



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

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**Statement
by
H.E. Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic
Republic to the United Nations
at the General Debate of the First Committee
of the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
New York, 9 October 2013**

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you and other members of the Bureau on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Let me also assure you and the Bureau of our full support and cooperation as you discharge your responsibility.

My delegation also associates itself with the statements made earlier by the Representatives of Indonesia on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and of Myanmar on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

The continued existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction, in particular, nuclear weapons remains a matter of concern about their possible use or threat of use by terrorists and non-state actors. In this context, the Lao PDR reiterates its view that only through the total elimination of nuclear weapons, the international community could ensure an absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of such weapons. The Lao PDR also welcomes the successful conclusion of the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference held on 22 April - 3 May 2013 in Geneva, Switzerland and calls for the full implementation of the action

plans adopted in 2010 on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, peaceful use of nuclear energy, and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle-East. The Lao PDR also welcomes the successful convening of the first ever High-Level Meeting of the UN General Assembly on Nuclear Disarmament on 26 September 2013 at the United Nations Headquarters and we believe that the outcomes of this meeting will move us forward to the total elimination of nuclear disarmament.

Universal adherence to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) would certainly contribute to the promotion of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. However, 17 years after it was adopted, CTBT remains ineffective. It is therefore, the duty of the international community to ensure the entry into force of this Treaty and we have to be optimistic. In this context, my delegation welcomes the recent ratification of CTBT by Brunei and Iraq and we are hoping to have more states, particularly those who have not done so to sign and ratify the CTBT at the early date.

Mr. Chairman,

The creation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones has a significant contribution to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation as well as enhancing regional and global peace and security. The Lao PDR supports the establishment of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones in the Middle East. In this regard, we wish to reiterate that it is essential that Nuclear Weapons States adhere to these zones and provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zones. We also wish to reemphasize the importance of the full operation of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and encourage the Nuclear Weapons States to accede to the Protocol annexed to the Treaty without any reservation as soon as possible. This year marks the 16th anniversary of the entry into force of the Treaty of the SEANWFZ. The Lao PDR has joined other ASEAN member states to resubmit the biennial traditional draft resolution entitled "Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapons-Free Zone" and hopes that the draft resolution will receive full support and co-sponsorship from member states, especially from P-5 countries.

Mr. Chairman,

While focusing on the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation, we cannot afford to ignore the challenge posed by conventional weapons, particular cluster munitions, which also constitutes a threat to peace, human security and development as a whole. As one of the most-affected countries by the Explosive Remnants of War including cluster munitions, the Lao PDR welcomes the progress made thus far in the universalization of the Convention on Cluster Munitions (CCM) and we encourage further efforts by the international community in this regard and call upon those states who have not acceded to this Convention to consider to do so. We welcome the successful outcome of the Fourth Meeting of

State Parties to this Convention held on 9-13 September 2013 in Lusaka, Zambia that reviewed the implementation of the Convention, particularly the implementation of 2010 Vientiane Action Plan. The Lao PDR also appreciate the generous offer by Costa Rica to host the Fifth Meeting of the Convention in 2014 and looks forwards to working closely with Costa Rica to ensure a success of the Fifth Meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

To date, it seems to us that the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation has progressed at a very slow pace. Expenditure on armaments has sky-rocketed while human races are struggling in extreme poverty. In this regard, the Lao DPR wishes to stress the need for strong political will and collective efforts to overcome these difficult impasses and to reemphasize the multilateral approach to achieving the ultimate goal of disarmament, non-proliferation and arm control. Although a small country with limited resources, the Lao PDR is state party to a number of international instruments on disarmament and fully commits itself to fulfil its international obligations under these treaties. The Lao PDR strongly believes that political wills and flexibility of member States are imperative for progressive development in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation as well as for overcoming the challenges posed on international community. It requires much effort from every country working together closely in achieving the common goals so that the world would be free from fear and all threads posed by all weapons. My delegation remains committed to constructive engagement to contribute to the work of this committee.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.