



INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL ON HUMAN RIGHTS

09-17TH OF MARCH 2007

The International Film Festival on Human Rights in Geneva was inaugurated in 2003 and coincides today with the Human Rights UN Council main session. This simultaneous event makes the Festival a Free Platform for discussion and debate on a wide variety of topics concerning human rights.

Sergio Vieira de Mello, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, who was tragically killed in August 2003 during the attack on the UN headquarters in Bagdad, was the main patron of the first Festival, together with Ken Loach, Robert Badinter, Jorge Semprun, the singer Barbara Hendricks, and since the summer of 2004, Louise Arbour, new UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. Ruth Dreifuss, former president of Switzerland, Amos Gitaï and William Hurt.

The inspiration and impetus behind the International Film Festival on Human Rights came from representatives of the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT), Human Rights Watch (HRW), Amnesty International (AI), the International Federation on Human Rights (FIDH) and the University of Geneva, as well as from associations of filmmakers.

- **A Film, a Subject, a Debate**

The aim of the Festival is to inform, debate and denounce violations of human dignity by inviting the audience to take part in discussions based on the concept: *a film, a subject, a debate* in the presence of film makers, defenders of human rights, politicians and recognized specialists.

- **International Competition and coverage**

The Festival places a high priority on those subjects that deal with human rights violations by major corporations worldwide, especially human rights violations in non-war zones and subjects directly related to current political and social situations. Among the key speakers who have participated in the Festival are Fernando Solanas, Carla del Ponte, General Roméo Dallaire, Anna Politkovskaia, Miguel Angel Estrella, the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court Luis Moreno Ocampo, among many others.

The Festival enjoys wide coverage by the media, especially because it takes place at the same time as the opening of the Commission on Human Rights which brings together many heads of state and official human rights representatives from countries around the world, and which, as you know, is highly controversial since many of the human rights violations worldwide are never discussed by the Commission. Therefore, in contrast to the Commission, the Festival serves as a **Free Platform** of debate and discussion of these often neglected issues.

- **Jury**

For the 2006 edition, actress Vanessa Redgrave, former ambassador of France to the UN, Stéphane Hessel and writer Russel Banks kindly accepted to be part of our International Jury. The 2005 Jury consisted of the 2003 Nobel Peace Prize recipient Shirin Ebadi, the writer Ariel Dorfman, the founder and director of "Actes Sud" International Publishing Company Hubert Nyssen, the American actor William Hurt, and the Lebanese filmmaker Danielle Arbid.

- **Awards**

The International Jury drawn from the worlds of cinema and humanitarian activities will award the Sergio Vieira de Mello Award offered by the City and the State of Geneva in tribute to the late United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and the World Organisation against Torture (OMCT) Award, both of which encourage film directors to devote their thoughts and creative talents to questions concerning human dignity.

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