



Intervention

by

**Ambassador Anouparb VONGNORKEO, Permanent Representative of the
Lao PDR to the United Nations**

at Joint Meeting of the Second Committee and the Economic and Social
Council on “Building productive capacities in LDCs, LLDCs, SIDS as well as
MICs for more resilient recovery and sustainable development in the post-
COVID-19 era”

10:00-13:00

20 October 2021

Madame Chair,
Mr. President of the Ecosoc,

1. I wish to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to you, Madame Chair and President of ECOSOC for convening this most relevant and timely meeting on building productive capacities for countries in special situations for their recovery efforts and building forward together from the impacts of Covid-19 Pandemic.
2. My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished Chairs of LDCs and LLDCs respectively, and echoes our full support to the proposals contained therein including the overall assessment on the severe negative impact and disruption to our societies and economies, and the fact that the most vulnerable are disproportionately most affected.
3. Being both an LDC and Landlocked, the Lao PDR is facing multiple challenges during this ongoing pandemic. Due to stringent lockdown and border closing, key sectors such as tourism, agriculture among others have been hardest hit while trade and FDI have continued to decline, compounded by debt distress. According to the recent *World Bank's assessment*, the second wave of pandemic and its lockdown measures strongly hit employment sector. Around 51% of respondents were without work or had to stop working in April–May 2021, compared with 17% recorded earlier in February–March 2021. Employment disruption is widespread in the service sector with more than half of workers in wholesale and retail trade and other services had to stop working or switch jobs during the lockdown. By May 2021, 5.5% of businesses had permanently closed, while 33% were temporarily closed. Among businesses that remained in operation, 65% experienced a fall in revenue from pre-lockdown levels. This crisis has undoubtedly led to overall declining of economic growth and slowdown progress towards SDGs implementation and LDC graduation.
4. In this regard, I call on international community, international financial institutions and development partners to honor their commitments in order to enhance necessary support measures to build productive capacities for countries in special situations so we are not left behind. I firmly believe that the upcoming LDC5 in Doha will come up with concrete, deliverable, action-oriented program to address the challenges we are facing.

5. I wish to conclude by commending the ECOSOC President for keeping countries in special situations high on the agenda and look forward to productive discussion and concrete follow-up.

6. My delegation reiterates its firm commitment to the work of ECOSOC and in this spirit, the Lao PDR has presented for the very first time, its candidacy for ECOSOC membership for the term 2023–2025 with a strong desire to represent the interests of the groups of countries in special situations in the council. We sincerely look forward to receiving support from all UN member states.

Thank You.