



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Statement

by

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the United Nations**

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(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

The re-election of H.E Ban Ki-moon as Secretary General of the United Nations is a testimony to his able leadership and great achievements in guiding this universal organization throughout the past 5 years. Once again, I would like to seize this opportunity to express, on behalf of the Lao Government, my sincere congratulations to Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and wish him a greater success in the discharge of his noble duty especially at a time when we continue to overcome multiple crises and numerous challenges.

In this same vein, the Lao PDR is pleased to work closely with all member states of the United Nations during this Sixty Sixth Session of the UNGA under the presidency of H.E Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, a veteran diplomat with extensive experience in international affairs and diplomacy. I also pay tribute to H.E Mr. Joseph Deiss on his success as President of the Sixty Fifth General Assembly. Like other delegations, I would like to welcome South Sudan as the 193rd member of the United Nations.

Mr. President,

The Government of the Lao PDR has always stood firm in upholding the principle of resolving problems by peaceful means, preserving international peace and security in view of creating conducive environment for the promotion of development cooperation. In this connection, throughout the past decades, the Lao Government has continued to pursue its consistent foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation aiming at ensuring tangible benefits for the Lao people, thus contributing to maintaining regional and international peace and security. This policy direction has again been re-affirmed at the 9th Congress of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party recently held in March 2011. By pursuing this policy direction responding to the external challenges, over the past decades the Lao PDR has firmly upheld and maintained political stability and social order, thereby constituting solid foundation for continued economic development and social progress. As a result, considerable progress in social advancement and poverty reduction has been achieved. In the next 5 years, the Government has put in place immediate and medium-term targets to accelerate economic development in all aspects so as to build a strong basis for

the implementation of the national strategy to transform the country into an industrialized and modernized nation and for achieving the ultimate goal for graduating from LDC status by 2020.

Mr. President,

In this globalizing and integrated world, all nations whether big or small, rich or poor have become more than ever interdependent as none of us can survive on its own in isolation from the international community. Although the Lao PDR has in the past recorded satisfactory achievements in its national socio-economic development endeavor, there remain daunting challenges that the country must continue to encounter. Being a small and least-developed nation, the country has been vulnerable to external shocks. Therefore, it shares a common desire with other countries to reside in a peaceful and secured world. Having said that, all nations must continue to enhance development cooperation, to ensure tangible benefits for our peoples based on mutual respect, solidarity, understanding and assistance, and at the same time to avoid the use of threat, interference, and force.

Nevertheless, it has been unfortunate that during the past year, we have faced multiple challenges caused by regional conflicts, spreading social unrest coupled with financial and economic crisis and devastating natural disasters, which have become more frequent. All this has posed severe threats on global peace, stability, security and development cooperation. Against this backdrop, these multiple challenges are not only obstructing developing countries, the least-developed ones in particular, in pursuing their national development efforts and achieving the international development goals, but also further reverse development.

Mr. President,

In such circumstances, we are of the view that the United Nations, as being the only universal organization, should further enhance its role in order to address the challenges in a more timely and just manner, thereby responding to the common aspiration of all Member States. Towards this end, we must accelerate the UN reform process, which has been

pending for over the years, to achieve more concrete outcome. It is more critical than ever for all Member States to enhance our cooperation in a sincere and trustworthy manner, without taking advantage of one another in the effort to reform UN bodies and improve their effectiveness.

Security and political stability remains critical element in advancing socio-economic development of all regions. Therefore, the United Nations should play a more crucial role in maintaining international peace and security by effectively carrying out its duty to address regional conflicts especially over the situation in the Middle East, which has been a pending issue for several decades. Against this background, the UN should display a more effective facilitating role in urging all parties concerned to find a solution and realize the vision of creating the two States of Israel and Palestine living side by side in peace, security and within internationally recognized borders as stipulated in the relevant Resolutions of the UN Security Council. In this regard, the Lao PDR supports Palestine's application on 23rd September 2011 for full membership of the UN.

Another important concern remains the issue of economic, trade and financial embargo imposed on Cuba for several decades, which has seriously affected the Cuban people. We are of the view that it is now time for the said embargo to be lifted unconditionally.

Mr. President,

Peace and security in Southeast Asia has contributed to creating an environment conducive to socio-economic advancement for ASEAN member countries. At present, ASEAN has continued its effort to accelerate community building by 2015 based on 3 pillars namely Political-Security Community, Economic Community, and Social-cultural Community. Indeed, our common endeavor has achieved a steady progress. In its community building effort, ASEAN aims to implement Free Trade Areas among the 10 member countries as well as between ASEAN and its dialogue partners. In this same vein, our organization has further strengthened its external cooperation by maintaining ASEAN's centrality in all ASEAN initiated frameworks namely ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3, ASEAN

Regional Forum (ARF), ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (ADMM+), and East Asia Summit (EAS). In addition, ASEAN has started discussion on its long-term vision and role beyond the year 2015. All this has contributed to maintaining peace, stability and development cooperation in the Asia-Pacific Region and in the world at large.

Mr. President,

Asia-Europe cooperation (ASEM) is also another mechanism facilitating international cooperation. Over the past 15 years, ASEM has remarkably developed itself and become an important forum for leaders to consider measures to respond to emerging regional and global challenges. In this context, the Lao PDR feels honored to be entrusted by ASEM member countries to host the 9th ASEM Summit in early November 2012 in Vientiane, Lao PDR. The Lao Government has made the preparation for this Summit a top priority. In this regard, I would like to take this opportunity to convey the invitation to their Excellencies Leaders of ASEM member countries to this Summit. This will provide an excellent opportunity for leaders of the two regions to discuss important issues related to the promotion of peace and enhancing effective cooperation among countries in Asia and Europe in this new era.

Mr. President,

Socio-economic development in a country which has suffered from the consequences and legacy of war has never been easy. One of the main obstacles and hindrances in our effort to advance socio-economic development is Unexploded Ordnance (UXO), which continues to extensively and seriously cause negative impact both directly and indirectly on the livelihood of the Lao people. The Lao Government has deployed all its efforts and mobilized financial means to clear the contaminated areas particularly the agricultural and inhabitable land across the country as well as to raise public awareness and help victims in order for them to reintegrate into the society. In discharging its duty as President of the Oslo Convention, throughout the past year the Lao PDR has received invaluable support and assistance from the international community including both states parties and non-state parties as well as international organizations in particular UNDP, civil society

organizations, and INGOs, all of which has contributed to the early implementation of this humanitarian Convention. On this note, I would like to express, on behalf of the Lao Government and people as well as on my own behalf, my most sincere appreciation to all countries and international organizations for the support and assistance rendered. This has clearly reflected in the broad participation in the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions, which was hosted by the Lao PDR in Vientiane in November 2010. Furthermore, I would like to congratulate those countries, which have ratified or acceded to the Convention on Cluster Munitions. The number of states parties to this Convention has now increased to 63 states. I do hope that other countries that are not yet States Parties to this Convention would consider acceding to it in the near future.

Mr. President,

It is more crucial than ever that the international community should seize the opportunity and fulfill our obligation to promoting and enhancing cooperation in view of addressing the pressing challenges as none of the countries can do so on its own. Against this backdrop, the Lao PDR reaffirms its consistent determination to working closely with the international community, thus contributing to making this world a peaceful, equal and just place to live, free from fear and deprivation. I am convinced that close cooperation and mutual assistance will enable us all to achieve our common goals.

Thank You.