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**STATEMENT BY THE KENYA FILM CLASSIFICATION BOARD CHIEF  
EXECUTIVE OFFICER DR. EZEKIEL MUTUA ON THE BANNING OF FILM  
“RAFIKI” ISSUED ON 27TH APRIL 2018**

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The Kenya Film Classification Board would like to announce that a local film titled ‘Rafiki’ produced by Awali Entertainment Ltd and directed by Wanuri Kahiu has been RESTRICTED due its homosexual theme and clear intent to promote lesbianism in Kenya contrary to the law.

Consequently, the said film should NOT be distributed, exhibited or broadcast anywhere within the Republic of Kenya and anyone found in possession of it will also be in breach of the law.

The Board notes with great concern that “Rafiki”, which was submitted to the Board for examination and classification on 10th April 2018, contains homosexual scenes that run counter to the law, the culture and the moral values of the Kenyan people. Indeed, it is our considered view that the moral of the story in this film is to legitimize lesbianism in Kenya contrary to the Board's content classification guidelines and the constitution of Kenya.

The decision to RESTRICT this film follows extensive consultations with various stakeholders including the film producer and other agencies of the law. It should be noted that the Board held a meeting with the film director Ms. Wanuri Kahiu on April 16th 2018 during which it was agreed that she be given until April 18th 2018 to edit the film to remove the offensive classifiable elements and submit it for re-classification. She later requested the deadline to be extended to April 25th 2018. Two days ago the Board received communication from Ms. Kahiu requesting that we go ahead and make a ruling on the original version.

It is also important to note that the producers of the film, in contravention of Section 7 of CAP 222, altered the film script which they submitted for licensing to the film licensing section without permission. The Board has taken time to review the original script that was licensed for production and notes the following:

- i) Romantic scenes depicting the lead actors as lesbians in the film were absent in the script.
- ii) In the script the lead actors were portrayed as having been attacked for political reasons, having formed a political party feigning unity between their parents whereas in the film they were obviously attacked for being homosexual.
- iii) In the script, a paper jet made from their political movement campaign lands on one of the main character’s shoulder which reminds her of her relationship with her lesbian partner, but

leaves the fate of their relationship to the viewer's imagination. However in the film it is her lesbian lover that places her hand on her shoulder, creating the impression of a happy ending to a troubled relationship. The objective is clearly to normalize homosexuality in Kenya and the message in the story is to celebrate the resilience of the youngsters involved in lesbianism. These are material alterations without full disclosure on the nature of the film.

The Board will pursue the legal means to hold the producers accountable for making material alterations to the script and coming up with a product whose theme and intention is contrary to the information contained in the original script.

In light of the above, the Board is left with no choice but to RESTRICT the film "Rafiki". It should therefore NOT be exhibited or distributed in any form or platform anywhere within the Republic of Kenya. Any exhibition or distribution of the said film or parts of it for public consumption in Kenya will be in violation of Section 16 of Films and Stage Plays Act Cap 222 of the Laws of Kenya and will attract severe penalties.

By attempting to normalize homosexual practices, the film "RAFIKI" contravenes the Laws of Kenya. Article 45 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) defines marriage as a union between persons of the opposite sex. Further, sections 162, 163, and 165 of the Penal Code criminalizes homosexual behaviour, with the State not recognising sexual relations between persons of the same gender.

Additionally, the Board is mandated by the Constitution to safeguard Kenya's culture, morality and national aspirations through film content regulation. Under section 16 (subsection 1) of CAP222 of the Laws of Kenya, the Board is mandated to:

- a) Approve content for exhibition to the public,
- b) Subject content to excisions, or
- c) Refuse approval for exhibition (where the content contravenes the law)

We wish to emphasize the fact that films made in Kenya for public consumption MUST reflect and respect the dominant values of the Kenyan society. Any attempt to introduce and normalize homosexuality in Kenya flies in the face of the law and the constitution and must be resisted. Hare-brained schemes by foreigners funding film producers in Kenya to promote homosexuality in the name of equality and inclusion will be exposed and strongly resisted.

Kenya is a country with a culture, beliefs and shared values which must be respected. The Board remains resolute and unequivocal on this matter. We shall not allow attempts to trade our moral values for profit. In particular, the Board will not allow the creation, distribution, broadcast, exhibition or possession of any films that offend the sensibilities of the Kenyan people. Content that undermines the institution of family, which is recognized in the Constitution as the basic unit of society will be resisted.

Finally, the Board would like to sound a warning that foreign agencies that are involved in promotion of films in Kenya must respect our culture and desist from funding content that undermined the sensibilities of the Kenyan people. Homosexuality is illegal in Kenya and

donors and other development partners are advised to ensure that the content they finance complies with the law.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'EM', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

**Dr. Ezekiel Mutua, MBS**  
**CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER**