

UNITAR and Diageo collaborate to strengthen road safety in Thailand

Bangkok, 20 March 2018 – The United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) with the support of Diageo is holding a two-day international multi-stakeholder workshop titled **“Improving Road Safety for Sustainable Cities: Best Practice Sharing Workshop”** on March 20-21, 2018, in Bangkok, Thailand.

The event, which aims to promote road safety in Thailand will be inaugurated by Mr. Teerapong Represent, Vice Minister, Ministry of Transport of Thailand, and attended by 50 local and international experts, government and civic officials, law enforcement officials, educators, business and corporate leaders. Together they will explore solutions, share best practices and discuss lessons to address road safety in Thailand.

Road traffic injuries from all causes claim more than 1.2 million lives each year, with 90 per cent of fatalities occurring in low and middle-income countries. Road crashes are the 9th leading cause of death across all age groups globally. According to the World Health Organization, Thailand ranks second among the countries with a high road traffic fatality rate, with an estimated 24,000 deaths annually or 66 deaths a day. This figure highlights the urgent need to take action that will improve road safety.

In separate sessions during the conference, road safety experts will share insights on strengthening road safety legislation and a multi-stakeholder approach to reduce drink driving, the need for infrastructure planning and urban design, and lessons learned through case studies from other cities and countries such as Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

Mr. Alex Mejia, Programme Director at UNITAR said: “With the support of Diageo, we have organized four (4) global events and five (5) country events in Africa, Latin America and Asia. We are very proud of this partnership, which aims to improve the capacity of public and civic entities involved in road safety across the world especially in countries with a high incidence of road accidents and injuries.”

“Our target is to engage more than 7,000 people through training workshops for government officials at the national and local levels, awareness-raising road shows for people and high-level conferences on the issue with the ultimate aim of achieving the 2030 agenda for sustainable development of reducing road traffic deaths and injuries by 50% by 2020.”

Mrs. Carolyn Panzer, Global Director of Alcohol in Society, Diageo plc said: “As leading premium alcohol beverage company, Diageo is committed to reducing harmful drinking. We have a long history of programs to reduce drink driving around the world and are encouraged to see progress in many countries. We believe that alcohol-related traffic fatalities are preventable and a single fatality is one too many. I’m pleased to be here in Bangkok today to share our global approach and to bring global best practices to Thailand as part of our partnership with UNITAR.”

Mr. Thanakorn Kuptajit, Corporate Relations Director, Diageo Moët Hennessy (Thailand) Ltd. (DMHT) said: “We believe that a mix of enforcement, education and partnership are required to effectively address the issues of road safety in Thailand. As a business, we have implemented a number of programs in Thailand working with government

organizations and NGOs. Our partnership with UNITAR in Thailand will only strengthen our resolve to drastically reduce the number of fatalities on the roads.

“While drink driving is not the main cause of accidents in Thailand (it is ranked 7th, according to Royal Thai Police data from 2006-2016), we want to reduce alcohol as a factor to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goal,” he added.

Diageo has a long history of working to reduce alcohol-related fatalities and crashes and supports numerous drink-drive prevention programs around the world. These range from supporting high visibility enforcement through random breath tests, to funding safe rides and free public transportation, and supporting laws to establish maximum blood alcohol concentration levels in countries where none exist.

In Thailand, DMHT's ‘Don't Drink Drive, Get Home Safely’ campaign is now in its 8th year and is executed in partnership with Traffic Police to raise awareness about safe driving and responsible drinking at all time, especially during holidays. For the first time in Thailand, the campaign features the ground-breaking film ‘Decisions’. Through the innovative use of virtual reality technology for educational purposes, the video successfully challenges people to think twice before getting behind the wheel after drinking and reminds them of the consequences of drink driving. To date, the initiative has attained more than 477,310 reaches and gained nearly 20,000 engagements. Since the campaign's launched in Thailand, 98% of those who have experienced ‘Decisions’ have made a promise never to drink and drive, and would also encourage their friends to join the pact to never drink and drive.

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