



**RADDO** *The voice of oases*

The Associative Network for Durable Development of Oases

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## **THE VOICE OF OASES at the WORLD SUMMIT FOR DURABLE DEVELOPMENT IN JOHANNESBURG**

### **Oases: exquisite ecosystems**

They dominate zones of about **30 % of the grounds emerged** along the large arid scarf which links Africa to Asia; from the Sahara to Mongolia. They shelter about **150 million people** in areas where other forms of life spurt out with difficulty.

They are formed by a rigorous management of rare water and ground resources in a strong alliance with the date palm tree. Oases are ecosystems patiently worked out by the societies which inhabit them in arid areas, in the form of a very complex social, ecological and economical constructions. These actual processes are those of an optimization of the interactions between cultural references, engineering constraints, economical limits and ecological potential in regards to the climatic adversity of a hostile environment to forms of life. Within this framework, oases constitute verified and alive experiments of durable development as well as an incomparable resource of expertise. Similar to other achievements actually protected, oases form part of the inheritance of humanity.

### **The call of oases**

**Heavy threats weigh on oases on all levels. There exists actual important factors of degradation emerging from the effect of an inappropriate model of development and depending on:**

- Climatic deterioration, especially the increase in the dryness and its effects on the availability of water, which is the foundation of the oasis;
- The inadequacy of demographic pressure and effective urbanization policies compared to the limited load capacity of the oasis's ecosystem;



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- The disqualification of the oasis's operators and its people in economical exchanges. This disqualification does not simply apply to products, but also to its commercial distribution;
- The monopoly of the importers-exporters on the distribution of local products;
- The modification of the ways of life and consumption, especially consumption of products manufactured to the detriment of local alimentary and artisans' products;
- The absence of the evolution of right on land property, on water, on modes of exploitation. This leads to the parceling out and the introduction of strong inconsistencies into an organized complex system whose survival is linked to important constraints;
- The enclosure and the geographical remoteness of areas;
- The absence of serious consideration by public authorities of the specificity of oases, especially in research, agriculture, education, and continuous training.

All these evolutions lead to the havoc of vivid forces including both the loss of capital and the rural exodus of young people.

Supposing that they pay an unjust tribute to a mode of arbitrary development which condemns them, **oases refuse to wither away** and launch **an appeal to the world** for an effective implementation of durable development.

➤ **Concerning the governance of oasis's associations, the RADDO asserts and proposes:**

- Taking into account the specificity of the people of oases in all fields of public politics of development on local, national and international levels;
- The respect of local habits and customs by political decision makers;
- The implication and participation of associations in the decision-making process concerning the politics of development at the local,



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national and international level, as well as in the processes of decentralization;

- Enhancing an appropriate place for women by the reinforcement of capacities, the guarantee of rights and social promotion;
- The induction of national and international public politics of cooperation in favor of oases, especially policies encouraging the sustenance of agricultural income of its people;
- Rupture of their isolation by establishing organizations specifically dealing with the safeguard and the development of oases;
- Enhancing the contribution of scientific research for resolving specific problems such as the epidemic disease of the palm tree (bayoud).

**➤ Concerning durable development of oases, associations assert and propose :**

- The recognition of a particular management of the natural resources of oases: that of the palm tree as a protected species and a symbol of life in intra-desert zones and that of water with progressive costs taking into account the constraints related to the survival of the environment;
- Taking into specific account the role of associations in public grants for development;
- The immediate application of the Conventions on biodiversity, climatic change and the fight against desertification which concerns greatly associations of oases;
- The promotion of adapted tourism in oases based on the principles of durable development that respects the ecosystem and generates locale income;
- Setting-up local “21 Agendas” concerning oases;
- Establishing programs that transmit and encourage the awareness of public opinion about the culture of oases, especially in school’s curriculum and in extra-curricular activities for young people;



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- The promotion and establishment of adept and renewable sources of energy.

