July 21, 2011

MUGABE AND THE WHITE AFRICAN, AN AWARD-WINNING DOCUMENTARY BY FILMMAKERS LUCY BAILEY AND ANDREW THOMPSON, SELECTED FOR THE ECONOMIST FILM PROJECT

Segment to Air on PBS NEWSHOUR Thursday, July 21st, Full Documentary To Air On PBS POV Tuesday, July 26th

New York, NY-- The Economist Film Project, which presents documentary films that reflect the types of hard-hitting issues The Economist is known for covering, announced today that the documentary Mugabe and the White African has been selected as part of The Economist Film Project. Directed by Lucy Bailey and Andrew Thompson and produced by Elizabeth Morgan Hemlock and David Pearson, Mugabe and the White African is an intimate account of the struggles for justice that Michael Campbell, one of the few hundred white farmers left in Zimbabwe after President Robert Mugabe began his violent “Land Reform” program in 2000, went through. A special segment from the film will air on PBS NEWSHOUR on Thursday, July 21st. The full documentary will air on Tuesday, July 26th on PBS’ POV (Point of View) series. (Check local listings.)

Since Robert Mugabe began his violent land seizure program in 2000, Zimbabwe has descended into chaos and the economy has been brought to its knees by the reallocation of formerly white-owned farms to ZANU-PF friends and officials with no knowledge, experience or interest in farming. In 2008, unable to call upon the protection of any Zimbabwean authorities or even to rely on the support of his fellow white farmers, Michael Campbell took the unprecedented step of challenging Robert Mugabe before the South African Development Community’s international court. In a fight to protect his property, his livelihood and his country, Campbell charged Mugabe’s government with racial discrimination and with violating human rights. On April 6, 2011, Campbell, age 79, paid the full price for his courage. He died in Harare, Zimbabwe from the brutal beating he received in June 2008, as recounted in Mugabe and the White African.

“Mugabe and the White African offers viewers an unprecedented look at the effects that Robert Mugabe’s land seizure program has had on white Zimbabwean farmers,” said Gideon Lichfield, Editorial Director of The Economist Film Project. “The film follows a man who risked everything, and ultimately lost everything, to stand up for his rights and for the rights of other farmers like him.”
“The SADC court case represents a watershed moment in Southern Africa, where Africa really has an opportunity to stand up and be counted. At its core, it is a story of good versus evil, of justice, bravery and faith – things all of us can relate to and question from anywhere in the world,” said Lucy Bailey, co-director of *Mugabe and the White African*.

"The Zimbabwean government is one of disunity that shouldn't be formally acknowledged. If this film can go some way towards bringing to an outside audience the injustices going on inside Zimbabwe – and, more importantly, get something done about it – then I feel that we as film-makers will have succeeded," added Andrew Thompson, the co-director of the film.

Bailey, who has a background in anthropology and a passion for Africa, has been working as a director in television for over 10 years. She is currently working for Comic Relief to make their appeal films for Red Nose Day and Sport Relief campaigns. Thompson is a BAFTA and RTS-nominated cameraman who has over 12 years experience filming all over the world for C4, BBC, National Geographic and Discovery. Bailey and Thompson, who live in Great Britain, formed Explore Films in 2008. Since this was their first feature-length documentary, they brought on board experienced producers, David Pearson and Elizabeth Morgan Hemlock at Arturi Films, in the UK, to guide, finance and produce *Mugabe and the White African*.

To date, *The Economist Film Project* has received approximately 1,000 film submissions. The films chosen for the Project are jointly curated by *The Economist* and PBS NEWSHOUR. Once a film is selected, a producer from PBS NEWSHOUR works with each director to create six- to eight-minute segments of the films, which then become the focus of special segments airing regularly on PBS NEWSHOUR through 2011. The segments are featured on both the NEWSHOUR and the Project websites (www.film.economist.com). Additional films selected by *The Economist Film Project* will be announced throughout the year.

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