



## Documentos



### Lao Delegation attended the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting (ASEAN SOM) and Related Meetings

H.E. Mr. Alounkeo KITTIKHOUN, Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs, Laos' ASEAN SOM Leader led the Lao delegation to attend the ASEAN Senior Officials' Meeting (ASEAN SOM), ASEAN Plus Three Senior Officials' Meeting (APT SOM), East Asia Summit Senior Officials' Meeting (EAS SOM), Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) Senior Officials' Meeting, Friends of Lower Mekong (FLM) Senior Officials' Meeting, ASEAN Regional Forum Senior Officials' Meeting (ARF SOM), and the 27th ASEAN-U.S. Dialogue held on 6-11 June 2014 in Yangon, Myanmar.

The Meetings reviewed the cooperation under the frameworks of ASEAN, APT, EAS and ARF over the past year, and charted out future directions as well as made preparations for

the 47th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting (AMM), Post Ministerial Conference (PMC) 10+1 Sessions with the ASEAN Dialogue Partners, the 4th East Asia Summit Foreign Ministers' Meeting (EAS FMM), the



21st ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF), the 7th Lower Mekong Initiative (LMI) Ministerial Meeting, and the 4th Friends of Lower Mekong (FLM) Ministerial Meeting to be held from 8-10 August 2014 in Nay Pyi Taw, Myanmar.

The Meetings also exchanged views on international and regional issues of mutual interest.

### Message by H.E. Thongloun SISOULITH Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR On the Occasion of the 46th Anniversary of the Founding of ASEAN and the 16th Anniversary of the Lao PDR's Accession to ASEAN

Excellencies,

Dear Friends and Compatriots,

On the occasion of the 46th Anniversary of the Founding of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the 16th Anniversary of the accession to ASEAN of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, on behalf of the Government of the Lao PDR, I would like to convey the best wishes to the Leaders of the Party and State, cadres, soldiers, police, entrepreneurs, merchants as well as all the Lao people both in the country and overseas.

ASEAN, founded on 8th August 1967, is aimed at maintaining and promoting peace, stability and cooperation for the prosperity of the Southeast Asian Nations. Throughout 46 years of its evolution, despite many challenges, ASEAN has spared no efforts in the pursuit of its objective by strengthening intra-ASEAN cooperation and enhancing ASEAN's external relations in order to continue to build the ASEAN Community that consists of three pillars: the ASEAN Political-Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community.

Over the past year, remarkable achievements have been made in the implementation of ASEAN's initiatives, measures, and cooperative activities in various areas such as in the political-security, economic, and socio-cultural fields.

In the political-security area, ASEAN has recorded important achievements among which the notable ones are the building of mutual trust and confidence and the maintenance

and promotion of peace and stability in the region. This has created an environment conducive to the strengthening of intra-ASEAN economic and socio-cultural cooperation as well as ASEAN's external relations.

In the economic field, ASEAN, with a population of over 600 million people, a total land area of over 4,4 million square kilometers, and the combined gross domestic product (GDP) of about US\$ 2,178 billion as of 2011, is a region where all its members have been enjoying high and stable economic growth in the midst of economic slowdown in some other parts of the world. In addition, the ASEAN Economic Community building process has made satisfactory progress and is moving, with firm steps, towards the realization of its objectives of establishing ASEAN as a single market and production base, a competitive economic region, a region of equitable economic development and integration into the global economy. At the same time, ASEAN also continues to implement the ASEAN-China Free Trade Agreement (FTA), the ASEAN-Japan FTA, the ASEAN-Korea FTA, the ASEAN-India FTA, and the ASEAN-Australia-New Zealand FTA. ASEAN is also in the process of negotiating with those six countries with which ASEAN has established FTAs with the aim of establishing the largest free trade area known as the "Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership" (RCEP). Once realized, it will become the world's largest FTA with almost half of the world's population. It is believed that all these will bring enormous trade, service, investment and other economic benefits to ASEAN and its Member States, including the Lao PDR.

In the socio-cultural front, on the whole, ASEAN Member States live in peace and harmony with one another amidst diversity in cultures, languages and religions, constituting a unique ASEAN identity that has become the strength of ASEAN. This has created a favorable condition for ASEAN to further pursue its efforts in the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community building that aims to create caring and sharing societies of the ASEAN Member States, developing human capacity and improving the well-being of people of the ASEAN Member States.

