

XV YEARS

**OSLO
FREEDOM
FORUM**

**JUNE 13-15
2023**

Oslo, Norway

XV YEARS OSLO FREEDOM FORUM

15 YEARS OF THE OSLO FREEDOM FORUM

27

Events

350+

Speakers

100+

Countries
Represented

494K+

Social Media
Follows

18K+

Attendees

19M+

Video Views

11K+

Articles
About OFF

\$332M

Earned
Media Value

CELEBRATING SOLIDARITY 2023 THEME

When the Oslo Freedom Forum (OFF) first started, it was a one-time gathering to celebrate those who bravely challenged 20th-century Fascism, Communism, and despotic military rule. Fifteen years later, more than 350 dissident voices from over 100 countries have shared stories of bravery and resilience at OFF.

Millions have now witnessed how seemingly ordinary citizens can challenge the world's deadliest tyrants, willing to speak out against them and even risk arrest, torture, or death. In turn, OFF has given life to unique partnerships, collaborations, impact, and support for at-risk advocates and civil society organizations.

The theme of the 15th annual Forum, "Celebrating Solidarity," honored the unity and community that the Human Rights Foundation (HRF) and our innumerable friends around the world have fostered over the last decade and a half. We recognized that only together can we truly unravel tyranny.

XV YEARS OSLO
FREEDOM
FORUM



Iranian actress and human rights activist Nazanin Boniadi

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GLOBAL MEDIA IMPACT



Swazi human rights lawyer Mzwandile Masuku and "Oh My World" host Hagar Chemali

MEDIA IMPACT

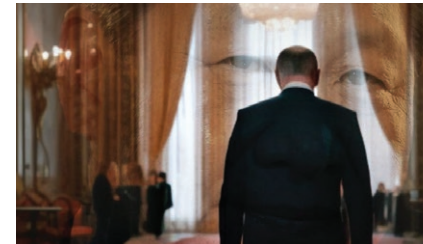
OSLO FREEDOM FORUM IN THE NEWS

515
MENTIONS

21
LANGUAGES

305
SOURCES


35
COUNTRIES



THE SIGNAL


Conspiracies of Hope

John Gould
June 2023



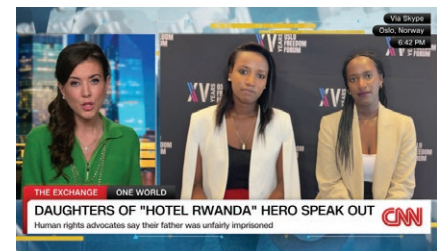
Most Russians 'sitting on the fence and waiting for this horror to end,' Garry Kasparov said

Christiane Amanpour
June 2023

Paul Rusesabagina speaks out after prison release

Julia Chatterley
June 2023




An overview of the Financial Freedom track

Mackenzie Sigalos
June 2023



MONOCLE

An interview with Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe

Isabella Jewell
June 2023



NATIONAL REVIEW

A 'Tribe' of Freedom Fighters

Jay Nordlinger
June 2023



EL PAÍS

El manual para derrocar dictaduras de Sdrja Popovic: "Hay que encontrar los tentáculos del dinero y cortarlos uno a uno"

Patricia R. Blanco
June 2023



POLITICO

Activists say the human rights movement is failing

Nahal Toosi
June 2023

POLITICO

Outwitting the North Korean regime

Nahal Toosi
June 2023



VOGUE

SCANDINAVIA

Designer and activist Louise Xin urges us to 'wear our values' with her latest fashion show

MEDIA IMPACT

SOCIAL MEDIA HITS

650+ UNIQUE POSTS

700K+ VIDEO VIEWS

3M+ IMPRESSIONS

Félix Maradiaga @maradiaga

Les invito a sumarse a la campaña global por la liberación de Monseñor Alvarés y de otros presos políticos del mundo: endarbitrarydetention.org

Agradezco al foro de la libertad de Oslo (Oslo Freedom Forum) y organizaciones internacionales aliadas, por ayudarnos a generar presión global frente a esta situación de detención arbitraria.

#OsloFF #FreeBishopAlvarez

11:53 AM · Jun 13, 2023 · 17.9K Views

Patricia R. Blanco @PatriciaRBlanco

Masterclass para derrocar dictadores de @SrđjaPopović, el activista serbio que lideró el movimiento que precipitó la caída de Milošević: "Hay que encontrar los tentáculos del dinero y cortarlos uno a uno" @OsloFF

3:42 AM · Jun 19, 2023 · 18.8K Views

Yeonmi Park @YeonmiParkNK

I will never ever take FREEDOM for granted. Celebrating Solidarity at Oslo Freedom Forum with fellow freedom fighters ❤️

#HRF @OsloFF

1:27 PM · Jun 13, 2023 · 46.1K Views

Masud Gharahkhani @MasudGh

Hadde gleden av å åpne Oslo Freedom Forum 2023. Arena for menneskerettighetsforkjempere i hele verden. Jeg avsluttet talen med «Et fritt menneske har mange drømmer. Et ufritt menneske har kun én drøm. La oss være deres stemme!» #IranProtesters

2:30 PM · Jun 13, 2023 · 2,512 Views

Jay Nordlinger @jaynordlinger

There are many courageous Cubans, and Abraham Jiménez Enoa (@JimenezEnoa) is one of them. I have talked with him at the Oslo Freedom Forum (@OsloFF). You will be pleased to know him.

7:57 AM · Jun 20, 2023 · 11.3K Views

Carine Kanimba @ckanimba

More authoritarian regimes like #Rwanda #Iran & #Russia are taking hostages, and wrongfully detaining innocent people to advance diplomatic agendas. At the @OsloFF, I spoke w/ @FreeNazanin @jrezalaan @AnaiseKanimba & @kylieatwood on this crisis & the need to end hostage diplomacy.

6:12 AM · Jun 19, 2023 · 12.6K Views

Antje Schippmann @antjeschippmann

Leaders of democratic countries have to stop saving the Islamic Republic, especially while their own citizens are being kidnapped by the regime, says @AlinejadMasih at @OsloFF, highlighting the case of Jamshid Sharmahd, the German citizen sentenced to death in Iran. #SaveSharmahd

81 Retweets 1 Quote 179 Likes

Masih Alinejad @AlinejadMasih

Today at my address at @OsloFF on #WomanLifeFreedom revolution in Iran, I had a message for the international community: Our revolution is continuing as brave Iranian men and women engage in daily acts of civil disobedience to end the Islamic Republic. Western governments should support the Iranian people, not the oppressive regime.

