



Press Release

HRH Prince Michael of Kent GCVO launches “*Helmets for Kids*” program and presents International Road Safety Award

Hanoi – On February 28th, Prince Michael attended a kick-off ceremony at Van Phuc primary school in Hanoi to launch the “*Helmets for Kids*” program, organized by Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIP Foundation). More than 1,100 helmets sponsored by the FIA Foundation were provided to students and teachers of Van Phuc primary school. On this occasion, Prince Michael presented the Prince Michael International Road Safety Award to Vietnam Television (VTV) in recognition of VTV’s positive contributions to road safety awareness in Vietnam.

Mr. Antony Stokes, Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Vietnam; Mr. Nguyen Hoang Hiep, Vice Chairman of National Traffic Safety Committee, Mr. Greig Craft, President of AIP Foundation; Mr. Saul Billingsley, Director General of FIA Foundation; Mr. Nguyen Xuan Tan, Deputy Director of Hanoi Transportation Department and standing member of Hanoi Traffic Safety Committee (TSC); Mr. Nguyen Hiep Thong, Deputy Director of Hanoi Department of Education and Training (DOET); and representatives from National Traffic Safety Committee (NTSC), Police Department, and Vietnam Television attended the kick-off ceremony.

At the start of the event, Prince Michael visited road safety activity booths conducted by AIP Foundation and talked with students about the importance of road safety. Activities included helmet decorating, traffic sign memorization games, and bicycling practice. On stage, Prince Michael, Ambassador Stokes, and representatives from NTSC, Hanoi DOET, AIP Foundation and FIA Foundation distributed helmets to student representatives, demonstrating their strong support for the “*Helmets for Kids*” program. Ambassador Stokes and AIP Foundation staff taught students how to wear helmets correctly. These helmets will serve as important companions to students as they travel to and from school each day.

Prince Michael stated during the ceremony, "Improving road safety and reducing casualties requires permanent vigilance, regular reinforcement of messages, and constant innovation. All of

these factors are evident in Vietnam's approach, and I applaud Vietnam's strong commitment to building on its road safety achievements." Prince Michael also encouraged the students to always wear their helmet when they ride on a motorcycle.

Mr. Nguyen Hiep Thong, Deputy Director of Hanoi DOET, said, "Department of Education and Training has always considered traffic safety education for children a top priority. We have coordinated with several organizations to integrate helmet training activities and traffic safety education within schools. After several years of implementation, we realize that school-based education is a highly effective method to change perceptions about helmets among children and parents."

The "*Helmets for Kids*" program was initiated by Mr. Greig Craft, President of AIP Foundation, in 2000. To date, the program has distributed more than 500,000 helmets throughout Vietnam and other countries in Southeast Asia.

FIA Foundation, a UK-based charity, is the primary sponsor of the "*Helmets for Kids*" program at Van Phuc primary school. In 2013, the charity sponsored more than 21,000 helmets at 19 schools in Vietnam through the *Helmets for Kids* program. FIA Foundation supports road safety initiatives worldwide as part of the UN Decade of Action for Road Safety 2011-2020. Alongside road safety programs, FIA Foundation promotes environmental and sustainable mobility and funds road-related research.

Mr. Saul Billingsley, Director General of FIA Foundation, stated, "We are very pleased with the achievements of the "*Helmets for Kids*" program. With support from AIP Foundation this past year, thousands of helmets have been donated to students and a large-scale public awareness campaign has effectively reached communities. We are committed to ongoing collaboration with government and non-profit organizations in Vietnam in order to reach our long-term goal: creating a new generation fully equipped with the knowledge and skills to stay safe on the road."

At the event on Friday, Prince Michael also presented the Prince Michael International Road Safety Award to Ms. Nguyen Thu Ha, representative of VTV, to recognize the achievements of VTV in raising awareness about road safety nationally. As a government-owned television program, VTV plays a vital role in disseminating information to the public. The program provides instant updates on new government traffic regulations and hosts traffic safety-themed television segments such as "Traffic Story on Sunday," in addition to its annual broadcast commemorating the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims.

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About the Asia Injury Prevention Foundation

The Asia Injury Prevention Foundation (AIP Foundation) is a U.S. registered 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization that uses public-private partnerships, public awareness education, and school-based programs to reduce the rate of traffic injuries and fatalities in developing countries. AIP Foundation has offices in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam; Phnom Penh, Cambodia; Bangkok, Thailand; and Chengdu, China in addition to offices in Africa. In 2001, AIP Foundation built its non-profit helmet assembly plant, V-SPEC, which manufactures Protec brand tropical helmets. These helmets offer an environmentally appropriate, safe and affordable option for motorcycle and bicycle users.

In 2009, AIP Foundation, in collaboration with the FIA Foundation and the World Bank, launched the Global Helmet Vaccine Initiative (GHVI), an international coalition with the objective of “putting a helmet on every head in the Decade of Action for Road Safety (2011-2020).”