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## Joint Media Release

### **AIA Cambodia and ISF Announce Partnership in Cambodia's Largest Community Football Programme**

**Phnom Penh, 26 November 2017** – Watching the antics of some 1,300 energetic boys and girls at the opening ceremony of their football season, it is easy to forget that this is no ordinary youth football league. While we often take for granted a child's right to play, these children have come from the type of challenging social circumstances that limit their access to sport and play. For them, playing football has been both a privilege and a lifeline – fostering stronger community bonds, developing life skills and providing positive role models.

This has been made possible by the Indochina Starfish Foundation ("ISF") who, for the last eleven years, has run a grassroots football programme that now reaches almost 4,000 of the most underprivileged children and their families across Cambodia each year. Through football, ISF aims to educate, motivate and empower these children, helping them cultivate healthy habits, confidence and social awareness.

As part of its football programme, ISF's annual Youth League provides coaching and tournaments for more than a thousand children each year and continues to grow in popularity. The league comprises six divisions of girls and boys in under-10, under-14 and under-18 age brackets, including deaf and hearing-impaired players. The enthusiasm for competing in league matches is such that teams travel for up to three hours each way to participate. For these children, playing in the league represents a rare opportunity to play competitive sport and develop the skills it requires, such as teamwork, leadership, decision-making and resilience.

Starting from this year, ISF is aligning with AIA (Cambodia) Life Insurance Plc ("AIA Cambodia") as the sponsor of the Youth League for the next three years, in its continuing efforts to reach disadvantaged children and communities. Speaking at the league's opening event in Phnom Penh, ISF Trustee Leo Brogan said, "We are so pleased to work with AIA who is committed to supporting healthy living for everyone, including communities in need. Together, we will be able to enhance the capabilities of the league and the quality of the football programme in general." He adds, "We are especially excited about how AIA's relationship with Tottenham Hotspur will enrich the development of the children in our football programme."

AIA Group Limited ("AIA") is the Global Principal Partner of Tottenham Hotspur Football Club ("Spurs"), a leading English Premier League team, and one of the benefits of this partnership is that two of Spurs' elite coaching staff are located in Asia to work with young people under AIA's community coaching programme. The two coaches attended the opening event of the AIA-ISF Youth League 2017/2018, where they actively engaged with the children, demonstrating football tricks and sharing tips on healthy living. "We are honoured to be invited to Cambodia to see how ISF and AIA are cultivating a love of football among children in poor communities," said Spurs coach Daniel Mitchell, adding, "The lifelong passion for sport begins at childhood and can have a positive impact that extends well beyond the playing field."

Richard Bates, CEO of AIA Cambodia, agrees. "By giving underprivileged children the opportunity to play a competitive sport in a safe and structured environment, ISF is helping them grow into healthy, balanced members of society who can make a positive contribution to their families and communities." Commenting on AIA's collaboration with ISF, he said, "Working with ISF is a natural fit for us and we are well placed to support them. Not only do we share the same values that centre around the needs of individuals and their families, both our organisations are committed to long-term social development in Cambodia."

The AIA-ISF Youth League opening celebration held on 26 November saw 194 friendly matches played by 100 teams. League matches and tournaments are held every week at the ISF Sports Ground in Phnom Penh.

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### **About AIA Cambodia**

AIA (Cambodia) Life Insurance Plc ("AIA Cambodia") is a wholly owned subsidiary of AIA Group Limited ("AIA" or the "Group"), the largest independent publicly listed pan-Asian life insurance group and the second largest life insurer in the world by market capitalisation.

AIA has a presence in 18 markets in Asia-Pacific—wholly-owned branches and subsidiaries in Hong Kong, Thailand, Singapore, Malaysia, China, Korea, the Philippines, Australia, Indonesia, Taiwan, Vietnam, New Zealand, Macau, Brunei, Cambodia, a 97 per cent subsidiary in Sri Lanka, a 49 percent joint venture in India and a representative office in Myanmar. AIA is a market leader in the Asia-Pacific region (ex-Japan) based on life insurance premiums and holds leading positions across the majority of its markets. It had total assets of US\$185 billion as of 30 November 2016. Through an extensive network of agents, partners and employees across Asia-Pacific, AIA serves the holders of more than 30 million individual policies and over 16 million participating members of group insurance schemes.

AIA Cambodia offers life insurance products and services that are uniquely tailored to meet the growing needs of individuals and families for healthcare protection and long-term savings. AIA Cambodia is committed to contributing to the kingdom's economic and social development over the long term.

### **About ISF**

Indochina Starfish Foundation ("ISF") is an NGO in Cambodia that believes every child has the right to education, healthcare and play. ISF provides education, healthcare and sporting opportunities to disadvantaged children in Cambodia. In addition, ISF provides support services to the families and wider communities of the children in our education programme to enable them to break the cycle of poverty they are currently trapped in.

ISF has grown from providing basic education opportunities to 18 children in 2006 to 680 in 2017. Our plan is to take an additional 100 students into our education programme each year. Through the services provided to the families of the children ISF works with, almost 3,000 additional people are supported.

ISF, with the support of the Football Federation of Cambodia, plays a key role in providing grassroots footballing opportunities to some of Cambodia's most disadvantaged children. This programme has grown from 50 players in 2006 to almost 4,000 girls and boys of all abilities, including those with disabilities, hearing impaired, blind and vision-impaired, HIV positive and wheelchair-bound youth in 2017.

## **About Tottenham Hotspur**

Founded in 1882, Tottenham Hotspur Football Club has a tradition of playing an entertaining and attacking style of football. The team finished second in the Premier League in the 2016/2017 season and has a multi-national squad of players. Tottenham Hotspur also has:

- A global following in excess of 400 million, with strong supporter bases across the UK, the USA, China, Asia and Southern Africa, including more than 150 Official Supporters Clubs worldwide
- A state-of-the-art training centre with the ongoing construction of a new world-class stadium development that will sit at the heart of a major regeneration for North London
- An award-winning Foundation that has created 2.5 million opportunities to help enhance the lives of people in its local community through education, employment, health and social inclusion programmes.

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