



For immediate release
Tuesday 30 June 2009

PUBLICITY EVENT

Protest outside Malaysian Embassy in London Animal welfare groups oppose plans for primate research facility in Johor

London, 30th June 2009. Representatives from the **British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV)** and the **International Primate Protection League (IPPL)** today hand delivered letters of protest to the High Commissioner of Malaysia in London. The animal welfare groups were responding to reports that Malaysia is in discussions with a number of animal testing companies, including an unnamed French company to set up a primate research facility in Johor using captive-bred long-tailed macaques (*Macaca fascicularis*) imported from nearby countries.

The negotiations reported to be underway coincide with the revision of the Directive that legislates animal testing in Europe, prompting fears that this may be an attempt to circumvent current efforts to place increased restrictions on the use of primates within the EU. There are claims that the monkeys used in the new facility will not be taken from the wild, but will instead come from breeding farms in countries such as Vietnam, Indonesia and China. There are, however, already widespread concerns about the conditions in which some primates are kept in source countries as well as the validity of many so-called 'captive-breeding' facilities, where monkeys are captured from the wild and their offspring sold for research, thereby still posing a threat to wild populations.

Sarah Kite, Director of Special Projects for the BUAV, said: "We are concerned that European research companies, in an effort to avoid the growing public criticism of animal experimentation and attempts to impose tighter restrictions on the use of primates within the EU, may be looking to set up primate facilities in countries where regulations are more lax. This appears to be the case in Malaysia, where there is reportedly no legislation governing the use of animals in research. The use of non-human primates in research is being questioned internationally most recently in the European Union, by scientists as well as others. The establishment of a primate facility in Malaysia would encourage further use of these animals at a time when this very practice is being challenged."

Dr Shirley McGreal, Founder and Chairwoman of the International Primate Protection League, said: "The Malaysian government recently decided that it would not allow the export of its own indigenous population of macaques for research purposes so it would be inconsistent for them if they considered allowing a foreign company to do the very same with macaques

imported from neighbouring countries. We urge Malaysia to put an end to these reported negotiations and to distance itself from this industry which inflicts such great suffering on our primate cousins.”

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Notes:

Photographs of the event and copies of the letters to be handed in are available on request

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About the British Union for the Abolition of Vivisection (BUAV)

The BUAV is the UK's leading organisation campaigning to end animal experiments. It has been campaigning for over 100 years to achieve a world where nobody wants or believes we need to experiment on animals. We are committed to achieving our aims through reliable and reasoned evidence-based debate. For further information, visit <http://www.buav.org/>

About the International Primate Protection League (IPPL)

Founded in 1973, IPPL is the only organisation in the world that works to protect and conserve all species of primate. A grassroots organisation, IPPL works with local organisations in habitat countries to promote community participation and effective conservation practices. IPPL has field representatives in more than 25 countries and an advisory board which includes renowned experts in primate behaviour, ecology, rescue and rehabilitation. For further information, visit www.ippl.org.