



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

(Please check against delivery)

Statement

by

**H.E. Mr. Anouparb VONGNORKEO,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Lao People's Democratic
Republic to the United Nations**

**At the General Debate of the First Committee
on All Disarmament and International Security.
During the 75th Session of the General Assembly**

New York, 12 October 2020

Mr. Chairman,

Let me begin by extending my congratulation to you and members of the Bureau on your election and I assure you of the Lao PDR's full support and cooperation. My delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of Indonesia and Vietnam on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and ASEAN, respectively.

As we mark the 75th Anniversary of the United Nations, it is of paramount importance to underscore the inter-connected nature of peace, security and development as well as the link between disarmament and economic and social development. Therefore, the work of the First Committee is crucial as it contributes to the promotion of global peace and security, creating an environment conducive to sustainable development globally.

In this context, the Lao PDR reiterates its full support for the Secretary-General's Agenda for Disarmament and his appeal for a global ceasefire amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Likewise, my delegation remains concerned with the increasing global military expenditure and armed conflicts, which would further hamper the efforts of the international community to increase support for development cooperation and humanitarian assistance and to promote peaceful environment for development, poverty eradication and unified global response to the COVID-19 pandemic and climate crisis.

Mr. Chairman,

On nuclear weapons, the Lao PDR reiterates its strong support to international efforts towards making our world free from nuclear weapons. We are of the view that nuclear weapons remain a serious concern and continue to threaten international peace and security. As long as nuclear weapons exist, the risk of accidental, mistaken, and unauthorised use can cause massive catastrophic destruction to humanity and environment. Therefore, we believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only fundamental guarantee against their use or threat of use.

On Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), we firmly believe that it is necessary to step up efforts to implement the three pillars of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, namely Nuclear Non-Proliferation, Nuclear Disarmament and Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy, which serves the best interest of the international community. Therefore, we call upon the Nuclear Weapons States to renew their commitment to the full implementation of the Treaty, particularly Article VI. While welcoming the 50th Anniversary of the entry into force of the NPT

in 2020, my delegation calls for constructive and productive deliberations and negotiations of the upcoming NPT Review Conference in 2021.

On Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones, my delegation is of the view that the creation of regional Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones has made significant contribution to the strengthening of the global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation, and eventually leading to a nuclear-free world. To this end, the Lao PDR is a strong supporter of preserving the Southeast Asia region, as a Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone and free from all other weapons of mass destruction, as enshrined in the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ Treaty) and the ASEAN Charter.

Mr. Chairman,

The Lao PDR has ratified the **Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW)** in September 2019 and welcomes those states which have already submitted their instrument of ratification and accession of this Treaty. In this regard, we call upon other states that have not yet done so, to join the Treaty in order to facilitate an early entry into force of the Treaty, so that it can further contribute to the realization of making our world free from nuclear weapons.

My delegation welcomes the High-level Meeting of the General Assembly to Commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons held on 2nd October. We believe that we should redouble our efforts to raise public awareness and promote education on the danger of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction so that the future generations will not follow the path of acquiring weapons of mass destruction.

Likewise, the Lao PDR underlines the importance of the entry into force of **the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)** which aims at promoting nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. However, more than two decades after its adoption, the CTBT remains ineffective. It is, therefore, the duty of the international community to ensure an entry into force of this Treaty and urge those who have not done so, to sign and ratify the CTBT.

On Cyberspace, the Lao PDR is of the view that a collective effort and commitment of the international community is needed in order to promote the use of ICTs for socio-economic development and for maintaining peace and stability in cyberspace. In this context, we welcome the efforts of the Open-Ended Working Group on developments in the field of information and telecommunications in the context of international security, especially to further develop rules, norms and

principles of responsible behavior of states in the field of information and telecommunication in the context of international security.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm my delegation's strong support to the international efforts in disarmament and international security and emphasize our specific needs in addressing serious impact of the cluster munitions as the unexploded ordnance (UXO) contaminated across our country have continued to kill and maim innocent people and especially children and hinder national development until today, even long after the Viet Nam War has ended more than four decades ago. Against this backdrop, the Lao PDR previously adopted our specific national MDG9, which is now SDG18 entitled "Lives Safe from Unexploded Ordnance (UXO)" to continue addressing the problems caused by UXO. We count on the continued and enhanced support and cooperation from the international community to help the Lao PDR implement this specific national SDG18 along with other SDGs.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.