SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS, Singapore

17 June 2014

To:
The Chinese Animal Protection Network, China

We refer to the implementation of the annual dog-meat eating festival 2014, to take place this Saturday (21 June, 2014), on the summer solstice, in Yulin, Guangxi Zhuang autonomous region, China. We are gravely disturbed to learn that more than 10,000 dogs are likely to be slaughtered and served as hotpots with litchis and strong liquor, to celebrate this occasion. We would like to extend our support to the international community in wanting a total ban of this festival, right from the outset.

While we do recognize that this festival in Yulin has been a customary staple, we feel strongly that, in an era of rapid globalization and modernization, we would also need to temper this with the ever-growing relevance and applicability of basic animal protection and welfare.

We would most ideally, in line with international animal welfare concerns too, wish to see a total abolition of such a practice. It is, without a doubt, utterly unnecessary to sacrifice a projected total number of ten thousand dogs, or more, merely for this occasion. Whilst certain traditions may still hold sway, somewhat, in this context, it is imperative that the current approach of eating dog meat, as well as the glorification of this practice by certain factions, be re-thought and re-looked, through and through.

At the very least, on a perhaps more practical and balanced note, we appeal to the relevant authorities there to look into reducing heavily the severity of the loss of animal lives and/or to look into far more humane ways of celebrating the occasion. Perhaps, also, a cue could be taken from the example set by South Korea, a country that has had a much longer dietary tradition of eating dog meat. We do believe that the local government in Yulin could use the South Korean example to, at least, reduce heavily the number of dogs slaughtered on the summer solstice and minimize the negative social effects of the festival.

We hope to be able to elicit the Chinese Animal Protection Network's endorsement and involvement in realizing a possible banning altogether of, or - at the very least - curtailing of the extent of animal cruelty associated with, this festival.

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