



**Lao People's Democratic Republic**

**Statement**

**by**

**by H.E. Sommad PHOLSENA**

**Minister of Natural Resources and Environment**

**at the Summit on Biodiversity**

**30 September 2020**

**(Please check against delivery)**

**Mr. President,  
Secretary-General Antonio Guterres,  
Excellencies, ladies, and gentlemen,**

At the outset, we would like to express our sincere appreciation to the UN for convening this important Summit on Biodiversity during this challenging time. Which is a great opportunity for all nations to recommit ourselves for the future of our world.

This important Summit is taking place at the time when we are moving towards the end of the UN Decade on Biodiversity 2011-2020. We have also embarked on the Decade of Action and Delivery for Sustainable Development. Over the decades, we have seen many outstanding achievements and progress made by member states, despite the progress achieved in the biodiversity target. The biodiversity loss has been increasing, which led to a fragile ecosystem and thus hindering the achievement of the 2030 Agenda.

**Mr. President,**

The Lao PDR possesses a great range of biodiversity in Southeast Asia and has an abundance of forest and water resources. As a State party to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) since 1996, the Government of the Lao PDR attaches great importance to the protection of biodiversity. In this regard, the country has committed to developing National Reports to the Convention and establishing National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan, and BioTrade programme, with objectives to maintain biodiversity as a key to poverty eradication. As a result, several progresses have been made, for instance, the National Protected Areas (NPAs) now cover 14.2% of the country's area, while the coverage of protected areas increases to

around 20.2% if the provincial and district protected areas are included.

Our Government has been quick to realize the need to protect the country's biodiversity, including its iconic wildlife species. It has established a comprehensive national protected area system and enacted laws, decrees, directives, and regulations on the management of forest, aquatic, and wildlife resources across the country. The forest cover will be reached 70% of the total land area in the near future, and now we are strengthening the enforcement of those laws and regulations, including the Prime Minister Order Number 15 on the enforcing banning of logs/timbers exportation for the protection and conservation of the forest. In addition, the government has promoted public awareness, education, and community involvement in the conservation of biodiversity and environmental protection.

**Mr. President,**

In conclusion, I wish to emphasize that ownership is very important, but the partnership is also critical to achieving the protection of biodiversity and our planet. Therefore, the Lao PDR is ready to cooperate with the international community in order to preserve the biodiversity and fulfill the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development.

I thank you