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# AN OPEN LETTER TO ANGELINA JOLIE

TWEET



Details Published on Sunday, 07 November 2010 12:30 Written by Association of Woman War Victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Dear Ms. Jolie,

Women, war victims in Bosnia and Herzegovina are, together with others, worried and restless with the news of your intent with which you wish to promote, before the eyes of the world, your movie "Untitled Bosnian Love Story", which we understand stands to falsify the historic truth about the crimes of mass gang rapes of Bosniak women in the 1992-1995 period, when our country was subjected to a brutal aggression. We understand it will be based upon a "loving surrender" of Bosniak women to their rapists and representatives of a country which planned, directed and commanded the execution of all of the crimes committed, including the crimes of sexual abuse which was to serve as a means of denationalizing and dehumanizing the victims.



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That suffering is the truth, the whole truth and the only truth and we are prepared to defend that truth until the Judgment Day. That truth is not only the truth in my personal and painful experience, but also in the experience of thousands recorded and documented witness accounts of women ages of 12 to 80, which were subjected to the most torturous rapes and repeated rapes and other sexual abuse in 67 municipalities of Bosnia and Herzegovina under the forces of the attackers.

Association Woman, War Victim have a body of evidence exceeding one thousand prima facie witness accounts of the victims of sexual violence. The Institute for Research of Crimes Against Humanity and Crimes Against International Law, a data base showing that the rapes of Bosniak women, as well as rapes of Serbian women whose matrimonial partners were Bosniak men, were done systemically and with generalized and uniform fashion evidently originating in Belgrade. The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, in The Hague, took those cases as the objective elements of group crimes and the essential element of the intent to commit genocide. Crimes of sexual violence were committed according to a predetermined plan of execution which, in the words of the genocide researchers were "generalized crimes".

Does your screenplay even remotely reflect the researched and verified pattern used in the commission of those horrendous crimes against thousands of raped women?

Do the ideas, messages and statements in the screenplay, and how many of them, stand in contrast of the reality taken to be the movie's theme?

Those are some of the fundamental questions which the women of Bosnia and Herzegovina are posing and expecting to have them answered.

We can not accept any falsification of the reality which thousands of raped women were subjected to.

WE may not prohibit or prevent you from making the movie according to your own intentions, but we can and will do everything in our power to publicly proclaim your movie as compromising the truth should its message and contents run against the reality.

All those who know the psychology of a victim who is a woman and upon whom a horrendous war crime of rape was committed know that it is not possible that a woman thus raped, unless she is a pathological case, fall in love with her rapist. That is well known to those who know and understand the culture and tradition of Muslim women, Bosniak women.

Neither the victims, nor the movie-makers would be well served should the movie present a falsified reality. The art ceases to be art if in its search for ideas it turns to falsifying reality. The protagonists in your movie, who vehemently and publicly defend the message of your movie, are more versed in the psychology of drug addicts rather than in the psychology of the pain of a woman who is a war victim of sexual violence.

The cinema artists who forcefully defend what you wish to portray in the movie are both morally and materially corrupt, or have been brought up so as to not have the ability to empathize with the pain of a victim. To illustrate, it would be as if you were trying to make a movie Untitled Love Story, using the same screenplay and instead of

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The Careerists

a Serbian male have a Taliban one, and instead of a Bosniak woman an American one. We believe that the American women would be as worried and as deeply hurt as we will be if your project continues based upon a falsified reality.

As our worries are based upon our experiences as victims we would like, before the movie goes into production, to meet and have our experts in the areas of sociology and psychology of the movie-making, as well as our researchers of war crimes review the screenplay so as to have the message of your movie be in harmony with the social reality, as it has been done in producing a number of movies in the past.

One of many a movie from the American movie industry, For Love of Liberty, directed by Frank Martin, showed honest and goodwill depiction of the love of an African American towards his homeland, the United States. That movie has helped the American public to better understand the real character of an African American.

Movies like that unite peoples and races. As we see today, the American people have elected an African American as their president. We wish for your movie to be honest and show to the world wide audience the truth of the way the rapists raped their victims and how the victims really felt following that horrendous crime.

There is no difference between a documentary and a feature movie when it comes to truth. Your movie deals with the identity of a determined group - the Bosniak community. Therefore our community is rightly concerned as to how their character is going to be presented - normal or pathological, real or falsified. To present an actual social reality in a falsified fashion is not art.

The movies about the Holocaust are all based upon the horrors of actual suffering of the Jews, without exception.

Truth is essential in quest for justice, and justice is essential in search for peaceful coexistence. Only the expressed truth, including truth presented in cinematography can help the people in Bosnia and Herzegovina find the inner peace, re-establish the trust and embark upon a path of coexistence and tolerance. Your movie can achieve that if it is so done as to achieve that. It is a standard expected of you as a cinematographer as well as an Ambassador of the UNHCR, recognized the world over.

Wishing that you will seriously take this request, which, in the words of Elie Wiesel, may be referred to "the cry to all good and honest people", we expect of you to assure us, in person, that our fears of your movie projecting to the world a false perception of Bosniaks, and especially the Bosniak women, as victims of the genocide committed during the armed aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina, is unfounded.

It is a sacred duty of all people, and especially the victims who survived horrendous crimes, including the crime of genocide, committed in the heart of Europe at the end of the twentieth century, to speak the truth and unmask lies and falsehoods.

Therefore we request that you will accept our invitation, twice handed to you by Mr. Hussein Navida, Head of the UNHCR in Sarajevo, and meet with our representatives and victims as it would be a good exercise for everybody in this contentious issue.

Hoping to see you soon, I remain

Sincerely Yours,

**Bakira Hasecic**

President of Association Woman, War victim

**Murat Tahirovic**

President of Association of Survivors of Death Camps

Dated in Sarajevo, October 25, 2010

*Response of Angelina Jolie could be seen if you click on the second photo of the article to enlarge it.*

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