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United Nations Holds First Film Festival

By **Aubrey Henderson**The **Epoch Times**

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NEW YORK - The first United Nations documentary film festival, "Stories From the Field," was held at the New School University in May, marking the 60th anniversary of the founding of the United Nations.

Out of 88 film entries 44 were shown. The films documented the humanitarian efforts of 20 different UN agencies around the world. The topics covered included third world poverty, efforts to improve primary education, the HIV epidemic, child mortality, and human trafficking. One of the main objectives of the event was to provide the public with information about ongoing projects that aren't covered in the media.

According to Isabelle Broyer of the United Nations, many issues are only covered during a time of crisis but afterwards the general public is left unaware of new developments. The films give "those in the trenches" an opportunity to provide the world with a glimpse of their day-to-day efforts.

Shashi Haroor of the United Nations said that the documentaries "... show how the UN is working with people around the world to make the 'Millennium Development Goals' a reality."

"The Millennium Development Goals, adopted in 2000, serve as an excellent list of priorities about issues that we consider at the heart of our work," said Haroor. The United Nations hopes to reach these various humanitarian goals by 2015.

Following the festival, an award for "best short film" was given to the makers of *Our Bodies, Their Battleground* which focused on the situation in the Congo and Liberia. It specifically addressed the issue of rape and violence against women during and after crises and how the tens-of-thousands of those affected rebuild their shattered lives.

"Human Trafficking" was awarded "best long film." This eye-opening film's objective was to raise awareness about and educate potential victims of human trafficking, especially young women, who may be deceived by attractive job offers abroad.

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