

ICFR

International Coalition  
for Filmmakers at Risk

**THE**  
**POWER**  
**OF A**  
**THOUSAND**  
**VOICES**



**The International Coalition for Filmmakers at Risk (ICFR) was founded in early 2020 as a concerted effort to unify the voices of our film industry, to provide a lifeline for filmmakers all over the world**

In 2012, Syrian filmmaker Orwa Nyrabia was forcibly detained at Damascus International Airport by military intelligence for his role in drafting a public call demanding democracy for Syria and to obtain humanitarian aid for his fellow citizens in dire need.

His partner, filmmaker Diana El Jeiroudi, and fellow independent filmmakers **rallied the international film industry through a campaign demanding his freedom.** Thousands of directors, producers, actors, film festivals, and other professionals from all over the world united behind this call. Eventually, the pressure proved too much for the Syrian government —

**who released the filmmaker without pressing any charges.**

This campaign was an example of how the film community can stand in solidarity and use its massive impact for the benefit of a filmmaker at risk.

A few years later, Orwa Nyrabia would go on to become one of the founders of the **International Coalition for Filmmakers at Risk (ICFR)** in early 2020: a concerted effort to **unify the voices and efforts of our film industry, so as to provide a lifeline for filmmakers from all over the world.**

# **OUR** **MISSION**

**With the rise and escalation of various global conflicts in recent years, ICFR's original mission has remained unchanged: to support independent filmmakers facing acute risk around the world**

In today's world, the creativity of filmmakers is one of the most influential tools for societies to find their way and defend their rights. **Especially in countries where freedom of expression is undermined and censorship prevails, filmmaking and independent storytelling take on an even more crucial, but dangerous, role.**

With the rise and escalation of many different conflicts around the world, ICFR's original **mission** has remained unchanged: **to support independent filmmakers at risk around the world.** The word 'risk' is key here, as we only have the power and means to actively help people that have been incarcerated and whose lives are in serious danger.



To this end, we rally the international film community and issue pressing and collective responses, often in the form of statements and campaigns. We press our network — film institutions, festivals, fellow filmmakers and actors — to share our calls and speak out on cases. **With each added voice, the ICFR's initial ripple grows until it can no longer be ignored**, neither by regular media outlets, nor by the parties responsible for putting filmmakers at risk in the first place. This can lead to an insurmountable amount of pressure that, hopefully, leads to filmmakers at severe risk to return to safety.

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# **OUR** **FILMMAKERS**

**Although many filmmakers have been released on bail or otherwise, most still face a threat of re-arrest, travel bans and continued systematic sabotage of their work.**

In the years since its foundation, **the ICFR has been campaigning for several persecuted filmmakers in Iran, Turkey and Myanmar.** We did this by releasing statements and organising events around their arrest, including press conferences, panel discussions and flash-mobs during the Venice International Film Festival, IDFA and IFFR.

Specific campaigns include the cases of **Hajooj Kuka** (Sudan), **Moataz Abdelwahab** (Egypt), **Mina Keshavarz, Firouzeh Khosrovani, Jafar Panahi, Mohammed Rasoulof** and **Mostafa Al-Ahmad** (Iran), **Ciğdem Mater** and **Erhan Ors** (Turkey), and **Ma Aeint** (Myanmar). Although many have since been released on bail or otherwise, **most still face a threat of re-arrest, travel bans and continued systematic sabotage of their work.**

Currently, **Ciğdem Mater** and **Ma Aeint** both remain incarcerated with undefendably long sentences; and oppressive regimes continue to crack down on filmmakers across the world all too frequently.



Cigdem Mater



Erhan Örs



Ma Aint



Mohammad Rasoulof



Mostafa Al-Ahmad



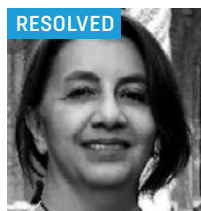
Navid Mihandoust



Zahra Shafiee Dehaghani



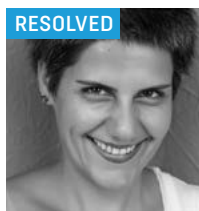
Leila Naghdiipari



Mojgan Ilanlou



Mina Keshavarz



Firouzeh Khosravani



Taraneh Alidoosti



Hajooj Kuka



Jafar Panahi



Tatsiana Hatsura-Yavorska



Moataz Abdelwahab



Agnieszka Holland



Elaheh Nobakht

***Oppressive regimes continue to crack down on filmmakers across the world all too frequently.***

# OUR EFFORTS



The ICFR has the power to advocate for the release and support of those individuals already imprisoned or actively persecuted. **Our coalition only acts with informed consent of the filmmakers at risk or their representatives.** Additionally, the ICFR will offer support to filmmakers in urgent need of assistance by connecting them with partner organisations and funds that can help to ensure their safety and to try and mitigate their risks. However, in times of increasing global crisis, the ICFR has also acted as a focal point for the international film community to offer support to filmmakers at risk, en masse. Two recent examples of this are our efforts aimed at filmmakers in **Afghanistan** (2021) and **Ukraine** (2022-current).

Together with our partners, **we were able to successfully coordinate the evacuation of 26 filmmakers from Afghanistan**; 16 to the Netherlands, 2 to Finland, 1 to France and 7 to Italy. During the escalation of the humanitarian crisis in Ukraine, the ICFR launched **the Emergency Fund for Filmmakers** and raised donations from within the film community that were used to assist in relocation expenses, legal and administrative fees (visas etc.), shelter and other primary needs. Within 1 year, we were able to identify and support (with micro-grants of 500–1500 euros each) **over 600 Ukrainian filmmakers in dire need.**

# OUR NEEDS

**The fight is far from over.** With escalating conflicts and increasing efforts to limit people's freedom all across our world, we now see filmmakers being persecuted based on their ideals and thoughts; arrested before even a word has been written down or a camera has been switched on. This, in our view, is none other than a crime against humanity itself.

Making a difference in the lives of filmmakers facing risk is a collective effort, and we are humbled by the immense support we have received since ICFR's inception. In turn, filmmakers have been set free and continue to share their stories — stories about what freedom means, what heroism is, what is worth striving for and what really matters. **And stories about what sacrifices must be made.**

**We encourage you to get involved with us.** Either as a strategic partner, a structural or one-off sponsor, or any other kind of vocal champion for our cause and cases. We welcome any and all support and involvement — until, we can only hope, our efforts will be no longer needed.

**ICFR is a non-profit organisation registered in the Netherlands.**  
**If you wish to support the work of the International Coalition for Filmmakers at Risk, you can donate to:**



For more information on how to donate to ICFR or how to join our efforts as a strategic partner, please contact us at **contact@icfr.international** or visit **www.icfr.international**



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## FOUNDING PARTNERS



## FUNDERS AND PARTNERS