370 Retweets 6 Quotes 1,216 Likes 2 Bookmarks

Christiane Amanpour @amanpour

Vladimir Kara-Murza finally "had his first... phone conversation with his kids" from Russian prison in over a year, @ekaramurza tells me, "I was not there to even hear his voice, and that breaks my heart... but I'm happy that the kids... got to talk to their father for 15 minutes."

1:41 PM · Jun 13, 2023 · 75.8K Views

Free Alaa @FreedomForAlaa

WATCH: Alaa's sister @Sana2's searingly beautiful speech at #OsloFreedomForum received with a standing ovation: "Our story is not one of success, strength or freedom. It's a story of defeat, vulnerability, resilience & the beauty of solidarity" Together we can #FreeAlaa Take Action: tinyurl.com/2p8mdhfa

10:19

5 Last edited 12:42 PM · Jun 16, 2023 · 48.2K Views

158 Retweets 17 Quotes 216 Likes 11 Bookmarks

Louise Xin · 2nd award winning Fashion designer/ Humanitarian& enviro... + Follow

Latest show at Oslo Freedom Forum
Thank you everyone from the bottom of my heart for making this possible.

It's almost like having a blackout. Everytime before I get on stage everything blurs out and I never remember what I said afterwards. The only thing I always pray for is that I've been useful for something so much bigger than me every second of the time that it was given to me.

The truth is there's no such thing as the single narrative. Everything is not black and white and life is not a Disney movie where you have the villain and the hero. In this story every single one of us have a role to play. It's the whole system we have built together as consumers, decision makers and brands that's failing those most vulnerable in our society. Pointing fingers at certain brands won't end it all, someone else will always be willing to jump in and make those money if there's a demand and people are willing to buy. Unless we change the mindset of what we values as a society.

I don't want to tell stories about the forced labour where the companies are the villains and the Uyghur camp survivors are the victim and the rest of us are just watching. After all my conversations with the survivors I see them as the strongest heroes I've ever got the honor to meet. Worth admire are also those CEOs after meeting the survivors decided to lose hundreds of millions dollars and facing potential life threats and encouraged all their friends to do the same. Or the Chinese police men who smuggled candy to the detainees and told them please hold on and don't loose hope. Last but not least those youth who attended my workshop at the European youth event who raise their hands when asked if they would walk out that door today and decide never more shop from their favorite brand using forced labour. Those stories exist and we need to tell them too and show the world there's hope and every single one of us can take part in rewrite the story and make it right.

Photo Emma Grann

Soundtrack for the show is made by
Eric Rosse - renowned film music producer from LA based in Sweden
Damian Ardestani - Artist known for Hunger Game soundtrack
@sofia Karemyr - Swedish actress known for her recent series in HBO and Netflix

Beautiful thread installation by @atelieryokyo
Production @moonageeventproduction

#fashionshow #forcedlabour #uyghur #china

Designer and activist Louise Xin urges us to 'wear our values' with her latest fashion show

with Jewher Itham and 6 others

Grace-Anna Douglas and 82 others

8 comments · 8 reposts

Hillel Neuer @HillelNeuer

"Don't say this is our culture—women kicked out of school if they don't cover themselves. It is an insult to say that. This is the culture of the Islamic Republic of Iran and of the Taliban. We need a Women's March—for the women of Iran and Afghanistan." @AlinejadMasih #OsloFF

456 Retweets 25 Quotes 1,304 Likes 13 Bookmarks

OSLO NORWAY

As the host of the Nobel Peace Prize, a country consistently ranked as one of the freest in international indexes, and with a long-standing commitment to promoting democracy internationally, Norway is a fitting home for the Oslo Freedom Forum. Over the last 15 years, OFF has garnered strong partnerships with Norwegian organizations and companies, support from the local and state governments, and coverage from top Norwegian media outlets.



OSLO, NORWAY

NORWEGIAN SPEAKERS

ERLING RIMESTAD

State Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway

Erling Rimestad first entered Norway's foreign service in 1991. He now serves as state secretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, representing the Labour Party. In his diplomatic efforts, Rimestad has been a vocal supporter of human rights and democracy. The MFA has generously supported OFF through more than five administrations and has consistently sought bilateral meetings between its staff and OFF speakers, helping to inform Norwegian policy on human rights.

MARIANNE BORGEN

Mayor of Oslo, Norway

Marianne Borgen was born in Oslo in 1951 and has served as the city's mayor since 2015. She was first elected as a member of the Oslo City Council in 1979 for the Norwegian Socialist Left Party and has continuously been a member of the City Council since 1995. Throughout her career, she has been a devoted civil servant and rights advocate. The City of Oslo has generously supported OFF from day one, historically hosting our community in their halls for our welcome reception and permitting us to line the city's most prominent street with our banners.

MASUD GHARAKHANI

President of the Norwegian Storting (Parliament)

Masud Gharakhani and his family came to Norway in 1987 as refugees from Iran. Representing the Labour Party, he served on the Buskerud County Council and the Drammen Municipal Council and was Drammen Labour Party's candidate as mayor at two municipal elections. Gharakhani was elected to the Storting, the Norwegian Parliament, in 2017 and was elected President of the Storting in 2021. Gharakhani has long advocated for minority rights and democracy and is a strong critic of all forms of misogyny and discrimination against women. The Storting has played a special role in the Oslo Freedom Forum, welcoming many of our top speakers over the years to tour its premises and interact and inform its lawmakers.

2023 MEDIA COVERAGE IN NORWAY

The Oslo Freedom Forum and its keynote speakers received coverage in Norway in the months leading up to the conference and into early July. With dozens of stories in the country's top media outlets, Norwegian coverage alone garnered over 135 million impressions.



Aftenposten

Det ambisiøse talerøret mot verdens urett

Arild Molstad
June 2023



NRK

Knusande rapport etter VM i Qatar: – Skuffa over Fifa

Ragna Kristine Sandholt, Anne Rognerud, and Nils Christian Mangelrød
June 2023

Aftenposten

Iran: Nazanin Boniadi gir stemme til kvinner som kjemper mot henrettelser og for menneskerettigheter i Iran

Nazneen Khan-Østrem
June 2023



Norge jubler over Haaland's triumf. Vil vi glemme fotballens mørke side?

Sondre Bjørndal
June 2023



Aftenposten

Arven etter VM er løgner

Daniel Røed-Johansen
June 2023



Altzi

Bruker catwalken til å protestere mot kinesiske myndigheter

Åsalinn Arntzen Dale
June 2023

Aftenposten

Han mener at Putin og Xi er svakere enn de gir inntrykk av. Én person bekymrer Francis Fukuyama enda mer.

