



Council of Europe

Note
to Editors

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Council of Europe Partner of Sarajevo Film Festival

Strasbourg, 24.07.2008 - For the first time ever, the Council of Europe has become the partner of the Sarajevo Film Festival and sponsor of the "Heart of Sarajevo" award for the best feature film. This year's festival takes place from 15-23 August. The Council of Europe, the 47 nation organisation known as the guardian of human rights, democracy and the rule of law, is a unique forum for voicing the concerns, hopes and aspirations of all 800 million Europeans.

Established in 1949, the continent's first and largest political organisation, through its work based on intergovernmental co-operation, seeks to promote and enforce fundamental European values that form the foundation of a tolerant and civilised society, and are indispensable for European stability, economic growth and social cohesion.

The Council of Europe works through legal texts, recommendations and other forms of assistance to its member countries, but also through the promotion of diversity and cooperation in the field of culture. For many years, the Council of Europe has been providing support to numerous activities in the field of cinema, and promoting the role that film has in making positive influence at social consciousness and spreading of ideas of tolerance and cultural exchange.

Since 1988, the European Support Fund for the Co-production and Distribution of Creative Cinematographic and Audiovisual Works, or Eurimages, has worked within the Council of Europe to promote the European film industry by encouraging the production and distribution of films and fostering co-operation between professionals. As of 2005, Bosnia and Herzegovina has also been a member of Eurimages.

Being very active in South-Eastern Europe, the Council of Europe considers the Sarajevo Film Festival, as a meeting point of the regional film industry, is a natural choice for promoting its activities, recognising mutual goals to educate people through films, to support artistic creation and the freedom of expression through film making, and to promote its values of cultural diversity and mutual respect.

The Council of Europe also recognises that directors from South-Eastern Europe whose films are selected for the Sarajevo Film Festival, have been choosing themes that correspond largely to the Council of Europe's values, most dealing with social commentary and human rights.

Every year, the Sarajevo Festival offers a truly rich film repertoire for its youngest audience. The Festival's special Children's Programme is a unique selection of films which attracts over 35,000 young viewers from all over the region. It represents a unique forum to present the Council of Europe's activities in the field of the promotion of children's rights and the protection of children from violence. At this year's festival, the Council of Europe will present its most recent Europe-wide awareness-raising initiative against corporal punishment of children, called "Raise your hand against smacking", which aims at legally banning corporal punishment of children, promoting positive parenting and raising awareness of children's rights throughout Europe.

For more information, see www.sff.ba

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