Date: May 16, 2002
Ref: RB/MM/wdcd.2002
cc: had/gdk/mnd/rb

Dear Sir/Madame,

I am pleased to refer to General Assembly resolution 49/115 entitled "Observance of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought".

This resolution invites all member states and non-governmental organizations and others to observe the World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought on 17 June with a view to promoting public awareness at various levels.

Even more, 17 June is a unique occasion to remind everybody that solutions are possible, and that key tools to this aim are strengthened participation and co-operation at all levels. Concrete efforts to reduce poverty and promote sustainable development, as well as to increase awareness worldwide of the problems and of the solutions, can help us make the difference for the people in the drylands. The successful implementation of this Convention depends enormously on local populations being made aware of the Convention and how it could assist them in their daily fight against desertification and the mitigation of the effects of drought. The Secretariat takes this opportunity to encourage the non-governmental community to undertake activities to raise awareness about the global problems of desertification.

Please be informed that decision 22/COP.5 stated that the Conference of the Parties agrees to adopt "Land degradation" as the global theme for the World Day to Combat Desertification on 17 June 2002, recognizing that countries may choose sub-themes for national activities.

The Secretariat would also appreciate receiving from the non-governmental community any information about activities undertaken to celebrate this day. Please communicate your activities to the Secretariat before 10 July 2001.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you, once again, for your active and effective participation in raising awareness of this Convention and look forward to future collaborations with your organisation.

Yours sincerely,

Rajeb Boulharouf
Coordinator
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