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INTERNATIONAL FILM
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Media Update

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Press Release

Human Rights through Cinematography 2017 film festival kicks off in Islamabad

Islamabad, 23 November 2017 - The third edition of the film festival *Human Rights Through Cinematography 2017* inaugurated today at the Embassy of Switzerland in Islamabad with the screening of the film "Impasse", which features the plight of those who suffered from various forms of exploitation at the hands of human traffickers.

H.E Thomas Kolly, Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan and Luis Enrique Calzada, Executive Officer, Department of Public Information from UN Headquarters in New York shared with participants the objectives of the film festival and highlighted the role of the cinematography in raising awareness about human rights issues around the world.

After the screening, a panel of human rights experts including Davide Tarzi, Chief of Mission of IOM, César Guedes, Representative of UNODC, Romina Khursheed Alam, Member National Assembly and Rukshanda Naz, Executive Director, Legal Aid and Awareness Services interacted with the participants and discussed the issues of human trafficking and stressed the need of protecting people from falling into the situations of exploitation and violations of human rights. Kaneez Fatima Kassim, a senior development expert moderated the panel discussion.

Building on the success of the past two editions in 2015 and 2016 the festival brings this year some 25 films and documentaries from all over the world focusing on topics including migration, refugees, freedom of expression, child abuse, human trafficking, drug abuse, people living with disabilities, rights of transgender people, violence against women, peace building, and the death penalty, among many others.

Started from today, screenings will be held in several locations, including many universities across the country, such as: University of Gujrat; the Institute of Business Administration, the Institute of Business Management and Habib University in Karachi; the COMSATS Institute of Information Technology, the International Islamic University and the Quaid-e-Azam University in Islamabad; the National College of Arts and the University of the Punjab in Lahore; the Bahaudin Zakariya University in Multan; the



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University of Peshawar; and the University of Balochistan in Quetta; Arid and Agriculture University and Fatima Jinnah Women University in Rawalpindi. The festival will conclude on 10 December, Human Rights Day.

In his opening remarks, the Ambassador of Switzerland to Pakistan H.E Kolly said: “We hope that the third edition of the film festival *Human Rights through Cinematography 2017* will help in fostering the critical thinking on urgent human rights concerns the world faces today. These films serve as effective tools for sensitizing and bringing about new social and cultural perspectives for further debate on human rights issues among the viewers”.

Luis Enrique Calzada, Executive Officer, Department of Public Information thanked all the partners for bringing such a unique festival to Pakistan and said: “Strongly grounded in international human rights standards, the new Agenda for Sustainable Development strives to leave no one behind and puts the imperative of equality and non-discrimination at its heart. “ I hope you all and our many followers across the country will enjoy the film festival while inspiring others to promote human rights in their daily lives and to work together to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals” he added.

The film festival is organized in partnership with embassies and high commissions of Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, the European Union, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and with the International Film Festival and Forum of Human Rights, the Goethe-Institute and the Pakistan National Council of Arts.

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