

## **MICHAEL MILES**

February 15, 2010

### **SUBJ: Report on concert tour through Morocco**

#### **MUSICAL DIPLOMACY TOUR TO MOROCCO A GRAND SUCCESS.**

For 8 whirlwind days, we travelled the country. We brought our own blend of original works and American music with banjo, guitar, drums and vocal harmonies. Once in Morocco we started meeting and performing with Moroccan musicians. We listened, we played, we spoke through interpreters, and we found a common ground. We took our common ground out to the Moroccan public--who saw this example of shared music & values, and a different view of America.

To say it was an honor, only hints at the privileges that were extended to us. We were welcomed and appreciated as we shared our selections of American music. But the breathtaking part for us was the collaboration. We had scheduled exchanges and rehearsals with Moroccan musicians who taught us their music and encouraged us to perform it with them. These were ancient musical traditions, centuries old. We thought, before being invited to return, that this was once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. But there will certainly be more.

**Abdelkrim Raddadi**, Cultural Specialist for the US State Dept said:

*"People could feel it from your heart... we could read in your eyes...respect for our music. Once you respect them, they appreciate themselves more in Morocco."*

**Samuel Kaplan**, US Ambassador to Morocco said,

*"There are no better examples of diplomacy than what Michael Miles and Tony Dale have brought to Morocco."*

To hear the American banjo play Moroccan melodies, to hear the traditional instruments of Morocco burn through American blues were just a few of the musical moments shared. This was demonstrative proof of music's universality. By sharing our crafts, all the musicians involved demonstrated that people who cannot talk to one another and come from different corners of the globe, can share and appreciate and respect one another. Music is a means for that. That appreciation and respect is then immediately extended to the audiences.

**Elizabeth Millard**, US Counsel General, said,

*"For many in the audiences Michael Miles and Tony Dale were the first Americans they had ever experienced. They are ambassadors through music."*

#### **STATISTICS**

1. Round trip distance travelled: 9198 miles
2. Performances in five cities for over 2000 people: Marakesh, Meknes, Casablanca, Khouribga, and Beni Mellal.
3. Collaborations with 11 different Moroccan musicians: Abdelilah el Miry, violin, hajuj, gimbire; Haj Younes, oud; Nasser Ouari, oud; Ahmed Naji on bass Louthar; M'hamed Damou, on Louthar; Abdellah Anid on bowed rabab; and the Houariyates Women singers & percussionists.
4. In attendance, Samuel Kaplan, US Ambassador to Morocco; Elizabeth Millard, US Counsel General to Morocco; Counsels General to Morocco from Spain, Netherlands, and Germany.
5. Venues included concert halls, schools, an orphanage, a school for the blind, and community centers.
6. American musicians involved: Michael Miles on banjo, guitar, & vocals and Tony Dale on drums and vocals

#### **ABDELKRIM RADDADI & MICHAEL MILES**

This tour was the shared vision of Michael Miles and Abdelkrim Raddadi, that American and Moroccan music could be shared and personal connections established between musicians and their audiences. On the one hand, it is simply a concert. But on the other hand, a cultural exchange that is at once honest and heartfelt, as well as musical and exciting has the power to shift attitudes. These events provided a positive view of America through compassion for community and musical artistry.

This was accomplished through Raddadi's extensive preparation with community leaders, artists, & venues. Each community welcomed the tour with complimentary meals, genuine hospitality, and advance promotion. With preparation in place, the performances were ready. Miles always spoke some Arabic greetings to the audience, engaged them with his compassion, and invited them to participate with singing. Some audience members were invited to come to the stage and lead the rest. This resulted in a greater sense of unity. Michael Miles and Tony Dale, along with Abdelilah el Miry, then proceeded to engage everyone with their excellent and shared artistry.

**WHAT IS NEXT? CONNECTING CHILDREN OF CHICAGO & CASABLANCA**

Over the next few months, as a direct result of this tour and in cooperation with Pegasus Players Global Voices initiative, students in Chicago Public Schools and Casablanca Schools will be preparing a musical exchange to occur through web conferencing. This initiative, led by Michael Miles and Arlene Crewdson, will continue the reach of this diplomatic initiative. Our intent is to push further the simple fact that the world is made safer and richer through cultural exchange and respect.

[Additional photos & videos are available.](#)

**More information**

Michael Miles  
847/909-1446

[Michael@MilesMusic.org](mailto:Michael@MilesMusic.org)

[www.MilesMusic.org](http://www.MilesMusic.org)