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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Women Ski Jumpers Seek Meeting with IOC Before Court Date

"We have had a response from the IOC's press office, acknowledging our faxed request for a meeting this week with President Jacques Rogge, and we are willing to meet with him anywhere that is convenient, prior to the April 20 Canadian court hearing," elite ski jumpers Lindsey Van and Katie Willis said today.

Van and Willis sent Mr. Rogge a fax last Friday, March 20 asking to meet with him while he is in Denver. The fax was sent to Mr. Rogge's direct fax number listed in the official IOC directory and confirmation of receipt by the fax service was provided. On that basis, Van and Willis traveled to Denver on March 24 and held a press conference on March 25 to discuss their requested meeting. They finally left the city at 5 p.m. with no response from Mr. Rogge.

An email apparently was sent to both Van and Willis just before 5 p.m. March 25, despite a request that the two ski jumpers be contacted on their mobile phones, in which numbers were provided in the original letter to the IOC. The email came from Mr. Robert Roxburgh, communications manager of the IOC's Communications office, and asked about their availability for a meeting. It went to the wrong email address for Van, but Willis received it as she was preparing to join her family in Hawaii for a postponed spring break vacation. The email did not state with whom the meeting would be, but Willis responded to Mr. Roxburgh that she and other top women ski jumpers would be happy to meet.

"We have to have this meeting with Mr. Rogge before our April 20 court hearing in Vancouver," Willis explained. "If he and the IOC's Executive Committee decide that we can participate in the 2010 Olympics, we need to have that resolved before April 20 or we will have no choice but to move forward with our court action."

Van, Willis and 13 other elite women ski jumpers are suing VANOC for the right to participate in the 2010 Olympics. Ski jumping is the only winter sport not open to both men and women and is one of the original sports of the modern Games. Van is the first and current World Champion in women's ski jumping, while Willis placed in the top 20 at last month's first World Championships in Liberec.