



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

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STATEMENT

BY H.E. AMBASSADOR KANIKA PHOMMACHANH, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS
AT THE GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE
OF THE 65th SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
New York, 11 October 2010

Mr. Chairman

I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of chairmanship of this Committee and assure you and the Bureau of my delegation's full support and cooperation for the work of this session under your capable leadership. The Lao PDR fully associates itself with the statements of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement, and Myanmar on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations. My delegation will, therefore, make a few additional remarks from the national perspective of the Lao PDR.

Mr. Chairman

My country attaches the highest priority to global nuclear disarmament and the collective determination of United Nations Member States to achieve concrete measures that guarantee international peace and security. Our current session is being held in the context of several positive and encouraging developments towards disarmament and a world free of nuclear weapons. The signing of the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) by the United States and Russian Federation, leading to a decrease in the deployment of strategic and tactical nuclear weapons, has provided new impetus to multilateral deliberations.

The 2010 NPT Review Conference concluded successfully with the adoption a Final Document with its 64-step action plan. Yet, it is not the expected outcome and all possibilities need to be harnessed to vigorously implement each of the recommendations proposed. Determined efforts will be required to aim for the universality of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), strengthening the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) with its surveillance machinery, and work towards the three pillars of nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Only then will it be possible to attain the targets set for the 2015 Review Conference, resulting finally in a Convention against Nuclear Weapons.

~~The High-Level Meeting convened by United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Ban-Ki-moon, on 24 September 2010, on revitalizing the work of the Conference on Disarmament (CD) calls for stronger political will and commitment to overcome differences and the stalemate that has characterized it thus far. It also reinforces and urges Member States to strive for making the CD once again a robust key disarmament entity to carry forward the disarmament agenda set by the international community. The CD will have to resume its 2011 work agenda on several key areas simultaneously, first among them being the formulation of a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) as a means to control non-proliferation and nuclear terrorism by non-state actors.~~

The CD will also have to focus on developing a legally binding agreement to curb the arms race in outer space and to aim for a peaceful outer space. With such pressing issues ahead of us, it is thus imperative for the CD to vigorously realign its procedures and also expand its membership from a 64-member body to one that reflects global engagement in disarmament issues.

Mr. Chairman,

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is another significant instrument which must be brought into force without further delay. The Conference on "Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT", held in New York on 23 September 2010, has clearly made it evident that voluntary moratorium is not sufficient and that only a total ban on nuclear testing would result in total nuclear abolition. It also pointed out that Member States must support the strengthening of the International Monitoring and Verification System with all the necessary safeguards and scientific advances.

The creation of nuclear-weapon-free-zones has significantly contributed to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, as well as enhancing regional and global peace and security, but must have the negative security guarantees from nuclear weapons states. My delegation is committed to work for the full operation of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), and also encourages the nuclear powers to accede to the Protocol annexed to the Treaty, as soon as possible.

The establishment of the Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East as reinforced by the May 2010 NPT Review Conference, would contribute to a lasting solution to peace for that region. It is, therefore, imperative to ensure the successful outcome of the 2012 Conference on this issue. We share the view of other Member States that gradually the entire world should strive to become one large nuclear-weapon-free zone.

Mr. Chairman,

The use of conventional weapons, particularly cluster munitions, undoubtedly has a long-term impact on the lives of people and impedes national social-economic development efforts. As a most-affected country by cluster munitions, the Lao PDR welcomes the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions on 1 August 2010. It is therefore a great honor for the Lao PDR to host the First Meeting of States Parties to the Convention on Cluster Munitions in Vientiane, from 9 to 12 November 2010. This forum will mark an important milestone for the international community to reaffirm its strong determination to address the challenges posed by cluster munitions. Meanwhile, the First States Parties Meeting will provide an opportunity to chart a clear vision, and adopt appropriate mechanisms to ensure the effective implementation of the Convention. Once again, I would like to extend my Government's cordial invitation to all United Nations member countries, and international multilateral and non-governmental organizations, as well as civil society, to participate and contribute to the successful outcomes of the Conference.

In conclusion, the Lao PDR would like to reiterate that political will and flexibility of States are essential for progress to overcome the challenges in order to achieve the long cherished goals of disarmament and non-proliferation. Only then can we invest our full efforts and resources for reaching the Millennium Development Goals and human betterment, and thereby envision a world free from fear and want. My delegation remains committed to constructive engagement in the work of the Committee to accomplish the collective aspiration for international peace and security. **Thank you, Mr. Chairman.**