ACTION ALERT: "BLACK BACH ARTSAKH" AT THE BERLIN FILM FESTIVAL 2021

Posted on February 28, 2021 by Keghart



Category: Opinions

2 March 2021

Dear Friend,

Please take a moment and read the letter addressed to the staff of Berlin International Film Festival and the background information attached to it. Would you please write a similar letter or make use of whatever means at your disposal to counter the Azeri intrusion.

Thank you

Please see below for update

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Dear Berlinale team,
Berlin International Film Festival

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https://www.berlinale.de/en/contact.html
We understand that you have received a letter from the Azerbaijani community calling for the removal of the "Black Bach Artsakh" from the Berlinale 2021 Film Festival.

The film is based on interviews with inhabitants of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) in times of war, thirteen years ago. Documentaries created by artists are an expression of human rights that cannot and should not be suppressed. The authors of "Black Bach Artsakh'' Ayreen Anastas and Rene Gabri are accomplished filmmakers with extensive filmography.

We encourage Berlinale 2021 Film Festival to present "Black Bach Artsakh" that tells true stories about people indigenous to Artsakh and to disregard the mischievous letter of the Azerbaijani community and to stay true to its "platform for the critical cinematic exploration of social issues" and allow for its "unique place of artistic exploration and entertainment" to flourish.

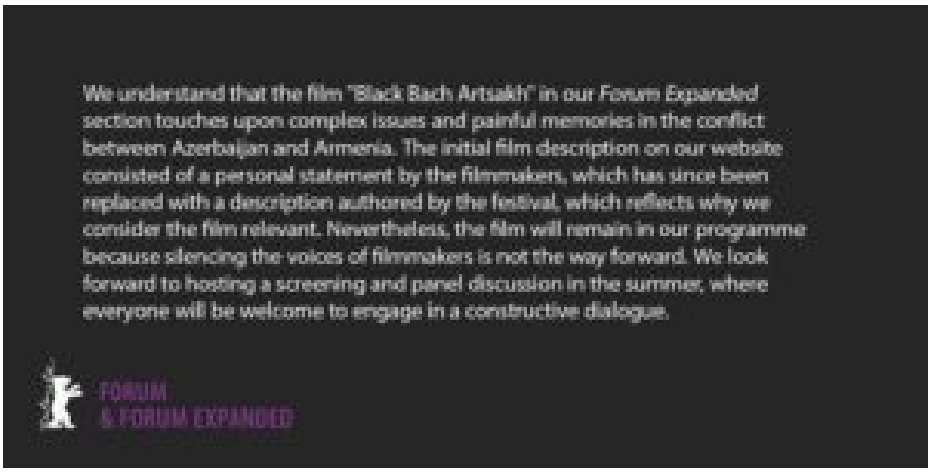
It would be a true loss for the art world if supporters of a corrupt regime (Azerbaijan is a dictatorship ruled by Ilham Aliyev) silence the voices of truth-telling talented artists such as Anastas and Gabri. Their film of the human struggle for existence should not be silenced simply because it's not in tune with Azerbaijan's manufactured narrative.

Sincerely,

Canadian Media Monitor

& Arusyak Karapetyan, Keghart.org Publisher, Arus.keghart@gmail.com

Update: Berlinale reaction to public concern:



We would like to further share information and clarification with the Berlinale in response to the misinformation contained within the letter that was sent to you by the Azerbaijani community. We welcome further correspondence and cooperation should the need arise for the exchange of information or any other questions.

Azerbaijan along with Turkey and hired Syrian mercenaries unleashed a war, in September of 2020, on Artsakh, "the last bastion of Armenian independence," during the global pandemic. After the signing of the November ceasefire document, the Azerbaijani Government keeps Armenian hostages in captivity in violation of the said agreement, rewards personnel of the Azerbaijani forces for inhumane crimes against captives, promotes State sponsored Armenophobia, and is yet to be held responsible for countless war crimes during the recent war as well as the completion of their erasure of Armenian cultural heritage in Nakhichevan in 2016.

In the 90's, the conflict had broken out after the people of Nagorno-Kharabakh, autonomous region, using their right for self-determination, successfully voted with a 90% majority for their independence based on constitutional laws at the time. This led to ethnic cleansing and violence against Armenians throughout Azerbaijan. The war was Azerbaijan's response to the indigenous Armenians desire to live in their ancestral lands in Artsakh. Both sides suffered great losses during the conflict itself. This was preceded and accompanied by the Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad and Maragha massacres of Armenians at the hands of Azerbaijanis. Those were massacres of exceptional brutality - torture, rape, beheading, and burning of the victims alive.

