

## PRESSE RELEASE

Berlin Center for Torture Victims (bzfo) says „Thank you“ to all donors

### **Donation project Berlinale and bzfo raised more than 25.000 Euros 66th Berlinale engaged for traumatized refugees in Berlin**

5 **Berlin, February 24, 2016** – Berlinale 2016 has been focusing on refugees – with giving the main prize “Goldener Bär” to the Italian documentary film *Fuocoammare* and with its donation appeal for traumatized refugees together with the bzfo. With the motto „Berlinale helps“ the film festival spread donation leaflets, set up donation boxes and collected via [betterplace.org](http://betterplace.org), a platform for social projects ([berlinale-for-refugees.betterplace.org](http://berlinale-for-refugees.betterplace.org)), to support the work of the Berlin Center for Torture Victims. Many visitors responded to the appeal – to this day the donations add up to 25.560,31 EUR. The bzfo will use the donations for fields of work, which are financed only partially or not at all by health insurances, social welfare offices, or other institutions. 10 These are interpreters accompanying therapy or social assistance, free German courses, and creative projects like film camps for young refugees.

#### **Donation debut of Berlinale was a success**

15 For the first time in the history of the Film Festival, Dieter Kosslick and his team started an official donation appeal for a non-profit organization. In preparation of the collaboration the festival director and his team visited the Berlin Center for Torture Victims to learn more about its work.

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#### **Interesting conversations at Berlinale Palast – bzfo’s patron Claudia Roth came to visit**

25 At the opening of the International Film Festival as well as at the closing award ceremony the bzfo was present at the foyer of the Berlinale Palast with an information booth. Employees of the Center talked to visitors, filmmakers, and journalists. Among others Claudia Roth, patron of the bzfo, and her Green Party colleague Konstantin von Notz visited the booth.

#### **Donations via betterplace possible until the end of March**

30 The online donation project on [betterplace](http://betterplace.org) will be accessible until the end of March 2016: [berlinale-for-refugees.betterplace.org](http://berlinale-for-refugees.betterplace.org).

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**BERLIN CENTER FOR TORTURE VICTIMS (bzfo)**

Since 1992 the **bzfo** offers medical and psychotherapeutic treatment as well as social assistance for torture survivors and victims of war/ civil war conflicts who suffer from severe physical and psychological injuries. In 2015 more than 600 adults, children and youth have benefited from our support. They come from Syria, Afghanistan, Chechnya, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Kosovo, Lebanon, Eritrea and more than 50 other countries of origin.

In 2013 the bzfo started a special interdisciplinary program for newly arrived refugees in need of basic medical and psychosocial support as well as counseling. The bzfo is financed by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, the United Nations, the EU, funds from the public healthcare system and by sponsors and numerous private donors.

Under the umbrella brand **Center UEBERLEBEN** the bzfo, the Center for Migration and Refugee Services, the Ueberleben Foundation for Victims of Torture and the non-profit organization Catania cooperate closely to give refugees, migrants and victims of violence the chance to have a dignified future. The Center offers a wide range of support from rehabilitation to social integration aimed at full participation in social, cultural and everyday life.

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