



## PRESS RELEASE

### **A Cinematic Journey Across Europe: European Film Festival Has Returned To Four Cities Across Pakistan**

Islamabad, 15 May 2024: Film buffs in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi had the opportunity to experience European cinema once again at the Third European Film Festival (EUFF) 2024, which commenced on 15<sup>th</sup> May 2024 at the Pakistan National Council of Arts (PNCA) in Islamabad. The festival will now travel to 3 more cities across Pakistan: Peshawar, Quetta, and Gujrat between 16<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

The 2024 edition of the EUFF in Pakistan showcases over 20 films produced by the Member States of the European Union covering diverse genres, including comedy, thrillers, documentaries, and fiction. These films explore wide-ranging themes such as family, childhood, romance, friendship, climate change, history, war, economic hardship, human rights, disability, and more. Additionally, the festival features several equally exciting Pakistani short films by emerging filmmakers and studios.

Each film selected for the festival was carefully handpicked to cater to an audience with an appetite for stories with global appeal. The festival presents a unique opportunity for Pakistani audiences to rediscover Europe; its diversified culture, and modern and adaptive societies. The festival in Islamabad screened 3 feature length and 5 short films from Europe, 2 Pakistani short films, and some more experimental works from Europe as installations.

Speaking to the media at the event, the Ambassador of the Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan, Her Excellency Dr Riina Kionka stated “In the EU, we actively support filmmaking not only as an art form but also as a means to bring people together to address important social topics. We believe that good cinema plays an important social and political role – to contribute to a pluralistic society based on respect for others, as well as on equality and democratic decision-making. That’s why exchanges and discussions occupy a prominent place in the festival.”

The film screenings in Islamabad were followed by a dynamic panel discussion titled “Viewing The World Through Films: The Importance Of Gaining A Global Perspective.” Moderator by Omar Khalid Butt, the panel included renowned playwright Bee Gul, actor Sarwat Gilani, and rising star Ali Junejo. Sharing her sentiments about the event, Sarwat Gilani said “I believe film festivals such as the EUFF are very important for any country, especially its youth, to put their culture and traditions into a visual narrative and tell that country’s story to the rest of the world. What I particularly love about European cinema is that it shows you the stark reality of the world as it is, unlike Hollywood which is shiny and squeaky. My two most favorite European films are The Prophet and Irreversible. If I had to cast a Pakistani actor in a European film, it would be Sarmad Khoosat in The Prophet

and conversely, I would love to see Monica Belluci in Maula Jutt as Daro, originally played by Humaima Malik.”

The panel discussions, in each city will bring the audiences face to face with some of the prominent names in the Pakistani film and television industry, including filmmakers, writers and actors. Tazeen Hussain, Saim Sadiq, Tazeen Bari and Kanwal Khoosat will join the festival in Peshawar. Zafar Mairaj, Haya Fatima Iqbal and Dr Quratulain Bakhtari will participate in Quetta, and Irfan Khoosat, Tamkenat Mansoor and Faseeh Bari Khan in Gujrat.

The festival also brings with it, in each city, a masterclass titled “Decoding European Cinema” by filmmaker, writer and actor Ali Junejo. The masterclass with the aim to help improve the understanding of world cinema and build professional capacity in its participants, had 60 people attend it in Islamabad, who were all praise and grateful for this unique learning opportunity, presented to them free of cost.

Other interesting features of the EUFF 2024 in all 4 cities are interactive audiovisual installations and a range of food stalls.

EUFF 2024 is open and free for the public, and will be held on the following dates at these venues post the launch event in Islamabad:

- 17 May, Iqra National University, Peshawar
- 23 May, Noori Naseer Khan Cultural Complex, Quetta,
- 29 May, University of Gujrat, Gujrat

The Third European Film Festival (EUFF) 2024 is curated and organized by Olomopolo Media, a leading platform for cultural and creative expression through performing arts and visual media as tools for social awareness, sensitization and advocacy and awareness with the aim to create room for collective ethical development and socio-cultural sophistication.

**For further details, please contact:**

Samar Saeed Akhtar  
Press and Information Officer  
[samar-saeed.akhtar@eeas.europa.eu](mailto:samar-saeed.akhtar@eeas.europa.eu)  
Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan