



United Nations Development Programme

Communications Office

PRESS RELEASE

Radio Tarifa Plays Ramallah *Concert in the Newly Built Palace of Culture*

Ramallah, 23 July 2004—Radio Tarifa, the internationally acclaimed world-music group from Spain, will be headlining a groundbreaking concert in Ramallah on Sunday July 25th at the newly inaugurated Palace of Culture.

Straddling the musical boundaries between the Arab world and Europe, Radio Tarifa draws on the rich musical heritage of the band's native Andalucia, fusing flamenco and ancient Moorish influences with the pulse of modern international rock and Arabic music – an evocative and powerful mixture that is certain to resonate with the Ramallah audience.

The concert by Radio Tarifa is one of several headline events marking the opening of the new Palace of Culture here this month. Located in the heart of the strife-torn Palestinian city, the \$5 million state-of-the-art auditorium was financed by the Government of Japan and built under the supervision of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in coordination with the Municipality of Ramallah and the Palestinian Ministry of Culture. The only cultural centre of its kind in the Palestinian territories, it features a 720-seat auditorium, conference rooms, and several exhibition halls, with facilities to handle everything from intimate poetry readings to symphony orchestra performances.

“People can be deprived of their incomes, their education and their crops, but it is hard to take away someone's appreciation for music and the arts.” Said Timothy Rothermel, the Special Representative of UNDP in Jerusalem.

“We are extremely happy to be in Palestine for the first time. Our visit here is a proof of the special sensitivity of Radio Tarifa towards our Mediterranean neighbours, whose cultures we have inherited historically... It has been an extraordinary experience for all the group members to share common values through music with the Palestinian people” said Radio Tarifa. “We strongly believe that music is the best of the bridges for dialogue and mutual enrichment. Our own name reflects that bringing cultures together does not mean losing our own identity,” added the band members.

The performance by Radio Tarifa is co-sponsored by the Spanish government and Coca Cola Espania.

Expressing his government's commitment to “continue promoting dialogue between cultures as a means to achieve mutual understanding and peace in this troubled region,” the Spanish Counsel General, Mr. Jose' Maria Ferre', said “this first performance by Radio Tarifa in the Palestinian territory is an example of how culture can be a central ingredient to development and dialogue.”

For its part Coca Cola Espania is “delighted for the opportunity to promote this interchange between Spanish culture and Palestine.” Coca Cola, throughout its existence through the National Beverage Company in the occupied Palestinian territory has carried out a number of community development and cultural projects.

The Radio Tarifa performance is the last show in the UNDP’s cultural month to mark the 25th anniversary of the Programme of Assistance to the Palestinian People (PAPP).

Key Events in the UNDP’s cultural month have been:

7 July:

- The highly accomplished 40-member student orchestra of the Palestinian National Conservatory of Music offered an inaugural program of classical masterpieces, and the dance troupe Baraem El-Fonoun performed original pieces derived from their Palestinian heritage.

8-14 July:

- Ramallah International Film Festival: The first major international film festival in the occupied Palestinian territories. The festival included 70 films and distinguished personalities from around the world. (<http://www.ramallahfilmfestival.org/>)

23 July:

- Concert by Simon Shaheen, the renowned Arab lute player, who has also performed in Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, Cairo’s Opera House, Theatre de la Ville in Beirut, and Belgium’s Le Palais des Arts.

25 July:

- Performance by Radio Tarifa
- (<http://www.radiotarifa.com/>)

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