

Hollywood stars slam silence on Gaza genocide on eve of Cannes Film Festival

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Palestinian photojournalist Fatima Hassouna (File photo)

Cannes, May 13 (RHC)-- The Cannes Film Festival kicks off Tuesday under mounting pressure for organizers to break their silence on Israel's genocide against the people of Gaza.

Over 380 leading figures in the film industry signed an open letter, saying they "cannot remain silent while genocide is taking place in Gaza." The letter was initiated by several pro-Palestinian activist groups and published in the French newspaper Liberation and the U.S. magazine Variety.

Among the signatories are Schindler's List actor Ralph Fiennes, and four former Cannes-winning directors, who said they were "ashamed" of their industry's "passivity."

Hollywood stars Richard Gere and Susan Sarandon, and acclaimed directors Pedro Almodóvar, former Cannes winners Ruben Ostlund, Mike Leigh and Costa-Gavras, decried the death of Palestinian photojournalist Fatima Hassouna.

Hassouna, 25, was killed along with 10 relatives in an Israeli air strike on her family home in northern Gaza in April. She is featured in Sepideh Farsi's documentary film, Put Your Soul On Your Hand And Walk, which has been selected to be screened in the ACID section at the 78th Cannes Film Festival on Thursday.

The film is described by the director as "a window, opened through a miraculous encounter with Fatima" into the "ongoing massacre of the Palestinians."

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