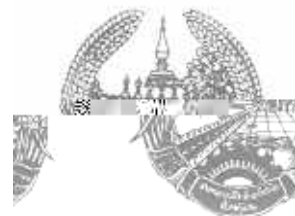


PEACE INDEPENDENCE DEMOCRACY UNITY PROSPERITY

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

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Statement

by

H.E. Mr. Somsavat LENGSAVAD

Deputy Prime Minister
Minister of Foreign Affairs
of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

at the 59th Session

of the United Nations General Assembly

New York, 27 September 2004

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of the Lao PDR, I would like to thank H.E. Mr. Julian Hunte, President of the 58th Session of the UNGA for his dedication and the hard work he has accomplished, and to welcome H.E. Mr. Jean Ping, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Cooperation and Francophonie of the Republic of Gabon, President of the 59th Session of the UNGA. On this occasion, I would also like to commend UN Secretary General Kofi Annan for his tireless efforts to make the United Nations more effective, especially for taking the initiative to establish a high level panel on threats, challenges and change, whose objective is to address the UN reform and to propose recommendations to the General Assembly. We, the member states, all look forward to seeing and considering these awaited recommendations.

Mr. President,

In 2000, the Millennium Declaration, a landmark document, was a manifestation of our strong will to face the most pressing challenges of our time. The Millennium Development Goals have become fundamental benchmarks in our efforts to achieve economic growth and sustainable development. Over the past four years, their implementation at the global and regional levels proved to be successful in some countries, while many developing countries, especially the least developed countries faced difficulties in attaining those goals due to unfavorable conditions. In this context, the Lao PDR views the high level plenary to review the implementation of the Millennium Declaration due to be held next year as a crucial opportunity for the international community to take stock of the progress made and to evolve appropriate measures that would especially secure the necessary financial resources for better achievements in the years ahead.

Mr. President,

The international situation continues to be marked by rapid and complex evolution. In this context, peace and international security must be preserved at all costs. The Non-Aligned Movement, at its Ministerial Conference held in Durban, South Africa, from 17-19 August 2004, has reiterated its commitment to multilateralism in the maintenance of international peace and security. The strengthening and promotion of the multilateral process would certainly contribute to the world efforts aimed at effectively addressing international challenges.

Today, weapons of mass destruction, whether chemical, biological or nuclear, all pose major threats to peace and security at the regional and global levels, and are far from being totally eliminated. Therefore, we should all work collectively to ensure that these inhumane weapons disappear from the face of the earth.

Terrorism continues to bring disaster to humanity and endangers national and international security. The international community is urged to further cooperate at the national, regional and international levels in the fight against terrorism in all its forms and manifestations. All acts of terrorism wherever and by whomsoever committed are criminal and unjustifiable. To this end, the Lao PDR reaffirms its position to continue to cooperate with the international community based on the principles of the UN Charter, international law and relevant international Conventions.

Mr. President,

The year 2005 will mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Asian-African Summit. Therefore, the commemoration of the Golden Jubilee will be a crucial opportunity to solemnly reaffirm the validity of the core principles of the Bandung spirit which are solidarity, friendship and cooperation, and continue to serve as an effective foundation for resolving global problems and promoting good relations among countries and peoples in the world.

Recently, the increased deteriorating security situation in Iraq is a cause for concern. The Lao PDR expresses the hope that a peaceful solution could be attained in order to achieve peace and stability as well as to ensure the well-being of the Iraqi people.

We commend the efforts deployed towards finding a peaceful solution to the Korean Peninsular issue through the convening of the three rounds of six-party talks. We hope that all parties concerned will pursue these talks so as to achieve a permanent peace and security in the Korean Peninsular thus creating a favorable condition for a peaceful reunification.

Violence continues unabated in the occupied Palestinian territory, including East Jerusalem. Such violence would harm the peace efforts in the Middle East and prolong the suffering of the peoples in the region. On this note, we urge that the parties concerned engage in serious dialogue, settle their conflict and realize a vision of two states, Israel and Palestine, living side by side in peace within secured and recognized borders, in accordance with relevant UN Security Council Resolutions.

Last month, the Non-Aligned Movement, also at its Durban Ministerial Conference, again has called upon the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. This unilateral embargo runs counter to the UN Charter and international law, as it has caused immense material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba and it is about time that such a practice be halted.

Mr. President,

Capitalizing on the momentum achieved at the historic International Ministerial Conference in Almaty, Kazakhstan, to address the special needs of land-locked developing countries, the Lao PDR, as Chairman of the Group of LLDCs, has spared no efforts to bring about benefits to these vulnerable developing countries. We would like to convey our appreciation to the UNCTAD XI that recognized LLDCs as "small and vulnerable economies". We express the hope that this special recognition will be granted in other international forums and organizations, especially in the WTO as access to international markets for products of interest to our countries will significantly help overcome our geographical handicap of being land-locked.

Mr. President,

The global illicit drug problem and related crimes remain an issue of concern to the world community. Due to its trans-boundary and international nature, this problem can only be dealt with effectively through international cooperation. In an effort to contribute to the fight against this scourge, the Lao PDR continues to build up and intensify cooperation at the national, regional and international levels. As a result, the opium cultivation in the Lao PDR shows a significant decline in 2004 in comparison to 2003 and we will strive to achieve the goal of eliminating opium cultivation by 2005. I would like to seize this opportunity to appeal to the international community to continue to grant financial support to assist our country in addressing a number of challenges namely the treatment of opium addicts and the creation of a new and sustainable employment as well as the provision of necessary infrastructures to prevent former opium growers from replanting opium poppy.

Mr. President,

Over the past year, the Lao people of all ethnics, all walks of life and religions have been living in solidarity and harmony. The social political stability across the country remained solid, the economy has enjoyed a sustained growth rate of 6.5%, the poverty of the people has been gradually reduced and the external cooperation relations have been extensively broadened. Later this year, the Lao PDR will be hosting the Tenth ASEAN Summit and other related Summits with ASEAN dialogue partners. On that occasion, a number of important documents will be adopted aiming to accelerate regional integration that will lead towards the establishment of the ASEAN community by 2020.

and

Mr. President,

In nearly 60 years of its existence, the United Nations, has played its role in promoting international peace and security as well as socio-economic development, and

has achieved many successes. As we enter into the 21st century, our world of today is still confronted with numerous complex problems which include wars, armed conflicts, terrorism and global crime, human trafficking, global warming, environmental degradation, HIV/AIDS and other diseases and the marginalization of developing countries, in particular the three most vulnerable groups among them, the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the Land-Locked Developing Countries (LLDCs) and the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Therefore, to address the global challenges of our time, the international community should cooperate and work collectively through the United Nations. In this prospect, the United Nations needs to be reformed if the Organization ought to be more effective and more democratic. The UN General Assembly should also have an important and more active role to play in the management of world affairs. As for the Security Council, we wish to reaffirm the Lao PDR's position expressed many years ago that there should be an increase in both the permanent and non-permanent members coming from the developed and developing countries in accordance with the principle of equitable geographical distribution and taking into account the relative importance of the various countries. In this context, the Lao PDR supports Japan, Germany, India, to become permanent members in a new expanded Security Council. MI this would largely contribute to achieving our ultimate goal of making the United Nations, our universal organization, an organization which gains trust and confidence of the member states.

Thank You.