Kristoffer Rønneberg
June 2023





DNMagasinet

Sjakklegenden vil ha et sjokoladefritt Russland: – Skaper en illusjon av at livet er normalt

Ola Magnussen Rydje
June 2023



Nettavisen.

Verdensberømt statsviter mener Trump er Putins redning

Thomas Paust
June 2023

DNMagasinet

Francis Fukuyama om kunstig intelligens: – Har bare begynt å skrape i overflaten
Magnus Newth
June 2023



Nettavisen.

Han har hjulpet 1000 personer å flykte fra Nord-Korea: – Forferdelig situasjon

Mariann Strand
June 2023



vårtØland

Han er pastoren avhopperne ringer

Sondre Bjørdal
June 2023



E24

Et lite stykke Russland

Torbjørn Røe Isaksen
June 2023

VG

Stille etter stormen

Leif Welhaven
June 2023



DAGEN

Denne pastoren har hjulpet over tusen personer å flykte fra Nord-Korea

Sølve Depui Aksnes
June 2023



STORIES OF IMPACT

OFF has a ripple effect, inspiring policy changes, greater awareness of human rights issues, alliances, and global solidarity for pro-democracy causes. Here are a few examples of the Forum's impact so far:



Malcolm Bidali, a Kenyan human rights defender and migrant workers' rights activist, shared a panel with Jennifer Sarvary Bradford, a crime prevention and criminal justice officer in the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Bradford is connecting Bidali with United Nations offices across Africa and Europe to help secure UN funding for his activism. Through networking opportunities provided at the Forum, Bidali also received interest from the Freedom Fund for prospective financial support, as well as an invitation to attend the Trust Conference.



After attending the "Documenting Conflict Zones: Influencers vs. Photojournalists" panel, producer, director, and filmmaker Benedict Moran offered to work with the panelists to create a documentary. They're currently discussing how to address issues related to human rights in China, Syria, and Ukraine.

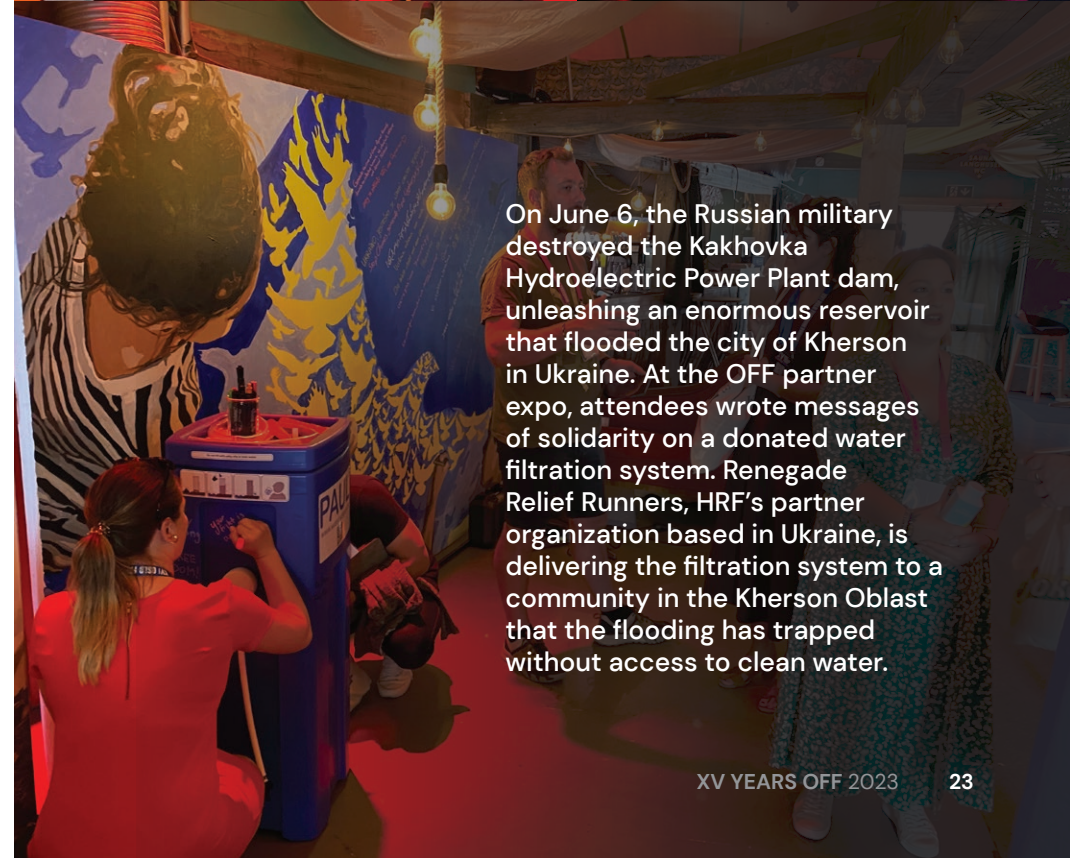


RAZOM

Russian environmental activist and HRF Freedom Fellow Evgenia Chirikova met Razom Executive Director Evelina Kurilets in a closed roundtable organized on the second day of OFF. Chirikova's organization, Activatica, is now in conversation with Razom about how they can amplify each others' efforts to provide humanitarian relief to Ukrainians affected by the war.



A group of Belarusian students in exile networked with OFF speaker and Belarusian journalist Hanna Liubakova and other activists. They contacted the Nobel Peace Prize Center in Oslo to donate a banner with the names of 1,493 political prisoners in Belarus.



On June 6, the Russian military destroyed the Kakhovka Hydroelectric Power Plant dam, unleashing an enormous reservoir that flooded the city of Kherson in Ukraine. At the OFF partner expo, attendees wrote messages of solidarity on a donated water filtration system. Renegade Relief Runners, HRF's partner organization based in Ukraine, is delivering the filtration system to a community in the Kherson Oblast that the flooding has trapped without access to clean water.



At OFF 2022, Carine Kanimba, activist and daughter of “Hotel Rwanda” hero Paul Rusesabagina, discovered — with the help of Citizen Lab, a digital security lab based in Canada — that her phone had been infected with the spyware Pegasus, turning it into a 24-hour surveillance device. By discovering the spyware at OFF, Kanimba could continue freely advocating for her father’s release. On June 27, 2022, she and John Scott-Railton, a senior researcher at Citizen Lab, testified in a public hearing before the United States House Intelligence Committee, urging Congress to oppose the use of commercial spyware and discourage investment. In March 2023, the Human Rights Foundation welcomed Paul Rusesabagina’s release from prison, and Carine took to the OFF stage again in 2023 to discuss the impact that her talk at OFF had on her father’s release, before introducing a video message from Paul thanking HRF for its advocacy efforts to ensure his release.



