



FIRST INTERNATIONAL URANIUM FILM FESTIVAL RIO DE JANEIRO PRESS RELEASE 31/05/2011

Costa Rican production: URANIUM 238 - The Pentagon's Dirty Pool wins best short film category of the First International Uranium Film Festival which ended Saturday night (28th of May 2011) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The documentary URANIO 238 – The Pentagon's Dirty Pool, produced by Pablo Ortega, won the prize for best short documentary in the Uranium Film Festival, which took place May 22 to 28 in Rio de Janeiro, Brasil. URANIO 238 had also won an award as best documentary in the Costa Rican Movie and Video Festival in 2009.

Thirty four international productions surrounding the nuclear fuel chain were chosen by a jury and were shown in two theaters in the beautiful suburb of Santa Teresa. More than a thousand people had the opportunity to view documentaries and films produced in Brazil, India, Australia, the Netherlands, UK, Costa Rica, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Russia, the United States, Japan, South Africa and other countries, where organizations and filmmakers are speaking out against the risks and dangers associated with the nuclear industry.

URANIO 238, produced for the San José Quaker Peace Center, has a duration of 28 minutes, and analyzes the impact on the health of civilians and military personel on the use of radioactive nuclear waste known as "depleted uranium" currently used in conventional weapons. "Through interviews with soldiers and activists, the documentary explores the health risks when this materials is ingested or inhaled by people in war zones or test areas", Ortega explained.

According to the producer, the main goal of the documentary was to point out the risks of the military use of depleted uranium for a presentation in the First Latin American Conference on Uranium Weapons. This event was organized by the Quaker Peace Center, the International Depleted Uranium Study Team (IDUST) and the International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) in San José, Costa Rica in 2009.

"Used in 1991 in the first Gulf War, the Balkans conflict, and later on in the second invasion of Iraq, this dangerous toxic and radioactive waste is associated with alarming rises in cancer rates, infant malformations and other terrible health effects among civilian populations in war zones and soldiers who are deployed in these wars or live next to DU testing sites", according to Damacio Lopez of IDUST.



This documentary is part of a worldwide campaign to ban the use of uranium weapons in wars. The International Coalition to Ban Uranium Weapons (ICBUW) is a global network which seeks an international treaty banning DU weapons world wide. As part of these efforts, peace activists recently celebrated on April 28th 2011, the passing by the Legislature of Costa Rica, of a reform to Costa Rica's Arms Law, banning the use, manufacture, transit, production and distribution of uranium weapons.

"Our commitment along with URANIO em Movi(e)mento, the film festival organizers in Brazil is to spread the information gathered in this festival, it is a rich source for all those seeking a world free of radioactive waste" says Isabel Macdonald of the San Jose, Quaker Peace Center of Costa Rica. The Festival from Rio goes on to São Paulo and other cities in the northeast.

"We are very pleased with this prize, especially in a festival with international outreach" said the producer. Produced for the Quaker Peace Center in Costa Rica with the collaboration of the University of Costa Rica, present to receive the prize was Isabel Macdonald of the Quaker Peace Center.

Those present in Brazil would agree with the words of Norbert Suchanek, General Director of the Film Festival, "This International Film Festival is not only about screening films it is about making friends". These friends will carry these films to as many places as possible to spread the facts about the risks associated with the nuclear industry.



Damacio Lopez and Isabel MacDonald

The festival team invites film makers and film enthusiasts around the world to participate in the Second International Uranium Film Festival, to be held May-June 2012 in Rio during the United Nations Conference Rio Plus 20.

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Also hundreds of students of Rio de Janeiro attended the Uranium Film Festival (above). Damacio Lopez (right) with Festival Coordinator Márcia Gomes de Oliveira at centre.



Isabel MacDonald receiving the Uranium Film Festival Award for the best short documentary during the Awards Ceremony at the Cultural Centre Laurinda Santos Lobo, Santa Teresa, Rio de Janeiro (above). Festival General Director Norbert G. Suchanek (right) together with official festival translator Luiz Augusto Silveira .

