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**JOINT RELEASE BY PRESENTERS ESPLANADE AND URBAN
REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, WITH 'LIVE' SHOW ORGANISER
MEDIACORP TV CHANNEL 5**

Marina Bay SINGAPORE Countdown 08/09

Binding people together in celebration of the New Year

- 10,000 wishing spheres to be set afloat in Marina Bay*
- First ever MediaCorp Countdown show at Marina Bay*

SINGAPORE, 11 December 2008 – As the year draws to a close, the Marina Bay SINGAPORE Countdown 08/09 will bring people from all walks of life together to celebrate and collectively express their hopes and wishes for the year ahead. This New Year's Eve, the event takes on even greater significance as a rallying point for Singaporeans to gather together to contemplate the year past and greet the New Year with anticipation and hope.

Jointly presented by Esplanade and the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), the development agency for Marina Bay, the Countdown event is into its fourth year and has become a unique New Year's Eve tradition for Singapore, offering an opportunity for Singaporeans around the world to celebrate and for the community to bond together.

MediaCorp celebrates with the nation

For the very first time, as a new media partner for the event, MediaCorp TV Channel 5 will be staging a 'live' Countdown show at Marina Bay. There will also be a dance party after the show at The Float @ Marina Bay until the early hours of the morning to usher in 2009.

Esplanade and URA present a countdown tradition unique to Singapore

Last year, over 250,000 people came down to Marina Bay with their family and friends and witnessed the lighting up of 5,000 spheres carrying the wishes of the community for the year ahead. This year, twice as many people are expected to pen their wishes on 10,000 spheres which will be installed in the Bay, a record number for the event. The installation of the spheres began in mid-November and will be completed by 31 December 2008. The spheres will be specially lit as part of a visual arts presentation that will set the entire Bay aglow.

At the stroke of midnight a breathtaking display of fireworks, choreographed to a special composition by Cultural Medallion winner, musician and composer Iskandar Ismail, will welcome in the New Year in a powerful and poignant celebration. Iskandar's work will be broadcast 'live' on MediaCorp radio stations Lush 99.5FM and Y.E.S. 93.3FM, so members of the public can tune in and witness the fireworks in tandem with the music, in perfect synchronisation.

Explaining how the Marina Bay SINGAPORE Countdown is unlike any other countdown event, **Mrs Cheong Koon Hean, CEO, URA**, said: *"It is special in that it brings together people from all walks of life to gather here at Marina Bay to usher in the new year with hopes and wishes for future possibilities. It is Singapore's very own countdown event with a heart. Especially in times like these, I hope all of us remain in good heart and look forward to brighter times ahead."*

Increased community involvement

Commenting on the increased community involvement this year, **Benson Puah, CEO, Esplanade**, said: *"This has been a challenging year for Singaporeans and the outlook for the next year seems no better. It is especially in trying times like these that the Marina Bay SINGAPORE Countdown can unite our community, to give us a chance to gather and collectively hope for a better year ahead. I am especially heartened by the increase in community involvement this year, to see more reaching out to those less able than themselves."*

This year, 20 community groups will reach out to their members to encourage them to pen their wishes on the spheres, almost double the 12 groups that took part last

year. Members of the People's Association Youth Movement (PAYM), who will be participating for the first time in this event, will bring the spheres to eight community clubs around Singapore. Community groups like the Chinese Development Assistance Council (CDAC), the Eurasian Association, the Singapore Indian Development Association (SINDA) and Yayasan Mendaki will also continue to support the event as will members from the SOKA Association, whose members will take to the streets on 20 December, with volunteers roving along Orchard Road, Ang Mo Kio and Tampines to encourage people to pen their wishes on the spheres. Their volunteers will also work with three voluntary welfare organisations – Dover Park Hospice, HCA Hospice Care and Society for the Physically Disabled – so their residents can pen their wishes on the spheres.

This year an additional 22 schools will join in by adopting spheres for their students and teachers to pen their wishes on, bringing the total number of schools involved to 52. Students from Hwa Chong Institution, Ngee Ann Polytechnic and Nanyang Technological University have also worked with different community and voluntary welfare organisations such as Child's Aid Society, Fei Yue Student Care and Riding for the Disabled Association, from 12 November to 9 December, to allow these communities to pen their wishes on the spheres.