In the conduct of its external relations, ASEAN has consistently pursued its outward-looking policy by enhancing cooperation with external partners, particularly, with its Dialogue Partners under the ASEAN-initiated frameworks, namely; ASEAN+1, ASEAN+3 (China, Japan and the Republic of Korea), the ASEAN Regional Forum (27 participants), the ASEAN Defense Ministers' Meeting Plus (18 participating countries), and the East Asian Summit (18 participating countries). ASEAN's external relations have been gradually strengthened, thereby, not only bringing mutual benefits to ASEAN and its external partners, but also contributing to the common cause of the maintenance and promotion of peace, stability, and development in the region and the world at large. Most importantly, all of its external partners, including the major powers, support the centrality of ASEAN and the role of ASEAN as a driving force in the above-mentioned frameworks as well as in the evolving regional architecture.

The above-mentioned achievements and the role of ASEAN, which have been recognized by the international community, were made possible due to the fact that ASEAN has pursued cooperation both within and between ASEAN Member States and with its external partners by adhering to the fundamental principles of ASEAN, particularly, the principles of respect for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of one another, peaceful settlement of disputes, decision-making based on consensus, mutual benefit, and cooperation based on comfort level of, and diversities among, the Member States or the so-called "ASEAN Way", among others.

Excellencies,

Dear Friends and Compatriots,

ASEAN is currently focusing its efforts on the ASEAN Community building comprising the three pillars, namely; the ASEAN Political-Security Community, the ASEAN Economic Community and the ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community, of which the establishment of the ASEAN Economic Community is slated to be realized in 2015 and announced on 31st December 2015, through effective implementation of the measures and activities under the Roadmap for an ASEAN Community 2009-2015. The Lao PDR has been, together with other ASEAN Member States, actively carrying out its obligations. At the national level, the Lao Government has issued the Decision No.: 04/GoV, dated 30th April 2013, which sets out five priority works as follows:

1. Promote awareness on ASEAN Community to the public,
2. Establish mechanisms and improve coordination system among line ministries and local authorities,
3. Conduct a study on goods production, identify products and related services where Laos has a comparative advantage that would be competitive in the ASEAN market; and promote and further strengthen small and medium-sized enterprises,
4. Improve existing and adopt new laws and regulations related to the setting up and operation of businesses so that businesses can improve their capacity and increase their competitiveness in the ASEAN Community, and
5. Develop human resources for both the line ministries and local authorities to ensure effective participation in the global economic integration.

In the meantime, questions are being asked on the future of ASEAN beyond 2015. In this connection, I would like to inform that ASEAN has started to look at this issue. The Lao PDR views that after 2015, ASEAN will continue to be an inter-governmental regional organization and the community of all the nations in the Southeast Asia where countries continue to live in peace and harmony amidst diversity in political systems, cultures, languages and religions, and continue to be beneficiaries of the fruits of development cooperation on the basis of the principles as stipulated in the ASEAN Charter. Most importantly, I am of the view that the development gap within ASEAN would not be yet fully bridged, thus, it will require ASEAN to continue its efforts in narrowing the gap by reviewing the implementation of the Initiative for ASEAN Integration Work Plan II and develop a new work plan taking into account the post-2015 developments.

Excellencies,

Dear Compatriots,

The Lao PDR has been consistently pursuing its foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship, and cooperation by broadening the external relations in order to integrate our economy into regional and global economies. The Lao PDR's accession to ASEAN on 23 July 1997 as well as the participation in the process of the ASEAN Community building and other sub-regional, regional and multilateral cooperative frameworks are the outcomes of the correct implementation of the foreign policy by our Party and Government in different periods.

Over the past years, the Lao PDR has recorded remarkable achievements in socio-economic development. I am of the view that our participation in the ASEAN FTA, the ASEAN services liberalization, and the ASEAN investment area as well as the FTAs between ASEAN

and its Dialogue Partners as mentioned above has contributed not only to the increase in the volume and value of trade and investment, tourist arrivals in the Lao PDR but also further contributed to the increase in support provided by ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners, friendly countries, and international organizations to the socio-economic development of our country.

Dear Compatriots,

The achievements that the Lao PDR has obtained, including the ones that have been derived from the participation in ASEAN cooperative activities, were possible due to the close leadership and guidance of the Politbureau of the Central Committee of the Party and the Government, the proactive contributions of all cadres, soldiers, police, entrepreneurs, merchants and the Lao people throughout the country as well as the support and assistance extended by ASEAN Member States, ASEAN's Dialogue Partners, and other friendly countries and international organizations. Therefore, on behalf of the Government, I wish to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks and deep appreciation to all of them for the valuable contributions and support.

