

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE****Qatar's Film Committee Acquires Life Rights to *Caesar* Story – the Syrian Military Defector Who Exposed Assad Regime Atrocities**

Doha, Qatar – [21 November 2025]: The Film Committee at Media City Qatar has acquired the life rights to the story of “*Caesar*,” the heroic Syrian military officer who put his own life at risk to expose systemic torture and human-rights abuses inside Syrian prisons during Bashar Al Assad’s reign as President

The project will be developed across multiple formats – a feature film and documentary, series and podcast – marking one of the Film Committee’s most ambitious and globally resonant undertakings to date. The Committee will partner with globally renowned **Department M** (*The Christophers*) and Doha-based **Katara Studios** to co-develop and co-produce the story, with distribution by award-winning studio NEON (*Anora*, *Parasite*, *Triangle of Sadness*, *Anatomy of a Fall*). The project will be supported by Kuwaiti-based Sard Media group, who will document and develop the project.

The real-life Caesar, who publicly unveiled himself as First Lieutenant Farid al-Madhan in February 2025, was a former forensic officer and head of the judicial department for the military police in Damascus. Following his defection, he spent three years smuggling evidence out of the Assad regime via hidden memory cards inside his clothes and loaves of bread.

The man behind the largest leak of evidence implicating the Assad regime in war crimes made a rare appearance during the Industry Days hosted by the Film Committee on the sidelines of the Doha Film Festival 2025. His presence at the event underscored both the gravity of his story and its global cultural significance.

The announcement follows three high-impact Industry Days, during which the Film Committee unveiled a series of landmark initiatives and partnerships. The Film Committee announcements underscored Qatar’s emergence as one of the most exciting new players in the international film landscape.

The *Caesar* project will trace al-Madhan’s extraordinary journey from secret documenter of atrocities within the Assad regime to international witness whose evidence transformed global policy and accountability. Development will begin immediately in Doha, supported by the Committee’s Qatar Screen Production Incentive (QSPI).

Mike Larocca, Co-Founder of Department M, said: “Caesar’s incredible true story is one of heroism and humanity, with the depth, scale, and global relevance to make for a great film. We are thrilled to be bringing it to life, and we look forward to working with the Film Committee, Katara, and NEON to create a film that entertains global audiences while doing justice to Caesar’s incredible impact.”



The acquisition reinforces the Film Committee's commitment to championing films that blend artistic excellence with social relevance — and marks another bold step in Qatar's strategy to establish itself as a global hub for impactful storytelling.

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About the Film Committee at Media City Qatar:

About the Film Committee at Media City Qatar - The Film Committee at Media City Qatar was established to position Qatar as a leading destination for global film production, co-financing, and creative collaboration.

Under the leadership of the Film Committee at Media City Qatar Chairman, H.E. Hassan Al Thawadi, the Committee supports the development of a world-class film ecosystem through strategic partnerships, incentives, and infrastructure investments. Working alongside the Doha Film Institute, Media City Qatar, and national cultural entities, the Film Committee at Media City Qatar seeks to foster a thriving creative economy, attract international productions, and amplify Qatar's voice on the world stage of cinema and storytelling.

About the Qatar Screen Production Incentive (QSPI):

The QSPI offers up to a 50% cash rebate on qualifying production expenditure for feature films, television, commercials, and post/VFX work produced in Qatar. Eligible applicants must be Qatari-registered companies licensed through Media City Qatar. The programme is designed to attract international productions, build local skills, and establish Qatar as a creative and economic hub for global storytelling.

About Department M:

Independent production company Department M represents the next generation of content development, production, and financing. The entity is tailored to the evolving global production sector, addressing the record-high demand for quality-first, commercially viable film and television. Department M was founded by two of the industry's most successful producers, Mike Larocca and Michael Schaefer, who each have proven track records developing and releasing many of the most popular projects of the last decade.

For more information or interview opportunities, contact: media@filmcommittee.qa