After collaborating at the Forum, HRF will now work with the Centre for Applied Nonviolent Action and Strategies (CANVAS) to incorporate financial freedom tools and strategies into their training, workshops, and fellowship programs with activists and civil society leaders from around the world.



HRF and the Sjøholmen Center hosted the first-ever OFF Camp for Kids, an interdisciplinary human rights camp of fun activities, sports, and educational programming around the city of Oslo. The camp allowed children to engage with important themes from the Forum, such as human rights, freedom, and democracy.

THEATER TALKS: A SNAPSHOT



Ukrainian politician
Lisa Yasko



FÉLIX MARADIAGA [Nicaragua]
Nicaraguan democracy advocate

Félix Maradiaga, a democracy advocate and outspoken critic of the Daniel Ortega regime in Nicaragua, was arbitrarily arrested in 2021 after announcing his intention to run for president. After spending nearly two years in the regime's most notorious prison, he was forced into exile in February.

In one of the most touching moments on this year's OFF stage, Maradiaga spoke about the importance of standing in solidarity with prisoners of conscience. He credited his 9-year-old daughter, Alejandra, who joined him on stage, for giving him strength throughout his imprisonment.

THEATER TALKS: A SNAPSHOT



HANNA LIUBAKOVA [Belarus]
Exiled Belarusian journalist

Hanna Liubakova is a Belarusian journalist, analyst, and non-resident fellow at the Atlantic Council. She has written about the latest developments in Belarus for The Washington Post, The Economist, Open Democracy, and the Conversationist. Liubakova started her career at the only independent Belarusian channel, Belsat TV, where she worked as a correspondent and presenter. She was a recipient of the Václav Havel Journalism Fellowship at Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty in Czechia and the World Press Institute Fellowship in the United States.

At the end of her talk, Liubakova instructed the audience to reach under their seats, where they found the names and faces of Belarus' 1,500 prisoners of conscience. The audience held up the pictures in a moment of solidarity with political prisoners. On Day 3 of the Forum, attendees had the opportunity to write letters of support to prisoners of conscience within HRF's community, which were then mailed to their friends and family to remind them they are not forgotten.



MZWANDILE MASUKU [Eswatini]
Swazi human rights lawyer

Mzwandile B. Masuku is a Swazi human rights lawyer and the son of the late prominent opposition leader Mario Masuku. With political parties banned in Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), Masuku and his family have suffered persecution and reprisals from the regime of King Mswati III, Africa's last absolute monarch. In 2009, he launched, with the late renowned human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko, the only law firm in the kingdom fully dedicated to public interest litigation and pro-bono legal representation. Despite threats, intimidation, and the January 2023 assassination of Maseko, Masuku continues to champion the rights of detained individuals and advocate for nonviolent democratic reform.

Masuku discussed his pro bono legal work with the late renowned human rights lawyer Thulani Maseko, who was assassinated in January 2023. Following his talk, Maseko's wife, Tanele Maseko, took the stage to honor her late husband's work defending human rights in Eswatini. "We will not be intimidated. We will fight. We will never surrender!" she said.

THEATER TALKS: A SNAPSHOT



KALBINUR SIDIK

[Uyghur Region]

Uzbek survivor of China's genocide & eyewitness to the camps

Kalbinur Sidik served as an elementary school teacher in Ürümchi (capital of the Uyghur Region) for 28 years until March 2017, when she was forced to work as a Chinese-language instructor in a hastily constructed all-male internment camp. After six months, she was transferred to a facility holding 10,000 women. She was forced to have an IUD fitted in 2017 and undergo sterilization in early 2019. Her daughter in the Netherlands campaigned for her release, and Sidik reached safety at the end of 2019. Her request for asylum is currently pending. Sidik testified before the UK Uyghur Tribunal in June 2021 and US Congress in March 2023.



GULBAHAR HAITIWAJI

[Uyghur Region]

Uyghur survivor of China's concentration camps

Gulbahar Haitiwaji worked as an engineer in the Uyghur region before leaving with her daughters to join her husband, who had sought asylum in France. In 2016, she was tricked into returning to China and vanished into the camps. Haitiwaji's daughter, Gulhumar, a French citizen, campaigned tirelessly for her mother's release. In 2019, after enduring two years in the camps and half a year under house arrest, Haitiwaji was allowed to return to France. Her book, "How I Survived a Chinese 'Reeducation' Camp," is the first published account describing life and brutalities in the camps. Haitiwaji testified before the UK Uyghur Tribunal in 2021 and US Congress in March 2023.



Gulbahar Haitiwaji and Kalbinur Sidik shed light on the horrors they witnessed in China's Uyghur concentration camps. Currently, more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs are arbitrarily detained and working at forced labor camps across China. Beyond the main stage, attendees learned more about Uyghur forced labor and consumers' role in it at HRF's Discounted Lives exhibit, which highlighted the hidden costs of fast fashion manufactured in China.

THEATER TALKS: A SNAPSHOT



NAZANIN BONIADI [Iran]
Iranian actress and human rights activist

Nazanin Boniadi is a renowned human rights activist and Iranian-born actress known for her roles in “Homeland” and “The Lord of the Rings: The Rings of Power.” She is an outspoken advocate for prisoners of conscience in Iran and, in 2022, became a leading voice in the protests against the Iranian regime’s murder of Mahsa Amini. She currently serves as an Amnesty International UK ambassador and is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations.

Boniadi spoke about the bravery of Iranian women who continue to call for women’s rights and justice for Mahsa Amini despite the Islamic Republic’s threats of violence, imprisonment, and death. Following her talk, Rana Mansour sang a moving rendition of “Women, Life, Liberty (Baraye),” an anthem of the 2022 Iranian Revolution composed of real tweets posted by protesters.



VÍCTOR NAVARRO [Venezuela]
Venezuelan human rights activist

Víctor Navarro is a journalist and former political prisoner who was arbitrarily detained in 2018 and held in El Helicoide, Venezuela’s largest and most notorious torture center. He fled to Argentina in 2019, where he lives in exile. He is the executive director of Voces de la Memoria, an NGO at the intersection of technology and human rights, and the creator of the VR experience, Helicoide.

At OFF 2023, Navarro described how he transformed his experience in Venezuela’s most notorious torture center into a VR project, “El Helicoide Reality,” to help people around the world understand the plight of prisoners of conscience. Attendees could also view “El Helicoide Reality” at the interactive expo and speak one-on-one with Navarro about the experience.

