



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement

by

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Permanent Mission of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the
United Nations

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the United Nations General Assembly

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(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, let me congratulate you and members of the bureau on your election, and I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

My delegation aligns itself with the statements made by the distinguished representatives of Guyana, Thailand, Malawi and Kazakhstan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, ASEAN, LDCs and LLDCs respectively.

Mr. Chair,

Since the Covid-19 outbreak emerged, the global economy has experienced unprecedented consequences, which exacerbate our vulnerability, inequality and threatening to reverse our decade-long economic and social progress already made towards the implementation of the SDGs. These impacts could be felt everywhere, but the most vulnerable, especially countries in special situations would be the hardest hit as poverty and hunger are on the rise, debts are skyrocketing, together with a sharp decline in tourism, investment and trade activities, resulting in revenue losses, among others.

Prior to the onset of the outbreak the global economy witnessed an upturn over the past two years, and global trade was expected to increase by 3 per cent, however the COVID-19 has triggered a collapse of international trade in the first half, and expected to continue through the rest of 2020. As mentioned in SG report, this could represent losses in global trade of about 6\$ trillion, roughly double the decline in trade during the 2008 financial crisis. These economic and social disruptions caused by the pandemic compounded with the more frequent natural calamities and widening income-inequality within and among countries threaten to cause severe impacts on long-term development agenda at all levels, especially in developing and vulnerable group of countries, which heavily rely on international trade as an engine driving inclusive economic growth and poverty eradication as well as a critical source to support national development and 2030 agenda.

Mr. Chair,

The Lao PDR, like many other countries in special situation, is doing its utmost to cushion the impacts resulted by the COVID-19 pandemic and maintain the progress made thus far on SDGs implementation while simultaneously working towards a smooth graduation from LDC status in the coming years. However, the pandemic has brought about immediate and long-term consequences on our socio-economic national development and most importantly on people's livelihood,

poverty eradication, health, education, employment opportunities and social protection. This crisis has undoubtedly led to overall declining of economic growth and slow progress towards SDGs implementation.

Against this backdrop, it is of paramount importance for the international community to ensure a united global response and renewed commitment to uphold multilateralism, to jointly contain the pandemic and address its long-term impact while adopting a holistic approach to build back better in the new normal. To this end, we require social-economic impact assessment of COVID-19, along with sufficient technical and financial support from development partners, UN system entities, International Financial Institutions and other stakeholders to assist national governments in overcoming this crisis, safeguarding our hard-earned progress and preparing better for future crisis.

Mr. Chair,

I wish to conclude by reaffirming the Lao PDR's determination to eradicate poverty and pursue the path of sustainable development. We count on the continued support by development partners, United Nations Development System and other stakeholders in supporting our national development efforts. We very much appreciate all support and assistance rendered to us by all friendly countries and international organizations, particularly during this time of public health crisis. My Government stands ready to work closely with the international community to win this battle against COVID-19 and to restore and accelerate progress towards the SDGs and build back better.

I thank you, Mr Chair.