



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement

By

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Prime Minister of the Lao PDR

At the 31st Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly
On the COVID-19 Pandemic

New York
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Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen

1. At the outset, I would like to congratulate Mr. Chair and the Republic of Azerbaijan, as Chair of Non-Aligned Movement, for its initiative to convene this 31st Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. President,

2. Currently, the New Corona Virus or COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose significant threats on health and lives of millions of people in every corner of the world. The number of infections have significantly increased day by day, showing no sign of abatement, and claimed lives of more than one million people worldwide. This is the unprecedented global health crisis that brought huge impacts and threats on people's livelihood as well as on socio-economic development and security of countries around the world, both in the immediate and long terms effect.
3. For Lao PDR, the Government has early undertaken strict preventive measures against COVID-19, such as the establishment of coordination mechanism for prevention, control and response to COVID-19 pandemic and lockdown the country since March to restrict individuals' entry and exit as well as the movement within the country.
4. Through the implementation of those preventive measures, we have been able to successfully contain the outbreak at a certain level with the number of infections at the manageable ones and no fatality. Later on, the Government has gradually eased the preventive measures to reduce the impact on the economy, while continuing to retain necessary measures, including 14-day-quarantine requirement for those travelers from abroad to prevent and contain COVID-19 in the Lao PDR. We also continue to apply other strict medical measures with extended support and assistance from friendly countries and international organizations, all of which have led to initial success as mentioned above.

Mr. President,

5. The COVID-19 pandemic has seriously affected the socio-economic development objectives of the Lao PDR and worsened the existing vulnerability of the country. It has put greater challenges to the realization of the 2030 Agenda and the implementation of Sustainable Development

Goals, and also disrupted and slow down the progress towards the smooth graduation from the LDC status.

Mr. President,

6. Lao PDR has a firm conviction that the development and distribution of the COVID-19 vaccines is one of the decisive factors in response to the pandemic. The most important thing, it calls for vaccines as global property and goods that are accessible for all without any discrimination. In this regard, I strongly urge the international community to promote “vaccine multilateralism” or COVAX, to ensure that COVID-19 vaccine is a global common public goods for all countries.

Mr. President,

7. I wish to conclude that it is now more important than ever to uphold the multilateral cooperation. In this unprecedented situation, we need to continue working closely, making bold decision and carrying out concerted actions. If we can do so, we will be able to address global challenges and safeguard our future.
8. Lao PDR stands ready to cooperate with the international community to find ways to mitigate the economic impacts of the current and post COVID-19 pandemic. Taking this opportunity, I would also like to extend my sincere thanks to the development partners, UN system entities, international organizations and INGOs for their continued support and assistance accorded to the Lao PDR in order to overcome this challenge and to build back better.

Thank you