



For immediate release

## **MAKE MUSIC MATTER CALLS ON CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ACTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF DR. DENIS MUKWEGE**

OTTAWA, September 1, 2020 – Make Music Matter founder and CEO Darcy Ataman, M.S.C., released a statement today, condemning death threats to partner and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Dr. Denis Mukwege:

“Make Music Matter strongly condemns the recent surge in death threats to beloved partner, friend, and colleague, Dr. Denis Mukwege. We call upon the Canadian government to publicly and unequivocally denounce threats against Dr. Mukwege and to help reinstate round-the-clock protection for him and all the staff at Panzi Hospital in Bukavu, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), by the United Nation’s mission MONUSCO.

Agents of peace should not be co-opted and politicized into ideologues against our common humanity. Truth should remain an armistice, sovereignty should not become a euphemism for impunity, and justice should be principled and equitable enough to remain a deterrent against selfish acts of violence against the most vulnerable.”

As a human rights defender, Dr. Denis Mukwege has advocated against the use of rape as a weapon of war and called for an end to impunity. Since his tweet on July 26th denouncing the massacre in the Kipupu and Mwenga territory of South Kivu, he has continued to receive substantial and menacing threats to him and his family by state and non-state actors both domestic and foreign.

Over the past twenty years Dr. Mukwege and his colleagues at the Panzi Hospital in the DRC have selflessly treated over 85,000 women in one of the most challenging environments and contexts in the world. Thousands have benefited greatly from Dr. Mukwege’s holistic healing model, allowing them to rebuild their lives and spirit post physical healing. Make Music Matter’s Healing in Harmony music therapy program remains an immensely proud and integral component of his holistic healing model.

#protectdrumukwege

### **About Make Music Matter**

Make Music Matter uses the creative process as a therapeutic tool to help empower marginalized individuals and communities. Its innovative Healing in Harmony program employs a unique blend of cognitive behavior therapy and music therapy that brings together trauma survivors with a local, trained psychologist and local music producer to write, record, and professionally produce songs about their emotions and experiences.



Songs become tools for education and awareness, helping to combat stereotypes, stigma, and shame. Music is disseminated via local radio stations, community concerts, social media, and major streaming platforms through A4A Records, with distribution through Warner Music Canada.

Make Music Matter works in 8 countries - DRC, Rwanda, Turkey, Guinea, South Africa, Uganda, Peru, and Canada. Target groups include adult, youth, and child survivors of trauma, including survivors of sexual violence, people living in poverty and conflict, displaced persons, those with mental and physical illnesses and disabilities, their caregivers, and others.

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