In addition, to ensure that our country is benefiting from the establishment of the ASEAN Community, particularly the ASEAN Economic Community, I would like to call on the agencies and Lao people from all segments of the society to continue to hold high the banner of ownership and responsibility to continue preparing for the various aspects as follows:

1. Strengthen the macro- and micro-economic management,
2. Improve and develop quality infrastructure, including transportation and logistics system, establishing Laos as a link in regional integration,
3. Improve or develop new laws to be comprehensive covering all fields, and ensure stricter law enforcement, as well as to improve the legal system of our country to be gradually in line with the regional and international standards,
4. Achieve a breakthrough in public management mechanism,
5. Develop qualified human resources and skilled manpower,
6. Business sector should be proactive in improving production, quality, and productivity for both export and domestic consumption that can meet the needs of the markets in different periods, moving towards growth, competition, merger, and mutual assistance in order to create common strength among business,
7. We together must continue to maintain peaceful and stable environment, social order and stable economic growth in order to compete in ASEAN market so that we can turn challenges into opportunities, and
8. All line ministries and local authorities to actively implement the Open Session of the Government Meeting's Decision No.: 04/GoV, dated 30th April 2013 related to ASEAN integration particularly the five priority works mentioned above.

I do believe that in a globalized era, only by ensuring self-strength and competitiveness that we will be able to bring benefits offered by the ASEAN Economic Community and the global integration to our nation and people.

Another important thing is the Lao PDR will be entrusted to chair ASEAN in 2016. Therefore, we should, from now on, make all the necessary arrangements to ensure the suc-

cess of this chairmanship as well as to contribute to charting out and implementing the ASEAN post-2015 vision.

In conclusion, may I wish the leaders of the Party and State, cadres, soldiers, police, entrepreneurs and merchants as well as all Lao people both in the country and overseas a very good health and success in your noble tasks and let us together celebrate the 46th Anniversary of the founding of ASEAN and the 16th Anniversary of the Lao PDR's accession to ASEAN with pride and joyfulness.

Thank you.

### Statement by His Excellency Mr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR at the 68th Session of the United Nations General Assembly New York, 28 September 2013

Mr. President,



On behalf of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to Excellency John Ash of Antigua and Barbuda on your election as President of this 68th Session of the UN General Assembly. May I assure our full support and cooperation to Your Excellency in the discharge of your noble duty. Likewise, I would like to sincerely commend Excellency Vuk Jeremic for the successful completion of his task as President of the 67th Session of

the UNGA.

The Lao Government offers its condolences to the Government and people of Kenya on the loss of life as a result of terrorist attack last week in Nairobi, and I join the international community in condemning such an inhumane act.

Mr. President,

The year 2013 marks a new turning point in promoting international cooperation for development and in addressing global poverty. At the World Summit on Sustainable Development or Rio+20 held in Rio De Janero, Brazil in 2012, the world leaders initiated an international consultative process to chart out vision and concrete action for enhancing sustainable development in the post-2015. This clearly testifies that poverty eradication and sustainable development remains our prevailing priority, because throughout the past decades, despite tremendous efforts made by the international community to achieve poverty eradication and development targets, 1,2 billion poor people or 22 percent of the world population still live in poverty. In addition, natural environment continues to be threatened and damaged that has led to climate imbalance, frequent occurrence of natural disasters, which have become unfamiliar phenomenon that had rarely been seen in the past years. Moreover, political and social unrests and armed conflicts occurred in different parts of the world continue to

prolong and there has yet been any sign of immediate resolution. Likewise, the global and regional economic and financial crisis has intensified its gravity that has posed long-term impact on developing countries, especially the least developed ones.

Mr. President,

Such state of development of political, social-economic and environmental situation continue to obstruct and impede all nations in attaining sustainable development goals including the MDGs. Against this backdrop, it is more crucial than ever for the international community to redouble its efforts in enhancing development cooperation based on sincere and mutual assistance for the benefits of all and for a secured world. As the world today becomes increasingly inter-dependent, no single country can develop and survive on its own without engagement and cooperation of the international community. In this context, the global institutions, like the United Nations, have an important duty to fulfill in advocating international development cooperation. On this occasion, I would like to commend Secretary General Ban Ki-moon for his tireless efforts in promoting international cooperation including cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations in different parts of the world in this complex and challenging global environment.

A nation's political stability and security constitutes a vital factor for enabling environment and condition to advance sustainable development. However, many regions of the world are experiencing social unrest, political strife and military confrontation and all this has posed a major threat to global and regional peace and security. In this regard, we share the common concern over the deteriorating situation in the Middle East, which has lasted for years now. Therefore, we call upon all parties concerned to work together and find a peaceful solution in order to save the lives of innocent people. In this spirit, the Lao PDR welcomes the agreement reached by Russia and the United States on Syria's chemical weapons.

Addressing the issue of Palestine based on the principle of creating two independent states of Palestine and Israel living side by side in peace requires an urgent attention from the international community. In this regard, the Lao PDR commends the efforts made by Israel and Palestine to resume peace negotiation, which marks an important milestone for the promotion of peace in the region.

