Representative Tashi Phuntsok, Office of Tibet, Brussels with the crew of the ‘The Dalai Lama- Scientist’ at the reception.

Venice: The much-awaited film, ‘The Dalai Lama – Scientist’ was premiered at the 76th Venice International Film Festival within the Venice Production Bridge on 31 August.

The 1 hour and 35 minutes long film opened at a jam-packed audience at Cinema Astra Multi Sala auditorium in Lido, Venice. A Peacejam Productions, written and directed by Dawn Engle and produced by Ivan Suwanjieff, is a part of Nobel Laureate’s Legacy series of Peacejam Foundation, established in 1996.

The film documents the full history of His Holiness the Dalai Lama’s fascination with science and his persistent efforts at bringing the scientific community and Buddhist scholars in conversation from the 70s to the recent period.

The film recalls His Holiness’ meetings with David Bohm and Carl von Weizsacher, who he considers as his Physics teacher, especially Quantum Physics. There are sad but heartwarming episodes of His Holiness’ friendship with Neuroscientist Francisco Varela, who passed away after a long but gallant fight against cancer.

The film encapsulates His Holiness’ long but successful bridging of minds between the scientists and Buddhist scholars.
From Cosmology to Quantum Physics, Cognitive Science or Psychology to Neuroscience, great care and attention were given to serialise the steps that finally brought the two traditions to a strong and collaborative understanding with each other.

In short, the film is a bold and incisive attempt at documenting the contribution from His Holiness the Dalai Lama – a simple Buddhist monk – to Science. This legacy is unparalleled and exceptional.

At the end of the premiere and after a standing ovation from the audience, Dawn and Ivan made short speeches to thank the audience. Ms Betty Williams, Nobel laureate from Ireland also spoke to applaud them for their wonderful work and recalled her wonderful friend His Holiness the Dalai Lama.

Mr Tashi Phuntsok, Representative of His Holiness to Western Europe, who was especially invited to the event by Peacejam, offered them scarves to thank them for their long and dedicated friendship with His Holiness and for their efforts at bringing focus on Tibet.

The occasion was important in another way as it was a reunion of 1998 Peacejam of the Nobel Laureates held in Robben Island, Cape Town in South Africa. Betty Williams, Dawn, Ivan and Tashi were together at the Island where Nelson Mandela was held for 27 years. Missing were Archbishop Desmond Tutu and the late Ahmed Kathrada, a veteran ANC mate of President Mandela.

After the premiere, the organiser held a cocktail reception at Ausunia Hungaria Hotel, nearby the film venue. The hotel is steeped in tradition and the film buffs and stars were to be seen aplenty there.

*Filed by Office of Tibet, Brussels*
Representative Tashi Phuntsok with the team of ‘The Dalai Lama – Scientist’ at the premiere.
‘The Dalai Lama- Scientist’ premiered on-screen at the 76th Venice International Film Festival.
Representative Tashi Phuntsok with Nobel Laureate Betty Williams and the director and producer of ‘The Dalai Lama – Scientist’.
Representative Tashi Phuntsok offering traditional Tibetan scarf as he greets Ms Betty Williams, Nobel Laureate from Ireland.
Representative Tashi Phuntsok with the team of the film during a gathering.