



Lao People's Democratic Republic

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Saleumxay KOMMASITH
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao People's Democratic Republic
At the Ministerial Meeting of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM)**

09 September 2020

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. Chairman,
Distinguished Colleagues,

First of all, I wish to extend my sincere congratulations and appreciation to you, Mr. Chairman, for your able chairmanship of our Movement and for hosting this virtual Ministerial Meeting during this challenging time. I assure you of our full support and cooperation and wish you every success in discharging your noble duty.

My delegation welcomes the theme of the Meeting “Bandung+65: More Relevant, United and Effective NAM against Emerging Global Challenges, including COVID-19”. We also support the Political Declaration of the Meeting today.

Mr. Chairman,

This year marks the 65th Anniversary of Bandung Declaration in which Bandung Principles have guided and been embraced by our Movement since the inception of NAM. Since then, the global landscape and international political, economic and social environment have experienced unpredictable rapid changes coupled with emerging opportunities and challenges. In this connection, I would like to reaffirm that the founding principles and objectives of NAM, inspired by peace, independence, sovereignty, equality and non-interference, remain crucial and relevant in today’s geopolitical landscape where sovereignty has often been breached, interference into internal affairs still prevails and multilateralism is challenged.

Therefore, the members of NAM should stand firm in upholding and defending NAM’s fundamental principles and making our Movement more relevant, united and effective. Towards this end, NAM has to enhance its effort to tackle poverty and underdevelopment, which continue to cripple people in the world and make us a marginalized section of the global population. NAM needs to find the right solution to various current conflicts and regional instability by peaceful means, and alleviate the impact of climate change that entails various current natural calamities across all regions of the world. More importantly, we have to further strengthen our effort,

unity and the forces of NAM in addressing the impact of global health crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and ensuring that our Movement can play a significant role in all areas of international affairs including in the United Nations, taking into account legitimate interests and needs of NAM members, especially those less developed ones.

Mr. Chairman,

As the international community commemorates the 75th anniversary of the United Nations and reflects many significant achievements and challenges over the past seven decades, we are of the view that the United Nations should be reformed and strengthened to fit the current global landscape so it can effectively fulfill its mandates in maintaining international peace and security as well as promoting international cooperation for sustainable development. In this regard, NAM should further enhance its active role to ensure the renewed commitment by the international community to uphold and defend the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and international law and make the UN relevant to all.

Mr. Chairman,

The world is currently facing the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, which poses immediate and long-term challenges for us to respond and recover from its impact on economic and social development as well as the livelihood of people. All this has threatened to revert our hard-earned progress in poverty eradication and SDGs and exacerbated the existing vulnerability and multiple challenges faced prior to COVID-19. Therefore, it requires a global response based on unity, solidarity and renewed multilateral cooperation to jointly contain the pandemic and implement appropriate preventive measures. In the Lao PDR, we have adopted early preventive measures that help us put COVID-19 relatively under control. This achievement is partly due to the cooperation and assistance provided by our friendly countries and international organizations to which we express our sincere gratitude.

In this connection, my delegation expresses our sincere appreciation to the Republic of Azerbaijan under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, for its able chairmanship of NAM and for COVID-19 related initiatives, including the convening of the thirty-first special session of the United Nations General Assembly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the Online Summit-level Meeting of the NAM Contact Group. In this regard, we hope that NAM would be able to help promote and ensure equitable and affordable global access to medicines, vaccines and medical equipment needed to face COVID-19.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating our full support and cooperation to NAM, and our commitment to uphold the founding principles and objectives of our Movement, and multilateralism under the flag of the United Nations.

Thank you