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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Popular emoji icon reveals darker side in distracted driving campaign targeted at Vietnamese youth**

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The darker side of the popular emoji icon was revealed to audiences across Vietnam in a newly launched distracted driving campaign targeted at 15 to 29-year-olds. The campaign's slogan is "Leave your phone alone or you could be next!" and features a sinister, evil emoji character as its key visual. The two associated TV commercials will be broadcast on national and provincial television channels; shown on televisions at target universities and at Cho Ray Hospital in Ho Chi Minh City; incorporated into the communications plans for 63 provincial traffic safety committees; and disseminated through digital channels via an online media campaign. Thirty billboards featuring the campaign's message will also be installed at 10 target universities as a constant reminder for students on their commute to and from school. AIP Foundation is leading the initiative as part of The UPS Foundation-supported *Safety Delivered* program and working in close consultation with the National Road Safety Committee, Ministry of Education, and target universities.

"It only takes a second for tragedy to strike," said Jerald Barnes, Corporate Relations Director of The UPS Foundation. "*Safety Delivered's* media campaign is playing an important role in spreading this message and raising awareness among youth of the dangers of distracted driving. The UPS Foundation is honored to work with AIP Foundation and the government of Vietnam to make the country's roads safe for all."

"Youth, who make up the most vulnerable road users, are a key audience for us," said Duong Van Ba, Deputy Chief of the Student Affairs Department at the Ministry of Education and Training. "The *Safety Delivered* program equips these novice drivers with the crucial road safety knowledge and skills they need to safely drive a motorcycle."

The campaign takes the familiar icon of a cute and innocent emoji and turns it into a lethal killer on the road by featuring a malicious emoji that preys on distracted motorcyclists. Through this innovative reimagining of common road situations into horror movie scenarios, the campaign addresses the consequences of unsafe behaviors such as calling, text messaging, and using the Internet. These behaviors cause a driver to become distracted, slow his or her reaction time, and affect his or her ability to make safe driving decisions.

"The campaign is being implemented at a crucial time," said Uong Viet Dung, Deputy Chief Secretariat of the National Traffic Safety Committee. "Looking at current trends in mobile phone-use growth and road crash data, distracted driving is poised to become a major road safety concern in Vietnam if it is not addressed immediately."

"The danger of mobile phone use while driving is not recognized by many in Vietnam," said Mirjam Sidik, CEO of AIP Foundation. "Our *Safety Delivered* program developed this campaign to try and change this perception and raise awareness of the consequences of distracted driving."

According to baseline surveys of 927 male and female students from seven universities in Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi, 79% of students reported having used a mobile phone at least once while driving in the past six months. This represents a troubling reality, considering the World Health Organization found that a driver talking on a mobile phone is four times more likely to be involved in a road crash than one who is not.

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### **About Safety Delivered**

*Safety Delivered* is supported by The UPS Foundation and implemented in Cambodia, Myanmar, Thailand and Vietnam. It works with young, inexperienced motorcycle drivers to improve their distracted driving behaviors while also working to increase child helmet use. Over two years, it is estimated that *Safety Delivered's* activities will be able to save more than \$12 million USD through reductions of road crash injuries and fatalities.

### **About AIP Foundation**

AIP Foundation is a nonprofit organization dedicated to preventing road injuries and fatalities in low- and middle-income countries. For more than 16 years, AIP Foundation has been delivering effective road safety programs in locations across Asia and Africa. To find out more, visit [www.aip-foundation.org](http://www.aip-foundation.org) or connect with us on Twitter @AIPFoundation.

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