

THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB
Venice Film Festival/Competition 2025

Statement by director/writer Kaouther Ben Hania

July 22 2025: Kaouther Ben Hania commented today on her new film THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB and its selection for the Venice Film Festival in Competition:

“I am deeply honored that THE VOICE OF HIND RAJAB has been selected for the Competition at this year’s Venice Film Festival. My heartfelt thanks to Alberto Barbera and the entire selection committee for offering this incredible spotlight on the film.

There was something electric in the energy around this project so immediate, so alive. In all my years as a filmmaker, I never imagined it would be possible to go from start to finish in just 12 months.

Here’s how it all began: I was in the middle of the Oscar campaign for *Four Daughters*, and mentally preparing to finally enter pre-production on a film I had been writing for ten years. Then, during a layover at LAX, everything shifted. I heard an audio recording of Hind Rajab begging for help. By then, her voice had already spread across the internet.

I immediately felt a mix of helplessness, and an overwhelming sadness. A physical reaction, like the ground shifted under me. I couldn’t carry on as planned.

I contacted the Red Crescent and asked them to let me hear the full audio. It was about 70 minutes long, and harrowing.

After listening to it, I knew, without a doubt, that I had to drop everything else. I had to make this film.

I spoke at length with Hind’s mother, with the real people who were on the other end of that call, those who tried to help her. I listened, I cried, I wrote.

Then I wove a story around their testimonies, using the real audio recording of Hind’s voice, and building a single-location film where the violence remains off-screen. That was a deliberate choice. Because violent images are everywhere on our screens, our timelines, our phones.

What I wanted was to focus on the invisible: the waiting, the fear, the unbearable sound of silence when help doesn’t come. Sometimes, what you don’t see is more devastating than what you do.

At the heart of this film is something very simple, and very hard to live with. I cannot accept a world where a child calls for help and no one comes. That pain, that failure, belongs to all of us. This story is not just about Gaza. It speaks to a universal grief. And I believe that fiction (especially when it draws from verified, painful, real events) is cinema’s most powerful tool. More powerful than the noise of breaking news or the forgetfulness of scrolling. Cinema can preserve a memory. Cinema can resist amnesia.

May Hind Rajab's voice be heard.”