



## Press Release

### Swedish Embassy Support Vietnam's Campaign on Helmets for Kids

HANOI, April 24, 2014: Today, the Swedish Embassy in Hanoi joined with AIP Foundation to deliver nearly 500 safety helmets to children of second grade of Cat Linh Primary School in Hanoi. At the event, the organizers called for stronger public response and urged parents and adults in Vietnam to put helmets on their children whenever they travel on motorcycles. The activity is also part of a jubilee celebration programme to mark 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Sweden – Vietnam diplomatic relations in 2014.

“Sweden is one of the leading countries in the world when it comes to road safety. From our practical experience, **it is necessary for children to wear a helmet each and every time they travel on a motorcycle**. Parents and adults must also be role models to their children and always wear helmets themselves”, said Ms. Camilla Mellander, Ambassador of Sweden to Vietnam.

According to the World Health Organization and other sources, road traffic accidents are a leading cause of death and injury in Vietnam and young children are particularly vulnerable. Road safety laws mandate the wearing of helmets for riders and passengers, but not all children.

Ms. Camilla Mellander also stressed that “motorcycles are the primary mode of transport in major Vietnamese cities and helmets can be a **simple protection** for both children and adults, and a truly **inexpensive way of saving lives**”.

Ms. Lotte Brondum, Director of International Development at AIP Foundation added that “in the case of a crash a correctly worn quality helmet can save a student's life. But the price for a quality helmet can pose a challenge on poorer families. Its therefore admirable that the Swedish Embassy in their anniversary celebration think about the safety of the Vietnamese families and donate helmets and thereby contribute to saving lives in Vietnam”.

"Road safety is very important for Sweden, and I am pleased to say that all our staff members at the Embassy have committed to wear a helmet for themselves and their kids whenever participating in traffic. We would love to see this initiative expanded to all schools and communities in Vietnam”, concluded Ms. Mellander.

In Vietnam, 22,000 people are tragically killed and 433,000 suffer injuries due to traffic crashes each year. Road injury is the number one cause of death for young people aged 15 to 29 and the number two cause of death for children aged 5 to 14. With over 80 percent of the population under the age of 50, the effects of road deaths on young people results in losses to the family and community. Traffic fatalities and injuries also generate economic strain for society. In 2010, AIP Foundation calculated that Vietnam lost 3.09 billion USD due to traffic crashes.

*The 45th anniversary of Sweden – Vietnam diplomatic relations is supported by a number of Swedish multi-national companies operating in Vietnam including ABB, AstraZeneca, AtlasCopco, Electrolux, SKF, IKEA and TetraPak.*

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