SPECIAL ADVOCATE VISITING VIET NAM TO DISCUSS FINANCIAL INCLUSION
25 May 2017

The UN Secretary-General's Special Advocate for Inclusive Finance for Development, H.M. Majesty Queen Máxima of the Netherlands, will visit Viet Nam from 30 May through 1 June 2017 to explore paths to progress on financial inclusion. Viet Nam is developing a national strategy for inclusive finance to promote affordable, effective, and safe financial services, with the aim of fostering development and improving the economic position of the Vietnamese people.

After arriving in Ho Chi Minh City on Tuesday morning, the Special Advocate will travel to the city of Da Lat in the Central Highlands of Viet Nam. Agriculture and horticulture dominate the local landscape with a great many small farms. One of the focal issues of the visit is value-chain finance in agriculture, with an interest in providing much-needed financing for small farmers. Queen Máxima will visit a project that provides farmers with financing and technical support. Farmers receive loans for the construction of greenhouses, advice on how to improve yields, and help in setting up a business plan. The project also links farmers with retailers, giving participants a more secure market for their products and a fixed income.

The Special Advocate will also visit a small grocery store that provides a mobile wallet aimed at women. In the afternoon she will return to Ho Chi Minh City, where she will talk with representatives of agricultural businesses and civil society organisations about the financing of agricultural activities.

On Wednesday she will travel to the capital, Hanoi, where she will meet Prime Minister Nguyen Xuan Phuc and have talks on the state of inclusive financing in Viet Nam with international partners such as the World Bank, the UN Capital Development Fund, the Asian Development Bank, and UN-Viet Nam. There will also be a roundtable discussion with private partners including financial institutions and fintech companies on their role in improving access to financial services. She will meet with Governor Le Minh Hung of the State Bank of Viet Nam, which coordinates the development of the national strategy for inclusive financing, and with the chair of the National Assembly, Nguyen Thi Kim Ngan.

On Thursday Queen Máxima will meet with Minister of Finance Dinh Tien Dung, Minister of Agriculture and Rural Development Nguyen Xuan Cuong, and Minister of Labour, Invalids and Social Affairs Dao Ngoc Dung. In the afternoon the State Bank will host a roundtable discussion with representatives of ministries and other organisations involved in preparing and coordinating the national strategy for inclusive finance.

In March 2011 the Special Advocate paid a visit to Viet Nam and spoke at a seminar on financial inclusion in Hanoi. At the World Economic Forum in Davos this year she met with the Prime Minister.