

Press Release –

Another huge success for KASI –

The launched of KASI latest project, a short film as part of their awareness raising initiative, received a very positive feedback both from the Minister Jimmy Deenihan who launched the project, as well as the hundreds of people from all sections of community who came and supported KASI. The launched was held at The Malton Hotel, last Thursday night, 7th March. ‘Barzakh’, an Arabic word which means ‘in limbo’ is a short film depicting the plight and tribulations of asylum seekers as they journey to another land. Specifically, the film portrays the story of a young Afghani man who fled his country and came to Ireland.

‘We thought of using film as a medium for awareness raising because, there is something about watching a movie that could evoke emotion on people; and ‘Barzakh’ is based on real story.’, explained Marilyn Catapat-Counihan, KASI Coordinator. ‘The idea is to highlight that asylum seekers left their country because they have no choice, but for a number of people, the asylum process left them ‘in limbo’, as it could take such a length of time for a decision to be made on their cases.’ added Ms. Marilyn Catapat-Counihan.

The speeches during the night also reiterated out that the direct provision system of housing asylum seekers on a long term basis presents all sorts of social, health and psychological issues. ‘For families rearing children in such a very confined environment is indeed very challenging.’, added Joni Kelly, KASI Family Support Worker.

The Coordinator cited few stories of despair of families and individuals, all of whom are waiting for such a long period of time – not knowing what the future holds. There is one asylum seeker in Park Lodge who will be nine years there this year. Another family have been here in Ireland for eight years. The children have never known any other country but Ireland.

Sheila Casey, Chairperson of KASI, appeal that night that perhaps, it is time that we talk about this issue and not pretend that asylum seekers are not here. KASI has written to the Minister of Justice and Equality, Minister Allan Shatter, appealing for compassion when making decisions on the subsidiary protection and leave to remain applications, especially to those who have been here for more than two years.

Barzakh is produced and directed by Stromlight, a Cork based film production company; and this project is part funded by the European Union under the European Refugee Fund and supported by the Office for the Promotion of Migrant Integration and supported by Pobal. KASI is also appreciative of the support of HSE – South.