The 7 territories, mentioned in the community letter, were around Artsakh and served as a buffer, a

guarantee of the security of the Armenian people, preventing such brutality by Azeris after the 90's war. There were around 500,000 Azerbaijani refugees (the reference to 1 million in the letter is a great exaggeration). They were mainly from the surrounding regions and Armenia itself. An equal number of Armenian refugees escaped Azerbaijan after the above mentioned massacres. Last but not least, the vast majority of the population in Artsakh was of Armenian heritage comprising 90% of the population.

The UN resolutions referred to in the letter, never mention Artsakh as part of Azerbaijan. In fact, there is a European Parliament resolution condemning Azerbaijani violence against ethic Armenians and supporting the choice of Artsakh's people to self determination given the threat to the safety of Armenians in Azerbaijan .

Sadly, Azerbaijan never waited peacefully as claimed in the letter. There were always artillery fired and provocations at the border of Artsakh as well as Tavush region of Armenia (Armenia proper). Meanwhile, Armenia was open and ready to return the 7 territories in exchange to formal commitment by Azerbaijan to the safety of Artsakh. These are documented facts, including through public interviews by former Armenian president's in 2010 and 2016, where they announced Armenia's readiness for this exchange.

It should be noted that Armenia and Artsakh never had an interest in starting a war. Instead, Azerbaijan and Turkey have been engaged in joint military training throughout the summer of 2020 after years of preparation, and before the September 27th, 2020 war. To provide an example of Armenophobic behaviour the president of Azerbaijan was quoted saying: "I said that if they do not leave our lands of their own free will, we will chase them away like dogs and we are doing that." "Armenia as a country is of no value. It is actually a colony, an outpost run from abroad, a territory (cont)" "I have repeatedly said that our society, especially the younger generation, should never forget that the Armenian state was created on historically Azerbaijani lands."

Indeed, according to numerous sources including Human Right Watch it was Azerbaijan that started the war .

Armenians in Artsakh remain in an existential threat. While the war "stopped" on November 10, the status of Artsakh is still unresolved. More than 200 Armenian hostages including civilians, among them women, remain in captivity, in violation of the ceasefire agreement. Human rights organizations consider Armenians in Artsakh to be under a genocidal threat . A testimony to it is the grave fate that Armenian civilians faced after they chose to not leave their homes in the territories that passed under Azerbaijani control. Videos of live beheading of elderly people circulate on the internet to this day. In one recent incident, an Azerbaijani who beheaded an Armenian elderly man was rewarded with a medal. Showcasing and encouraging Armenophobia. Likewise, the destruction and appropriation of Armenian cultural heritage left in Azerbaijani occupied territories has begun, similar to the erasure that took place in Nakhichevan.

Azerbaijan's disregard for international law, Armenian heritage under the threat of cultural genocide, its violation of human rights covered up by manipulation of information, corruption of western media and politicians are well documented by international organizations. Please consider the following material for illustration of Azerbaijani dictatorial State's corruption for propaganda in Europe , the use of laundromats and lobbying of Washington to sanitize its war.

RESOLUTION on the situation in Armenia, Published: 1990-01-18

Ilham Aliyev addressed the nation, October 17, 2020

Ilham Aliyev on Twitter, Nov 20, 2012

Ilham Aliyev chaired the meeting of the Cabinet of Ministers dedicated to the results of socioeconomic development in the first quarter of 2015 and objectives for the future 10 April 2015

Human Rights Watch- World Report 2021.

Genocide Emergency Alert: Azerbaijan's Invasion of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) October 2020

Zartonk Media, Kamil Zeynalli, Who Participated In The Beheading Of An Old Man During The War, Awarded A Medal In Azerbaijan. February 6, 2021

The Guardian, Monumental loss: Azerbaijan and 'the worst cultural genocide of the 21st century, March 01, 2019

Freedom Files Analytical Centre, European Values Bought and Sold, March 2017

OCCRP, Azerbaijani Laundromat, September 4, 2017

The American Conservative, How Azerbaijan is Lobbying Washington to Sanitize its War, October 12, 2020

Comments

Lusine Nalbandyan – 2021-03-03 03:19:17
It will be very disappointing to know that Berlinale 2021 Film Festival will be provoked by false arguments obviously sponsored by the corrupted Aliyev government and remove “Black Bach Artsakh” from their program. I'm sure that the organizers of the festival will have enough integrity to check the facts and make a fair decision.

Raffy DerBedrossian – 2021-03-03 00:10:10
The Armenian mistreatment needs to end once and for all. The Turkic people have lied and got away with murder for 600 years. Armenians have been the targeted race since its their lands they stole and still reside on till today. They took advantage of a race that was weakened and oppressed from centuries of wars. The world needs to listen and understand the truth. Armenians don't have oil to buy foreign governments or corporations. Armenians only offer the truth and evidence of injustice. All they expect is the world to listen and understand the oppressions they still suffer in the hands of the Turkic people.