
The End Of Poverty? Think Again. UK film screening features panel with leading voices on world poverty.

Press Release
26 November 2009

The British Film Institute and Share The World's Resources will be screening the award winning documentary 'The End of Poverty?' at the BFI Southbank on 12th December 2009 at 2pm.

The screening will be followed by a lively panel discussion and Q&A session led by Colin Prescod, chair of the Institute of Race Relations. Panellists will include Irene Khan – secretary general of Amnesty International, Clare Short MP, the film's director Philippe Diaz, and John Hilary – executive director of War on Want.

The End Of Poverty?, which gained critical acclaim following its debut at Cannes 2008 and 25 international film festivals, investigates the historical and political causes of poverty in the world. Dubbed by critics as '*An Inconvenient Truth* for global economics', the film reveals that poverty is not an 'accident' but the result of military conquest, slavery and the colonisation of land and resources over several centuries.

"This film is about injustice...and inequalities which grow wider and wider every year, and about answering the daunting question: *Why, in a world of so much wealth, do we still have so much poverty, where billions of people live on less than one dollar a day?*," explains Philippe Diaz, the film's director. "Our economic system since colonial times requires cheap labour and cheap resources from the Global South to succeed and to finance our lifestyle in the North. Without changing that we will never alleviate poverty.

"Ultimately the goal of the film was to change the dialogue around the poverty debate from 'poverty is a shame', to 'poverty exists for a reason'."

Filmed over four continents from the slums of Africa to the barrios of Latin America, the documentary is narrated by the award winning actor Martin Sheen and features expert insights from: Nobel prize winners in Economics, Amartya Sen and Joseph Stiglitz; acclaimed authors Susan George, Eric Toussaint, Chalmers Johnson, and ex-'economic hit man' John Perkins; university professors William Easterly and Michael Watts, amongst many others.

The film explores how the causes of poverty stem from the exploitative economic system developed through the colonial era and since perpetuated through unfair trade, debt repayment and unjust taxes on labour and consumption. As Clifford Cobb of the Schalkenbach Foundation explains in the film; "The resources of the world are given to all of us, and yet a handful of people and corporations have control of them ... if we could enable everyone to benefit from those resources, we could end poverty."

The End Of Poverty? has been embraced by activists and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) worldwide for its 'direct talk' about the role of free market policies in causing and perpetuating global poverty. Campaign groups that have endorsed the film include: Share The World's Resources, Amnesty International, ATTAC (Association for the Taxation of Financial Transactions to Aid Citizens), CADTM (Committee for the Abolition of the Third World Debt), Global Call to Action against Poverty (GCAP), InterAction, Jubilee Debt Campaign, Make Poverty History, Tax Justice Network, Transnational Institute, and the UN Millennium Campaign.

Following the screening, the BFI's Delegates Centre will offer complimentary refreshments and host a range of organisations providing more information about the issues raised in the film with opportunities for discussion and campaigning.

For more information about the event, including details of panellists and how to book tickets, visit www.stwr.org/endofpoverty

Press contact:

Rajesh Makwana, director of Share The World's Resources, rajesh@stwr.org, +44 (0)20 7609-3034

Notes to the editors:

Share The World's Resources (STWR) advocates for governments to secure basic human needs by sharing essential resources such as water, energy and staple food. www.stwr.org.

The BFI (British Film Institute) promotes understanding and appreciation of Britain's rich film and television heritage and culture. Established in 1933, the BFI runs a range of activities and services. The screening is part of the African Odysseys matinee series, programmed by the African Caribbean Consultative Committee in conjunction with the BFI. www.bfi.org.uk.

Irene Khan is Amnesty International's seventh secretary general and has taken the helm as the first woman, the first Asian and the first Muslim to guide the world's largest human rights organisation. She is the author of the recent Amnesty publication 'The Unheard Truth – Poverty and Human Rights', which represents Amnesty's new focus on global poverty.

Clare Short MP was Secretary of State for the UK Department for International Development from 1997 to May 2003. DFID was a new ministry created after the 1997 general election to promote policies for sustainable development and the elimination of poverty. She is currently the Independent Labour MP for Birmingham Ladywood.

John Hilary is executive director of War on Want, a charity that fights poverty in developing countries in partnership with people affected by globalisation. He has worked for the past 20 years in the international development and human rights sector, and is a recognised expert in many fields across the global justice agenda.

Colin Prescod has worked in film, television, theatre and academia. He is chair of the Institute of Race Relations in London, and a member of the editorial working committee of the international journal 'Race and Class', as well as chair of the Association for Cultural Advancement through Visual Art (ACAVA).

Philippe Diaz is the award-winning producer and director of 'The End of Poverty?'. Having attained international acclaim for many of his productions since the 1980s, he established Cinema Libre Studio in 2003 with a consortium of partners as a vehicle for intelligent, independent films to be financed, produced and distributed.

The End Of Poverty? is produced by Cinema Libre Studio in collaboration with the Robert Schalkenbach Foundation, and has been officially selected by over 25 international film festivals. More information about the film as well as trailers, clips and images for download are available at:
www.theendofpoverty.com

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Share The World's Resources

PO Box 52662
London N7 8UX
United Kingdom

Phone

+44 (0) 20 7609 3034

Email

info@stwr.org

Website

www.stwr.org

