



## **adidas Kicks off Youth School Football Tour to Support China's One Belt, One Road Initiative**

**XI'AN, November 20, 2017** – adidas, the world's leading football brand, kicked off a five-day school football coaching tour in the historic city of Xi'an today with plans to take its school football program led by veteran international youth football coach, Tom Byer, to a total of five cities strategically-located along the route of China's One Belt, One Road Initiative (BRI).

Continuing to Baoji in Shaanxi Province, Shangrao in Jiangxi Province, Chongqing and culminating on November 24 in the Sichuan capital of Chengdu, the tour represents the latest in a series of adidas activities aimed at teaching fundamental youth football skills and promoting football in schools under the brand's ongoing strategic grassroots football program throughout China.

"The impressive results we continue to witness from our school football program collaboration with China's Ministry of Education (MOE) provides an inspiring reminder that, through sport, we have the power to change lives," said Colin Currie, Managing Director, adidas Greater China. "Today represents a proud moment for us as we extend this program to even more cities nationwide, including to key cities and future cities along the Belt and Road. As the world's No.1 football brand, adidas remains strongly committed to continuing to leverage our first-class resources and expertise towards football development at all levels in China."

Day one of the tour in Xi'an today saw adidas ambassador Tom Byer lead a total of 40 youngsters from Xi'an Development Zone No 6 Primary School through a series of training exercises designed to teach fundamental movement and other related football skills, as well as help them become more confident and relaxed with the ball.

After the training session, the children put what they had learnt into action going head-to-head for a brief friendly match.

Announced in October 2013, the One Belt, One Road Initiative forms a critical component of China's bid to strengthen regional and global development, tracing the ancient route of the old Silk Road. Its relevance and importance are growing at a time when China is also making a concerted effort to develop its capabilities in sports – especially football – as part of plans to build an RMB 5 trillion sports industry by 2025. adidas fully supports this goal, both through its partnership with the MOE and its wider efforts to nurture football and sport participation in general across China, including in cities along the route.

"With over 20 years of training experience, I believe that football is a sport that players should learn and develop at a very early stage," said Tom Byer. "Working with adidas, my main goal during this tour and beyond is to go and meet Chinese school children, nurture a passion for football among them and teach them skills which they can practice on a regular basis. All of this serves as an importance foundation for the future development of Chinese football."

### **adidas' Pledge to Grassroots Football in China**

adidas has long been recognized as a major player in promoting China's football development with its holistic approach starting from grassroots all the way to the elite level. In recent years, adidas has sharpened its strategic focus on grassroots football development primarily in



recognition of the huge impact it can have on Chinese football development as a whole. Its holistic grassroots football approach consists of youth leagues, coach-the-coach training and player development. The model is structured around a development pathway beginning with an introduction to basic football skills and elite participation in football. adidas' increased investment in developing youth football in China matches its rich heritage in sports and is part of the brand's longstanding commitment to support grassroots sports initiatives.

In June 2015, adidas China established a landmark three-year partnership with the MOE in a bid to accelerate the development of school football nationwide. In accordance with the partnership, adidas has pledged to leverage its global and local resources in support of the MOE's school football initiatives nationwide. To date, it has provided support to the MOE's training of over 17,000 teachers and supported its summer and winter training camps for approximately 3,000 children. adidas has also donated more than 60,000 balls to over 1,000 schools across the country, enabling over 1 million students to enjoy the game.

adidas' partnership with the MOE reached a historic moment in July this year when both parties collaborated with the German Football Association (DFB) to jointly host the first-ever Chinese youth training camp in Germany. Chinese President Xi Jinping and German Chancellor Angela Merkel visited the camp in Berlin.

On June 1, 2017, adidas China, the MOE and China Education Television (CETV) together launched "Daily Football," the MOE's first-ever official television series. Reaching over 8 million viewers nationwide and featuring Tom Byer, the series aims to teach essential football moves through a total of 365, 3-minute episodes aired daily on CETV.

### **About adidas**

adidas is a global leader in the sporting goods industry with the core brands adidas and Reebok. Headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Germany, the company employs more than 60,000 people across the globe and generated sales of € 19 billion in 2016. In Greater China, the company employs more than 4,500 people and generated sales of over € 3 billion in 2016.

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