



FESTIVAL AU DESERT

6-7-8 JANUARY

2011

PRESS RELEASE

THE FESTIVAL IN THE DESERT, ESSAKANE CONFIRMS ITS ELEVENTH EDITION

We are pleased to confirm that the Eleventh Edition of the Festival in the Desert, Essakane will be held on the 6th, 7th and 8th January 2011 at Timbuktu.

While some have expressed concerns about security in the Sahara, this situation is not new to us and will not in any way affect the opening of the Festival in Timbuktu - Mali. This Edition is guaranteed by several Partners for whom the Festival in the Desert has become indispensable.

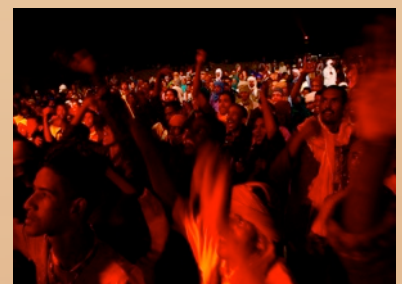
In its previous ten years, the Festival in the Desert has become one of the largest gatherings of diversity in the world. A gigantic, unique and unprecedented event whose founding credo is Peace and Reconciliation. The Festival is internationally recognized as a genuine space for dialogue and as a framework for intercultural exchange in the poetic and immense Sahara.

The Festival in the Desert is important for the region of

Timbuktu, for Mali, for the Sahara, for tourism and cultural exchange, for discovery and for the spirit of travel and adventure. This is the identity of the Festival. These factors guarantee its success and sustainability despite recurrent suspicions about safety in the region.

The Festival in the Desert through its openness brings to the world the little-known heritage, culture and civilization of the Sahara, once hidden and contemplative in the desert. While at the same time, the Festival allows the Saharan to meet the heterogeneity of today's global community.

The Festival in the Desert is an essential lever in the economic and social development of Mali and particularly for the region of Timbuktu where the event has taken place for the past ten years with large crowds and without any security incident for Festival attendees.



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Timbuktu, January 6, 7, 8 - 2011

We believe that it is important to encourage participation in the Festival rather than to ban it despite the statements of several foreign ministers from other countries. We know that foreigners who come to the Festival in the Desert have always been secure despite the warnings that have invariably preceded it each year.

These are the essential points : that for the reasons mentioned above and despite the annually repeated "renewed suspicions" the Festival in the Desert is an indispensable factor for everyone and particularly for the nomads of the region.

As a result it enjoys a particular protection. Stability in the area is also guaranteed every year by the Government of Mali which is currently implementing provisions adapted to the safety of all festival-goers. The State continues their assistance and has affirmed their support for the January 2011 Edition which once again promises to be a major cultural event.

The Eleventh Edition of the Festival in the Desert, with its dream always in mind, promises to unfold with poetry and magic to reach its supreme objective.

The days are punctuated by meetings and debates on a diverse range of current topics, by parades of camels, by the poetic songs and the Tendé (tambourine) drumming of Touareg women with their epic tales of the adventures of the Touareg and the Sahara.

At night, national and international artists and celebrities perform on the main outdoor stage whose sound system defies the desert's silence, whose lights brighten the desert without competing with the stars, whose seats are the fine brilliant white sand dunes.

The site of the Festival is a 15 minute walk from Timbuktu, between the Sahara and that mythic city, an open space at



the entry point for yesterday's caravans which during the Festival will arrive once again.

Bamako, 7 November 2010

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