



**Statement by**

**His Excellency Thongloun SISOULITH,**

**President of the Lao People's Democratic Republic**

**At the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the G77  
and China on “Current Development Challenges: The Role of  
Science, Technology and Innovation”**

**15 September 2023, Havana, Cuba**

**(Please check against delivery)**

**Mr. President,**

At the outset, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba for the gracious hospitality extended to my delegation. I would also like to congratulate Cuba for the excellent arrangements for hosting this Summit of G77 and China.

**Mr. President,**

For 6 decades since its inception in 1964, the Group of 77 and China, which accounts for two-third of all United Nations member states, has become the largest and forceful coordinating mechanism of developing countries to promote and protect the collective socio-economic interests of the Group within the United Nations. The Group has played a crucial role in charting out and enhancing regional and international policy measures to safeguard the legitimate interests of developing countries globally. At a time when the international community are encountering multi-faceted and emerging challenges, the Group must strengthen our role and solidarity and unity so as to further advance our cause and the legitimate interests of developing countries, including the implementation of the SDGs, the reform of international financial architecture, taking into account the benefits of developing countries and continue the call for the fulfilment of the obligation and commitment pledged by the developed nations.

**Mr. President,**

As we approach midpoint of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, many countries, particularly developing countries are experiencing economic stagnation, which has hampered the progress made and the momentum gained in attaining the SDGs. In this light, developing countries must seek innovative ways and means to ensure sustainable recovery from socio-economic impacts caused by multiple crises, while further enhance our collective strength and resilience, properly utilize science, technology and innovation including advanced information and communication technology to transform and accelerate

progress and achievement in the implementation of internationally agreed development goals including the SDGs as scheduled.

The Government of the Lao PDR has attached great importance to the role of science, technology and innovation and their implication for overcoming the ongoing challenges and advancing the country's national development agenda in moving towards green growth and digital economy. In this connection, the Lao PDR has adopted its National Digital Economy Development Vision and Strategy. Towards this end, our country has continued to enhance closer cooperation and collaboration with international organizations and countries in the region in order to share best practices and promote technology transfer including through South-South Cooperation and regional framework such as ASEAN, among others.

Nevertheless, continued support and cooperation remain crucial in the field of science, technology and innovation, especially in developing related infrastructure and human resource capacity. In this regard, the Lao PDR is of the view that strengthening South-South and Triangular Cooperation will provide ample opportunities and bring about mutual benefits for all and this could be done through sharing of best practices, lessons learnt and transfer of technical and technological know-how in accordance with the actual need and circumstances in each country as well as increasing investment in research and development of science, technology and innovation. All this will make important contribution to further enhancing the capacity in technology and innovation for advancing sustainable development in all countries.

On this note, the Lao PDR wishes to propose that our Group continues to strengthen the cooperation mechanism and initiatives aimed at enhancing capacity and mutual support in the area of research, development and application of science, technology and innovation as forceful engine for advancing sustainable development in a more tangible manner.

**Mr. President,**

Today, we are witnessing increasing unilateral coercive measures and protectionism being imposed, all of which have undermined multilateral trading system. At the same time, developing countries strive to maintain preferential treatments in international trading system to support our national development efforts. In this regard, we continue to call for an immediate lifting of economic embargo against the Republic of Cuba, a sovereign UN member state, and we firmly believe that sanctions can only lead to severe damage and negative impacts to the innocent people and create more division among countries.

**Mr. President,**

I would like to conclude by reaffirming the Lao PDR's firm commitment to strengthening solidarity and cooperation with all members of the Group of 77 and China in addressing the pertinent challenges and striving to attain the SDGs. The Lao PDR stands ready to promote closer cooperation with all countries to ensure sustainable development and the well-being of our peoples. I wish this Summit a very constructive and fruitful outcome. Thank you.