN CRIES OUT!

The Music Publishers Association of Nigeria (MPAN) is an association of owners of interests in copyright catalogues comprised of tens of thousands of musical works, from the 1960s to 2018, locally and internationally. As the single largest body of music copyright owners in Nigeria, no single individual or other body has more at stake in the development of music related copyright, and the success of the overall Copyright management system, in Nigeria. Therefore the current suspension of the Copyright Society of Nigeria (COSON) license to act as a collective management organization (CMO) for musical works by the Nigerian Copyright Commission is one of great concern to us and our members.

MPAN recognises that the NCC's actions regarding COSON are well intended especially in light of the fact that the NCC under the impressive leadership of Mr. Afam Ezekude has been one of the biggest contributors to the significant positive developments of copyright administration in Nigeria. However, we believe that the NCC can achieve its objective - of ensuring rights owners and creators are well represented by their designated CMO - without adversely affecting COSON's members which we are one of. The impact of NCC's decision to suspend COSON's license, on rights owners is that we do not have any CMO properly and effectively representing our rights. The continued suspension has created uncertainty about the stability of music business in Nigeria, and is ultimately driving away much needed foreign and local investment in the music industry as funding plans are literally having to be put on hold pending the resolution of this matter.

MPAN thus firmly but respectfully calls for the NCC to not throw away the baby with the bath water and lift the suspension of COSON's licence without further delay as MPAN, investors and thousands of helpless copyright owners across Nigeria and beyond continue to suffer otherwise. Nigeria is rapidly approaching a critical turning point in the development of copyright (administration), and with increasing consumption of creative works by an increasing global audience, huge opportunities for value generation abound both for creators and the country's GDP alike.

Duly appointed trustees:

MUSTAPHA OLUMIDE, IDIGBE ISIOMA ALEXIS, ODIONG MICHAEL ANIEMA, EJUEYITICHIE TOJU AUGUSTUS, IGE JUSTIN ADENIYI, EZE EZEGOZIE PRINCE, OSIKOYA ABIODUN SAID, ASIKA ASA, ABIDOYE IBUKUN OLUWASEYI, MAIKORI AUDU ADAMU



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It is important that the huge strides made by what is undoubtedly the leading CMO in Nigeria are not undone due to issues that could be resolved in a much less damaging manner. The COSON success which is now gravely threatened was built on account of huge sacrifices made by many people, over several years, including many diligent and committed officers of the NCC.

MPAN therefore appeals to the NCC for an immediate withdrawal of the suspension in the interest of all stakeholders in the Nigerian music industry. We have earlier sent a letter to the NCC dated 20th June 2018, wherein we made this request and also proffered other options which the NCC could exercise to achieve its aim of ensuring that rights owners and creators are well represented by their designated CMO. Though we are yet to receive a response to our letter, we are hopeful that the NCC and its leadership would consider our suggestions and act on them speedily.

Signed

MUSIC PUBLISHERS ASSOCIATION OF NIGERIA (MPAN)

Isioma Idigbe
Secretary

Olumide Mustapha
Chairman

MPAN
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