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PRESS RELEASE

Longines FEI World Endurance Championships 2016 allocated to Slovakia

The Longines FEI World Endurance Championships 2016 will be held in Samorin (SVK) following a decision at yesterday's FEI Bureau monthly teleconference meeting. A unanimous proposal from the FEI Endurance Committee recommending the Slovak venue received the support of the full Bureau.

Three bids to host the Championships were received when the bid process was reopened in April of this year following the decision to reallocate the event. Also bidding were Fontainebleau (FRA) and San Rossore, Pisa (ITA), but the Bureau ruled that neither of these two venues were suitable due to concerns over welfare and safety. Both venues proposed mid-October dates, meaning that the rides would start and finish in the dark, potentially putting horses and riders at risk. There is also increased potential for heavy rain in these areas at that time of year.

Samorin Equestrian Centre, the brain-child of Slovakian businessman Mario Hoffmann, staged very successful FEI European Endurance Championships last year. The 2016 World Championships will run from 15-18 September, with the qualification period ending on 16 July.

The Championships had originally been allocated to Dubai and were scheduled to be held in December of this year, but at its spring in-person meeting on 6-7 April, the FEI Bureau voted to remove the Championships from the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as it felt that the UAE National Federation is not currently in a position to guarantee that horse welfare would be fully protected.

“We were very happy to receive three bids and appreciate the willingness to support the FEI at such short notice for this year's World Championships”, FEI Secretary General Sabrina Ibáñez said, “ but the Bureau had no hesitation in opting for Samorin. Horse welfare has to be the most important element in the allocation of these major events and Samorin has a proven track record, having already run both the young horse and European Endurance Championships very successfully.

“The timing of the Championships was also important and, with the three bids all coming from Europe, the Bureau felt that a September date was more appropriate. Both Fontainebleau and San Rossore were



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proposing mid-October when the reduced daylight hours could potentially have an impact on safety. Safeguarding the safety and welfare of the equine and human athletes is our top priority in all our disciplines.”

Managing Director of x-bionic® sphere Ján Mašek is also very pleased with the FEI Bureau’s decision: „This is great news and another challenge for x-bionic® sphere. Our resort is developing rapidly. We recently renewed the tradition of the well-known P-T-S athletic meeting, we will host the Nations Cup (CSIO3*) in show-jumping on the last weekend of July, one of the most prestigious triathlon races, Challenge Šamorín, will be held here at the end of August and next year we will host The Championship triathlon event and the European Championships in cross-country run. After the well-organized European Endurance Championships we hosted last year, we convinced the FEI representatives of our preparedness to organize a world-class endurance event too. We look forward to the race and we are prepared to organize another great event in this beautiful equestrian sport. “

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About x-bionic® sphere

x-bionic® sphere is a place that unites sport, relax and innovation, which are brought to you in cooperation with a global sport brand of top quality, X-BIONIC®. This unique and multifunctional complex, which is a paradise for demanding visitors, professional athletes, sports enthusiasts, families, as well as for people who like health and wellness, is unparalleled in the world. It is situated in the vicinity of Bratislava and Vienna and has some of the best training facilities in the world. x-bionic® sphere provides professional conditions for 27 Olympic sport disciplines, including one of the most modern and biggest Olympic equestrian centers, not to mention the excellent X-BIONIC® HOTEL and congress centers.