

ladesh and cross the border. The army arrived, burning everything.'

Although she wanted to address the persecution of the Rohingya in her film, the director did not expect so many women and children to want to speak so freely. *'This film is a bit of a serendipity story'*, she explained. While she was looking for children and their families in the camp to hear what they had to say, she had not anticipated that a 9-year-old child would want to testify about the rape she had suffered, nor that, the next day, ten women would also want to speak out, demonstrating that no one in the camp cares about them. Emmanuel Davidenkoff explained that sexual violence is often hushed up.



Olga Prud'homme Farges and Pramila Patten

ones demanding that the Rohingya return home. Pramila Patten added that the situation has deteriorated even more since the documentary was filmed. These people are still living in temporary shelters made of bamboo and tarpaulins, and the Bangladeshi government is systematically refusing to renovate and reinforce the camps. Emmanuel Davidenkoff pointed out that Bangladesh is one of the poorest countries in the world. Citing a report in *Le Monde*, published a few months ago, he explained that these camps are absolute lawless zones, where from 4pm onwards, NGOs are no longer allowed to intervene and must leave the camp until the following morning. *'Even in the Far West they must have had more laws than that'*, he concluded.

At the end of the sequence, the audience, mainly young people, were invited to ask questions. *'If there are a million refugees in the camps, what's the total Rohingya population?'* asked one of them. Pramila Patten replied that she didn't have any precise figures, but in Bangladesh the government estimates that there are 1.2 million. To conclude, Olga Prud'homme Farges added that most of the community has fled Arakan, around 80%.

Burma is home to 126 different ethnic groups, but if there's one stateless community, it's this one

Pramila Patten about the Rohingyas

Pramila Patten, the United Nations Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict, is very familiar with the case of the Rohingya, an issue she has been tackling since 2002. She explained this silence about the violence suffered in part by the largely unfavourable political situation, particularly in 1982, when a law was passed abolishing their nationality and therefore their rights. *'Burma is home to 126 different ethnic groups, but if there's one stateless community, it's this one'*, she said. Before 2017, there was an outpouring of solidarity and compassion from the Bangladeshi people, but now they are the

BLUE ISLAND

29 September 2023, 10:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Auditorium



Serge Gordey

To be Hong Kongese, to be free and Chinese?

Serge Gordey introduced the screening of the documentary film directed by Chan Tzewoon, entitled *Blue Island* (2022), without revealing the subject, preferring to highlight the Normandy region's partnership with the Docs Up Fund agency which produces *'films that come from countries where the question of human rights is being raised, where filmmakers are taking it up.'* Before launching the film, the producer specified that it is *'not a report or a classic film but a particular way of seeing the world, an author's view which takes the time to reflect, which tells us much more than the images that flood us every day.'*

After watching the film, Philippe Le Corre said that *'this documentary seems to reflect three things: the complexity of the*

feeling of belonging to Hong Kong, between the relationship with China and the territory of Hong Kong; the difficulty of dealing with the Chinese Communist Party, illustrated by the way the production mixed actors and real people; and the ambivalence of being both a spectator and a player in history.' The researcher then briefly reviewed 'the complicated history of the Rock, which was a British colony

MODERATOR:

Philippe Le Corre, researcher at the Asia Society Policy Institute and geopolitical advisor, Asia Society France

SPEAKERS:

Serge Gordey, Producer, Docs Up Fund
Nathan Law, Hong Kong democratic opponent



© Pierre Galliot - Région Normandie

Serge Gordey

Asked about the question of Hong Kong's identity, the dissident explained that *'it is a very important, unique and crucial component for the resistance because it reflects values and an understanding of History in the face of the orthodox narrative of Beijing and the authoritarianism of Xi Jinping.* He added that *'it's a difficult identity to define, but we resist when China tries to erase it.'*

These images aren't allowed to be shown there because of the heavy censorship

Nathan Law

for 150 years before being handed back to the People's Republic of China in 1997.' But while *'the contract stipulated that Hong Kong would remain autonomous until 2047, China broke it by stepping up its repression of this special region, most recently in 2019-2020.'*

Nathan Law, leader of the 2014 Umbrella Movement and now in exile, is an embodiment of Hong Kong's troubling identity, caught between a desire for freedom and Chinese origins. The activist, who explained that *'a lot of films have been shot in Hong Kong to talk about the 2019-2020 protests but these images aren't allowed to be shown there because of the heavy censorship'*, admitted that *'watching this film was very difficult.'* Indeed, *'it brings back traumas from the events of 2014 and 2019; I witnessed terrible acts, friends were injured and arrested.'* Fortunately, *'this film shows important people from the resistance movement, it's important, it helps to understand the situation.'* Nathan Law asked the audience: *'What would you have done if you were from Hong Kong?' 'These films are essential for understanding the sacrifices made by our people'*, he said.

Having left Hong Kong in 2020 because he knew he was *'wanted and risked several decades in prison'*, Nathan Law reflected on the difficulty of resisting China from abroad *'because you have to mobilise crowds locally.'* *More and more people have left the country in the last three years, almost 20,000 for political reasons,* he lamented. *The United Kingdom is helping Hong Kong refugees and we can organise events to ensure that China does not succeed in erasing our history.'* Before concluding: *'Even if the situation isn't going in the right direction because so many people are in prison, I remain optimistic; there's no point in despairing, you have to remain courageous even if 9 out of 10 social movements are going to fail.'*

THE NORMANDY INDEX: UNDERSTANDING THREATS TO PRESERVE PEACE

28 September 2023, 10.30 a.m. – 12 p.m., Azur Room



Branislav Staniček, Elena Lazarou, Bénédicte Feuger, Valérie Drezet-Humez and Salomé Limery

© Nicolas Broquedis

Multiple threats, universal peace

The three moderators working for Europe Direct, co-organisers with the European Parliament of this youth event based on the Normandy Peace Index, a tool *'used to*

guide the actions of the European Union, to decipher what's happening in Ukraine and to understand the threats impacting states and populations', introduced the discussion in the form of an interactive workshop, giving the high-school students in the room the opportunity to express their opinions via a live digital quiz.

MODERATORS:

Ophélie Bouin, Head of Communications
CRIJ Normandie

Salomé Limery, European Projects Officer
Maison de l'Europe de l'Eure

Bénédicte Feuger, Head of the Carrefour
Rural Européen des Acteurs Normands
(CREAN)

SPEAKERS:

Valérie Drezet-Humez, Head of the
European Commission Representation in
France

Elena Lazarou, Head of the External
Policy Unit, European Parliament Research
Department

Branislav Staniček, European Parliament
External Policy Researcher

With 78% of them admitting to being unfamiliar with the index, its creator Elena Lazarou set out to explain this indicator *'which measures threats to peace and democracy around the world.'* *'It was launched in 2018 thanks to an agreement between the Normandy Region, the European Parliament and the Institute for Economics and Peace in Sydney'*, she continued, *'it's an index based on the European definition of peace found in the 2016 EU*