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LAUNCH OF THE IRCC LOGO AND SLOGAN AT THE NATIONAL INTER-RACIAL AND RELIGIOUS CONFIDENCE CIRCLE (IRCC) WORKSHOP 2008

Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports and the Chairman of the National Steering Committee (NSC) on Racial and Religious Harmony, unveiled the new IRCC logo and slogan at the National Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circle (IRCC) Workshop 2008 on 5 Apr 08.

The IRCC logo and slogan was selected by the IRCC Chairmen in a six-week long national competition held in Sep 2007. The competition was in response to calls from IRCC members who wanted to have a logo and slogan to better represent the role and importance of the IRCCs. The competition attracted an overwhelming 23,000 entries from schools, institutes of higher learning as well as the general public and professionals. The overall winners for the logo and slogan competition were respectively awarded \$2,000 in cash.

This national level workshop, was attended by about 200 participants from the IRCCs, the NSC on Racial and Religious Harmony, and Community Engagement Programme (CEP) Clusters. It was held to take stock of the IRCCs' progress and re-emphasize the goals and objectives of the IRCCs. Participants also shared their experiences and best practices in steering the IRCCs towards fostering greater social cohesion and inter-faith understanding.

In his opening address, Dr Vivian Balakrishnan, Minister for Community Development, Youth and Sports, said: "The strength of the IRCCs lies in the network of warm personal relationships among religious and community leaders who are members of the IRCCs. This network will foster greater social cohesion which will be invaluable during crises."

Mr Bernard Chiang of Braddell Heights IRCC also shared his experiences as an IRCC Chairman: "I am very encouraged by the close relationships developed amongst my members. The religious leaders in my IRCC not only participated actively in the IRCC activities, but have graciously opened their doors to host visits and meetings. They even attended each other's religious festivities as friends."

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Background on Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs)

1 The Inter-Racial Confidence Circles (IRCCs) formed in 2002 against the backdrop of the September 11 attack, have been re-positioned as local-level inter-faith platforms under the Community Engagement Programme (CEP) to respond quickly to incidents with racial and religious dimensions.

2 Working through the IRCC network developed in the past few years, MCYS encourages leaders from religious organisations such as churches, mosques, temples etc, as well as other ethnic and community organisations such as clan associations to participate in the IRCCs. The IRCCs were renamed as Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles on 6 Sep 2007 to better reflect their new role as important bridges between different religious groups at the local level. To date, 84% of the religious organisations are on board IRCCs.

Roles & Objectives of IRCCs

3 IRCCs aim to foster friendships and build trust amongst people during peace time so that we can withstand challenges and strains on our social cohesion during crisis. In a crisis, they will be the key links to disseminate information, soothe and minimise communal tension, and maintain public confidence.

Who are the members?

4 Members of IRCCs comprise of leaders from religious and ethnic-based organizations, as well as community-based organisations located within each constituency. There are 84 IRCCs throughout Singapore, one in every constituency.

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FACTSHEET ON THE NATIONAL IRCC LOGO & SLOGAN CONTEST

In conjunction with the renaming of Inter-Racial Confidence Circles to Inter-Racial and Religious Confidence Circles (IRCCs), a nationwide contest entitled “Seeking the Perfect Shade of Harmony” was held to find a logo and slogan for the IRCCs from 6 Sep to 12 Oct 07.

2 There were five categories for the contest, namely – (i) Pre-School (who were invited to participate in a colouring contest); (ii) Primary School; (iii) Secondary School & Institute of Technical Education; (iv) Polytechnic, Junior College and University and (v) General Public and Professionals.

3 The six-week long competition attracted an overwhelming 23,494 entries from the various categories as listed below:

Category	Number of Entries
Pre-School	18,165
Primary School	2,640
Secondary School & ITE	1,974
Polytechnics, Junior Colleges & Universities	358
General Public & Professionals	357
Total	23,494

Category	Number of Entries
Logo	2,753
Slogan	2,576
Colouring	18,165
Total	23,494

4 50 logos and 40 slogans were short-listed and forwarded to the IRCC chairmen for judging. The chairmen judged the entries based on their portrayal of the elements of trust, respect, harmony and co-operation.

The Winners

5 The winning slogan is “Different Races, Many Beliefs, One Nation”.

6 The overall winners for the logo and slogan competition were respectively awarded \$2,000 in cash, while individual winners in the respective categories each won \$1,500 in cash. The winners for the various categories are listed below:

GRAND PRIZE WINNER		
Logo	Loh Siew Choo	
Slogan	Allan Tan	

LOGO WINNERS		
Category	Name	Institution
Primary	Tay Kai Xin, Ranice, 11	Red Swastika School
Secondary and ITE	Charles Looi Chun Hoe, 17	ITE College West (Ang Mo Kio)
Polytechnics/Junior Colleges and Universities	Yew Kian Meng, 18	Singapore Polytechnic
Professionals	Phoebe Sung Seow Ting	
General Public	Loh Siew Choo	

SLOGAN WINNERS		
Category	Name	School / Institution
Primary	Raphael Soh Qin, 11	Anglo Chinese School (Primary)
Secondary and ITE	Muhammad Zaki Bin Hosain, 19	ITE College West (Dover)
Polytechnics/Junior Colleges and Universities	Pay Wan Rong, 17	Singapore Polytechnic
General Public and Professional	Allan Tan	

SCHOOLS WHICH SUBMITTED THE MOST ENTRIES		
Nan Chiau Primary School		
CHIJ St Theresa's Convent		
PCF Woodlands Branch		