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AEON CO., LTD.

## **Aeon to start a joint project with the Malaysian government and UNIDO**

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Toward building a framework for sustainable development of food production, distribution and sales

In June 2013, Aeon Co., Ltd. and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) will begin the full-scale operation of their joint project, the Sustainable Supplier Development Program (SSDP), with the main support of Malaysia's Ministry of International Trade and Industry. Under this first initiative in the Asian retail sector, Aeon and UNIDO will build a framework for sourcing safe and sustainable food ingredients and products and thereby contributing to the development of producers in the primary and secondary industries of Malaysia.

SSDP is conducted as a part of the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI), a private-public partnership initiative whose mission is to achieve continuous improvement of global food safety. It aims to contribute to sustainable development of small-sized suppliers by helping improve their food safety and quality control management capabilities.

Specific actions under SSDP include the introduction of GFSI's food safety program for small-sized suppliers to achieve global food safety standards. To this end, UNIDO will send necessary specialists for the implementation of the program. Aeon will provide training on food quality control and manage the project's schedule mainly through its group company, Aeon Co. (M) Bhd. It will also review the program's content through another group company, Research Institute For Quality Living Co., Ltd.

This project will provide Malaysian consumers with a greater access to safe and secure food products. It will also enable suppliers in the country to supply food products of global safety standards. This means that Malaysian suppliers will have opportunities to trade with not only Aeon but other retailers worldwide, which in turn will promote export opportunities and invigorate the country's economy in Malaysia. SSDP will also help Aeon continue offering safe, secure and affordable products to its customers. While promoting its strategy to shift to Asian markets under the Group's Medium-term Management Plan, Aeon is planning to open a number of new stores in Asia and is accelerating its efforts to develop Topvalu private label products for the ASEAN market.

The project represents Aeon's commitment to safe and secure products and services and contribution to community development. Together with customers, suppliers and many other stakeholders, Aeon will continue striving to create a sustainable society.

## [Reference]

### About the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)

UNIDO is one of the specialized agencies of the United Nations (UN), headquartered in Vienna, Austria. The organization was originally established as a UN department in 1966, and later became the 16th specialized agency of the UN in 1985. UNIDO's mission is to help developing countries and countries with economies in transition in their fight against marginalization in today's globalized world. As part of the UN common system, UNIDO has responsibility for promoting industrialization throughout the developing world, in cooperation with its 173 Member States.

UNIDO currently boasts 31 Country Offices and 18 UNIDO Desks in developing countries, in addition to 9 Investment and Technology Promotion Offices (ITPOs) around the world, including Tokyo.

### About the Global Food Safety Initiative (GFSI)

GFSI was launched in 2000 following a number of food safety crises when consumer confidence was at an all-time low. Since then, experts have been collaborating in numerous Technical Working Groups to tackle current food safety issues defined by GFSI stakeholders head on. Current activities within GFSI include the definition of food safety requirements along the entire food supply chain to cover scopes such as feed, distribution and packaging.

