



**REMARKS BY THE HONOURABLE MINISTER OF  
YOUTH SPORT ARTS AND RECREATION DR  
KIRSTY COVENTRY'S ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
#NAMA LEGENDS@40 VIRTUAL CEREMONY**

**27 MARCH 2021**

Good Evening and all protocol observed.

It is my It is my honour to welcome all of you to this special edition of the 2021 National Arts Merit Awards (NAMA) Ceremony which is in all aspects, a different one. This is so, given the COVID-19 restrictions that we have since learnt to live with as Government strives to save lives in this pandemic.

Traditionally NAMA honours artists that would have produced works within a specified period of one calendar year. COVID-19 and the associated National lockdowns impacted the cultural and creative sector's productivity across the various disciplines. The National Arts Council of Zimbabwe, could not shelve the awards as the National Lockdown presented an opportunity to close Zimbabwe's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Independence with the symbolic awarding of 40 living legends of the Cultural and Creative Sector. Incidentally, the NACZ is also celebrating 35 years of existence.

The legends to be honoured today are people who have had an indelible impact on their different disciplines. These living legends include pioneers, innovators and consistent contributors in fields such as the manufacture of the Mbira musical instrument, Film, theatre, music, dance, visual arts, literary arts and the spoken Word.

These legends have, most importantly, also contributed beyond just their artworks but most have ventured into mentoring and skills development. This has had a ripple effect as is seen in the transfer of their skills and technical knowledge to upcoming and

established artists who, not only inherit the craft and genius of the Living Legends but are also becoming potential vectors of transmitting their experiences to future generations without end.

The hosting of this virtual ceremony dubbed #legends@40 NAMA has not been easy to prepare given the COVID-19 pandemic. I therefore would like to extend my sincere gratitude to the teams that acted behind the scenes, the event managers JCMC, Arts organisations and the partners for tonight's ceremony.

To the Living Legends being honoured today, I say congratulations, you are just but a part of the whole. There are still many others out there that are also doing extremely well as Living Legends. These 40 are just a representation of the great work happening in the creative sector.

Thank You.