

INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION DIRECTORATE

Press release N° ___ /2021

Date: 26 October, 2021

AU CONTINUES TO PROMOTE PEACE AT THE FESPACO PAN-AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL

Promoting peace through arts and African stories

The African Union (AU) Commission, through its Department of Political Affairs, Peace and Security, awarded the African Union Peace Prize for the promotion of a culture of peace, social cohesion and non-violence to the documentary, “The Letter”, made by Kenyan producers Maia Lekow and Christopher King, at the just ended 27th Edition of the Ouagadougou Pan-African Film and Television Festival (FESPACO), which took place from the 16th to the 23rd of October 2021 in Burkina Faso.

Set in Kenya, the documentary, “The Letter”, explores the search for peace and reconciliation amidst marginalization and the stigmatization of the elderly in rural communities. It is a call to rebuild harmony and to strengthen the social fabric within communities despite divergence in beliefs and opinions.

Speaking on behalf of the Commissioner for Political Affairs, Peace and Security, Ambassador Bankole Adeoye, the Chair of the five-member AU Peace Award jury, Ambassador Osman Keh Kamara, highlighted the role of literature and film in impressing values on the collective consciousness and reshaping the societal mindset to treat senior citizens fairly, with dignity and respect. “As we all galvanize our efforts towards ending conflicts and promoting good governance in Africa, directors, scriptwriters, editors, producers and actors have a central role in spreading peace and harmony in our societies. The values of peace and tolerance that your works contain will continue to influence African citizens for decades to come,” he said.

The objective of the AU Peace Prize is to recognize, reward and honor the best of African cinematography and videography that promotes a culture of peace, social cohesion and non-violence in line with a memorandum of understanding (MoU), signed on 28 December 2012, between the AU Commission and the Government of Burkina Faso – on behalf of FESPACO. This is also in line with the 2021 AU theme of the year i.e. “Arts, Culture and Heritage: Levers for Building the Africa We Want”.

The jury for the AU Peace Award was composed of peace practitioners, filmmakers and academics from across Africa. In addition to the Chair of the jury from the AU Commission, the other members of the jury were Dr. Stanislas Meda of Burkina Faso, Ms. Manka Eileen Tabuwe of Cameroon, Ms. Makgano Priscilla Mamabolo of South Africa and Mr. Mohamed Sahbi Kraiem of Tunisia.

In line with Agenda 2063, Africa’s rich arts and culture continue to play a pacifying and unifying role in the continent’s search for peace, integration and prosperity. The

AU's participation at this 27th Edition of the FESPACO Pan-African Film Festival was therefore a golden opportunity to renew the AU's commitment to the promotion of peace through arts and African stories.

For more information:

Mr. Paschal Chem-Langhee, Communication Officer, Email: Chem-LangheeP@africa-union.org | Political Affairs, Peace and Security | African Union Commission |

Ms. Lulit Kebede, Communication Officer, Email: LulitK@africa-union.org | Political Affairs, Peace and Security | African Union Commission |

For further information:

Information and Communication Directorate, African Union Commission | **E-mail:** DIC@africa-union.org
Web: au.int | Addis Ababa, Ethiopia | **Follow Us:** [Facebook](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Instagram](#) | [YouTube](#)