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Maybank Championship Malaysia 2016 Announces Innovative Player Selection Process for Enhanced Quality of Play

*Martin Kaymer and Louis Oosthuizen First International Players to Confirm Participation;
Player Selection Process Revealed*

11 November 2015 - Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia: Maybank today announced the first of several innovations for the upcoming Maybank Championship Malaysia 2016 golf tournament that will be held here from 18 February – 21 February 2016.

“Golf tournaments in the region have reached a pivotal point as the quality of the organisation, courses and star players have grown over the years. As a long time supporter and sponsor of Malaysia’s leading golf event over the past decade, Maybank has been on the forefront of that evolution. Today, we are beginning the next stage of that growth as we focus our attention on creating a Championship that seeks to elevate the entire field of play, grow and sustain the attention of spectators from across the region, and ensure that every player is given the same respect and attention as would have been reserved for star or headline players in years past,” said Tan Sri Dato’ Megat Zaharuddin Megat Mohd Nor, Chairman of Maybank.

To be held at the historic Royal Selangor Golf Club (RSGC), the Championship represents an evolution in the way international sporting events in the ASEAN region are run. These enhancements are envisioned as being the first step towards changing the way professional golf is perceived in the region; the sport is developed at a national and regional level; and enhancing the spectator experience on the golf course and at home.

“As one of the oldest golf courses in the country, we are pleased to host one of the youngest championships in this part of the region. It will indeed be exciting to have more than thirty nationalities competing at a very high level at the Royal Selangor Golf Club amongst the distinguished members and guests from all over the world that will be at our historic club,” said Tan Sri Yong Poh Kon, President of Royal Selangor Golf Club

The inaugural Maybank Championship Malaysia is co sanctioned by The European Tour, The Asian Tour, The Professional Golf of Malaysia Tour (PGM Tour), and The Professional Golfers Association of Malaysia (PGAM).

The Maybank Championship Malaysia has also achieved another significant milestone as this marks the first time that all professional golfing bodies in Malaysia have collaborated in this manner for the common good of the game as well as its professional players, the eager fans and young talent that are waiting to be shown the way forward towards competing internationally and at the Rio Olympics in 2016.

“We are working with the PGM Tour and PGAM; The Asian Tour and The European Tour; and our local Ministry of Youth and Sports through the Sports Commissioners office to ensure that every player, visitor and fan that visits us receives the best possible experience. This includes efforts to enable the participation of as many appropriately qualified professional golfers from as many countries in the region as possible. It also hinges on the Championship having world-class winning talent that are already household names globally and local favourites across the 156 man field of play. By doing so, we ensure that the entire field of play is of an order of quality that is entirely elevated as compared to focusing all of our attention, efforts and resources on a handful of star players,” added Tan Sri Megat.

To that end, the Maybank Championship Malaysia 2016 has included several changes to the way professional golfers are invited to and qualify for the much-anticipated event.

The innovated player field for the 2016 event will see:

- The top sixty- seven (67) players from the European PGA Tour and the top sixty-seven (67) Asian Tour Players gaining automatic invitations for the event.
- Ten (10) spots will be given to the top ten (10) qualifying players based on the Order of Merit from the Professional Golf Of Malaysia Tour (PGM) and members of the Professional Golfers Association of Malaysia (PGAM).
- Five (5) spots will be given to ASEAN Professionals that will be awarded based on the Asian Tour Order Of Merit, Asian Development Tour Order Of Merit and National Professional Golfers Association of ASEAN Countries (where available).
- An additional two (2) spots will be given to Malaysian professionals.
- One (1) spot will be accorded to the top player on the Middle East North African Tour (MENA).

- Two (2) spots are reserved for other top players who are not members of European PGA Tour and the Asian Tour.
- The final two (2) spots will be given to the top two amateurs that qualify – one (1) to the highest ranked Malaysian in the Amateur World Rankings; and one (1) to the Asian Pacific Amateur Masters Champion.

One of the richest European PGA Tour and Asian Tour co-sanctioned tournaments in Southeast Asia; and a premier event contributing to both the Race to Dubai and the Asian Tour Order of Merit, the Championship offers a prize purse of USD 3 million. The Maybank Championship Malaysia will in 2016 be one of only six events at which the European Tour members will participate in the Asian Region.

Keith Waters, The European Tour's Chief Operating Officer, said: "We look forward to working closely with Maybank and Global One to ensure that the first edition of the Maybank Championship Malaysia is a great success. For many years now, Maybank have been great supporters of both The European and Asian Tours, and indeed of the game of golf across Asia".

"So we thank them for their continued commitment, as well as Global One for the great job they do in promoting professional tournaments. With the likes of Anirban Lahiri and Kiradech Aphibarnrat making great strides, golf in Asia is currently in very good health and I am sure this new tournament will continue to grow the game across the region."

"To have two Major Champions in Martin Kaymer and Louis Oosthuizen committed to the Maybank Championship Malaysia is a real statement of intent, and I'm sure there will be more high profile players keen to follow their lead."

The event will provide a significant platform for Asian Players to gain valuable Official World Ranking points and stake a claim for a place at the 2016 Olympics. It is also one of only four tournaments that is co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour in 2016.

Asian Tour Chairman Kyi Hla Han said: "On behalf of our players, I would like to extend our fullest appreciation to Maybank for its vision and commitment to stage a golf tournament that will further invigorate the development of professional golf at the highest level in Asia".

