



PRESS RELEASE

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**FERA STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE SENTENCING OF IRANIAN FILM DIRECTORS PANAHI AND RASOULOF**

**The Federation of European Film Directors (FERA) strongly condemns the sentencing of Iranian Film director Jafar Panahi to 6 years in prison and a 20-year ban on making films, writing scripts, travelling abroad and giving interviews.**

This disgraceful attempt at silencing a fellow film director is a blatant violation of fundamental human rights and speaks to the oppressive nature of the current Iranian regime.

Freedom of expression and debate are core values of every enlightened society and should be welcomed by any political leadership that claims to represent its people.

Mr Panahi is one of the leading voices of modern Iranian cinema. His social realistic films are internationally acclaimed, winning the Camera d'Or at the Cannes Film Festival for his debut feature *The White Balloon*, the Golden Lion award for *The Circle* and the Silver Bear at the Berlinale for *Offside* – films that are all banned in Iran.

FERA equally protests the sentencing of filmmaker Muhammad Rasoulof to 6 years in prison.

FERA calls for the immediate overturn of these outrageous convictions of Iranian filmmakers, whose only crime is to be brave enough to make films that resonate with the rest of the world in their honest portrayal of our shared humanity.

**European film directors condemn this cowardly persecution of artists in the strongest terms, a strategy that history has proven futile time and again. In his art Jafar Panahi gives testimony to the truth - and the truth will prevail - even in Iran.**

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