



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by
H.E. Choummaly SAYASONE,
President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
at the 70th Session of the UN General Assembly

New York, 30 September 2015

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Excellency Mogens Lykketoft on your election as President of this 70th Session of the UN General Assembly. I am confident that with your extensive diplomatic experience, you will guide this GA Session with great success. May I assure our full support and cooperation to Your Excellency in the discharge of your noble duty. Likewise, I would like to sincerely commend Excellency Sam Kahamba Kutesa for the successful completion of his task as President of the 69th Session of the UNGA.

Mr. President,

This year marks the 70th anniversary of the United Nations since its inception after the Second World War had ended. Its main objectives are to promote the international peace, security and development cooperation, aiming at ensuring that all mankind live in peace, social progress and conducive environment for development.

Despite conflicts and challenges that have occurred in different parts of the world, in general, peace, security and development cooperation among all nations remain the prevailing trend of this era. This is the important achievement of the United Nations in fulfilling its mandate as stipulated in the Charter.

Mr. President,

Nevertheless, the international environment continues to undergo numerous challenges such as armed conflicts, terrorism, poverty and hunger, infectious diseases, climate change and natural disasters which have posed major threats to peace and development. Therefore, I am of the view that we must enhance our political will, mutual assistance and cooperation under the banner of the United Nations in order to collectively address the said challenges facing us. To this end, the United Nations should improve its working method. The Lao PDR hopes that on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the United Nations this year, the international community will collectively make serious efforts to conduct comprehensive reform of this universal organization so as for the UN to be able to respond to the emerging challenges in a more effective manner.

Mr. President,

Taking this opportunity, I would like to welcome the successful conclusion of the UN Summit on SDGs a few days ago, during which the 2030 development agenda was adopted, aiming at further addressing major challenges faced by the world today, including those off-track MDG targets. Indeed, the new development agenda is the outcome of the open and inclusive intergovernmental negotiations. To realize the set goals and targets within the next 15 years, we need to honor our political commitment to strengthening global partnership and cooperation at all levels.

Mr. President,

Today, conflicts have often occurred in many regions of the world such as in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Europe, which have caused major concerns for the international community. Therefore, it is important to find solutions and restore peace and development to those regions. In this context, the Lao PDR consistently supports peaceful settlement of conflicts in those regions. I therefore praise all parties concerned for reaching agreement on Iran's nuclear programme, which is of historic significance. This is testimony to the value of dialogue as the best way to address a conflict, which should be taken as a model for resolving hot issues of the world.

In addition, the Lao PDR always hopes that the issue of Palestine which has been stalled for many decades will be resolved by peaceful means by the parties concerned with a view to creating two independent states of Palestine and Israel living side by side in peace based on the Arab Peace Initiative and recognized borders as stipulated in the Security Council Resolutions. The Lao PDR, therefore, urges the international community to redouble its efforts to help rehabilitating Palestine back to normalcy as soon as possible.

In the era of interdependence, cooperation and engagement are the key factors for peaceful co-existence and mutual benefit. The Lao PDR, therefore, welcomes the recent re-establishment of the diplomatic relations between the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba, which has opened a new chapter in the history of relations between the two countries, that had been stalled for many decades. The Lao PDR does hope that the re-established relations would be further enhanced, leading to the end of the embargo, thus bringing about actual benefits to the people of the two nations, the region and the world at large.

Mr. President,

Climate change and severe natural disasters, which have occurred more frequently, have caused huge impact on the development of countries, especially developing countries, including the least developed countries that are most vulnerable due to their limited infrastructure, insufficient technology, financial and human resources to respond to and address those phenomena. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the international community to help these vulnerable countries, through, among other things, building their long-term capacity to tackle such challenges. We hope that the UN Climate Change Conference to be held in Paris later this year will be able to adopt various measures to address climate change in the coming years.