THE HAVEL PRIZE

The Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent, named in honor of the late Czech president, playwright, dissident, and former HRF chairman, celebrates the power of art and creativity in the struggle for human rights. The 2023 recipients are:



NICARAGUA

PEDRO X. MOLINA

Nicaraguan journalist and cartoonist



Molina is a Nicaraguan political cartoonist who was forced into exile on Christmas Day 2018 after Nicaraguan dictator Daniel Ortega's political police killed a journalist, jailed two others, and ransacked the offices of *El Confidencial* — the digital newspaper that featured Molina's biting caricatures of Ortega and his tyranny. Molina published his first two cartoons in *Barricada* in 1995, later becoming a cartoonist for the digital outlet *El Confidencial*. In 2019, he received the Maria Moors Cabot Prize, awarded by Columbia University. The same year, *Americas Quarterly* recognized him as one of its Top 5 Latin American political humorists.

UGANDA

KAKWENZA RUKIRABASHAIJA

Ugandan lawyer and novelist



Rukirabashaija is a prominent Ugandan novelist recognized by English PEN in 2021 as a Writer of Courage and a fierce critic of the dictatorship of Yoweri Museveni. He has shown exceptional courage and defiance despite being imprisoned and tortured three times since 2020 for his irreverent writing and books. In late December 2021, Rukirabashaija was kidnapped from his home and taken to an army base, where he was illegally detained for one month because of his tweets criticizing Museveni and his son. Rukirabashaija was so severely tortured he was released only on medical grounds. He was charged with "offensive communication" under Uganda's repressive Computer Misuse Act. In February 2022, he fled to Germany for medical treatment; he vowed to return to Uganda to face trial after his medical treatment.

THE HAVEL PRIZE

UKRAINE

The third prize was shared by four Ukrainian artists.



YURIY KERPATENKO

Late Ukrainian musician and principal conductor of the Kherson Regional Philharmonic

Kerpatenko was a renowned Ukrainian musician and principal conductor of the Kherson Regional Philharmonic. In October 2022, Russian troops assassinated Kerpatenko in his home at point-blank range after he refused to conduct a concert under the rule of Russian invading forces in Kherson, Ukraine. The concert was meant to portray an “improvement of peaceful life” in the occupied city, but Kerpatenko “categorically refused to cooperate with the occupants,” the Ukrainian Ministry of Culture and Information Policy later confirmed. Kerpatenko led his hometown’s orchestra for more than 20 years before he was murdered. The Havel Prize was presented posthumously to Kerpatenko for his courageous stance against the Russian forces’ repeated attempts at “artwashing” their illegal occupation of Ukraine.



ART RESIDENCY IN OCCUPATION

Ukrainian underground art society

Art Residency in Occupation is an underground art society created by curator Yuliia Manukian. During the occupation of Kherson, Ukraine, six resident artists secretly met in a basement studio at the initiative of Manukian to produce works showcasing the death and destruction in the southern city, offering viewers an opportunity to understand the scope of the war. Through this residency, Manukian sought to provide shelter for artists and gave them the opportunity to tell stories of war through the language of art. While written journalism can distance an outsider from the reality of current life in Ukraine, Manukian believes that the group’s collection of drawings, paintings, photographs, diary entries, and videos convey the raw truth.



STAND UP FOR UKRAINE

Ukrainian and Lithuanian artist collective

Stand Up for Ukraine is a project that brings people together through the universal language of music, reminding us that art can transcend boundaries, challenge oppressive ideologies, and ignite a collective spirit of solidarity. The performance project, curated by Neringa Rekašiūtė, Eglė Plytnikaitė, and Elvina Nevardauskaitė, seeks to spark hope and empowerment and encourage people to stand united against a totalitarian regime that undermines human dignity. It consists of a live performance where the 22-year-old Ukrainian singer and refugee, Elizaveta Izmalkova, is joined by passersby singing along to the folk song “Chervona Kalyna” — a symbol of Ukrainian resilience and freedom.



MARIIA LONIUK

Ukrainian artist

Loniuk is a Ukrainian freelance artist specializing in digital art. Since Vladimir Putin’s 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Loniuk has created vivid and touching illustrations about the war, conveying the feelings and images Ukrainians face. Her drawings capture the devastation of cities, homes, and human lives, the ubiquity of death and suffering, and the war’s destruction. Despite this, her illustrations also highlight the tremendous bravery and determination of the Ukrainian army and the courage and solidarity of the Ukrainian people as they defend their freedom.

ART & PERFORMANCES

LOUISE XIN FASHION SHOW

OFF partnered with designer and activist Louise Xin to host a fashion show that urged consumers to “wear our values,” in line with HRF’s program by the same name. The fashion show, held at a leading event space in Norway, Høymagasinet, featured Xin’s couture brand that put Uyghur forced labor on the map for the mainstream fashion industry. Norwegian model and climate activist Ada Martini and Uyghur models Sano Turdiev and Ayesha Erkin were among the models who donned Xin’s 3D floral appliqués, sculpted folds, and enticing prints.



RANA MANSOUR [IRAN]

Rana Mansour is an Iranian-American singer-songwriter whose music bridges the East and the West. Most recently, she made global headlines for her performance of Shervin Hajipour’s Grammy Award-winning protest song dedicated to Mahsa Amini, “Baraye” (“For Women, Life, Liberty”), for which Hajipour was detained in Iran.

ZARA LARSSON

[SWEDEN]

Zara Larsson is a Swedish pop singer who, in 2016, rose to the international stage as a vivid songwriter with a vibrant voice. Her three full-length albums and various collaborations have generated billions of streams, attracting an ardent global fan base and earning numerous multi-platinum certifications. Larsson collected awards at the Swedish Grammy Awards, Nickelodeon Kids' Choice Awards, and MTV EMAs. Throughout her career, she has maintained a strong commitment to women's rights and activism. In 2020, Larsson ended her partnership with China's Huawei to promote its smartphones, saying, "it's not a nice state."



ART & PERFORMANCES



OSLO STRINGS [NORWAY]

Oslo Strings is an innovative string ensemble based in Oslo, Norway, featuring Kaja Fjellberg Pettersen on cello, and Ragnhild Lien, Isa Caroline Holmesland, and Lise Sørensen Voldsdal on violin and viola. With a repertoire that includes their own string arrangements, backing vocals, and the ability to play a range of instruments, Oslo Strings brings a unique touch to every performance. Their collaborations have spanned a diverse range of artists, including Madrugada, Maria Mena, Karpe, Gabrielle, Erlend Ropstad, Cezinando, Minor Majority, Jan Eggum, and Daniel Kvammen.



