



**Press Release**  
**21.5.2023**

## **"The Bridge of Return" Wins First Prize at Al Awdah International Film Festival**

We are delighted and proud to announce that the film "The Bridge of Return" has been honored with the opportunity to open the 7th edition of Al Awdah International Film Festival, which commenced on Sunday, May 21, 2023, at Palestine University under the theme "Awaiting Return, Returning." We extend our deep gratitude to the esteemed judging committee and the audience for recognizing the artistic value and message conveyed by the film, awarding it the prestigious "Key of Return" prize for the best film on the theme of the right of return.

"The Bridge of Return" is a documentary film produced by Kayan Feminist Organization and directed by Palestinian filmmaker Essam Ballan last year. The film aims to contribute to documenting the Palestinian Nakba, preserving our collective memory, specifically focusing on the voices of missing women. It sheds light on the narratives of Palestinian women who experienced the Nakba in the cities of Safed and Beersheba, highlighting their role in facing challenges, resilience in the face of adversity, and the transmission of their stories and legacy to future generations. It is a great honor and tremendous achievement for our film to win this award, particularly at this distinguished festival, which plays a vital role in solidifying the Palestinian narrative, affirming the right of return, and supporting Palestinian films that uphold truth and historical rights.

On this occasion, we would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the participants involved in the film, as well as everyone who contributed to its production, and the team behind the Al Awdah International Film Festival, initiated by the Palestinian Film Forum in partnership with Palestine University in Gaza, Khadouri University of Palestine in Tulkarm, the General Union of Palestinian Women - Cairo branch, and the Palestinian House Foundation in Berlin. We appreciate the trust placed in us and value this recognition.