Mr. President,

Southeast Asian region, now in the process of economic integration through ASEAN cooperation frameworks with a view to building an ASEAN community by the end of this year, has continued to enjoy peace and stability and constant economic

growth. In addition, ASEAN has broadened its external relations with different countries and regional groupings at various levels, as well as with the United Nations. In 2016, the Lao PDR will have the honor to assume the ASEAN chairmanship for the second time, which is the first year of ASEAN Community. I do hope that the international community, especially the ASEAN Dialogue Partners will continue to support ASEAN-led mechanisms in which ASEAN playing a central role in order for ASEAN to become a community based on ASEAN way, and continue to be a regional grouping that contributes to maintaining peace and enhancing cooperation with other regions and the world at large.

Mr. President,

This year 2015 marks the 40th anniversary of the establishment of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Over the past 4 decades, we have gone through a period of healing the wounds of war and advancing the national development through the implementation of the Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plans, especially the 7th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan for 2011-2015, which will be completed by the end of this year. The achievements made during the past 40 years are attributed to many factors, but the most crucial ones are political stability and social order. This has provided conducive environment for economic growth and steadily improving the livelihood of people. The Lao Government has maintained its unwavering political will to fight against poverty; create prerequisites for lifting the country from the LDC status; and pursue the path of sustainable development through "three-level development" known as "*Sam Sang*" that is making a province as strategic body, a district as comprehensively strong body, and a village as development body, while enhancing its cooperation with development partners, which will pave the way for industrialization and modernization of the country. Indeed, we are moving on the right direction in our national development cause. In addition, in the coming months, along with the Eighth Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020), the Lao Government will adopt the Ten-year socio-economic Development Strategy (2016-2025) and the Vision 2030). Nevertheless, it is recognized that the Lao PDR will continue to face numerous challenges in the process of its socio-economic development. These include, among others, impact of regional and global economic and financial crisis and natural disasters. I therefore call upon the development partners to continue rendering their support to the Lao PDR to achieve our goal of sustainable development in the coming years.

Mr. President,

Although Indochina war ended four decade ago, the legacy of war continue to pose serious obstacles to our national development, especially to the agriculture production and the livelihood of the people, development of infrastructure as well as to investment programmes in those UXOs contaminated areas. The clearance of UXOs as remnants of war will take long time and requires huge resources. Recognizing such serious impact, the Lao PDR has been actively promoting the Convention on Cluster

Munitions or Oslo convention that could prevent further the victimization of humankind. This year, the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions took place in Croatia in early this month with a view to stock-taking progress and shortcomings in the implementation of Convention. Taking this opportunity, the Lao PDR calls upon those countries which are not yet party to the CCM to accede to this universal Convention. At the same time, we also encourage friendly countries and international organizations to continue to provide funding and technical support in this endeavour.

Mr. President,

This year marks the 60th anniversary of Laos being a member state of the United Nations. Throughout the years, we have actively participated in the work of the United Nations in various areas. Moreover, the cooperation between the Lao PDR and the United Nations have steadily been enhanced. The financial and technical support which have been provided by the UN agencies, Funds and Programmes, have made important contributions to the socio-economic development of our country. We hope that such valuable support and cooperation will continue in the coming years.

The Lao PDR attaches great importance to promoting and protecting human rights and has become state party to seven of the main international human rights instruments. Having desire to contribute to the work of the Human Rights Council, the Lao PDR has presented its candidature for the membership of the Human Rights Council for the period 2016-2018. We look forward to receiving support from the member states and the opportunity to contribute to the work of the Council.

Mr. President,

This year is of great historical significance for the international community, especially the adoption of the 2030 global agenda. I am of the view that this would mark an important milestone in realizing the aspiration of all mankind to live in peace, security, prosperity and social justice while protecting the environment and promoting sustainable development for the brighter future of the current and future generations. To this end, the Lao PDR will actively contribute to the realization of the SDGs and targets that the world leaders adopted a few days ago.

Thank you.