

Statement
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49th session of the Commission of the Population and Development
(CPD) (11-15 April 2016, The UN HQ – NYC)

- Excellency Mr. Chairperson
- Distinguished delegates

On behalf of the Government of Lao PDR, I would like to congratulate her Excellency, Ambassador of Zambia and the other distinguished members of the Bureau for the successful organization of the 49th Session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD).

I wish to take this opportunity to thank the United Nations, in particular, UNFPA for the support to our participation in this very important event which is held at a critical juncture in the process of the finalization of our 8th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020) which focuses on graduating from the status of Least Developed Countries by 2020. This plan formulation process coincides also with the conclusion of MDGs and the roll out of the post-2015 development agenda “*Sustainable Development Goals*”. Therefore, the theme of the 49th session of CPD is timely and crucial as we continue to strengthen the use of demographic evidence in supporting the implementation of the 8th NSEDP and the localization of the SDGs.

In order to “Leave No One Behind” as highlighted in the SDGs, the quality and disaggregated demographic data and evidence is extremely crucial to help us in identifying the effective interventions, measuring and reviewing the progress. The Lao PDR has successfully conducted the 5th Population and Housing Census in March 2015 which will provide us with a

wealth of information to set the baseline for the 8th NSEDP and SDGs as well as evidence for strengthening policy framework and implementation, in particular, to capture the benefits of demographic dividend which is expected to last for the next 30 years for the Lao PDR. Apart from this, the Government has continued to strengthen data collection, analysis and use in all areas. However, despite the Government's efforts, quality data and the use of data, including demographic evidence are still limited. Therefore, the international community support to build capacity to in this area is needed to further enhance the effectiveness and efficiency in monitoring, reviewing and reporting towards the SDG localisation and implementation in the Lao PDR.

Madame. Chairperson,

The importance of this year theme highlights the needs for us to continue our commitment to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Beyond 2014 within the context of the SDGs. It is vital to ensure that ICPD is continued to be reviewed, and implemented within the context of the SDGs. The Lao PDR recognizes that ICPD contributes to the achievements of human security. We are committed to the implementation of the ICPD.

Over the last 20 years since ICPD, therefore, Lao PDR has undergone important changes in the field of population. Maternal mortality has significantly reduced achieving the MDG target in 2015. Life expectancy has continued to increase. A great achievement in economic growth and reduction in poverty has been observed. However, many challenges remain, including the highest adolescent fertility rate within the region, a low skilled and education of young population and increased disparities within the country. Therefore, ICPD continues to be relevant today. The continuous dialogue of ICPD as part of the Commission is crucial. I fully appreciate UNFPA commitment to support the global community, including the Lao

PDR in implementing ICPD including strengthened national capacity in producing and using demographic dividend in the context of the SDGs.

Last but not least, I wish the 49th session of ICPD a great success and bringing great values to enrich our partnerships, cooperation, and the success of SDGs. I look forwards to your continuing support and assistance. As this will certainly enhance our Government's efforts for the achievement of our national development goals, including the population matters and the upcoming SDGs – most importantly, the Lao PDR's graduation from the LDC status by 2020s.

Thank you very much for your attention.