



EUROPEAN FILM FESTIVAL 2014

Opening 25th European Film Festival in Tanzania Alliance Française, 27 November 2014 European Union Ambassador Filiberto Ceriani Sebregondi,

Hon, Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Information, Youth Sports & Culture, Ms Sihaba Nkinga

Excellencies, members of the diplomatic corps

Dear Guests from academic institutions, the media, film industry and civil societies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honor and pleasure for me to invite you all to be part of the 25th anniversary of the European Film Festival in Tanzania. Indeed, 2014 is the 25th time the European Union organizes a Film Festival in Tanzania and we are very proud of such continued cultural cooperation.

Quoting from the former President of the European Commission, H.E. José Manuel Barroso, "Culture and science are at the core of the European project as a way of going beyond borders. They also show us what can be achieved when people meet and inspire each other". End of quote.

Cultural events such as the European Film Festival contribute to promoting freedom of expression, respect for individuality and embracing innovativeness. Indeed, they are at the core of the European Union policies and values.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a world that is dramatically changing, fast moving and increasingly competitive we have to invest in skills, creativity, innovation and new technologies to cope. Art opens avenues that lead beyond economic solutions, it fosters job creativity and more inclusive and cohesive societies. Art gives each individual a chance to fulfil her or his potential. Artistic and cultural expression provide identity and promote mutual understanding, thus fostering peace and wellbeing.

Film as a work of art has contributed effectively to making history, preserving it and communicating the culture of each civilization from generation to generation, borders to borders. It is important to build a culture where everyone can have ideas and feel they are valued. I am happy that tonight we have with us Tanzanian film makers and artists, whose efforts in this industry have contributed greatly to giving culture a voice. Let this festival bring also opportunities for interaction and exchange between the European and Tanzanian audio-visual sector.

And speaking of opportunities, Ladies and Gentlemen, especially the youngest here present, I call on you to explore the Erasmus+ scholarship programme, which is funded with 14.7 billion euros over the next seven years – 40% more than what was under the previous period. The programme addresses the existing skills' gap by providing opportunities to 4 million people to study, train and gain work experience abroad. In September this year, we launched here at the Alliance Française the EU info point, which I urge you to make use of and stay informed of.

Hon. Permanent Secretary,

This historical festival is composed by a range of historical films that cut across time, borders, events, people, cultures and much more. The significance of our great histories, of both Africa and Europe, is captured in many ways in each film.

Tonight's opening film, *La Dolce Vita*, is a 1960 Oscar winner film by the great Fellini, which has been deemed immortal. This is a tale of a man who dreams of someday doing something good in life but is instead trapped in the givings and misgivings, highs and lows of life in the streets of my native town of Rome. This imagery depicts the sweet life that most dream of, some chase after and a few actually realize it. Definitely, everybody would need to find out for oneself.

18 Films from 14 countries alongside the European Union are displayed. They come from Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. The screening will continue tomorrow and Saturday; here at the Alliance Française, at the Goethe-Institut and this year also at the University of Dar es Salaam to reach out to our younger audience.

The films take us back to historical moments in Europe, particularly to World War times. As you know 2014 comes 100 years after the start of World War 1, so this year's Film Festival is largely inspired by reflections on the tragic World Wars' experience. Some movies tell true stories about World War 1 and 2 in Europe, some others refer to internal civil wars or rebellions in Europe, others even inspire us through the true story of heroes, such as the Swiss founder of the Red Cross or the Swedish PM Olaf Palme. A number of films tell about paradox of modern life's differences, such as the Oscar prized "la Dolce Vita" or the tragicomedy around the fall of the Berlin Wall called "Good Bye Lenin". Finally other films show the challenging life of Africans in Europe or of Europeans in Africa and teaching us that nothing is ever black or white. I really encourage many of you to go and watch these films: they entertain, educate, and remind us of the importance of respecting human dignity.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I wish to extend my utmost gratitude for the support and organization from all the European diplomatic missions and institutions who participate in this year's festival, namely Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Spain, Switzerland, and the Netherlands, for their financial generosity. Special thanks go also to the EFF Taskforce and to Andersons Limited who have worked tirelessly in organizing this festival, the publicity around it, and have make it a grand reality. Finally, thank you Wahapahapa band for creating a beautiful ambiance here as we wine and nibble the wonderful canapés from Le Bistro.

To your ministry and its institutions, Hon. Permanent Secretary, you have been patient and cooperative throughout the process; and for that we are grateful.

Let tonight emphasize on our bond of cooperation and let it celebrate the great friendship between Tanzania and Europe.

Na sasa tukafurahie sinema yetu! Asanteni na karibuni