

On 25th February 2019, Ciné-ONU screened ‘Lindy Lou, Juror Number 2’ in partnership with Together against the Death Penalty (ECPM) and the United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner, Europe (OHCHR), at Cinéma Galeries in Brussels to raise awareness of the 7th World Congress against the Death Penalty.



For 20 years, Lindy Lou has lived with an unbearable feeling of guilt. Committed to fulfilling her civic duty, Lindy sat with 11 other people on a jury that handed down the death penalty to a Mississippi man convicted of a double homicide. An overwhelming feeling of regret compels Lindy to track down her fellow jurors.

A full house turned out to watch the film and listen to our speakers: Florent Vassault, Director of the film; Sandrine Ageorges-Skinner, activist against the death penalty, and wife of death row prisoner Hank Skinner; Paul d’Auchamp, UN Human Rights Deputy Regional Representative for Europe; moderated by Petra Hongell, Information Officer at UNRIC.



Paul d’Auchamp started by asking: “How do you convince other countries to abolish the death penalty? In the words of a former foreign minister of Switzerland, you can either break down the door, which alienates them, or you can respectfully ring the doorbell and have a constructive conversation...” Florent Vassault added “Lindy Lou thinks she can make a difference in her direct environment by passing on this story. Telling this story creates a ripple effect and in this case it was a small victory”.

But how can this momentum be translated into action at a national level? Paul d'Auchamp thought "that the energy and creativity pushing abolitionism a lot of the time comes from civil society. Our [the OHCHR's] added value is to raise this issue consistently through the UN, Human Rights Council, the General Assembly and to engage with UN Member States..."



Finally the speakers focused on the importance of abolishing the death penalty. Florent Vassault remarked that "If we want to be a society, we cannot have the death penalty", and Paul d'Auchamp added that "the most fundamental right human right of all is the right to life - as the human rights lawyer Sir Nigel Rodley once said, "you don't kill people to show people that killing people is wrong".

Sandrine Ageorges-Skinner left us with some powerful words: "It's about education. The UN's work is about education which can be frustrating and take a long time, but it's the only way."

"We have a right to life, but I think this is about the right to be human."

For the handout, [click here](#) .

To see pictures from the evening, [click here](#) .

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