

In February 2019, United Nations Cinema screened two documentary films in Ireland in partnership with Irish Aid. On the 4th of February, 'On Her Shoulders', about Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Nadia Murad, in Galway; and on the 5th, 'Under The Wire', about Sunday Times journalist, Marie Colvin, in Dublin. Both were followed by a panel discussion to raise awareness of the work of the UN, in particular Sustainable Development Goal 5.

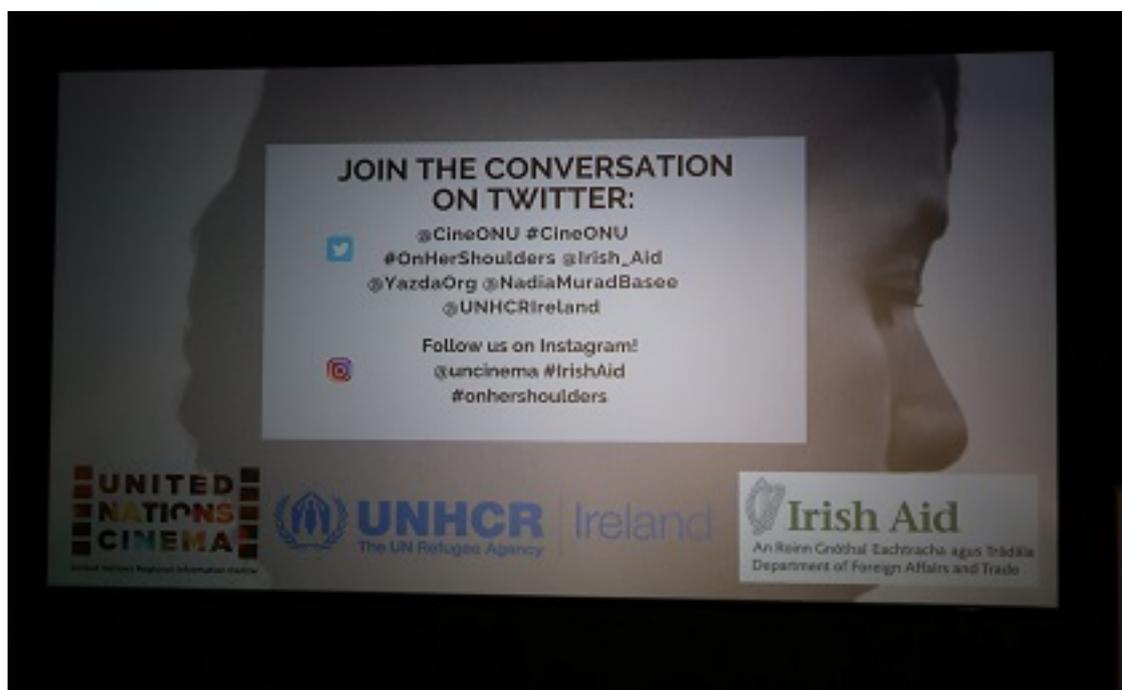


The panel talk that took place after On Her Shoulders focused on the displacement of the Yazidi people, with Nadia as their figurehead, and the position of women in conflict. On the panel were Ahmed Khudida Burjus, from Yazda; Áine Hearn, Director of the Conflict Resolution Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Ireland; Jody Clarke, UNHCR; and moderator Caroline Petit, UNRIC.



During the discussion, Ahmed Khudida Burjus said that half a million people have lost everything and now face an unknown future. Jody Clarke added to this saying, “We forget, when we talk of 60 million refugees worldwide, that they are individuals with hopes and dreams, living lives that have been destroyed because of extraordinary circumstances, driven from their homes by conflict and other terrible events beyond their control.” Áine Hearn stressed that women should not be left out of this equation. “Make their voices count,” she said.

Both the film and the panel were about the importance of maintaining culture and identity. Ahmed Khudida Burjus explained how in Greece, there is a camp called Nadia's camp where Yazidi people try to stay together, not just to preserve their religion, but mainly to preserve their identity. “We want to stay together to be stronger, but we must be in a safe place,” he said. Jody Clarke stated that most refugees want to go home, which is why you find so many in camps on the borders of, or within the countries, they call home. While Yazda runs programs in Sinjar with partners, US AID and EU AID, there is a multicultural team behind Nadia, supporting her all around the world, including in Dublin.



The discussion following Under The Wire revolved around the role of journalists in conflict, accountability for their safety, and freedom of speech. On this panel were Chris Martin, the film's director; Martina Feeney, Director Human Rights Unit for the Department of Foreign

Affairs and Trade, Ireland; Saorla McCabe, UNESCO; and moderator Caroline Petit, UNRIC.



Chris Martin described his film as a blue print for what happened in Syria. He said that although Marie Colvin thought she could stop the slaughter, journalists are often direct targets in conflict. "Journalists are no longer neutral observers. Take them out and no one will know what you are doing," he said. Problems arise when the freedom of press is challenged. "Lack of media freedom is the canary in the coal mine. The freedom of NGOs and media to operate is the sign of a fully functional democracy," said Martina Feeney. Despite this, the presence of journalists can have an important impact on the outcome of a conflict.



Saorla McCabe reminded the audience that local journalists are killed in much greater numbers than international journalists. In 2017, local journalists represented 90% of all killed journalists

and in 2016, 94%. "UNESCO organises training for journalists in risk assessment, first aid and online safety. There are also safety protocols for media managers. UNESCO monitors press freedom violations," she said. The film itself is another source of information. "Putting the story out there means people cannot say they didn't know what was going on. Telling the truth is very important for the Syrian people," Chris Martin, said in closing.

Watch the trailer for [On Her Shoulders](#) and [Under The Wire](#)

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

Find more information about [On Her Shoulders](#) and [Under The Wire](#)

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