

Good Afternoon, Esteemed Lord Mayor, distinguished members of the Weimar Human Rights Award Board, the people of the city of Weimar, esteemed guests, friends, and colleagues.

Thank you.

When I first received the call informing me of this honour, I was speechless. My immediate reaction, I confess, was to look up the names of the previous winners, the giants of human rights history who have stood on this very stage. Seeing the magnitude of their work, the sacrifices they have made, and the fundamental ways they have reshaped our world, I was instantly filled with a deep, consuming sense of imposter syndrome. I thought, *I don't belong here. I am not half as great as they are.*

But this award, given for the work of the Pada Platform, is not about me. It is about what it validates.

To receive the Weimar Human Rights Award as a feminist, a women's rights advocate, and a digital rights defender is not just a profound personal honour; it is confirmation and validation for every single woman who fights to be heard, who fights for her right to safety, and who fights to be regarded as the human being she is.

This award, given in this historic city of Weimar, is a confirmation, a powerful confirmation—that the dreams, the hopes, and the struggles of every African girl are valid, seen, and supported by the global community.

The work we do in digital rights is rooted in the belief that the online space must be a space of liberation, not just another frontier for violence. We work in Zimbabwe, a small country, yet tonight, the people of Weimar have looked across the globe and stated clearly: "The freedom, the safety, the digital inclusion, and the human rights of women in Zimbabwe matter. And they should be fought for." Thank you for this incredible act of solidarity and belief.

I must dedicate this moment to the people who laid the groundwork for my life and for this platform.

First, to my mother, who was taken from us far too soon. She introduced me to feminism, not as a political theory, but as a survival guide. She taught me that women are denied space not because they are incapable, but precisely because they are feared.

To my father, my first and most unwavering cheerleader, who patiently sat through and listened to every single public speaking practice session I ever had. He made me feel, from a young age, that my voice was the most important thing in the world.

To my children, my hear who let me off the hook so many times. They understand, with a

grace I cannot repay, that they share their mother with countless women and girls across the continent, and for their patience and understanding, I am eternally grateful.

To the tireless team at the Pada Platform, who have committed themselves to our labour of love, often with very little recognition. Your dedication is fueled by the quiet, daily victories of the girls who have passed through our organization and who are now building their own futures. This award belongs to you.

And finally, to my supporters and friends. Thank you, Martina Baurle of the Hamburg Foundation, for your belief in our vision, in our struggles. To the board members of the foundation, thank you for your faith. And thank you to Johannes, who is simply always there, quietly and reliably, when it matters the most.

This award does not signify the end of a chapter; it signifies a new beginning. It gives us not just a platform, but renewed energy for the fight ahead.

My deepest hope is to see Africa free from the devastating cycles of wars, free from the guns, and, crucially, free from the pervasive war against women's bodies that is prevalent on our continent. To the African leaders, I say now and clearly: **Our bodies are not your battlefields. This needs to stop.**

To the global world watching tonight: It is time to be honest about those who sponsor violence and cause mayhem across our communities. It is time to hold ourselves and each other accountable as citizens of the world, because human rights are indivisible.

And finally, to the women of the world: Remember this truth. Democracy can never fully exist, can never be fully realized, without you. Without women's voices, there is no true freedom. Let us continue to fight for our voices to be heard everywhere, from the village meetings to the digital frontier.

We will continue this fight until every single woman and girl, everywhere in the world, is safe, heard, and free to realize her full, magnificent human potential. I thank you for your solidarity.

Thank you, Weimar. Thank you all.