

emPawa Africa Releases Statement On Bad Bunny's Unauthorized Use Of Joeboy's Empty My Pocket



Nigerian singer and emPawa Africa founder Mr Eazi has publicly demanded that pop superstar Bad Bunny and his record company Rimas Music give credit and restore rights to emPawa Africa artist Joeboy and emPawa producer Dëra for illegally using their music on Bad Bunny's *Un Verano Sin Ti*. Bunny's "En?ñame a Bailar" is an Afrobeats track that allegedly uses elements of Joeboy's 2021 song "Empty My Pocket" produced by Dëra. "En?ñame a Bailar" was released in May of 2022.

Mr Eazi has worked behind the scenes for nine months trying to resolve the issue with no solution. He and emPawa Music are publicly demanding that Bad Bunny and Rimas Music grant Joeboy publishing, songwriting and feature credits on "En?ñame a Bailar" and credit Dëra as the track's co-producer.

"The team at emPawa Africa have attempted to sort this issue amicably since May of last year with our mutual legal teams,"

Mr Eazi said. “But the intent of Rimas Music is clearly to blatantly appropriate young African creators’ work for their gain without attribution. Unfortunately, this is part of a broader pattern we see in how the wider music industry approaches the IP [intellectual property] of African artists.” said Mr Eazi, noting a history dating back to Michael Jackson’s adaptation of Cameroonian musician Manu Dibango’s “Soul Makossa” (on *Thriller*’s “Wanna Be Startin’ Somethin’”), and the resulting litigation. “Afrobeats has become a global phenomenon, and everybody wants to sample a piece of it. Unfortunately, afrobeats artists, their producers and labels often have to pursue legal means to secure publishing and royalties after songs they originally created are co-opted without credit by other artists.”

Mr Eazi and Bad Bunny previously collaborated on n “Como Un Bebé,” from J Balvin and Bad Bunny’s joint 2019 album, *Oasis*. Nigerian producer Legundury Beatz produced the song and is considered by Mr Eazi to be one of the earliest examples of Afrobeats being utilized in the Latin reggaeton world.

“I founded emPawa Africa to protect and support African creative entrepreneurs and artists with a virtuous ecosystem, believing that afrobeats and afropop would be today what we wished then it would become. We will not accept Bad Bunny and Rimas denying Joeboy and Dëra credits and a share in the ownership of a song they wrote, composed and, in Joeboy’s case, even performed on.”

Bad Bunny’s label Rima Music responded to Mr Eazi in a statement sent to [Billboard](#). His team at Rimas Entertainment claims that they purchased the master track of “Empty My Pocket.”

Mr Eazi’s emPawa Africa responded to this claim with a statement in a press release:

“Rimas Music states that it purchased the master recording

from Lakizo Entertainment which, it also states, is identified in numerous public sources as the track's creator and owner." This claim falsely implies that Lakizo Entertainment is the sole creator and owner of "Empty My Pocket." Joeboy is the sole performer of "Empty My Pocket," a song which he wrote on a beat composed by Dëra. Lakizo Entertainment's role in the release of "Empty My Pocket" was as a licensed distributor; In assuming this role, Adesina Lekan (dba Lakizo Entertainment) negotiated the rights to a partial share in the writing and production credit, as well as a partial share in the master. In actuality, Lakizo Entertainment's only creative contribution to the 2021 master recording of "Empty My Pocket" was adding its "It's Lakizo, baby" tag at 0:07.

No one should confuse Rimas' alleged payment to Lakizo Entertainment for the master with a publishing clearance. Nor should they confuse emPawa Africa's request for composer credit, publishing and royalties for Joeboy and Dëra with a request for the sort of upfront payment Rimas Music states that it made to Lakizo Entertainment."

emPawa Africa also made it clear they only want respect for Joeboy's and Dëra's intellectual property not cash.

This is not the first time Bad Bunny was accused of plagiarism. Missy Elliott successfully sued him for using a sample of her "Get Ur Freak On" on his 2020 single ["Safaera."](#) Reggaeton artist Jowell, who was one of the featured artists on "Safaera," made comments on Twitter that Missy had taken most of the song's profits which caused [Missy](#) to respond and let everyone know she took 25% of the song instead of 99 because there were six other samples and 15 writers on the song.

Fans hope that Mr Eazi and Bad Bunny can work out a deal and go back to making music together.



Joeboy