MANASSEH MATHIANG [SOUTH SUDAN]

Manasseh Mathiang is an exiled South Sudanese musician and peace advocate. Throughout his many years of activism, Mathiang has harnessed the power of art and music to foster public discourse and bring awareness to social injustices. In 2016, he co-founded the South Sudanese youth movement and artist collective #Anataban. After fleeing to Kenya, he founded Hagiga, a pro-democracy movement promoting freedom of expression through artistic storytelling.

ART & PERFORMANCES



RAMY ESSAM [EGYPT]

Ramy Essam is an Egyptian musician best known for his appearances in Cairo's Tahrir Square during the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. His song "Irhal" ("Leave") garnered worldwide attention, as the lyrics served as a plea to demand the resignation of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. Time Out referred to the anthem as the third-most-world-changing song of all time. Often referred to as the "singer of the Egyptian Revolution," Essam has faced backlash, with his songs banned in Egypt. Now living in exile, he is a 2019 Laureate of HRF's Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent.



"FORGING YOUR OWN PATH" ART EXHIBITION [CUBA]

From June 12–16, HRF hosted "Forging Your Own Path," an art exhibition featuring 12 Cuban artists, including TIME "Icon," founder of Movimiento San Isidro, and current political prisoner of the Cuban dictatorship, Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara. While most featured artists live in forced exile, HRF is proud to have given exposure to two artists who remain in Cuba: Sandra Ceballos and David Peraza. A special gallery tour organized by curator Claudia Genlui to Cuban pro-democracy activist Rosa María Payá and other representatives of the Cuba Decide movement fostered inter-movement solidarity in the Cuban context.

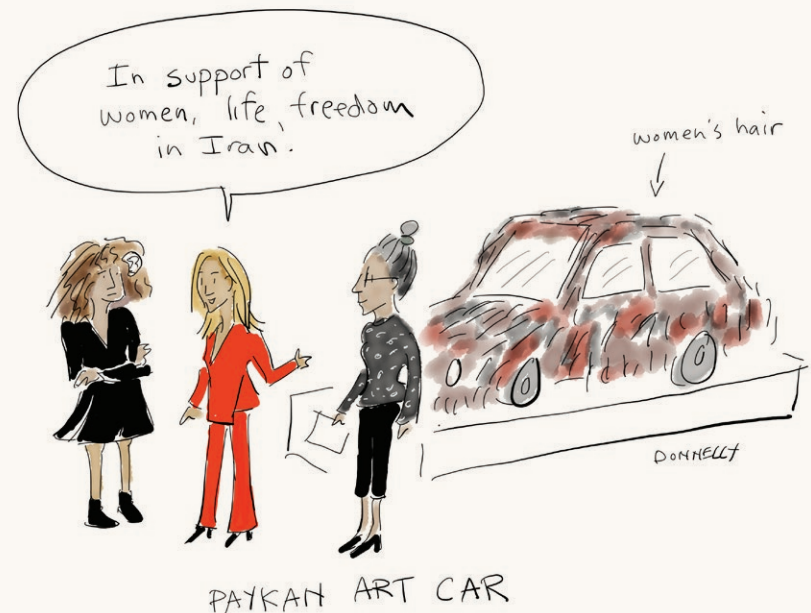
ART & PERFORMANCES



PAYKANARTCAR [IRAN]

PaykanArtCar is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization founded in 2021 to unite the talents of contemporary Iranian artists with a beloved symbol of national pride: the Paykan automobile. Through creativity, the organization advocates for the restoration of human rights and dignity for all in Iran, no matter their race, religion, gender, or their sexual orientation.

The first edition of the PaykanArtCar earned the Václav Havel International Prize for Creative Dissent at OFF 2022. The second edition of the automobile, revealed in a special ceremony at OFF 2023, amplifies the voices of Iran's Women, Life, Freedom revolution. Simin Keramati, an Iranian-Canadian multidisciplinary artist, was commissioned for the design.



LIZA DONNELLY

Liza Donnelly is a writer and cartoonist with The New Yorker Magazine, providing commentary on culture and politics. Donnelly has created political cartoons and live-drawn cultural and political events for numerous outlets and is the first cartoonist credentialed for the Academy Awards. Donnelly pioneered a form of digital visual journalism, or live drawing, wherein she digitally draws events in real-time and streams them online. She has live-drawn at several OFF events.

INTERACTIVE PROGRAMMING: A SNAPSHOT

Through panel discussions, fireside chats, and workshops, this year's interactive programming challenged participants to think more critically about the issues presented during theater talks, forge partnerships, and create practical, innovative solutions to advance freedom worldwide.



Luis Moreno Ocampo, first prosecutor of the International Criminal Court

INTERACTIVE PROGRAMMING

DAYS 1-2 OSLO KONSERTHUS



HEALING BROKEN HEARTS

Activists in civil society routinely face PTSD and other mental health challenges. This panel provided an opportunity for OFF community members to share their experiences with one treatment modality.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| Thor Halvorssen (Moderator) | HRF chief executive officer |
| Amir Ahmad Nasr | Sudanese journalist, blogger, and author |
| Iyad El-Baghdadi | Palestinian writer and human rights activist |
| Dr. Leyla Hussein, OBE | Psychotherapist |
| Yeonmi Park | North Korean human rights activist |
| Zineb El Rhazoui | Moroccan-French journalist |



IRAN: THE FINAL REVOLUTION?

Mahsa Amini’s murder in 2022 sparked a women-led revolution in Iran. This panel featured activists, policy experts, journalists, and lawyers, offering their perspectives on the revolution and calls to action.

- Kim Ghattas (Moderator)** Author of “Black Wave: Saudi Arabia, Iran, and the Forty-Year Rivalry That Unraveled Culture, Religion, and Collective Memory in the Middle East” and contributing writer at The Atlantic
- Gissou Nia** Human rights lawyer
- Karim Sadjadpour** Senior fellow, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace
- Masih Alinejad** Iranian journalist and women’s rights activist
- Yasmin Green** CEO of Jigsaw



THE GLOBAL HOSTAGE-TAKING CRISIS

Authoritarian regimes are increasingly holding hostages as part of their oppressive tactics. This panel featured former hostages, relatives of former hostages, and experts in the field to share their experiences and how the global community can address this issue.

