



PEACE INDEPENDENCE DEMOCRACY UNITY PROSPERITY

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

**317 EAST 51ST STREET, NEW YORK, N.Y. 10022**

**TELEPHONE: (212) 832-2734**



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**Statement by**

**H.E. Dr. Thongloun SISOULITH,**

**Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs,**

**Head of the Delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic**

**at the General Debate of the 61<sup>st</sup> Session of the UN General**

**Assembly, New York, 25 September 2006**

**Madam President,**

Let me extend, on behalf of the Government and people of the Lao PDR, my sincere congratulations to you on your election as President of the 61<sup>st</sup> session of the UN General Assembly. I would also like to express my deep appreciation to H.E. Mr. Jan Eliasson for the efficient manner in which he assumed his presidency during the last session.

I wish also to seize this opportunity to convey our high appreciation to Secretary General Kofi Annan for the commendable achievements he has made throughout his two consecutive terms of office in the maintenance of peace and promotion of socio-economic development the world over.

**Madam President,**

Despite the fact that today's global trend is bound towards peace, development cooperation, the international situation continues to undergo rapid and complex changes. Numerous events during the past year demonstrate that world peace, justice and security are far from being secured due to the use of force in the settlement of international problems and violations of sovereignty of member states, which all have posed major impediments to peace and development cooperation among states and peoples.

Globalization offers new opportunities for economic development, yet benefits are unevenly shared. 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 launch trade liberalization and further integrate themselves into the world economy. Nevertheless those countries continue to face many problems, primarily the lack of basic infrastructure, access to markets, capital and new technology, as well as finance and investment. In order to solve these problems, the international community must create an enabling environment conducive to development, whereby interests of the developing countries can be tangibly promoted. Therefore, grant aid and soft loan 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 transfer be improved and the international financial architecture be reformed.

**Madam President,**

To enable the United Nations to meet the challenges ahead, it should be reformed in a comprehensive, inclusive and balanced manner. This would enhance the important role of the Organization in maintaining international peace and security, promoting peaceful settlement of disputes and international cooperation for development. In addition, the UN reform process should include the revitalization of the General Assembly, strengthening of ECOSOC as well as reforming the Security Council in order to render it more legitimate, democratic and effective.

Despite the failure of the recent United Nations Conference to review the implementation of the Program of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons, the Lao PDR considers that the said Program of Action is a living document and remains a cooperation framework that empowers states to work for its full and effective implementation.

**Madam President,**

The historic Meeting of the Heads of State or Government of the Group of Land-locked Developing Countries (LLDCs), the first of its kind, held on September 14<sup>th</sup> 2006 in Havana, Cuba, adopted a Declaration reaffirming the right of access to and from the sea of Landlocked countries in accordance with international law and underscored the importance of a mid-term review to assess the implementation of the Almaty Program of Action. In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of LLDCs, I appeal to the international community to further address the special needs and problems of this vulnerable Group and lend support and assistance to us in our efforts to bring the mid-term review process to a successful conclusion.

**Madam President,**

The Lao PDR supports the UN General Assembly Resolutions that call upon the Government of the United States of America to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Republic of Cuba. Such act which is contrary to the international law and UN Charter has inflicted a huge material loss to the Cuban people.

In the Middle East, there is an urgent need to implement the UN Security Council Resolution 1701 which would bring the situation in Lebanon to normalcy and pave the way for a comprehensive solution to the Palestinian problem in conformity with the relevant UN Resolutions with a view to creating a sovereign and independent State of Palestine, living in peace with all countries over the world.

The situation in the Korean Peninsular requires that problems should be resolved by peaceful means. In this regard, we call for the resumption of the six-party talks based on the principles and commitments as contained in the joint Declaration of September 19, 2005, in order to promote peace and security in the region.

The international community is deeply concerned to see the people of Iraq continue to endure daily significant loss in human lives and material properties. The Lao PDR expresses the hope that peace, security and national unity could be restored as soon as possible.

**Madam President,**

In the Lao PDR, following the election of members of the National Assembly of the VI legislature held in early 2006, a new government has been formed with the main tasks of consistently pursuing the policy of overall restructuring and ensuring the effective implementation of the Five-Year socio-economic development plan. This achievement would contribute to strengthening the nation's political stability and social security and consolidating the solidarity throughout the society. Over the past five years, the national economy had grown at the annual average of 6.3%, poverty incidence declined from 48% of the population in 1990 to 28.7% in 2006, life expectancy increased to 61 years and opium cultivation was completely eradicated. The public investment was concentrated in areas such as infrastructure and social development, particularly human resource development which focuses on education, health and culture. Besides, foreign direct investment has swiftly increased to 2.8 billion US\$ in 2006.

For the coming years, the government will concentrate all efforts and actively mobilize all forces and potential in the country, in conjunction with opportunities and favourable conditions provided by the international community, for the purpose of ensuring successful implementation of the National Socio-Economic Development Plan for the period from 2006-2010, achieving a continual economic growth at an annual rate of 7.5%. It is expected that by 2010, the slash and burn method of cultivation will definitely be terminated and the problem of poor households will be basically solved. In addition, support policies towards small and medium enterprises will be implemented concurrently with the promotion and gradual expansion of industrialization with a view to further improving and raising to a higher level the living conditions of our people. Similarly, the Lao PDR will further expand its relations and cooperation with the international community as well as contribute actively to the regional integration, particularly the integration of ASEAN member countries with the aim of enhancing the role of the Lao PDR as an efficient partner of the countries in Southeast Asia and other regions in the world.

**Madam President,**

In closing, the Lao PDR reiterates its determination to work in unison with the international community aimed at creating an environment that would pave the way towards promoting the well-being of all countries and peoples the world over.

**Thank you.**