The unilateral embargo on the Republic of Cuba, an independent State, is deemed unjust and contrary to international law, causing major impact on the lives of the peace-loving Cuban people. Therefore, it is now time to put an end to the embargo.

Mr. President,

The Lao PDR always attaches great significance to creating peaceful environment and to safeguarding political stability for national development with a view to graduating from LDC status. To this end, the Government of the Lao PDR has deployed its utmost efforts in pursuing consistent foreign policy and promoting international cooperation at all levels. We continue to attentively fulfill our international obligations in maintaining peace and promoting the rule of law. In this vein, the Government of the Lao PDR has mapped out a policy direction on state governed by the rule of law, on promotion and protection of the fundamental rights of people of all strata. To date, the Lao PDR is party to many international instruments on human rights. The national law on human rights, including the law on the rights of women and children, has been enacted and amended. To continue fulfilling its international obligations, the Lao PDR has presented candidatures for membership in the Human Rights Council

for the term of 2016-2018 as well as membership in the Executive Board of UNDP/UNFPA for 2016-2018. We do hope that the Lao PDR will be given an opportunity to work with the international community within the aforesaid frameworks.

At regional level, the Lao PDR has played an active part in the process of ASEAN community building consisting of three pillars namely political-security community, economic community and social-cultural community, which will commence on 31 December 2015. We believe that political and economic strength of ASEAN community will form a solid ground for regional cooperation, thus contributing to the maintenance and promotion of peace, security and development in the region and the world at large.

The Lao PDR played an important role as Chair of the framework of cooperation between the two continents, Asia and Europe (or ASEM) from 2010-2012 and was given a great honor to host the 9th ASEM Summit from 5-6 November in Vientiane, under the theme "Friends for Peace, Partners for Prosperity", which was successfully concluded. At the Summit, Leaders from the two continents had constructive exchange of views on ways and means to promote peace and to enhance development cooperation in their respective regions for the benefits of the two peoples in Asia and Europe as well as to ensure their legitimate rights to live in peace and to improve their well-being. The Lao Government is proud to be given such opportunity to undertake this important duty and I would like to take this opportunity to express my deep gratitude to all friendly countries and international community for the support and assistance extended to the Lao PDR, which have led to the successful outcome as envisaged by the Summit.

Mr. President,

Despite various achievements in its socio-economic development, being both least developed and landlocked country, the Lao PDR remains vulnerable and continues to face numerous challenges in poverty eradication and development efforts, as clearly reflected in the recent Third National MDG Progress Report launched early this month. To achieve all MDGs, the country must continue to overcome daunting challenges such as child malnutrition, gender inequality in education, and impact by UXO contamination. Nevertheless, the Lao Government will continue to lead its people in moving ahead together with the international community in tackling numerous challenges in order to achieve the MDGs.

The Lao PDR is one of the most affected countries by cluster munitions and unexploded ordnances (UXO), which continue to pose major constraints to the national social-economic development and poverty reduction. In this regard, the Lao PDR calls upon all countries to consider acceding to the Convention on Cluster Munitions with a view to ensuring total ban on cluster munitions as well as helping address the impacts of cluster munitions in the affected countries.

Mr. President,

In 2014, the group of LLDCs will hold a 10-year review Conference on the implementation of the Almaty Program of Action on addressing specific problems and special needs of the LLDCs. Addressing specific problems of LLDCs has become regional and international obligation. Regardless of their development level, these countries will not be able to address the impacts of their landlockedness without international cooperation, especially from transit countries and development partners.



In this context, the Review Conference scheduled in 2014 is of great importance not only for the LLDCs, but also for all development partners. This Conference will provide an excellent opportunity for the international community to identify the emerging challenges and adopt a new cooperation framework aiming at addressing the impact of landlockedness faced by the LLDCs. We have high hope and expectation on the outcome of this Conference as it would adopt a new policy direction and more concrete measures reflecting current development environment that can form a basis for addressing the specific problems faced by LLDCs in the next decade. The success of this Conference would certainly demonstrate the spirit of genuine partnership and mutual assistance among members of the international community. Therefore, in my capacity as Chair of the Group of LLDCs, I wish to take this opportunity to call upon all parties including international organizations, as well as the United Nations System, international financial institutions, and private sector to participate actively in the preparation and organization of this Conference in view of ensuring its successful outcome.

Mr. President,

We have only two years left to meet the MDGs, however there remain numerous challenges facing us. Therefore, our post-2015 development agenda process is important for all countries and stakeholders to fully engage in reviewing how various measures have been undertaken to achieve MDGs during the past years, and chart out new and appropriate future direction. I am convinced that in the spirit of effective and sincere cooperation, we will be able to achieve the set targets and goals and overcome the challenges and constraints we are facing.

Thank You.