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## **MEDIA ALERT**

### **PHOTO EXHIBITION UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS, NEW YORK:**

*The Beauty of  
The Challenge of*

***DESERTS  
DESERTIFICATION***

**Bonn, 20 October, 2006** - A major photo exhibition entitled “The Beauty of DESERTS - The Challenge of DESERTIFICATION” opens its doors to the public on 30 October at the United Nations Headquarters in New York.

One of the many events taking place in the context of the 2006 International Year of Deserts and Desertification, the exhibition is being organized by the Secretariat of the UNCCD, in collaboration with the Government of Italy and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD).

Selected images by acclaimed German photographer and author of “Deserts of the World”, Michael Martin, as well as the winners of the first UNCCD photo contest, and other well-known artists and IFAD photographers, will be on display. In striking fashion, they depict the day-to-day struggle of people living in the world’s drylands. Seventy per cent of the drylands are already hit by desertification, affecting 250 million people worldwide directly and nearly one billion indirectly.

The exhibition also focuses on some of the most magnificent ecosystems of this world: the deserts - unique natural habitats boasting incredibly diverse fauna and which have been home to some of the world’s oldest civilizations. Captured on camera is the fragile beauty and proud heritage of the earth’s deserts, which deserve our protection.

The visual experience is complemented by photo captions, providing an informative insight into the global issue of desertification as well as life and survival in the desert.

The exhibition will take place in the South Gallery of the UN Headquarters and will run until the end of November 2006.

**For further information see [www.iydd.org](http://www.iydd.org)**

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