"While the top players from the Asian Tour will enjoy the opportunity to compete against the stars from The European Tour, we must laud Maybank for including leading ASEAN and Malaysian golfers to be a part of what will be truly a world-class golf championship. Malaysia has long been an important market for the Asian Tour and we look forward to

working closely with the PGM and PGAM as well for the betterment of the game in the country and across Asia.” He added.

Kaymer and Oosthuizen Confirm Participation

Meanwhile, Martin Kaymer and Louis Oosthuizen were revealed as the first international golfing professionals to confirm their participation at the event. Among the many players that are expected to headline the 156-men field, they are the first of many leading lights in professional golf that fans can expect to see on the greens come February 2016.

Louis Oosthuizen, a past Champion of the Maybank Malaysian Open 2012 and a well-known favourite here, is ranked at No.13 on the Official World Golf Ranking and No.4 on the Race to Dubai¹.

In 2010, Oosthuizen won his first European Tour event, the Open de Andalucia de Golf and won his first major championship, the 139th Open Championship at St Andrews. He won for the fourth time on the European Tour when he successfully defended his Africa Open title in 2012, also adding the Maybank Malaysian Open to his list of victories that year. Oosthuizen continued his winning streak after that by winning the Volvo Golf Championship in 2013 and 2014 respectively.

Two-time Major Champion Kaymer currently ranks No. 26 on the Official World Golf Ranking and No. 20 on the Race to Dubai².

He played at the Maybank Malaysian Open in 2011 as World No.1 and holder of the US PGA Championship 2010, which was also his first Major. Since then, he has won the US Open 2014 his second Major and the Players Championship 2014, which is the PGA Tour Flagship Event. Other wins include the HSBC World Golf Championship in 2010; and his place in Europe’s winning team at the Ryder Cup in 2012 and 2014. He last played in Malaysia at the Maybank Malaysia Open in 2012.

“The inclusion of players like Oosthuizen and Kaymer alongside a field of play that is being curated to be among the best in Asia is sure to elevate the Championship as we begin a new chapter in ASEAN’s professional golf scene. The Maybank Championship Malaysia marks our commitment to raising the bar for professional golf and we will be making several other similar player announcements and innovations in the coming months,” said Tan Sri Megat.

For further details please log on the www.maybankchampionship.com.my

¹ Official World Golf Ranking points and position accurate as of 9th November 2015

² Official World Golf Ranking points and position accurate as of 9th November 2015

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About Maybank – Humanising Financial Services

Maybank is among Asia's leading banking groups and South East Asia's fourth largest bank by assets. The Maybank Group has an international network of 2,400 offices in 20 countries namely Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Philippines, Brunei Darussalam, Vietnam, Cambodia, Thailand, Hong Kong SAR & People's Republic of China, Bahrain, Uzbekistan, Myanmar, Laos, Pakistan, India, Saudi Arabia, Mauritius, Great Britain and the United States of America. The Group offers an extensive range of products and services, which includes consumer and corporate banking, investment banking, Islamic banking, stock broking, insurance and takaful and asset management. It has over 46,000 employees serving more than 22 million customers worldwide. (www.maybank.com)

About GlobalOne

GlobalOne (Emerald Evolution Holdings Sdn Bhd) is an executive lifestyle sports promoter and we create sports event ownerships.

We specialise in providing the full spectrum in sponsorship event management and have an excellent track record in planning and delivering on PGA European Tour golf events for Malaysia (Maybank Malaysian Open), Singapore (Singapore Masters) and Indonesia (Indonesia Open) since 1999. We have strong relations with sports governing bodies, the media and commercial sponsors and technical partners to deliver on the bottom line.

We assist all our clients to create strategic, high-return, best practice sponsorship to provide a strong, unified vision, across departments and stakeholders, of the broad range of marketing and business objectives that can be achieved through this sponsorship. We also form and maintain strong relationship with players' managers to source the best players. GlobalOne has staged a highly successful and prestigious tournament in Asia – the Maybank Malaysian Open, (2006 – 2015) which is co-sanctioned by the European Tour and the Asian Tour providing the event with Official World Ranking status.

The European Tour

The European Tour is committed to celebrating the game of golf from the origins of the professional game, building a proud history of achievement, sportsmanship and integrity as well as showcasing our diverse global talent and rich landscapes. The European Tour's innovative approach enables us to embrace the world, combining championships of tradition with new tournaments in the cities and countries of the future. The European Tour International Schedule, which from 2009 has incorporated The Race to Dubai, is a thriving global brand which, in 2013, will feature a minimum of 45 tournaments spread across all five continents of the world; the European Challenge Tour focuses on the up and coming players of the future; while the European Senior Tour provides a new start for champions celebrating their 50th birthday. The European Tour's corporate identity features the iconic silhouette image of six-time Open Champion Harry Vardon who gives his name to The Harry Vardon Trophy, presented to the player who is crowned European Tour Number One and winner of The Race to Dubai at the end of the season.

Asian Tour

As the official sanctioning body for professional golf in Asia, the Asian Tour leads the development of golf across the region, enhancing the careers of its members while maintaining a commitment to the integrity of the game. The Asian Tour, through its membership of the International Federation of PGA Tours, is the only recognised pan-Asian professional golf tour in Asia. This unique feature positions the Asian Tour at the pinnacle of professional golf in Asia; providing its events with Official World Ranking status. Visit us at www.asiantour.com, www.facebook.com/asiantourgolf, www.twitter.com/asiantourgolf, www.youtube.com/theasiantour and www.weibo.com/asiantourgolf.

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