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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **ACTION PLAN UNVEILED FOR CHINA GOLF TOURISM**

Three new initiatives to boost China's rapidly expanding golf travel industry have been announced today at the Asia Golf Tourism Convention (AGTC) in Haikou.

The drive to improve industry standards and provide a bridge between Chinese golf and the global game are key messages for the China Chapter of IAGTO (International Association of Golf Tour Operators).

"This third annual AGTC is a seminal moment for golf in China and particularly the China Chapter of IAGTO," commented Mr Tenniel Chu, Chairman of the China Chapter and Vice Chairman of Mission Hills Group.

"Our desire is to enhance the golfing experience for all inbound and outbound tourists and it is vitally important that we work together to achieve this common goal."

Almost 500 delegates – including nearly 200 golf tour operators from 32 countries – are attending the AGTC, which is being held in China for the first time. Mission Hills Haikou is the official host venue for the event.

At a press conference following the AGTC Opening Ceremony, Mr Chu unveiled a three-point action plan for the China Chapter, which is quickly expanding its membership base.

"First, we are currently inviting senior, respected and experienced public figures to join our inaugural Board of Directors. We want our organization to benefit from the best wisdom and leadership available as we pilot a course through these exciting times for golf tourism," he said.

"Second, to further promote Chinese golf to the world, we will host an annual gathering of golf tour operators from around the world every year at Mission Hills. This will be in addition to the AGTC which, of course, is held in different countries around the region.

"Third, the China Chapter's annual meeting will now include a workshop in which members exchange ideas, learn about best practices and receive updates on the latest developments in the rapidly evolving golf tourism industry.

"I firmly believe these steps are essential if we are to keep pace with the rest of the world."

The AGTC, running from 24-27 March, is being held by IAGTO in partnership with Mission Hills Group and the Haikou Government.

More than 60 Chinese golf tour operators, golf planners and specialist golf travel agencies are attending.

"This AGTC is the largest ever golf tourism event to have taken place in Asia, and the most diverse and important international tourism event to have taken place on Hainan Island," said IAGTO President and Chief Executive Mr Peter Walton.

"It is also the first time that a golf tourism trade event has had more buyer delegates than supplier companies, which will lead to more business opportunities than ever before."

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**About Mission Hills**

Mission Hills China, owner and operator of Mission Hills Shenzhen, which includes 12 golf courses, and Mission Hills Resort Hainan, which features 10 courses, is a key player in the country's fledgling sports and leisure industry. The Mission Hills brand encompasses several sub-brands, including Mission Hills Golf Clubs, Mission Hills Residences, as well as Mission Hills Hotels & Resorts. It is also the host, promoter and underwriter of several high-profile golf tournaments, including the World Ladies Championship and the World Celebrity Pro-Am. The company employs approximately 14,000 people across its two operations



### **About IAGTO**

Established in 1997, IAGTO is the global trade organisation of the golf tourism industry, and has over 500 golf tour operator members in 62 countries, which control more than 85% of golf holiday packages sold worldwide and which collectively have annual sales of over US\$2 billion. IAGTO runs annual Asia and North America Golf Tourism Conventions, along with its annual Mid Year Convention and regular Destination Conventions. IAGTO established the International Golf Travel Market, now owned and operated by Reed Travel Exhibitions, in 1997 and the International Golf Travel Writers Association in 2000. It also runs the prestigious annual IAGTO Awards.