The event this year is also supported by four community libraries, at which wishing stations will be set up. Members of the public who want to play a part in the event can also pen their wishes at wishing stations set up in various shopping centres, the Singapore Visitor's Centre at Orchard and the Concourse and waterfront at Esplanade Theatres. (More details on the wishing stations can be found below)

MediaCorp TV Channel 5's 'live' Countdown Show and Party@The Float

Mr Kenneth Liang, Executive Vice President, Programming and Production 5, MediaCorp TV, said: *"MediaCorp is happy to produce this year's New Year Countdown party at the float. From Times Square in New York to the Harbour Bridge in Sydney, countdown venues are permanent iconic locations. This year with the Marina Bay Singapore Countdown jointly presented by Esplanade and URA being beamed 'live' to more than 20 territories across Asia, Australia and the Middle East, we will have defined the stunning Marina Bay as Singapore's definitive countdown venue and imprinted on the collective consciousness of the world that Singapore indeed, is one of Asia's leading and most beautiful global cities."*

MediaCorp will be celebrating with the nation with a 'live' Countdown show and a mega dance party at The Float @ Marina Bay. Members of the public who purchase tickets will get to enjoy a spectacular 'live' show hosted by *Gurmit Singh, Michelle Chia, Fiona Xie, Utt and Andrea Fonseka* with a stellar line-up of homegrown celebrities including *Taufik Batisah, Hady Mirza, Adrian Pang, Jade Seah, Superband winner Rabbits*, regional rock band *River Maya* and many more. Channel 5's ever popular on-screen characters *Phua Chu Kang* and *Barbarella* will also appear in character to heighten the New Year's Eve atmosphere.

In the effort to reach out to a larger audience, Channel 5 will broadcast the Countdown show and fireworks display 'live' from 10:30pm. At 11:59pm, the entire nation will join in as we countdown to usher in the new year.

After this, 5,000 party-goers will get to dance the night away on the biggest floating stage in the world, with music by the internationally acclaimed DJ Koflow and DJ George Leong. This will be the party of the year under the night skies at Marina Bay!

For more information on the 'live' Countdown show and Party@The Float log on to 5.mediacorptv.sg/countdown09

Be part of this meaningful celebration

Friends and family members who are overseas can be a part of this event via a dedicated event website www.marinabaycountdown.sg, created to capture wishes online in the form of photographs, short video clips or text. A live telecast of the fireworks presentation and the countdown will also be available on the event website as well as screened 'live' on Channel NewsAsia International.

Community leaders and well-known local personalities will share their wishes in the form of video dedications. These recorded segments represent the hopes and dreams of people throughout Singapore and will be screened during the evening of 31 December on projection screens along Esplanade's waterfront and on plasma screens at Esplanade Basement 1.

Members of the public can also be part of this event by capturing special moments of the Marina Bay SINGAPORE Countdown through their camera lenses. Details of this unique photography competition, which is being held for the second year and closes on 12 January 2009, can be found on www.marinabaycountdown.sg.

Marina Bay SINGAPORE Countdown 08/09 is presented by Esplanade and Urban Redevelopment Authority, the development agency for Marina Bay, with 'live' show organiser MediaCorp TV Channel 5. This year, we are pleased to have on board our Presenting Sponsor, Carlsberg; Co-sponsor, Ferrero Asia Ltd; Supporters, Pontiac Land Group and PUB – the national water agency; and Contributors, Marina Bay Financial Centre, Overseas Union Enterprise and The Fullerton Heritage.

Said Ms Grace Lee, Senior Marketing Manager of Carlsberg Singapore,
“Carlsberg is honoured to be a part of this highly symbolic countdown party. As part of our innovative role as the Presenting Sponsor, Carlsberg will have 60 strongly illuminated Carlsberg Wishing Spheres along the Marina Bay waterfront. Singaporeans will be invited to pen their wishes and dreams for 2009 on our Carlsberg Wishing Spheres during our festive roadshows. Carlsberg wishes all to usher in the New Year with new hopes and aspirations, as we reach out and uplift the spirit of the masses.”

About Marina Bay

Marina Bay is the future heart of Singapore's City Centre. It provides Singapore with an opportunity for further urban transformation and to attract new investments, visitors and talent and will be a new destination for the local community. Extending seamlessly from the existing Central Business District, Marina Bay is set to become the new focal point that will reinforce Singapore's position as a leading global city. It offers extraordinary potential for growth and development in the heart of the city, an advantage that few other cities can offer, and will create an exciting array of limitless opportunities for locals and foreigners alike, to explore (live), exchange (work) and entertain (play).

About Urban Redevelopment Authority

The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) is Singapore's national land use planning and conservation agency. URA is also the development agency for Marina Bay. We spearhead Singapore's future development efforts at Marina Bay, taking a holistic approach to master plan and implement key infrastructure. As the place manager for Marina Bay, we also promote investment opportunities and exciting activities within Marina Bay, in collaboration with other government agencies and private stakeholders.

About Esplanade – Theatres On The Bay

Esplanade – Theatres on the Bay is one of the world's busiest arts centres, officially opened on 12 October 2002. This architectural icon with its distinctive twin shells is sited within Singapore's civic district, just by Marina Bay at the mouth of the Singapore River.

Esplanade aims to be a performing arts centre for everyone, and its programmes cater to its diverse audiences. Its programme line-up spans all genres to encompass music, dance, theatre and visual arts, with a special focus on Asian culture.

