



# Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement  
By

**H.E Saleumxay KOMMASITH**  
**Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs**  
at the Least Developed Countries Annual Ministerial Meeting

(04 minutes)

**New York, 22 September 2022**

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**Madame Chairperson,**

Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of Malawi and I commend for your able leadership of our group.

**Madame Chairperson,**

The Doha Programme of Action (DPoA) fully recognizes the multi-faceted challenges faced by the LDCs and reaffirms the commitment to assist this most vulnerable group of countries to overcome numerous hindrances. The Lao PDR recognizes that the DPoA lays an important stepping stone towards fulfilling the international community's collective commitment to leave no one behind.

For the last two decades, the Lao Government has underscored LDC graduation as an overarching goal. Throughout the years, considerable progress has been made in implementing the previous programme of actions on LDCs, which has enabled our country to be recommended for LDC graduation during the 2021 Triennial Review by the Committee for Development Policy (CDP). Nevertheless, given the unprecedented and severe impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic, our country continues to encounter uncertainties and challenges. Therefore, it is of particular importance that another thorough review process is needed in the coming few years to assess whether our country will be able to tackle the ongoing difficulties and meet the set graduation thresholds in a sustainable manner and make sure that graduation must be irreversible.

In this context, our government is developing a Smooth Transition Strategy (STS) which is practical, achievable, flexible and country-tailored in order to help the country to be better prepared for addressing the current and future shocks. Toward this end, the process of developing the national STS has already been started through the whole-of-government approach and in consultation with all relevant stakeholders, aiming at formulating STS that responds to the national development needs and priorities in the coming years.

**Madame Chairperson,**

At this critical juncture, while mobilizing domestic resources to support our development agenda, the Lao PDR considers the extension of international support measures for graduating LDCs, as reflected in the DPoA, particularly crucial for the implementation of our national smooth transition strategy. The continued support from development and trading partners as well as the UN system remains essential so as to avoid any disruptions, especially from the currently declining ODA. In this regard, the Lao PDR calls for the fulfilment of the historical ODA commitment made by the economically advanced countries to LDCs as well as enhanced support on access to funding and debt relief measures, these represent essential tools for our country to mitigate the current social-economic challenges we are facing.

**I thank you.**