



9 October 2012

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

# **INTERNATIONAL TABLE TENNIS FEDERATION (ITTF) TOGETHER WITH SINGAPORE TABLE TENNIS ASSOCIATION (STTA) ARE COMMITTED TO DEVELOPING LOCAL YOUTHS INTO CHAMPIONS OF TOMORROW**

International Table Tennis Association and Singapore Table Tennis Association (STTA) are signing a Memorandum of Understanding to formalize their commitment towards developing local youths into Champions of tomorrow. The ITTF will be awarding STTA the special privilege to send the champions of the Primary 5& 6 category from the Crocodile Challenge Cup to the ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge. This MOU is ground-breaking as the first such agreement between the ITTF and a National Sports Association which laid the foundation for the growth of local development.

The ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge is a new project offered by ITTF and is open to youths between 11-12 years old. The objective of the annual event is to identify talent at a young age and the ITTF hopes for national associations to plant seeds of motivation for the benefit of table tennis by setting up a national phase of qualification prior to entering athletes to the Hopes week. And the Crocodile Challenge Cup serves as the best qualification platform as the competition is designed for primary schools to send their best representatives to compete in the 6 boys'/ girls' singles categories.

The Hopes week is all about challenge, unlimited fun and education. For the 2012 edition, the Hopes week attracted young talents close to 70 countries covering all 6 continents. The ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge 2013 will be held from 9-16 June 2013 at Vienna, Austria. Through the ITTF World Hopes Week & Challenge, we hope to teach excellence by offering training and competitive opportunities to the local youths.

"Since setting up the ITTF Asia Pacific Office in Singapore in 2011 the ITTF is committed to helping the Singapore Table Tennis Association in its strategy and future directions. Young aspiring athletes has been at the heart of ITTF development for several years now and the Global Junior Program has matured into an integral part of the ITTF's structure. A relatively new program within this structure is the Hopes Program, which targets the talented players of the very young generation. The ITTF is extremely pleased the STTA has set up a local National event to choose its players to attend the Hopes Challenge week and this is exactly in line to the concept and pathway we envisage of this program. It is therefore only natural and with great pleasure that the ITTF supports the STTA in this initiative" says Ms. Judit Farago, Chief Executive Officer of International Table Tennis Association

"Both the ITTF and STTA share the same vision: to groom and nurture the younger generation into tomorrow's sportsman or sportswoman. And this MOU formalizes our commitment to groom more local talents and developing them into champions of tomorrow. The STTA believes in supporting our young talents to overseas training and competition stints at an early age as this will give the young paddlers an early advantage in the sport., and this initiative is only made possible because of the sponsorship from Crocodile International" says Er. Dr. Lee Bee Wah Member of Parliament for Nee Soon GRC & President, STTA.

We would like to invite your reporter and photographer to witness the signing of the MOU, and the details are as follow:

Date: Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> October 2012

Time: 10.30am

Venue: Tanglin International Centre (Conference Room), 354 Tanglin Road Singapore 247671