

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tanzanian delegation visits Hanoi, seeks NGO advice on tropical helmet production

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A delegation from the Tanzania Ministry of Home Affairs, Tanzania Prisons Service, and the Tanzania Helmet Vaccine Initiative arrived in Hanoi from Dar es Salaam on November 16th for a four-day visit to investigate helmet production and advocacy projects in Vietnam. Led by Mr. John C. Minja, Tanzania Commissioner General of Prisons, the group was welcomed by the Asia Injury Prevention (AIP) Foundation in Hanoi.

During their stay, the delegation toured the AIP Foundation Protec helmet factory, as well as school-based traffic safety program and helmet-monitoring project sites. A high-level meeting with the National Traffic Safety Committee on November 20th provided an opportunity to exchange ideas and for the delegation to learn about Vietnam's renown road safety successes over the past ten years.

A low-income country of approximately 47 million people, Tanzania faces a growing road safety crisis, similar to Vietnam's. The country reported 2,595 fatalities and 16,308 injuries due to road traffic accidents in 2007. Of the lives lost on Tanzania's roads, one in four are bicyclists or motorcycle riders, who could have been protected with a quality helmet.

The relationship between Vietnam and Tanzania road safety stakeholders was initiated by Greig Craft, Founder of AIP Foundation, and Tanzanian Prime Minister Mizengo Kayanza Peter Pinda in 2010. Encouraged by the successful helmet initiatives in Vietnam, Prime Minister Pinda recently selected the appropriate government entities to develop a similar initiative in Tanzania. The Prime Minister also has keen interest in Vietnam's rice growing technology and the delegation will meet with representatives of Oxfam to learn from Vietnam's experiences.

The Tanzanian government aims to establish a tropical helmet factory in East Africa based on the Protec model. It would be developed by the Tanzania Prison Services (TPS), a division of the Tanzania Ministry of Home Affairs. The delegation signed a Memorandum of Understanding with AIP Foundation on November 22nd in Hanoi as the first step in developing a technical and implementation plan. The factory will create jobs in Tanzania and provide high-quality helmets to the regional market, including Kenya and Uganda. Protec will export parts and components for local assembly in Tanzania.

“A helmet initiative based on Vietnam's successful model and adapted to the needs of Tanzanian road users has the potential to save thousands of lives,” said General Minja. “We want to learn from Vietnam's success and hope to gain valuable technical advice from AIP Foundation and the Global Helmet Vaccine Initiative.”

“This visit marks an important achievement for AIP Foundation and Vietnam,” said Mr. Craft. “We have been able to develop an innovative, yet practical, developmental solution for other countries who recognize this unique opportunity to replicate our success on their own roads.”



About AIP 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, and Bangkok, Thailand. In 2001, AIP Foundation built its non-profit helmet assembly plant, 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).”

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