



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by

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Republic to the United Nations

On behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)
On Agenda Item 23: Group of Countries in Special Situations

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the United Nations General Assembly

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(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,

1. I am privileged to deliver this statement on behalf of the Member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN); namely, Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, Viet Nam, my own country, the Lao PDR.

2. ASEAN associates itself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of South Africa on behalf of G-77 and China.

Mr. Chairman,

3. ASEAN welcomes the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) by the Leaders of the Member States of the United Nations which includes, among others, poverty eradication as a priority. So the important task before us now is the need for the effective implementation of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

4. Be that as it may, given the current difficult economic conditions, it is a more challenging task for developing countries, in particular, the groups of countries in special situations: the least developed countries (LDCs), landlocked developing countries (LLDCs) and the small island developing states (SIDS) which are the most vulnerable to realize their national development objectives and meet the agreed global development goals and targets, including the unfinished business of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and targets. Therefore, ASEAN welcomes the support and assistance from the international community to the countries in special situations to implement their respective national development plans; the Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA) for the LDCs for the Decade 2011-2020, the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs for the Decade 2014-2024 (VPoA) and the SAMOA Pathway; and the agreed global development agendas such as the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Chairman,

5. ASEAN welcomes the progress made in the implementation of the IPoA, VPoA and the Samoa Pathway which has, to some extent, contributed

to the development of LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. Such progress was made possible because of the support and assistance provided to the LLDCs by the transit countries, development partners, international organizations, UN development agencies, private sector and other stakeholders. This has helped to gradually improve the connectivity, increase productive capacities and competitiveness of the countries in special situations.

Mr. Chairman,

6. While welcoming some progress made in the implementation of the above programmes of action, we should not lose sight of the serious challenges faced by countries in special situations. For this reason, we call on the international community, especially development partners to continue to fulfill its commitment by increasing its support and assistance to the groups of countries in special situations in order for them to overcome their specific development challenges.

Mr. Chairman,

7. ASEAN has been in the process of community building for some years where commendable progress has been made in regional cooperation and integration. As a result, its vision and aspiration to become an ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) is set to be realized by this year. This is, indeed, a cause for celebration. However, ASEAN is also well aware of the need to narrow the development gap among its members as a few of them are still in the groups of countries in special situations and between ASEAN member states and other countries and regions. This is not only recognized by ASEAN but the international community, in particular, our dialogue partners as well. Therefore, ASEAN adopted various initiatives to support its member States that are in the groups of countries in special situations such as the Initiative for ASEAN Integration (IAI) which was launched in 2000 and covers a wide range of areas. Furthermore, the ASEAN Framework for Equitable Economic Development and the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity are being implemented. This has significantly contributed to alleviation of poverty, narrowing of the development gap and promoting sustainable development in the ASEAN region.

Mr. Chairman,

8. Finally, I would like to reaffirm ASEAN's commitment to cooperate with UN agencies and development partners in our efforts to assist the groups of

countries in special situations to realize the goals and objectives of IPoA, VPoA and SAMOA Pathway and the agreed international development agendas such as 2030 Agenda.

I thank you.