- Kylie Atwood (Moderator)** National security correspondent at CNN
- Anaïse Kanimba** Human rights activist, genocide survivor, and daughter of formerly detained “Hotel Rwanda” hero, Paul Rusesabagina
- Carine Kanimba** Human rights activist, genocide survivor, and daughter of formerly detained “Hotel Rwanda” hero, Paul Rusesabagina
- Jason Rezaian** Writer for The Washington Post’s Global Opinions
- Nazanin Zaghari-Ratcliffe** Former hostage in Iran



DISCUSSION WITH LUIS MORENO OCAMPO

Luis Moreno Ocampo served as the first chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC). In this discussion, he presented his new book, "War & Justice in the 21st Century," and guided attendees on effectively engaging with and bringing cases to the ICC. A book signing followed the discussion.



IGNITE TALKS WITH HRF'S FREEDOM FELLOWS

The Freedom Fellowship is one of HRF's most innovative programs, where 10 dissidents from authoritarian regimes around the world receive hands-on mentorship from experts in nonviolent movement building. Fellows hailing from Belarus, Cuba, Iraq, and Tibet delivered three-minute Ignite Talks about their current projects and plans for the future.

- Carolina Barrero** Cuban art historian and human rights activist
- Pema Doma** Tibetan human rights and climate campaigner and campaign director of Students for a Free Tibet
- Salman Khairalla** Iraqi environmentalist
- Volya Vysotskaia** Belarusian human rights activist



Carolina Barrero



Pema Doma



Salman Khairalla



Volya Vysotskaia

DAY 3
SALT



A DICTATOR’S PLAYBOOK

LESSONS ON A PEACEFUL RESISTANCE

Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping are leveraging their growing economic, political, and military influence over other authoritarian regimes to circumvent Western pressure and establish an illiberal new world order. This panel explored lessons the global community can learn from atrocities created by Putin and Xi’s influence and what we can do to halt them.

- Josh Rogin (Moderator)** Washington Post columnist
- Eva Kurilets** Executive director of Razom in Ukraine
- Freddy Tshiong-Tso Lim** Taiwanese congressman, human rights activist, and metal singer
- Omar Alshogre** Director of Detainee Affairs, Syrian Emergency Task Force
- Tafi Mhaka** Zimbabwean political commentator



EXPOSING THE KLEPTOCRATS

HOW TO COUNTER THE CORRUPT NETWORKS PROPPING UP MODERN DICTATORS

Modern dictatorships span a broad range of ideologies, from far-right nationalists to brutal Communist regimes. But there’s one element they all have in common: corruption. How did corruption become the strand tying all of these dictators together, and what can be done to expose these kleptocrats and unwind their networks of illicit finance?

- Casey Michel (Moderator)** Head of Combating Kleptocracy Program at HRF
- Jennifer Ávila** Journalist and editor-in-chief at Contracorriente Honduras
- Kyle Parker** Chief of Staff, US Helsinki Commission
- Miranda Patrucić** Editor-in-chief of the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP)
- Tutu Alicante** Equatoguinean human rights lawyer and activist



DOCUMENTING CONFLICT ZONES

PHOTOJOURNALISTS VS. INFLUENCERS

Documenting conflict zones is not a new phenomenon, but the ethics of this are increasingly coming into focus. Photojournalists are on the frontlines documenting atrocities to inform the world of a dictator’s abuses, while dictators welcome influencers to paint a false picture of the country’s state.

- Anjan Sundaram (Moderator)** Award-winning author and journalist
- Abdulrahman Alkawwas** Archive manager at the White Helmets
- Daria Impiombato** China analyst at the Australian Strategic Policy Institute
- Julianne Romy** Legal advisor at eyeWitness

BUILDING A GRASSROOTS ALLIANCE FOR FREEDOM

In this workshop, Venezuelan democracy advocate Leopoldo López guided activists in organizing a cohesive global movement for freedom. Drawing on his experience as an opposition leader and former prisoner of conscience, López discussed shaping one’s activist narrative, effectively using new technology, and rekindling the global enthusiasm for freedom and democracy.

Leopoldo López

Venezuelan democracy leader



FINANCIAL FREEDOM TRACK

Financial freedom is intimately related to political freedom. Authoritarian regimes abuse their control over the financial system to surveil, seize, and sanction activist bank accounts. In collaboration with renowned Bitcoin educators and experts, HRF hosted over a dozen workshops training activists on how to safely & securely use Bitcoin and other financial freedom tech to escape authoritarian control. Topics included securely & privately accepting donations of digital assets, growing alternative communities & economies under dictatorships, & finding ways to survive even when dictators close the bank accounts of NGOs and social movements.

Speakers included:

- | | |
|------------------|--|
| Nathan Law | Hong Kong pro-democracy activist |
| Farida Nabourema | Togolese writer and blogger |
| Anna Chekhovich | Financial director of the Anti-Corruption Foundation |
| Adam Back | CEO of Blockstream |

EXPO INSTALLATIONS

KONSERTHUS & SALT

EXPO INSTALLATIONS

HRF EXHIBITION

Located in the Oslo Konserthus on the first and second day, the HRF Exhibition featured interactive booths inspired by seven of HRF's programs, as well as a library of books written by former OFF speakers.

For information about all of HRF's programs, please visit hrf.org/programs.

ART IN PROTEST

Syrian artist and former Art in Protest Resident Artist Tammam Azzam curated an exhibition of eight pieces demonstrating art's power as a form of creative dissent.



CELEBRITIES & DICTATORS

Attendees voted for the celebrity they think has been the biggest advocate for human rights in recent years. Amal and George Clooney won with 38% of the vote.



FLASH DRIVES FOR FREEDOM

Flash Drives for Freedom’s booth followed the journey of a USB drive from its donation to reaching the hands of North Koreans, who can view the drive’s contents to access information from outside the country.



RESPONSIBLE FINANCE

Attendees tried out HRF’s Defund Dictators tool to see if their investments are inadvertently propping up authoritarian regimes.



TYRANNY TRACKER

Democracy or authoritarian regime? Attendees guessed the regime type of countries across the world according to HRF’s political regime classification system.



WEAR YOUR VALUES

Our Discounted Lives installation shed light on the hidden cost of Uyghur forced labor in the fashion industry, highlighting the negative impact of purchasing cheap clothing made in China.



IMPACT LITIGATION

Through the story of detained Cuban artist and advocate Luis Manuel Otero Alcántara, the Impact Litigation booth illustrated how HRF litigates on behalf of prisoners of conscience.

SPEAKER LIBRARY

Attendees browsed through a diverse selection of books authored by former OFF speakers, as well as reports published by HRF's Policy Team.



EXPO INSTALLATIONS

PARTNER EXPO

On the third day of the conference, at SALT, HRF's partner organizations showcased a diverse range of projects and initiatives challenging tyranny: from collaborative art projects, to a VR experience, to a digital security help desk for activists.



