



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

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**Statement**

**by**

**Ms. Somsanouk KEOBOUNAN,**

**Third Secretary, Permanent Mission of the Lao  
People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations**

**At the Thematic Debate on Agenda Item 47:**

**“Assistance in Mine Action”**

**During the 74<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

**New York, 23 October 2019**

**Mr. Chairman,**

1. I wish to begin by thanking the Secretary-General for his remarks this year on International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action, which highlight the important of mine action for peace and security, humanitarian action and development, including to provide the opportunity worldwide to highlight the threats posed by landmines, explosive remnants of war and improvised explosive devices, as well as the central role the United Nations plays to address these threats and reduce their impact.

**Mr. Chairman,**

2. The Lao PDR shares the vision of a world free of threats from explosive remnants of war. To realize this vision, the international cooperation and assistance is very crucial. Therefore, the Lao PDR commends the United Nations system and the international community for their work in the field of mine action, which has, to a great extent, addresses the humanitarian concerns caused by explosive remnants of war, including landmines, cluster munitions in many effected countries around the world.

**Mr. Chairman,**

3. During the Indochina war, over more than 270 million sub-cluster munitions were dropped on most parts of our country where up to 30% of them failed to detonate upon impact. Therefore, the explosive remnants of war (ERW) remain a major challenge to the socio-economic development, thus, hampering poverty eradication efforts in our country. The ERWs still continue to kill and maim innocent people, especially in the rural areas. Therefore, support and assistance are essential for the clearance, mine risks education and victim assistance.

**Mr. Chairman,**

4. The Lao PDR will continue to work closely with international community to overcome this challenge. Currently, we are in the process of developing a national standard in the area of Mine Risks Education, including the upgrading of advocacy

materials and expanding radio programme towards nationwide broadcasting. The achievements highlighted above would not have been made possible without the support from our development partners, including donors and international organizations. Therefore, we thank them for support and assistance.

5. With the assistance and collaboration, we are delighted to inform that since last year, the European Union, Ireland, Japan, Republic of Korea, Norway, United Kingdom, the United States of America, among others, have continued and pledged to increase their assistance to the Lao PDR through the National Operator (UXO Lao) and INGOs at least until 2022. Furthermore, six donor's countries have made contributions to UNDP UXO Program namely Australia, European Union, Ireland, Luxembourg, Republic of Korea and New Zealand. In addition, INGOs such as HALO Trust, HI, JMAS, MAG, NPA and World Education have also played an important role in UXO survey and clearance across all affected provinces in the Lao PDR.

**Mr. Chairman,**

6. I would like to conclude by expressing our sincere gratitude to all international stakeholders for their long-standing support and assistance extended to our country. The Lao PDR will continue to work closely with all stakeholders to rid of the above mentioned major challenge so that we can focus and direct our resources and efforts to the social and economic development of our country, thereby, improving the well-being of our people and contributing to the implementation of the global development initiatives, including the 2030 agenda.

**I thank you, Mr. Chairman.**