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## Introducing Lyo & Merly - Mascots for the 1st YOG

FINA Communication Department

As mascots for Singapore 2010, Lyo, a lion cub, embodies the values of Excellence and Friendship, while Merly, a merlion, personifies the values of Excellence and Respect. Through their acts and stories, they will promote the Olympic Values of Excellence, Friendship and Respect.

Welcoming Lyo and Merly to the Singapore 2010 family, Mr Goh Kee Nguan, Chief Executive Officer of the Singapore Youth Olympic Games Organising Committee, said, "As mascots for Singapore 2010, Lyo and Merly have to appeal to the international community and the youth. At the same time, they must also possess a strong Singapore's identity. As the host city for the inaugural YOG, we hope to share our culture with friends around the world. What better way to do it than to have Lyo and Merly represent us and the youth, and be the faces of the first YOG."

From 14 August to 6 September 2009, members of the public were also invited to name the mascots. About 375 entries were received from more than 20 countries. Lyo was named by Sean PANG Yi Wei, while TUNG Chi Jun picked the name for Merly. Sean and Chi Jun, both Singaporeans, had the opportunity to be amongst the first to meet Lyo and Merly in person today. They were also presented with a pair of mascot plush toys and Singapore 2010 merchandise for naming the mascots.

Lyo is short for "Lion of the Youth Olympics". A sports lover, he is fun-loving and hopes to inspire young people to keep fit and enjoy sports for life. He symbolises youths' boundless energy, their determination to live life to the fullest and zeal to strive for Excellence.

Merly got her name from "mer" (meaning the sea) and "l y" stand for liveliness and youthfulness. A passionate advocate of environment protection, Merly believes that everyone has a role to play in working towards a sustainable future. She also wants to encourage young people to play an active role in their communities and promote respect for one another.

Lyo and Merly will be appearing at many Singapore 2010 events in the coming months to help create buzz and excitement for the Games. Lyo and Merly plush toys and other Singapore 2010 merchandise were also available for purchase for the first time at today's event. The first Singapore 2010 Official Olympic Store will open on 22 November 2009 at Takashimaya Square Basement 2.

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