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**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,
political, economic, social and cultural rights,
including the right to development**

Written statement* submitted by Rencontre Africaine de Défense pour les Droits de l'Homme (RADDHO), a non- governmental organization in special consultative status

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[14 February 2011]

* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

Economic, social and cultural rights

The fourth 'Greentree' discussions at Manhasset, New York, from 16-18 March 2008 in application of Resolutions 1754 (2007) and 1783 (2007) of the Security Council encouraged a certain hope about reaching the end of the political negotiations by the use of open dialogue between the different parties.

RADDHO remains preoccupied now, however, by the repeated armed attacks, hostage-taking of citizens and foreigners, the drug traffic, smuggling and imposed slavery practices imposed on migrants by Mafia-type groups in the Sahara region. Terrorist acts perpetrated against civil populations by Al-Qaeda Maghreb Islamique constitute a real menace for the peace, security and promotion of human rights in the whole region of the Maghreb and the Mediterranean basin.

Unemployment, lack of future perspectives for the youth, corruption in the distribution of international assistance, food shortages, poverty, as well as exclusion and marginalisation of women and children in the camps near Tindouf, are the main sources of human rights violations, of violations of international humanitarian law and the violation of the rights of refugees in the Sahara region.

RADDHO asks for a serious and consequent inquiry in order to bring to justice those responsible for using the peaceful demonstration at Laâyoune on November 8, 2010 which caused the death of thirteen persons as well as important material destruction.

The failure of negotiations sponsored by the international community since many years to find a peaceful and equitable solution for Western Sahara should not serve as a pretext for extremist groups to promote terror among the populations or to create regions of lawlessness in that part of the world.

The opening of dialogue about the project of statutory autonomy for this region appears to RADDHO as providing a new impetus which will contribute to finding a realistic solution for all the parties concerned within the different elements at stake in the region.

It is important to create a structure of international dialogue which takes into account the humanitarian problematic as well as the struggle against poverty in order to undermine the development of terrorism in the Western Sahara and in the Sahara region as a whole.

The MINURSO should support coordination among all United Nations agencies for an improved coherence for humanitarian aid projects in the region.

RADDHO encourages the development of regional cooperation through socio-economic and cultural integration within the region which is fundamental for the realisation of human rights for all the Sahraoui peoples.
