

Press Release, Oktober, 21<sup>st</sup> 2015, 18:00



## Film Celebrities Raise their Voices for Refugees in European Parliament and Commission – FOR A THOUSAND LIVES: BE HUMAN.

French director **Michel Hazanavicius** (5 Oscars, 6 Césars, and 7 BAFTAs for *THE ARTIST*), Italian actress/director **Valeria Bruni Tedeschi**, German cinema icon **Hanna Schygulla**, French director **Laurent Cantet** (Palme d'or for *ENTRE LES MURS*), and Polish actor **Andrzej Chyra**, have come to Brussels for a series of meetings. They have met with President **Martin Schulz**, Chair of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice, and Home Affairs **Claude Moraes**, and Chairwoman of the Committee on Culture and Education, **Silvia Costa**. Afterwards, they went to the European Commission to meet with First Vice-President **Frans Timmermans**. The delegation has appealed to the European Union to take measures ensuring member states respond to refugee matters by acting jointly, in solidarity, and with humanity, in accordance with the EU's founding values.

This delegation spoke on behalf of the appeal's 5,500 signatories, including: Emmanuelle Béart, Susanne Bier, Juliette Binoche, Dany Boon, Constantin Costa-Gavras, Daniel Craig, Alfonso Cuarón, Jean Pierre & Luc Dardenne, Julie Gayet, Michael Haneke, Agnieszka Holland, Isabelle Huppert, Aki Kaurismäki, Claude Lanzmann, Mike Leigh, Ken Loach, Sophie Marceau, Jiří Menzel, Cristian Mungiu, Joshua Oppenheimer, Pawel Pawlikowski, Corneliu Porumboiu, Jonathan Pryce, Isabella Rossellini, Volker Schlöndorff, Til Schweiger, Ulrich Seidl, Léa Seydoux, Bertrand Tavernier, Béla Tarr, and Thomas Vinterberg. They addressed the following points:

- The European Union must offer legal ways for people fleeing war and terror to seek protection in the EU.
- European nations must act in solidarity. The Dublin Convention has led to precarious situations for refugees and unjust burdens on the EU's border countries.

An equitable relocation of refugees among the E.U. states is a first step, but the system must take into account the asylum seeker's individual circumstances.

- European countries must create living conditions for refugees that embrace personal freedom, physical safety without restriction, and offer access to work and education.

Shocked by the events of the current humanitarian crisis, the appeal FOR A THOUSAND LIVES: BE HUMAN ([www.for-a-1000.lives.eu](http://www.for-a-1000.lives.eu)), which can still be signed by film professionals, was launched by the European film community on Sept. 2nd. It rallied the support of Europe's leading institutions including the European Film Academy, the Film Festivals of Venice and San Sebastian, went viral and received thousands of individual signatures.

**Here's some quotes from the meetings and the press conference:**

European Parliament President Schulz welcomed the delegation quoting Edmund Burke: "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing. The majority of Europeans favours helping refugees. I welcome this initiative and many others by civil society, they show that we stay mobilized to find a fair solution in a spirit of solidarity and humanity".

Michel Hazanavicius: "The only way Europe can hope to block the dangerous progress of populism and demagoguery is by remaining both political and human."

Hanna Schygulla: "Europe is ill from its own cynicism and pessimism. This crisis is also a chance. I arrived as a Polish refugee in Germany, and I eventually embodied Germany in the films I acted in."

Andrzej Chyra: "Poland has been isolated for so long, it would be an enrichment to the country to have some influences from new cultures".

Valeria Bruni Tedeschi : "When I commit, to my work or to a cause, I never lose sight of the fact we are all in the same boat, and that we must relate to one another as equals."

Civil Liberties Committee Chair Claude Moraes: "European filmmakers understand the power of images. For this reason, they are right to speak out on refugees, as the winter sets in, to call on member states to shake off their complacency and populism, and focus on a practical, organised, compassionate action in place of inertia."

Culture Committee Chair Silvia Costa: "Cinema, creativity and culture have a crucial role in raising citizens' awareness and the responsibility of national and European institutions. We are delighted to have received at the European Parliament the call from directors and actors who, with their valuable work, can give a voice and eyes to the dramatic situation of refugees. We share with them the goal of a more cohesive and inclusive Europe."

First Vice-President Frans Timmermans: "We need to continue to work hard to put solutions in place which are both humane and effective. In order to break the logic of

fear which has become so widespread in our societies – the fear of the other, of what the future holds – we also need people in civil society who stand up for humanist values".

**A video of the press conference and clips of the meetings are available on video on demand (VOD)**

**<http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Assetdetail.aspx?ref=I110509>**

**<http://audiovisual.europarl.europa.eu/Assetdetail.aspx?ref=I110696>**

**Photos as well as press releases in English, French, German, Polish, and Hungarian are online:**

**[www.for-a-1000-lives.eu/press-releases/](http://www.for-a-1000-lives.eu/press-releases/)**

**More information: [www.for-a-1000-lives.eu](http://www.for-a-1000-lives.eu)**

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