Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by

H.E. Mr. Thongsavan PHOMVIHANE,

Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR

The High-level Dialogue on the 5th Anniversary of the Global Development Initiative (GDI)

New York, 25 September 2026
(Please check against delivery)

Your Excellency Han Zheng, Vice President of the People's Republic of China;

Distinguished delegates,

1. On behalf of the Government of the Lao PDR, I am honoured to participate in this High-level dialogue on the fifth anniversary of the Global Development Initiative (GDI). This meeting reaffirms our shared commitment to international cooperation and sustainable and inclusive development.

Excellencies,

2. The international development landscape remains challenging, with limited progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals. Developing countries continue to face serious constraints, including limited development financing, climate change, debt pressures, technology gaps, and unequal market access. These challenges require stronger solidarity and enhanced multilateral cooperation.
3. Yet, over the past five years, the GDI has become a vital platform for international development cooperation. With the participation of more than 130 countries and international organizations, the Initiative has promoted practical cooperation, including on poverty reduction, food security, health, climate resilience, green development and industrialization, digital connectivity, and capacity building.

Excellencies,

4. For the Lao PDR, the GDI has provided valuable support to our national development efforts. The Vientiane Low-Carbon Demonstration Zone has been developed to promote green and low-carbon growth. In addition, science and technology classrooms in schools have supported students to develop digital skills from an early age. These projects, among others, demonstrate the practical value of the GDI on sustainable development priorities.
5. From the Lao PDR's own experience, three principles are particularly important. **First**, development cooperation should be demand-driven and closely aligned with national priorities. **Second**, South-South cooperation should be strengthened so countries can learn from one another and apply the lessons to their own development conditions. **Third**, cooperation should focus on long-term capacity building through investing in people, institutions, knowledge and technology.

Distinguished Delegates,

6. This year marks a significant milestone for the Lao PDR, as we are scheduled to graduate from Least Developed Country status. This achievement reflects the progress made in our 50-year journey. Nevertheless, challenges remain in sustaining development momentum beyond graduation. We strongly believe that enhanced cooperation and partnership at all levels remain critical for all countries in special situations.

7. Guided by sovereign and self-reliant economic policy, the 10th Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2026–2030) has been adopted. Priorities include investing in human capital and new technologies, promoting balanced development across sectors, enhancing climate resilience, strengthening public governance and institutional capacity, deepening regional and global integration and connectivity to support inclusive and sustainable development.

Excellencies,

8. In conclusion, the Lao PDR reaffirms its strong commitment to the GDI's objectives and the 2030 Agenda. We stand ready to work closely with all partners to advance practical cooperation and ensure that development is inclusive and sustainable for all.

   Thank you.