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MEDIA RELEASE

**NATIONAL COUNCIL ON PROBLEM GAMBLING
SEEKS PUBLIC VIEWS ON EXCLUSION MEASURES**

*Dialogue Sessions with Key Stakeholders for Inputs;
Online Public Consultation to Follow*

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) today announced that it is embarking on a consultation exercise, to seek views and inputs on the implementation of exclusion measures, especially family exclusion measures, for the casinos in the Integrated Resorts.

This is timely, following the introduction of the Casino Control Bill in Parliament in January 2006. Sections 157 and 158 of the Bill put in place the broad framework for the exclusion measures, as well as give the NCPG the statutory authority to implement them. The Bill was open to public consultation in October and November last year. The NCPG was also consulted on the draft Bill and gave its inputs taking into account views from the public as well as views of Council Members.

There are 3 sets of exclusion measures: self, family and third party exclusion. The measures were first announced by Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports (MCYS) in April 2005 during the Parliamentary Debate on Integrated Resorts. Dr Balakrishnan also noted then that a national council on gambling would be formed and that the council would consult key stakeholders from the family, social service, religious and community sectors on the implementation of the exclusion provisions.

With the broad regulatory framework in place through the Casino Control Bill, the NCPG wants to embark on the next stage of discussion which is on the implementation and operational aspects of the measures. It has formed a public consultation sub-committee headed by Mr Tan Kian Hoon, who is also Chairman of the National Crime Prevention Council.

Said Mr Tan: "Through this exercise, we hope to develop a simple yet effective way to empower families who might be affected by problem gambling. We feel that there are many stakeholders and members of the public who would have views to contribute. We welcome all views on how to best make this system work – fair, effective yet simple enough for families."

The consultation will be conducted in two phases. In the first phase, the NCPG intends to consult key stakeholders including religious groups, social sector and grassroots organisations, as well as private sector professionals. This will comprise closed door dialogue sessions which will run from April to May 2006.

In the second phase, the NCPG will seek views from the general public via an online public consultation exercise. The NCPG expects to wrap up its consultation by July or August this year.

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National Council on Problem Gambling

Attachments:

Annex 1 lists the members of the NCPG sub committee on public consultation.
Annex 2 provides a brief description of the exclusion measures.
Annex 3 provides an English-Chinese glossary of relevant terms and names.

For media queries, please contact:

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ANNEX 1

THE NCPG PUBLIC CONSULTATION SUB-COMMITTEE

1. Mr Tan Kian Hoon, Chairman
(Chairman, National Crime Prevention Council/
Managing Director, Evergreat Construction)
2. Mrs Mildred Tan (MD, Ernst & Young Singapore)
3. Mr S Rajendran (Chairman, Hindu Endowments Board)
4. Ms Debra Soon (General Manager, WBL Corporation)
5. Mr Guntor Sadali (Editor, Berita Harian & Berita Minggu)
6. Dr Ang Yong Guan (Psychiatrist, Ang Yong Guan Psychiatry)

ANNEX 2

EXCLUSION ORDERS UNDER THE CASINO CONTROL BILL

Sections 157 and 158 of the Casino Control Bill provide powers to the National Council on Problem Gambling to issue exclusion orders to prohibit certain patrons from entering the casinos.

The following are the various exclusion orders under the NCPG as set out in the Bill:

Voluntary Self-exclusion

The National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG) and the casino operator may issue exclusion orders upon a person's request.

Family Exclusion

The NCPG can exclude a person whose gambling behaviour has caused serious harm to his/her family, upon application by a family member.

Third Party Exclusion

The NCPG may issue an exclusion order to a person who is on a government - funded social assistance programme, is a bankrupt or has a petition of bankruptcy filed against him, or has a poor credit record.

ANNEX 3

ENGLISH-CHINESE GLOSSARY

National Council on Problem Gambling (NCPG)	<全国预防嗜赌理事会>
Casino Control Bill	赌场管制法
Family Exclusion Measures	家庭保护管制措施
Social Safeguards	社会保护网
Public Consultation	公众咨询
Mr Tan Kian Hoon	陈建勋先生
Problem Gambling	嗜赌
Gamblers	赌徒
Problem Gambler	病态赌徒
Gambling Addiction	赌瘾
Addiction	瘾癖症