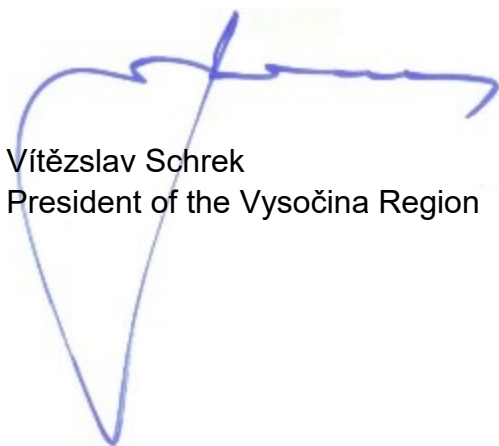


Dear visitors of the Ji.hlava IDFF Echoes,

In light of the events of the recent weeks, I am more and more convinced that humanity, dialogue, cooperation, tolerance and respect are important and necessary aspects of a functioning civil society. The possibility to discuss things, to express our opinion freely and to take responsibility for it are attributes without which we can no longer imagine our lives and which we take for granted as part of living in a democratic Europe.

The Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival is a platform that helps us form opinions about what is happening around us, because every festival day is literally packed with discussions and incredible creative energy. The selection of films focusing on diverse topics and social contexts gives us a unique opportunity to get to know the world we are living in. A quarter of a century existence of the Ji.hlava International Documentary Film Festival, hundreds of screened competition films and tens of thousands of enthusiastic visitors every year confirm the event's extraordinary popularity. I firmly believe that the Ji.hlava IDFF has the same positive response outside the Czech Republic. I am happy that *When Flowers Are Not Silent*, a film that opened the festival in Ji.hlava in autumn 2021, was selected to kick off the Echoes in Belgium. It describes the complex struggle of civil society in Belarus in a situation where those in power do not hesitate to resort to brutal repression.

Don't miss the 10th Echoes of the Ji.hlava IDFF, join the discussions, have fun and express your opinions freely – because you can!



Vítězslav Schrek
President of the Vysočina Region