

HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL

PATRICIA A. FORKAN
President

October 13, 2006

Mr. Zhao Xuemin
Vice Minister
State Forestry Administration
18 Hepingli Dongjie
Beijing 100714
China

Dear Vice Minister Zhao,

I am writing on behalf of the 9.5 million members and constituents of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and our international arm, Humane Society International (HSI), to express our strong opposition to the 'Animal Olympics' that are currently being held in Shanghai. In this event, wild animals, including endangered species, are forced to participate in unnatural and degrading activities. HSUS/HSI respectfully requests that you permanently end this event.

The horrific display of animal cruelty at the 'Animal Olympics' that has been broadcast to the world depicts animals who are denied the ability to express any of their natural behaviors and are restrained and forced to entertain spectators. The shackles and muzzles confirm that the distressed animal performers are not willing participants.

In the animal entertainment industry, trainers often use excessive and abusive training methods to force the animals to perform tricks and sit for pictures. Regardless, the animals are still wild and behave unpredictably. One example of this occurred in Hawaii in 1994 when an African elephant performing in a circus crushed her trainer to death and injured another circus worker and 12 spectators before running loose on the streets for half an hour. In the end, she was shot to death by the police. Incidents such as this exemplify not only the distress that performing animals endure, but also the danger that they pose to the public.

As evidenced by newspaper after newspaper decrying the inhumane treatment of animals at this event, the 'Animal Olympics' reflects poorly on China's image. I respectfully request that you do everything possible to protect the affected animals from further abuses.

Sincerely,



Patricia Forkan
President, Humane Society International

Promoting the protection of all animals worldwide

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