



PRESS RELEASE

Results of the XVI International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights "Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan 2022"

The opening ceremony of the XVI International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights "Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan 2022" was held on 14 November 2022, in Bishkek at "Bellagio Premium", Avangard Business Center, from 6 to 9 p.m. Representatives of government services, international and national experts, representatives of embassies and international organizations, as well as filmmakers and civic activists took part in the ceremony. This year the festival was held under the slogan "Climate and Crises: the Situation with the Fundamental Rights of Citizens, Alternatives for the SDGs".

"The key topic is human rights in times of crises and disasters, because during such a period of trials it is important to find alternative strategies to promote Sustainable Development Goals. This is possible only if human rights and freedoms are respected and citizens participate equally in the decision-making process at all levels of government."

The program of the festival opening ceremony was focused on the events that took place in Ukraine, via screening of the animated documentary "We Have Left. Voices of Ukrainian Children" created by ADC "Memorial". The animated documentary is based on interviews conducted by psychologists with Ukrainian children forced to migrate to the EU countries because of the war. The children describe their feelings when they realised that the war broke out, how they survived shelling, evacuation, separation from loved ones; they talk about their pain, hopes and dreams. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4muybK7QSgQ>

During the opening ceremony, the festival organizers were informed that human rights activist Vitaly Ponomarev, Memorial Human Rights Center, who was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (2022), was deported from Manas Airport to Moscow on the basis of an entry ban imposed by the SCNS for a period until 27 June 2022. The ban period expired a few months ago. However, the ban, contrary to the law, remains in effect, which led to the illegal deportation of Vitaly Ponomarev on 14 November 2022. Both the Border Service and the leadership of the SCNS were informed about this situation in advance. The Norwegian Helsinki Committee has lodged a complaint with the UN Special Rapporteur on Human Rights Defenders concerning the deportation of Vitaly Ponomarev from Bishkek on 14 November 2022.



The format of the festival "Bir Duino - 2022" is an exchange of best practices in overcoming various crises. International partners of the festival and experts, such as Elina Steinerte, elected member of the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture (2023-2026), former Chairperson-Rapporteur, member of the Working Group on Arbitrary Detention (2016-2022), shared their experience in this regard. Uransuzh Gambasuren, human rights defender from Mongolia, shared her experience on the new Law on Protection of the Rights of Human Rights Defenders of Mongolia. Pedro Garcia Arenas, civic leader, fighter for ecology and human rights, head of Viso Mutop organization, talked about the experience of developing dialogue platforms between various social, political and ethnic groups in Colombia. Andreas Roksen, Swedish journalist, director and producer, Ksenia Shimanskaya, director of the Human rights Department of the international festival "Docudays UA" (Ukraine) shared their knowledge on promotion of human rights through art and new innovative strategies.

Master classes and laboratories were held in thematic blocks for discussion of issues of climate security, civil and political rights, social, economic and cultural rights, the role of local citizens in decision-making processes at all levels of government, the activities of human rights defenders during crises and disasters, the fight against impunity, children's rights, gender equality and non-discrimination.

For documentary filmmakers, with the support of the Goethe Institute (Kazakhstan), a master class was held by Ulrich Gaulke, film director from Germany, representing modern German cinema. As part of the special program, Ulrich Gaulke presented his documentary COMRADES IN DREAMS and the audience had a unique opportunity to ask questions and discuss the film with the director.

We also presented the film "A Thousand Cuts", about the work of an independent Philippine news site Rappler and its brave founder, journalist Maria Ressa, who was awarded the 2021 Nobel Peace Prize "for her efforts to safeguard freedom of expression, which is a prerequisite for democracy and lasting peace."

Besides that, within the framework of the festival, journalist Adil Turdukulov conducted a number of interviews with the festival guests and international human rights experts:

1. Urantsooj Gombosuren (Mongolia) - "What is the difference between the "island of democracy" and the "pearl of democracy"?"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqoc_pz93p8
2. Elina Steinerte (Great Britain) - "Every country has its own problems. There are no ideal countries yet."
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kHNkivkRfU>