DOODLING ON DICTATORS

Attendees exercised their right to free expression by defacing and doodling on dictators' portraits to prove they are not above ridicule.

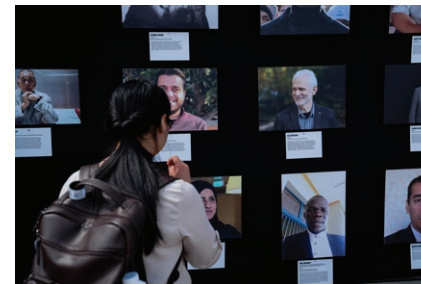
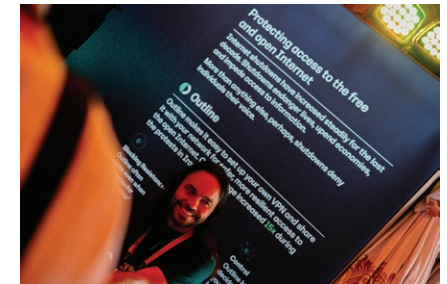


GREATFIRE

GreatFire, an organization that works to counter online censorship in China, showed attendees how to freely access information removed by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP)'s authoritarian rule.

JIGSAW

Jigsaw, a unit within Google that explores threats to open societies, worked alongside human rights defenders to protect access to the Internet.



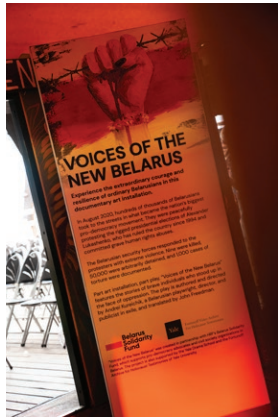
LETTERS TO PRISONERS OF CONSCIENCE

Attendees read about prisoners of conscience in HRF's community and wrote letters of support to them and their families.

RECLAIM ERITREA

Reclaim Eritrea showcased the Eritrea Project, a Google Maps webpage created to raise awareness for human rights abuses in Eritrea and around the world.





VOICES OF THE NEW BELARUS

Part art installation, part play, “Voices of the New Belarus” is authored and directed by Andrei Kureichik, a Belarusian playwright, director, and publicist in exile, and translated by John Freedman. Featuring the monologues of 16 Belarusian political prisoners, the exhibition brings attention to the struggle of the Belarusian people against a brutal despot who, unchained by any moral constraints, relentlessly attacks dissidents.

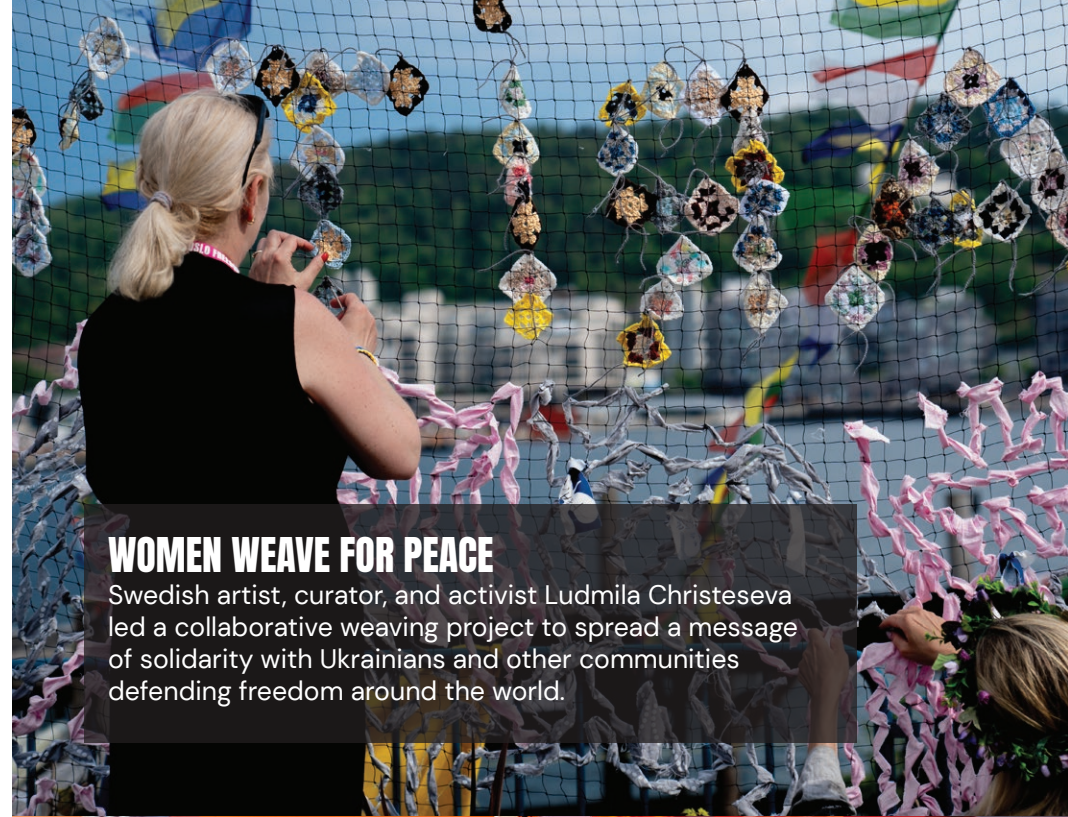
RENEGADE RELIEF RUNNERS

Attendees wrote messages of solidarity with Ukrainians on a water filtration system, which Renegade Relief Runners, a humanitarian aid team, will deliver to Ukraine after OFF.



VENEZUELA INTELIGENTE

Venezuela Inteligente, an organization focused on digital security for activists, hosted private consultations to teach attendees how to protect themselves from threats online.



WOMEN WEAVE FOR PEACE

Swedish artist, curator, and activist Ludmila Christeseva led a collaborative weaving project to spread a message of solidarity with Ukrainians and other communities defending freedom around the world.







VOCES DE LA MEMORIA

VOCES DE LA MEMORIA

Keynote speaker Víctor Navarro and his colleagues from Voces de la Memoria showcased “El Helicoide Reality,” a VR experience that put attendees in the shoes of a prisoner of conscience of Venezuela’s largest torture center.



Join us in Oslo, Norway, June 3–5 for the 16th edition of the Oslo Freedom Forum at the Oslo Konserthus. Buy your tickets at oslofreedomforum.com.

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XV YEARS OSLO
FREEDOM
FORUM

CELEBRATING SOLIDARITY