

To Patrizia Danzi, director general of the SDC

My name is Hawa Mahamat Adouma, and I am a journalist who specialises in producing content in the Kanembu language. It is both an honour and a pleasure to extend a warm welcome to you on behalf of my fellow journalists and the entire staff of Radio Ndarason.

We are deeply touched by your visit, as it is a strong sign of the SDC's support for our radio station, which broadcasts to the countries of the Lake Chad Basin. This region is under threat from the extremist rhetoric of movements such as **Jama'tu Ahlis Sunna**, more commonly known as **Boko Haram**. Our mission is to counteract the rhetoric of violence and hatred by harnessing the power of this formidable tool that is radio.

Ms Danzi, we possess a unique strength that no other media outlet in the region can claim. We have deep roots in this region. The majority of us were born here, and we speak Kanembu, Kanuri, and Buduma, the indigenous languages of the vast Lake Chad Basin.

In its latest report on press freedom in the Sahel, **Reporters Without Borders** praised the work and courage of Radio Ndarason in this difficult-to-access region. This region may be difficult to access for others, but not for us. Lac Region is our home. We understand the suffering, fears and hopes of our people. They talk openly with us, alerting us to potential dangers because they recognise that we are their voice.

The SDC's support empowers women, refugees and other vulnerable groups to make their voices heard. Thanks to your support, daily news is broadcast in local languages throughout the region. Debates on topics such as girls' education, maternal health and agriculture are produced and broadcast. An FM radio station will soon be broadcasting in Maiduguri, Nigeria. This will increase our impact tenfold. Local transmitters will be established in Cameroon and Niger. Radio Ndarason is growing fast and broadening its reach.

As you can see, Ndarason is a **hub of positive energy**. With the support of professionals from Africa and beyond, this radio station has provided us with hands-on training in journalism, enabling many of us to achieve a high level of professional autonomy in producing top-quality information and radio programmes.

Before I conclude, I would like to express my gratitude once again and appeal to you, as director general of the SDC, to continue this support and, if possible, to increase it. The road to peace is still long, but as the proverb says, "even the majestic baobab tree begins its journey as a small seed." We have already taken several steps, thanks to the SDC.

In Africa, when we welcome a distinguished guest, tradition dictates that we present them with a small gift. As we broadcast on shortwave, we thought it fitting to give you a small transistor radio, like the ones used by our many listeners in remote areas. Ndarason means "the radio that follows you everywhere". With this highly sophisticated radio, carved in wood by a local craftsman, you will be able to tune into our broadcasts from Geneva. From this point forward, Ndarason will follow you everywhere! Thank you once again for your visit.

