



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

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**Statement by**

**H.E. Dr. Thongloun SISOULITH,  
Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs,  
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**at the General Debate of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of  
the United Nations General Assembly**

*New York, 29 September 2008*

Mr. President,

First, let me express, on behalf of the Lao PDR Delegation, my heartfelt congratulations to you, a veteran diplomat of Nicaragua on your election as President of the 63<sup>rd</sup> Session of the UN General Assembly. I trust that with you at the Presidency, the work of the General Assembly is in good hands. I would also like to commend H.E. Srgjan Kerim for the effective manner in which he presided over our work during the previous session.

Mr. President,

The Lao PDR is of the belief that the United Nations remains an important and preeminent forum for addressing issues relating to international cooperation for economic development, peace and security, and human rights and the rule of law, based on dialogue, cooperation and consensus-building amongst States. For over half a century, the UN has played a crucial role in maintaining international peace and security and promoting the socio-economic advancement of member States, especially developing countries. Yet, as the world situation evolves ever more complex and unpredictable, the UN increasingly needs more robust and effective institutions. In our opinion, the UN reform must be comprehensive, transparent, inclusive and balanced and pursued in an effective and accountable manner. We must strengthen the role and authority of the General Assembly, including in questions related to international peace and security, as the chief deliberative, policy-making and representative organ of the UN. We must revitalize its work which must be guided by the principles of democracy, transparency and accountability. We must also reform the Security Council, turning it into a more democratic and representative organ, comprising both new permanent and non permanent members in order to enable it to better preserve and promote international peace and security. No less important, we must substantially reinforce the development pillars of the UN, which include the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, UNCTAD, Regional Commissions and the Development Account, enabling them to better support developing countries to achieve internationally agreed development goals, on the basis of their national development strategies.

In this context, we commend Secretary General Ban Ki-moon's reform efforts aimed at transforming the UN into a more responsive, dynamic, multi-functional and effective organization. The Secretary-General's personal dedicated engagement for the cause of peace as well as his endeavours in search for solutions to the three global crises of finance, fuel and food deserve special recognition.

Mr. President,

The current difficult and complex situation in the field of disarmament continues to be a cause of concern. We recognize the threat posed by the permanent existence of nuclear weapons and the possible use or threat to use them. It is hence incumbent upon the nuclear States to honour their unequivocal commitment to work towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons. Renewed efforts are needed to resolve the impasse in achieving nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation in all its aspects.

Mr. President,

While globalization brings with it numerous opportunities for economic development, the obstacles that the world faces deserve significant attention. Developing countries, in particular the most vulnerable groups, namely the least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and small island developing states (SIDS), have taken important

steps to further integrate themselves into the global economy. Nevertheless, these countries remain beleaguered by poor-quality basic infrastructure, limited access to markets, capital, new technology, and low supply of finance and investment.

The sudden increase in oil and food prices has led to a period of economic instability in many countries. However, this global phenomenon has had a more amplified impact on developing countries, given their particular low financial and technical capacities to deal with sudden international shocks. To combat this problem, we stress the need for the full and effective implementation of the Rome Declaration and the establishment of a Global Food Bank and an International Food Fund to ensure long-term food security for developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them. In addition, the great untapped potential of these countries should be explored and exploited to the maximum extent, through increased investment and technology transfer by developed countries and other development partners for mutual benefit. We also emphasize that global energy policies should aim to support the efforts of developing countries, in particular LDCs to purge poverty and achieve sustainable development.

Thus, if developing countries are to be able to benefit truly from globalization, the international community must create a favorable environment that is conducive to development, whereby the interests of developing countries can be tangibly promoted. Therefore, grant aid and soft loans should be increased, appropriate measures to address the instability and weakness of commodity markets be undertaken, special and preferential tariffs for exports from developing countries, in particular from the most vulnerable groups among them be granted, debt sustainability be achieved, mechanism for technology transfers be improved and international financial architecture be reformed.

Mr. President,

The goal of achieving peace and prosperity remains the highest priority of the international community. Yet, this goal remains impeded by interstate conflict, terror, and unlawful unilateral sanctions and interventions. We are greatly distressed by the persistent conflict that has plagued the lives of the peoples of the Middle East for decades, particularly the Palestinian people who have been fighting for the exercise of their right to self-determination and Statehood. We are deeply saddened by the number of casualties and material damage inflicted upon the nations of Iraq and Afghanistan. And we remain troubled by the embargo that has been imposed on the Republic of Cuba by the Government of the United States of America, an act that is clearly not legally warranted and does not respond to the legitimate interests of the peoples of both nations. In this regard, the Lao PDR sincerely urges the parties concerned in the aforementioned conflicts to seek ways to peacefully resolve their differences. It is our fervent hope that the peoples living in these conflict-ridden areas could enjoy peace and prosperity as swiftly as possible.

Mr. President,

Unlike most calamities, global warming affects not only the livelihood of every being on the planet but also the course of human history. Climate change will become all the more worrisome, as it leads to many other social and economic problems that our world faces today. That is why there is a need for immediate global action to address climate change in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. In formulating policies confronting climate change, we should promote the integration of all three components of

sustainable development that is economic development, social development, and environmental protection. In this respect, we call for the full implementation of the Bali Roadmap.

As widely expressed at the Millennium Development Goals High-level Event, the lack of effective implementation of the Internationally Agreed Development Goals (IADGs), including the MDGs remains a deep concern. Therefore, the highest priority should be given to securing the effective and full implementation of the agreed goals and commitments. In this context, we underscore the urgency to address the special needs of LDCs and LLDCs through the full, timely and effective implementation by all stakeholders of the Brussels Programme of Action and the Almaty Programme of Action, as called for in the 2005 World Summit Outcome.

Landlocked developing countries face a unique impediment in not having access to the sea. International cooperation is crucial to the success of the development goals of these countries. We therefore would like to stress the significance of the upcoming mid-term review of the Almaty Program of Action to be held on 2 and 3 October 2008 here in New York which should provide the international community with the opportunity to assess progress made, lessons learned, and constraints encountered in the implementation of the Almaty Program of Action. We hope that the session will galvanize the global partnership for development to assist landlocked developing countries in not only strengthening their effective participation in international trade and the world economy, but also in fulfilling the goals of internationally agreed development goals.

Mr. President,

Being a member country, Lao PDR is gratified to witness the continued stability, growing from strength to strength and deepening integration of ASEAN which is an important contribution to the maintenance of peace and further cooperation in the region and the world. A recent momentous and milestone event is the signing of the ASEAN Charter thus transforming ASEAN into a rule-based regional organization.

The Lao PDR continues to enjoy solid political stability and social order. Thus, our socio-economic development has registered significant achievements as reflected in high and sustained GDP growth. Notwithstanding these achievements, the Lao PDR still faces impediments. Rising oil prices, inflation and a global economic slowdown all stand in the way of our path to economic prosperity. This year, we are also experiencing a severe flood, inflicting huge material loss nationwide. Yet, in spite of all this, by improving the quality of basic infrastructure, human resources and cooperating with international partners, we are determined to pursue our twin strategies of poverty eradication and regional integration. At this pace, we hope to extricate our country from the shackles of underdevelopment by the year 2020.

Mr. President,

I can not conclude without reaffirming that development remains central and must come first for the intertwined peace and human rights to succeed. Therefore the full, timely and effective implementation of the outcomes of the major UN Summits and Conferences is indispensable. The Lao PDR reiterates its unshakable commitment to continued full cooperation with the international community in pursuit of a world free from fear and want, rooted in a new, just and equitable order. Together, I am sure, we will be able to reach new heights.

Thank you