## ➤ **Oases's associations affirm their refusal of:**

- The uncontrollable degradation of oases, their trading as much as their idealization;
- The marginalisation of oases and their minimalist role in important projects and programs of development;
- Their unfavorable competitive role compared to industrial agro-alimentary implantation of proximity;
- The existence of mono-implantation projects incompatible with their environment;
- The desertion of oases.

## ➤ **Moreover, associations members of the RADDO propose and assert :**

- Setting up a **yearly universal day of oases** under the aegis of the United Nations

## **Who is the RADDO ?**

Associative Network for Durable Development of Oases

Established in November 2001, the RADDO is a network of active associations in North Africa (Maghreb) for the protection and the promotion of durable development in Oases.

Supported by its expertise and beneficiaries in the local realities of oases, the objective of the RADDO is to safeguard and rehabilitate oases as economical, ecological, cultural and social inheritance of humanity.

Its actions are based on *lobbying, awareness of public opinion, education, capacity reinforcement and research in all aspects of the life of oases, especially in management of natural resources, agriculture, economical valorization of the oases specificity and its products.*



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The operating mode of the RADDO is that of a network directed by a Committee of Permanent Follow-up (*Comité de Suivi Permanent CSP*) depending on focal points by countries and supported by facilitating structures in France. See contacts at the end of the document.

### **Durable development: a dilapidated process?**

Since 10 years, the international conferences and declarations of the United Nations have succeeded in causing only few concrete engagements in favor of durable development concepts announced at the Summit of Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and aspired by a large majority of men and women of the world.

However, the international negotiations of the WTO (World Trade Organization) in Doha or the G8 confirm and reinforce the rule of the trade laws on human, social, cultural and environmental rights.

In the name of economic growth, a model of developmental predator hence continues without limits. It is recognized nowadays as unbearable reinforcing injustices, inequalities and the pressure on natural resources which in return increase the poverty and the exclusion of the greatest number of individuals: until when will this expire?

Moreover, serious and unjustified regressions actually appeared along the course of the preparatory process in Johannesburg concerning the financial commitments taken in Rio on increasing public aid to development, setting up Agenda 21, implementing the Conventions on biodiversity, climatic change and desertification and reducing the debt of poor countries.

These considerable challenges that endanger the continuation of the history of humanity should render the historical occasion of the world Summit of durable development in Johannesburg an event engaging a radical change of orientation for a viable future.



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Johannesburg is also the occasion for conscious awakening and public mobilization.

This is why the RADDO expresses its impatient eagerness for realizing the above engagements, as well as its solidarity and support for all movements claiming the implementation of the principles of durable development and the emergence of the rules of good governance in terms of developmental ethics. The RADDO express also its unity with all movements promoting the solidarity and equity for the most deprived, for the participation of the civil society in the decision-making processes, for sharing responsibilities in the access to fundamental needs for all, for the precaution in taking decisions and for the implementation of developmental policies ensuring harmlessness and reversibility of choices on all levels and all scales.

The RADDO is opened to any dialogue likely to reinforce the stated objectives and construct a more responsible world.

## **Contacts**

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| □ Focal point Algeria APEB        | <a href="mailto:aueb89@hotmail.com"><u>aueb89@hotmail.com</u></a>             |
| □ Focal point Tunisia ASOC        | <a href="mailto:asoc@rotedd.org.tn"><u>asoc@rotedd.org.tn</u></a>             |
| □ Focal point Morocco OASIS VERTE | <a href="mailto:oasis_verte@caramail.com"><u>oasis_verte@caramail.com</u></a> |
| □ Focal point Mauritania TENMIYA  | <a href="mailto:tenmiya@toptechnology.mr"><u>tenmiya@toptechnology.mr</u></a> |
| □ Facilitator France CARI         | <a href="mailto:cariassociation@aol.com"><u>cariassociation@aol.com</u></a>   |
| □ Facilitator France CCFD         | <a href="mailto:h.taferant@ccfd.asso.fr"><u>h.taferant@ccfd.asso.fr</u></a>   |