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Czech Radio will air an exclusive documentary on a Syrian swimmer, BBC will rebroadcast it

From devastated Damascus to the Rio Olympics – such was the journey of Yusra Mardini, an eighteen-year-old Syrian swimmer. Czech Radio will broadcast an exclusive documentary on her life story a day before the start of the Summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. Yusra is a member of a refugees' team competing at the Olympics and her courage and bravery moved the whole world. This document by Czech Radio will also be rebroadcast by the BBC. This is a special occasion and the first time these two public service media engaged in collaboration of this kind.

“Yusra Mardini is now in the centre of attention of the world’s media. Shortly before the Olympics, she received about two hundred requests for an interview from around the world. However, it is Czech Radio who has almost worldwide exclusivity for her story. This is thanks to the Radiožurnál reporter Magdalena Sodomková and her friend, the French photographer Lam Duc Hien,” who recorded Yusra’s journey through the Aegean Sea to Europe,” said **René Zavoral**, the Director General of Czech Radio.

The exclusive documentary series titled **Yusra Swims for Her Life**, presents a moving story of courage and bravery of an eighteen-year-old swimmer who fled from war and, after an arduous journey, arrived in Germany. During the sea journey, Yusra and her sister helped to save several lives when they managed to drag a sinking boat to the shore. Later, in Germany, she became a sports team member, and her dream came true after she was selected as one of the ten athletes who will form a refugee Olympic team.

“There is a huge interest in the topic of migration as one of the major issues and problems the world is facing today. Then there is the massive interest in the Olympics – many listeners are interested in sports. The last Olympics were held in London, and so many people are looking forward to the Rio Olympics. Yusra’s story uniquely links both these things. I think that what our partners at Czech Radio offered us is a unique approach to her story, witnessed by you before anyone else, a story that presents a global challenge, in a way,” said **John Goudie**, the Documentaries Unit editor at BBC Radio.

The series will premiere on Czech Radio – Radiožurnál, BBC Radio 4 and BBC World Service. More episodes are planned for early September 2016 and Spring 2017. Also, a unique [website](#) will be launched that will feature Yusra’s story the way it was experienced and recorded by Magdalena Sodomková. You can join her on the journey, go through the whole route and find all the facts.

Magdalena Sodomková and the photographer Lam Duc Hien met Yusra during her escape from Syria in August 2015. She was just one of the million refugees who set out on a journey to Europe during one of the largest migration waves in history.

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