Statement by H.E. Mr. Thongphane SAVANPHET,

Deputy Foreign Minister of the Lao PDR

at the Annual Ministerial Meeting of the Least Developed Countries (LDCs)

26 September 2024, 10:00-13:00 Hrs., at ECOSOC

(4 Minutes)

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Madame Chair,

Excellencies,

1. At the outset, my delegation joins previous speakers in commending Nepal for the able stewardship in chairing the LDCs Group. I assure you of our full support and cooperation in order to further advance the implementation of the Doha Program of Action (DPOA).

2. This year, we convene our Meeting at a very critical time when the global community continues to encounter numerous challenges and crises. The LDCs, in particular, have borne the brunt of these compounding crises, which amplify the existing vulnerabilities and widen the poverty gap. It is truly disheartening to observe that the significant developmental strides made by LDCs over the past decade are now at risk, threatening our aspirations for graduation from LDC status.

3. Although the DPOA offers clear guidance and marks a significant milestone for all LDCs, development partners, and other stakeholders to reaffirm our collective political commitment to address the challenges we face. Yet, a quest in pursuing solutions which are not only transformative but also pragmatic, effective, action-oriented, sustainable, and specifically designed to address the most pressing concerns faced by LDCs remain far reaching. Therefore, it is imperative that we continuously advocate for enhanced support measures to ensure coordinated and effective implementation of the commitments outlined in the DPOA and its six priority areas.

4. In this regard, we urge the international community including development partners, UN development system to prioritize their support and cooperation for LDCs taking into account the unique challenges, special needs and circumstances of LDCs .

Madame Chair,

5. As for the LDC graduation, the Government of the Lao PDR has adopted our national smooth transition strategies (STS). Therefore, we would like to seek sufficient support and assistance for the implementation of our STS so as to ensure that the Lao PDR could graduates from the LDC status in a smooth, quality and sustainable manner while continuing development momentum towards achieving the SDGs. This strategy also emphasizes the continued importance of enhanced international support measures needed, prioritizing essential investments and capacity building through 2026.

6. The STS includes key areas of focus namely maintaining macroeconomic stability and financial sustainability, trade and investment, human capital development and structural economic transformation, and climate change and disaster management.

Mr. Chair,

7. Graduation from LDC status is not an end goal in itself. It requires not only steadfast commitment and decisive actions from the national government but also the sustained and enhanced support of the international community. Therefore, it is vital that we maintain a strong partnership, cooperation, and international assistance throughout the graduation process and the subsequent transitional phase. In this regard, we earnestly urge the international community to bolster support in key areas such as promoting export diversification, facilitating accessible climate financing on concessional terms, advancing technology transfer and capacity-building initiatives, and fulfilling ODA commitments for LDCs.

8. To conclude, I would like to reaffirm the Lao PDR's commitment to the implementation of the DPoA and the integration of its provisions into our national policies and development plans. We stand ready to work closely with all partners, including the UN system, international financial institutions, and trading partners, to achieve the objectives outlined in the DPOA. Last but not least, we count on the Group's continued support in upholding our collective endeavors and safeguarding the interests of LDCs.

Thank you.