Esplanade houses world-class performance spaces, supported by a comprehensive range of professional support facilities and services. Its two main venues are the 1,600-seat Concert Hall, with acoustics by the late Russell Johnson of ARTEC

Consultants, and the 2,000-seat theatre, an adaptation of traditional European opera houses in horseshoe form.

In the past year, Esplanade welcomed over eight million visitors and hosted over 2,400 performances.

About MediaCorp

MediaCorp TV Channel 5 is Singapore's No. 1 English TV station. It is a 24-hour entertainment and sports channel with a mix of local and international mass-appeal programmes.

Channel 5 has a heritage of creating highly-rated and award-winning local productions featuring Asian faces and themes, such as *Phua Chu Kang Pte Ltd*, *Crime Watch*, *Incredible Tales*, *Parental Guidance*, the recent *Sayang Sayang*, *Calefare* and *The Showdown*.

The channel is also among the first in Asia to produce formatted versions of top-rated international game shows, like *Who Wants To Be A Millionaire?*, *The Weakest Link* and *Singapore's Brainiest*. In 2004, it launched the highly successful *Singapore Idol* to record-high ratings and in 2007, it launched *Deal or No Deal*. This November, it launched yet another highly acclaimed game show *Don't Forget The Lyrics*.

On the international programming front, Channel 5 continues to feature largely popular reality shows like *America's Got Talent*, *Survivor*, *Amazing Race* and *American Idol*. Many of its international series – *Desperate Housewives*, *CSI*, *Prison Break*, *Lost* and *Ugly Betty* are Emmy and Golden Globe Award winners.

In addition, Channel 5 is the station for prestigious sports events. Examples are the SEA Games, Summer Olympics, UEFA Euro 2004, US Augusta Masters and Lexus Cup. In 2008 Channel 5 is the Official Broadcaster for the 2008 Beijing Olympic Games and 2008 Formula 1™ SingTel Singapore Grand Prix.

Channel 5 aspires to be a respected and recognised brand in Singapore as well as in the region. It has received numerous accolades, including Asian Television Awards, New York Festival Awards and Promax International Gold Awards.

Channel 5 is part of MediaCorp, Singapore's leading media company with the most complete range of platforms, spanning television, radio, newspapers, magazines, movies and digital media. MediaCorp has over 55 products in four languages (English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil), including online classifieds, Internet TV-on-demand and High Definition TV broadcast. Winner of numerous international awards and accolades including Asia Television's Broadcaster of the Year, MediaCorp's vision is to become Asia's top media company, delivering valued content to the world.

For more information, please visit 5.mediacorptv.sg

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Annex 1

DETAILS ON WISHING STATIONS

Wishing Stations @ Esplanade

5 – 28 December, Fri – Sun only
5 – 10pm daily
Esplanade Concourse and Waterfront

Wishing Station @ Marina Square

5 – 28 Dec 08, Fri – Sun
10am – 10pm daily
Marina Square, Market Street Promo Space at Level 2

Wishing Station @ Parkway Parade

5 – 28 Dec 08
11am – 10pm daily (except from 20 – 23 Dec, 11am – 10.30pm)
Parkway Parade, Level 1 (near the taxi stand)

Wishing Station @ Raffles City

5 – 28 Dec 08, Fri – Sun
10am – 10pm daily
Raffles City, Level 3

Wishing Station @ Singapore Visitors Centre @ Orchard

5 – 28 Dec 08, Fri – Sun
9.30am to 10.30pm Mon - Fri, Sun / 9.30am to 11pm Sat
Singapore Visitors Centre @ Orchard, Junction of Cairnhill Road and Orchard Road

Wishing Station @ Suntec City

5 - 21 Dec 08, Fri – Sun
10am – 10pm daily
Galleria Dome, Level 1

Wishing Stations @ Libraries

8 – 28 December, Daily
12nn – 8pm
Bedok Community Library
Jurong Regional Library
Toa Payoh Community Library
Woodlands Regional Library

Wishing Station @ Marina Barrage

5 – 28 Dec 08,
9am – 6pm Mon – Fri / 10am – 8pm Sat – Sun
Level 1, Information Counter

VIDEO DEDICATION SCREENINGS

31 December
7.45pm – 8.15pm
9pm – 9.30pm
10.15pm – 11pm
Projection screens on **Esplanade Waterfront**
Plasma screens at **Esplanade Basement 1**

Annex 2

COUNTDOWN SHOW ON CHANNEL 5

31 December 08

9:00pm-10:00pm (Pre-Show performances)

10:30pm-12:10am (Live broadcast of the Countdown show & Fireworks on Channel 5)

PARTY@THE FLOAT

31 December 08

Admission from 9:00pm

Tickets are available at SISTIC's outlets.

For show and party ticketing information: 5.mediacorptv.sg/countdown09