3. Pedro Garcia Arenas (Colombia) – "The fight against drug trafficking is a priority for us"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tvn6SBby2x8&feature=youtu.be>
4. Anara Ibraeva (Kazakhstan) – "Human rights defenders also need protection sometimes!"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KLvX6LvcGQ&feature=youtu.be>
5. Andreas Roksen (Sweden) – "Documentaries in Sweden are more popular than feature films"
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uXhEmLc_hfc
6. Gelia Pevsner (France) – "I came to Kyrgyzstan to prepare a report on how people, who have relocated, are accepted here"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0-1sa-Maa9A>
7. Khadicha Askarova (Uzbekistan) - interview with the festival guest, wife of Azimzhan Askarov
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qb5XUoFrVgM>
8. Vyacheslav Mamedov (Netherlands) - "Unfortunately, the whole region of Central Asia is developing according to the Turkmenistan scenario"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vmv9cZtEXE>
9. Gulnara Karakulova (Kazakhstan) – "The most important thing is not to be silent about it"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A0M0GNC4Rwg>
10. Ruben Kazaryan (Kazakhstan) – "I chose the documentary format because you can't make something up and it's easier to tell the truth"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sgP8xrhG2V0>
11. Ksenia Shymanska (Ukraine) – "I am following the situation here and fully understand how unpredictable and unsafe it is to be a human rights defender here"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U014cNBXtUg>
12. Marianna Kazakova (Czech Republic) – "We feel together, like when you have a common enemy"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j32CjMBXwdg>

Also, on 15 November, international experts spoke live on "Speak TV" with journalist Kaiyrgul Urumkanova in the program "Kyiy", where issues of human rights activities in Kyrgyzstan and in general around the world were raised. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NPYjdBj5JY0>

The International Festival of Documentary Films on Human Rights "Bir Duino-Kyrgyzstan 2022" is the only human rights festival in Central Asia that provides a broad platform for viewing and discussing documentary truth in the human rights field, attracting filmmakers from near and far abroad.

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**International Documentary Film
Festival "Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan -
2022"**



**PA Human Rights Movement:
"Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan"**

The festival screenings, which took place from 15 to 18 November at the Broadway cinema in Asia Mall, were attended by hundreds of spectators from among representatives of state, international and non-governmental organizations, residents and guests of the capital. A platform for discussing the films was organized, and everyone, regardless of their national and social background, age and religion, was given the opportunity to get involved in a discussion about justice and corruption, good governance, the rights and duties of the citizens.

The program of the Festival-2022 presented to the viewers the brightest documentaries, released mainly in 2022 and presented by authors from France, Germany, Estonia, Czech Republic, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. The competition program of the festival included 22 documentaries: 16 local and 6 foreign ones.

On the first day of the festival, nine films about gender equality and climate change were shown. They were viewed by more than 300 people.

On 15 November 2022, at about 4 p.m., Tursuniyaz Dosaliev and Dzholdoshbek Kyrgyzbaev, employees of the Kyrgyz Tasmasy State Institution under the Ministry of Culture, Information, Sports and Youth Policy of Kyrgyzstan, approached the organizers of the festival. They announced a ban on the screening of the films "Mara" (60 minutes, directed by Sasha Kulak, 2022, France, Great Britain) and "This Rain Will Never Stop" (103 minutes, directed by Alina Gorlova, 2020, Ukraine, Germany, Latvia, Qatar).

On 16 November 2022, in the morning, Samat Begaliev, commercial director of the Broadway cinema, forbade the projectionist to start screening of the films in the cinema hall. He presented a letter of the State Institution "Kyrgyz Tasmasy" dated 16 November, 2022 on the suspension of the screening of documentaries at the Broadway cinema as part of the festival. The justification of the refusal was the Resolutions of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic No. 550 dd 29 October, 1999 and No. 551 dd 14 October, 2018. The letter was signed by the head of the film distribution department P.A. Borpieva. As a result, the screenings of the films "Mara" and "This Rain Will Never Stop" were canceled, as the documentaries had not undergone state registration.

According to Part 2 of Article 10 of the Constitution, censorship is not allowed in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Human Rights Movement "Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan" declares the unacceptability of the categorical restriction of human rights and freedoms in violation of Articles 10, 23, 33, 55 of the Constitution of the Kyrgyz Republic, Articles 2, 19 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Articles 6, 12, 13 of the UN Declaration on the Right and Responsibility of



Individuals, Groups and Organs of Society to Promote and Protect Universally Recognized Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.¹

Despite the agreement on the lease of the cinema hall dated 13 October 2022, which did not provide for any restrictions and prohibitions on the screening of any films, AIM Group LLC (the cinema) did not inform us on any legal grounds for violating its obligations to show the films "Mara" and "This Rain Will Never Stop".

As a result, the entire program of the festival was shown on 16, 17 and 18 November, and on the evening of 18 November a special screening of the film "This Rain Will Never Stop" was organized at Ololo House.

