

**Beyond Thresholds of Conflict: International Film Festival of Peace, Bangalore, India  
11-12 February 2017**

**Background:**

The world today is facing unprecedented increase in conflicts, wars, violence resulting in irreparable destruction of humanity and environment and exodus of masses to an uncertain future. Conflict can be in the form of direct violence like civil wars or in the form of indirect violence that emerge from conflict of caste, class, religion or gender.

In the context of gender, it is rarely shown that the women are part of decision making processes or peace building efforts. Thus, women are generally represented as victims, weak and vulnerable groups in society or used as tools but not real partners in any of the fields.

Incidentally it is women in today's world who shoulder responsibility in averting violence, resolving and transforming conflicts. Many women who have experienced violence know how to restrain conflicts and to heal the wounds. They have developed strategies and knowledge of handling violence without it miserably going out control. Some women have demonstrated leadership of not allowing conflicts to morph into destructive forces.

However, these women have been largely invisible or remained unrecognized. The diverse forms of nonviolent action that women have taken up as their shared responsibility to address the multitude of political, social, cultural, ecological conflicts they face in everyday lives, is a forgotten narrative.

The time and need is now that the forgotten narrative to be unfolded and applauded.

In this context, 'Beyond Thresholds of Conflict': An International Film Festival of Peace was held on 11<sup>th</sup> & 12<sup>th</sup> February 2017 at Gandhi Bhavan, Bangalore, India. It was jointly organized by Eco Foundation for Sustainable Alternatives (EFSA), Karnataka Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi, Bangalore Film Society, CIEDS Collective, Ekta Foundation Trust, Enable India Foundation, International Gandhian Institute for Nonviolence and Peace (IGINP), Radio Active CR 90.4, Infinite Souls Farm and Artists Retreat.

The film festival was inaugurated by Dr. Ho. Srinivasaiah, the president of Gandhi Smaraka Nidhi, Mr. Tushar Gandhi (great grandson of Mahatma Gandhi), Dr. Jill Carr Harris of IGINP, Shilok Mukkati (poet & transgender youth leader) and the children from different social backgrounds.

This festival was born out of belief that in a world increasingly beset with conflicts and the use of violence as the only way to resolve them, Gandhian nonviolence as responsible means continues to renew and offer relevant and sustainable alternatives to the violent path.

“Beyond Threshold of Conflict”, an International Film Festival on Peace, brought together path breaking films from around the world that celebrate women’s immensely significant role through responsible nonviolent actions in conflict resolution/ reconciliation in their own diverse, and often complicated contexts within their families, communities and countries.

This two-day film festival was the travelling edition of the Peace Builders International Film Festival held for the first time in New Delhi in Oct’2016. The festival showcased documentaries, animation and fiction films that shed light on women as builders and keepers of peace from countries across the world – Sri Lanka, Tibet, India, Iran, India, Paraguay, Denmark, Pakistan, USA, Indonesia and the Middle East.

Another highlight of the festival was an insightful conversation, ‘Speaking Peace in Times of War’ held with eminent women feminist writers/ activists who have been working and writing for peace in their own contexts and in their own ways.

The film festival received thunderous applause from the public audience from different fields of professions, students, journalists, theatre persons, writers and peace loving citizens.