

## **Proposal Paper for the Admission of Macau as a Nation within the WSDC Ltd**

### **a) Aim of Paper**

The aim of this Paper is to urge the Members of the **WSDC Ltd** to approve Macau's application to be admitted as a nation within the **WSDC Ltd** for the purpose of allowing it to send a Team Macau (5 Macauian High School Debaters, a Team Manager, a Team Coach, and/or a Team Judge) to its annual **World Schools' Debating Championships**, as well as granting it all the rights, responsibility and privileges which would follow from its inclusion into the WSDC debating community as a corporate citizen.

### **b) Brief History of Macau's Political Past and Political System**

Macau has a parallel political history similar to Hong Kong, which was a colony of the British for 155 years till it handover to People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1997.

Macau was administered as a colony by the Portugal for 442 years until its return to the People's Republic of China (PRC) in 1999, under the "One China, Two Systems" political framework. Under this treaty with Portugal, China has agreed that its socialist economic system would not be practiced in Macau and that Macau would enjoy a high degree of autonomy in all matters, except foreign and defence affairs until at least 2049, fifty years after the handover. Macau is now known as a **Special Administrative Region (SAR)**, like Hong Kong.

Macau, like Hong Kong, has many of the features of a Western, liberal democracy:

1. Regular, Periodic Free and Fair Elections for 50% of the Legislative Parliamentary Council; and its Chief Executive of the Macau SAR. There are 12 active political parties which could put up their candidates for election into the Legislative for half the seats. The other half of the seats are elected by professional or special interest groups called "functional constituencies". These groups represent professionals like engineers, educators, or industries such as gaming, legal, transport, IT, etc.
2. Free Press -- Numerous privately owned, non-government newspapers and TV news channels. These independent voices do, on the whole, represent public opinions in Macau.
3. High Degree of Respect for Human Rights -- Open public protests is allowed, with no restrictions on the Internet. Macau is jokingly known as the "line of freedom" by Mainland Chinese students as they could enjoy access to Facebook, YouTube, and other uncensored Internet websites the moment they cross over by land from Zhuhai in Guangdong into the Macau SAR. Workers' unions are active and are powerful forces in the political arena of the Macau.

4. Robust Free Market -- Macau is a thriving tourism and gaming hub with many international players, a high volume of Western foreign professionals and Asian migrant workers. The unobtrusive Macau Government is trying its best to upgrade the human resource capital of its native population of about 500,000 while welcoming foreign talents to augment its booming economy.
5. Religious Freedom -- Being the gateway to the Jesuits' evangelical missions to China 400 years ago, Macau has a high Catholic and Christian following, as is evidenced by the numerous churches and "mission schools" dotting its rugged landscape. Being a vital sea port, before its eclipse by Hong Kong in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, Macau has a long history of the worship of the Chinese Sea Goddess, Ma Zhu. It has religious holidays for Christians, Buddhists, Muslims and Taoists throughout the year.

In short, Macau is distinctly different and unlike the People's Republic of China.

### c) Reasons for Admitting Macau into the WSDC Ltd as a Nation

#### 1. De Facto Status as a Representative Political Entity

Macau, except for its foreign and military affairs, operates as an autonomous city-state with complete freedom in its political, economic, social, educational, environmental, and cultural decision-making and policies. In many ways, Macau is similar to Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland, which are all represented in the **WSDC Ltd**, together with England.

Of course, the inimitable similarity to the Hong Kong SAR, its closest neighbour separated by an hour's ferry ride, which is a long-standing member of the WSDC debating family, makes the Macau SAR a compelling candidate for it to represent itself under its own SAR Flag.

Macau SAR's independent, democratic political system is guaranteed till 2049 by the Chinese Government, like Hong Kong, and is in no danger of being revoked. There is no controversy over Macau's inclusion, unlike highly possible diplomatic conflicts over inclusion of Taiwan or Tibet which the Chinese Government adopts a zero-tolerance approach over its sovereign rights over these territories.

