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BEIJING HOSTS OFFICIAL EVENT IN LONDON TO LAUNCH 2009 CHINA OPEN CROWN JEWEL EVENT

- **Kickoff event at Mandarin Oriental in London follows Sony Ericsson WTA Tour decision to award Beijing major 9-day event featuring world's best players and equal prize money beginning in 2009 as part of Tour's Roadmap plan**

LONDON, United Kingdom – On the heels of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour's decision at its March 2007 Board meetings to award to the city of Beijing one of the four "crown jewel" events that will anchor the streamlined 2009 Calendar under the Tour's Roadmap plan, officials from the city of Beijing and the China Open are hosting a major launch party to celebrate and promote the achievement.

The China Open 2009 launch event is designed to commemorate and demonstrate the city of Beijing's commitment to a major milestone in women's professional tennis – the arrival of a crown jewel event in Beijing that heralds a new era for the sport under its Roadmap calendar, as well as signals the continuing strategic importance of China to the future growth of the game. As a part of China's post-Olympic strategy, the 2009 China Open has already been positioned by Beijing as a core event that will spearhead the city's commitments in sports and cultural developments. These developments include a new public transportation system, enhanced spectator facilities and services, and exciting cultural attractions designed to support Beijing's world class sporting events. In addition, in 2008 the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour will open an Asia-Pacific regional office headquartered in the city of Beijing.

Dignitaries in attendance at the star-studded and rare overseas officially sanctioned promotional event included Madam Lv Xiwen, Senior Consultant of the Beijing Municipality; Mr. Zhang Yabin, Chairman of the China Open; and Larry Scott, Chairman and CEO of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour. They were joined by nearly every key sports administrative director from Beijing, China Open senior management, members of the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Board, Sony Ericsson Global Head of Sponsorship Julian Mack, tournament directors from around the world, and Sony Ericsson WTA Tour star players from China and around the world.

Since the inaugural China Open three years ago, the tournament has already become one of the premier events in women's tennis. The crown jewel China Open in 2009 will take the event to an entirely new level in every respect, and promises to feature the very best of women's professional tennis.

In March, the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour announced that as part of its Roadmap 2010 circuit structure plan, the city of Beijing had been awarded a major nine-day mandatory tennis tournament featuring equal prize money of at least US\$4 million beginning in 2009. As part of the partnership, the Tour will open a new Asia-Pacific office in Beijing in 2008, which will serve as the hub of a major marketing and promotional initiative to grow women's tennis in China and the Asia-Pacific, one of the world's largest and most dynamic markets and regions.

At the time of the announcement, Sony Ericsson WTA Tour CEO Larry Scott stated: "The future growth of women's tennis and China are powerfully linked. With the establishment of a crown jewel tennis event in China that will feature the world's best players, along with a new Tour presence, our sport is positioned for explosive growth in the world's most exciting market. The incredible and rapid success of the Chinese players on Tour, combined with the popularity of our stars in China, the Chinese government's support for women's tennis and the 2008 Olympic Games in Beijing, make for a potent mix that will propel women's tennis to new heights in the Asia-Pacific region."

The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour is the world's largest premier professional sport for women with more than 1,400 players representing 75 nations competing for \$62 million in prize money at the Tour's 63 events in 35 countries. More than 4.5 million people attended women's tennis events in 2006 with millions more watching events on television networks around the world. The Sony Ericsson WTA Tour season concludes with the Sony Ericsson Championships at Madrid Arena in Madrid, Spain, November 6-11, 2007. Further information on the Tour can be found on the Internet at www.sonyericssonwtatour.com.



PRESS RELEASE

"I am very pleased that the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour has decided to award Beijing a major nine-day tennis event featuring the world's best players beginning in 2009 and to open its Asia-Pacific office in Beijing in 2008, a move that I believe is significant for the rapid development of tennis in Beijing and China", said Zhao Fengtong, Vice Mayor of Beijing. "As the host city for the upcoming 2008 Olympic Games, Beijing has unparalleled advantages in developing tennis. We have full confidence and capabilities to work closely with the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour for the long term to run the Beijing event as a top world tournament so as to propel the development of tennis in Beijing and China."

"I am really excited that Beijing will be the home of one of the Tour's biggest and most important events," said Zheng Jie, Sony Ericsson WTA Tour World No. 32. "Women's tennis has become incredibly popular in China and will only get bigger in the years to come. It is great that the Tour will be opening an office in Beijing to promote the sport in China."

The China event will be one of four mandatory events (which all players who qualify by ranking will be required to play) anchoring the new 2009 Tour Calendar and offering equal prize money with a minimum of US\$4 million. The tournament will be held at the Olympic Green Tennis Center in Beijing, the official site of the 2008 Olympic Games tennis event. Under terms of the partnership, Beijing and the Tour, working with the city of Shanghai and the ATP, will explore the possibility of combining the Beijing tournament with the ATP's Masters Series event in Shanghai, creating a combined women's/men's event that would rotate annually between Beijing and Shanghai. The other three crown jewel mandatory events under the Tour's Roadmap plans will be the Sony Ericsson Open in Miami, the Pacific Life Open in Indian Wells and an event to be staged in the city of Madrid. Each of these four events, along with the four Grand Slams and the Sony Ericsson Championships, will be mandatory for all players who qualify by ranking. Sixteen additional premier tournaments featuring top players will round out the new circuit's 20 premier events.

The promotion and growth of women's tennis in Asia-Pacific has been a priority for the Tour, with the recent success of a number of Chinese players in both singles and doubles, along with the establishment and presence of Tour events in both Beijing and Guangzhou over the past years, having already propelled women's tennis to one of the most popular sports among fans in China. Li Na, at No.18 in the Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Rankings, is the highest-ranked Chinese player ever, and in 2006 at Wimbledon, became the first Chinese player to reach the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam. Zheng Jie and Peng Shuai have also made their mark on Tour and rank within the Tour's top 50. Zheng and Yan Zi captured China's first Grand Slam titles with doubles victories at each of the 2006 Australian Open and 2006 Wimbledon.

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