



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by

**Her Excellency Aly Vongnoubountham, President of Lao Women's Union
and Vice Standing President of National Commission for the Advancement
of Women, Mothers and Children**

**At the General Discussion
68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women**

**Under the priority theme “Accelerating the achievement of gender equality
and the empowerment of all women and girls by addressing poverty
and strengthening institutions and financing with a gender
perspective”**

New York, 11-22 March 2024

**Mister Chair,
Distinguished Delegates,**

1. The Lao PDR supports this year's priority theme which underscores the urgency of poverty eradication and strengthening institutions to achieve gender equality through financing with a gender perspective as we strive to attain the SDGs so that women and girls will not be left behind.
2. Achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls has always been at the core of Lao PDR's national policy planning, the efforts to achieve the key targets under SDG1 and SDG5 and realize the objective of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action including other regional instruments to promote gender equality and advancement of women.
3. Since early 1990s, the Lao Government has made all its efforts to address poverty by investing in developing basic infrastructure, health and education, promoting income generation through increasing employment opportunities and job creation especially for the rural poor families in order to improve the well-being of rural population with strong emphasis on women. According to the Global Gender Gap Index 2023, the Lao PDR was ranked fifth in economic participation and opportunity as well as women's empowerment in the workplace.
4. Over the years, the Lao government has prioritized advancement of women, ending gender-based violence, promoting women's participation in politics and policy making bodies, inclusive social and economic development, strengthening women's entrepreneurial skill and their leading role in Small and Medium Enterprises, among others, in its national development policy as clearly reflected in the current Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan for 2021-2025.
5. We are of the view that enhancing women's economic participation, investing in social protection scheme, healthcare and education remain crucial and will significantly contribute to ending women in poverty, early child marriage, gender-based violence and improve the overall well-being of women and girls across the country.
6. To enhance its national capacity, the Government has also deployed its utmost efforts to advance the implementation of the National Plan of Action by allocating adequate budget for promoting gender equality, setting up poverty reduction and SME funds, offering low interest rate loan and other financial services and advice for women entrepreneurs. At the grassroot level,

Women's Saving Groups and Village Development Fund have been established to increase participation of women in economic sector.

7. Despite significant progress made during the past years, numerous challenges remain to be addressed, especially during this post Covid pandemic period.
8. On this note, the Lao PDR looks forward to further strengthening collaboration with all UN agencies, development partners, international financial institutions, and other stakeholders in the pursuit of our common endeavour to achieve gender equality and empower women and girls in the Lao PDR.
9. I wish the 68th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women a great success. Thank You.