



les cinémas
du monde



Press release

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Cannes Film Festival

La Francophonie joins forces with FEPACI to create a Pan-African Cinema Fund

The OIF (International Organisation of La Francophonie) marks its presence at the 63rd Cannes International Film Festival by participating in the launch of a Pan-African fund in favour of the cinema, which could represent a genuine turning point in the policy of aid to the film industry in developing countries.

Creation of this fund, which African filmmakers have been advocating for many years, is a project initiated by FEPACI (Pan-African Film Federation), which called on the know-how, experience and support of the OIF to launch this fund and, in particular, to conduct the feasibility study. This news was announced by Frédéric Bouilleux, Director of French language and cultural diversity with the OIF, at a press conference in the Pavillon des Cinémas du Monde, at the Cannes International Film Market on 20 May, 2010, in the presence of Charles Mensah, Chairman of FEPACI and Seipati Bulane Hopa, Secretary General of FEPACI.

Film professionals will remember their dialogue with Abdou Diouf, the Secretary General of La Francophonie, who met with them in Cannes in 2006, and the commitment he made at Fespaco (Pan-African film and television festival) in Ouagadougou in 2007 to mobilise the resources to implement the recommendations of the symposium organised by the OIF in Brussels in 2007 on the economic viability of the film industry. La Francophonie's commitment answers to a recommendation issued by the African Union calling for creation of a mechanism to finance film and television production on the African continent.

This new Pan-African fund in aid of the film industry aims to mobilise substantial resources for cinema in the developing countries, alongside existing multilateral and bilateral funding, by federating efforts and guiding cinematographic creation to suit the needs and aspirations of the African public.

La Francophonie was keen to participate in this approach, whose objectives it shares: reaffirming the legitimate desire of Africa to acquire the means of its own cinematographic expression and give it the capacity to manage these resources while stressing complementarities and cooperation between African countries.

Drawing on the expertise gained over 22 years in management of the Francophone fund for audiovisual production in developing countries, which has enabled production of some one thousand films since it was set up, La Francophonie, an international organisation more than half of whose members are African countries, will in this way contribute to implementation of the UNESCO Convention on promoting the diversity of cultural expression, of which it is one of the most ardent supporters. Responding to a recommendation of the African Union and relying on the special relations it entertains with the group of ACP countries (Africa, Caribbean, Pacific), La Francophonie is keen to encourage broad involvement in this initiative in order to ensure the greatest chance of success. The Tunisian national federation of film producers, the national cinema centre of Gabon and the African guild of producers and directors have already expressed their support for the project.

A progress report on creation of the fund will be presented at the Carthage Film Festival in Tunisia in October 2010.

This announcement was made as the Cannes film festival pays tribute to the talent of African filmmakers and confirms selection for the official competition – for the first time in over 10 years – of an African film, *Un Homme qui crie*, by the Chadian filmmaker Mahamat-Saleh Haroun, a film that received a grant from the OIF.

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