In fact, the Head Coach/Manager of **Team China (PRC) WSDC**, Loke Wing Fatt, is in full support of Macau's inclusion as a competing member of the **WSDC Ltd** and is the prime mover in the collective effort of Macau's ascendancy as a competing WSDC nation.

#### 2. For the Development of High School Debating in Macau

English Varsity Debating in Macau was in the doldrums until the 2004 when **Mr Theo Cheng**, the Student Affairs Manager of the **University of Macau English**

**Debate Team (UMAC EDT)** decided to do his best to promote and deepen the good art of verbal jousting in his university. Together with the efforts of his dedicated debaters and Loke Wing Fatt, Theo and his **UMAC** Student Affairs colleagues built and guided the **UMAC EDT** to its current status as the best debating university in China, and the 4<sup>th</sup> best debating “country” behind Singapore, the Philippines and Malaysia in Asia this year at the **Botswana World Universities Debating Championships 2011**.

The **UMAC EDT** hosted the prestigious **North-East Asian Debate Open 2010** last November and will be the first Chinese host of the **2<sup>nd</sup> United Asian Debating Championships 2011** in May 2011. It is planning to host the **Austral-Asians Inter-Varsity Debating Championships (Australis)** and the **World Universities Debating Championships (WUDC)** in within the next 3 years when its new campus is ready.

As a result of the consistent efforts of debate lovers in Macau, with the support of outside expertise, English Varsity debating in Macau is now vibrant and exciting, with full participation from all its tertiary institutions in local tournaments and international debating competitions.

Mr Theo Cheng, with Mr Raymond Lio (**UMAC** Student Affairs Manager), Nicole Ng (Best Macau/Chinese Debater) and Fiona Leung (Best EFL Speaker at the **Bangkok WUDC 2008**) had applied to the Macau Government last month to form the **Macau English Debate Association (MEDA)** and is now awaiting approval for its official gazetting by March 2011. The development of debating in Macau will now be focussed on high schoolers in order to form a virtual cycle for varsity debaters to “*pay forward*” the benefits they have gleaned from debating, and for high schoolers to reciprocate their kindness by feeding these universities with a consistent stream of good varsity debaters.

Therefore, one of the key aims of the **MEDA** is to provide a Macau-wide, coordinated systematic framework for the promotion of English High School Debating in Macau. Through a “Big Sisters/Brothers Helping Younger Brothers/Sisters” approach where varsity debaters conduct high school debate workshops and organise high school debate tournaments, under the ambits of the **MEDA**, we will work towards the enhancing and deepening of the English high school debating pool in Macau.

The inclusion of Macau in the **WSDC Ltd** as a debating nation will help **MEDA** to market its debate programmes, recruit and train good Macauian high school debaters who will be motivated by the opportunity to cross-sword with the best high debaters in the world in the annual **WSDC**.

### **3. Full Support from the Macau Government**

The Macau Government recognises the tremendous value-add impacts that debating can bestow on its students. It is increasingly focussing on the upgrading of the intellectual and creative capabilities of its student population in order to help its youth compete in the global market of big ideas. Having worked as the Debate Consultant for the **Macau Government Higher Education Centre (GAES)** for the past 4 years, I could personally say that they are enlightened bureaucrats who would devote time, energy and money in the promotion high school debating in Macau and would be most willing to play host to the annual **WSDC** in the near future, if the **Macau SAR** is admitted into the **WSDC Ltd**. Similar to the **Qatar Foundation**, Macau has a **Macau Foundation** which acts as its educational investment arm. It financially supports the development of intangible educational assets such as the development of a vibrant, democratic debating community in Macau, and Mainland China.

#### **d) Summary**

On behalf of the aspiring Macau high school debaters, the varsity debaters and the adult debate lovers who are all working to proliferate good debating in the **Macau SAR**, I plead with you to admit the **Macau SAR** as a competing Nation in the **WSDC Ltd** because it is fair, because it is just, because it will boost the development of high school debating in Macau and because Macau will “pay forward” the benefits of its admission into the **WSDC Ltd** by championing the cause of **WSDC** in the Macau and Mainland China as a responsible and active Member-Nation of the **WSDC Ltd**.

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