On 17 November 2022, at 6 p.m. the closing ceremony and awarding of the winners of the festival took place at "Bellagio Premium" at the Avangard Business Center in Bishkek. The winners were awarded in six main categories. Each of the following nominees received unique prizes of the Festival "Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan": a diploma and a statuette of Umai Ene.

Five members of the jury, consisting of representatives of Kyrgyz documentary cinematography and human rights experts, evaluated the films based on such criteria as content reflecting the theme of the Festival-2022, depth and completeness of disclosure of the topic of human rights and freedoms, originality of the plot, as well as directing and cinematography.

The Grand Prix of the XVI International Festival "Bir Duino Kyrgyzstan" was awarded to the film "This Rain Will Never Stop" by Alina Gorlova, Ukraine, Latvia, Germany, Qatar.

The Best National Film prize was awarded to the film "Alaman" by Ilgiz Sherniyaz and Sooronbek Turgunmamatov, Kyrgyzstan.

The film "Intensive Life Unit" by Adela Komrzy, Czech Republic received the **Best Foreign Film prize** of the festival.

The prize in the Best Film on Climate Change category was awarded to the film "#BishkekSmog" by a creative group including Iskender Aliev, Bermet Borubaeva and Andrey Tkach, Kyrgyzstan.

The prize in the category Best Film about Social, Economic and Cultural Rights was awarded to the film "Black Wagon" by Adilet Karzhoev, Kyrgyzstan.

The prize for the Best Film about Civil and Political Rights was awarded to the film "A Place Called Wahala" by Jürgen Ellinghaus, France, Germany.

¹ The rights to: freely publish, transmit or disseminate to others opinions, information and knowledge about all human rights and fundamental freedoms; study, discuss, form and have an opinion on the observance of all human rights and fundamental freedoms both in legislation and in practice, and attract public attention to these issues using these and other appropriate means (Article 6); effective protection of legislation (Article 12), use of resources for the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms by peaceful means (Article 13).

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The prize in the category Best Film on Gender Equality was awarded to the film "Girls, Space, Equality" by Aizada Bekbalaeva, Kyrgyzstan.

The film "Struggle" by Azamat Ubraimov, Kyrgyzstan received the **"Ulan Ulansyn" Prize named after Ulan Egizbaev**.

The Special Jury Prize was awarded to Aibek Baiymbetov's film "Heavenly Horse", Kyrgyzstan.

At the closing ceremony, the results of five innovative workshops held within the framework of the Festival-2022 were presented, such as: "Activities of Human Rights Defenders in Situations of Risks and Disasters", "Labor Rights in Eastern Europe and Central Asia; Assessment of the Consequences of the COVID-19 Pandemic, Military Conflict and Migration Crises", "The Right of the Child to Protection from Bullying in Schools", "Justice is Waiting: Kumtor and the Struggle of Local Communities for Their Rights", "Climate Justice and Human Rights: Promotion of the Local Communities to Reduce the Gaps."

The festival day ended with a special screening of the documentary film "Professor Musa Mateev" about an outstanding reconstructive surgeon with a worldwide reputation. The film shows in detail how he developed his method "a flap in a flap", which is widely used in modern plastic and reconstructive surgery. Thanks to this technique Professor Musa Mateev was able to help more than 15 thousand patients, adults and children, vulnerable families.

The Film Festival "Bir Duino" is held jointly with the FIDH solidarity networks (International Federation for Human Rights), Civil Rights Defenders, Front Line Defenders, CSP (Civic Solidarity Platform), Forum-Asia, WLP (Women's Learning Partnership), Goethe Institute (Kazakhstan), BICE (International Catholic Child Bureau), Central Asia Labour Rights Monitoring Mission, as well as with the support of partners from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, local activists from the regions of the KR and a wonderful team of the festival volunteers.

Solidarity, Dialogues and Pluralism platforms with the innovative format Human Rights Through Art united everyone at the festival, created new strategies for positive change through Art and Human Rights for the next 3 years.

The Organizing Committee of the 2022 Festival would like to thank the audience, documentarians and human rights experts, wonderful young people, numerous volunteers, international and national partners and those who provided technical and financial support to the 2022 Festival.

TOGETHER, WE ARE POWER!

Sincerely,
Organizing Committee of the Festival-2022

You can find more detailed information about the festival on our website www.birduino.kg.
Should you have any questions, please, contact us at birduinokyrghzstan@gmail.com.