



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by

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Madam Chairperson,

It is a great honor for me to represent the Lao Government at the 63rd session of the CSW, the theme of which is in line with the development policy and priorities of our country.

The Lao PDR aligns itself with the statements delivered by the distinguished representatives of the State of Palestine and Thailand on behalf of G77 and China and ASEAN, respectively.

Madam Chairperson,

The Lao Government attaches great importance to the social protection systems, access to public services and sustainable infrastructure for gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls as they are integral to achieving the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Over the past years, we have made progress in our effort to promote gender equality and empowerment of women through the implementation of the National Strategy for Gender Equality, the Strategic Development Plan for Lao Women and National Strategy for Mother and Child. This includes the conduct of various activities such as skill training on different disciplines for women living in poverty, the campaign for women to set up Village Saving Schemes and Collective Fund to provide credit for women. All of this has provided opportunities, resources and skills for women to get employment and generate income, develop their family economy, support education and eventually eradicate poverty.

Given the importance of the universal access to health care, the Lao Government with support of the World Health Organization and other UN agencies are implementing the Decree on the National Health Insurance including the provision of free maternal and child health services. In addition, the Lao Government has implemented the Law on Civil Servants which, among others, increases maternity leave period from 3 to 5 months, and the State Budget Law, which indicates responsibilities of all sectors and local governments to have gender budgeting plan.

Madame Chairperson,

The social protection schemes in our country are mainly in the form of child grants, employment schemes and old age pensions which have also benefited women and girls in terms of reducing financial burdens at the household level while serving as tools by the government to support the reduction of poverty and economic inequality more broadly, and thus making significant contribution to reducing gender inequality.

Currently, the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is in the process of drafting the National Social Protection Strategy. In addition, Law on Gender Equality to provide legal frameworks for the development of a national social protection floor and gender equality is being drafted. All of the above, will pave the way for providing all the Lao people with a better life and increased social, economic and human development prospects.

Notwithstanding the progress made, much more needs to be done as we face various challenges stemming from being a least developed and landlocked country. Therefore, we are of the view that it is crucial to have sufficient support financially and technically for the implementation of the above vision, strategy and plan of action for promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls. In this regard, we call for enhanced partnership from the international community so as to help realize our goal of sustainable development where gender equality and women empowerment are promoted.

Thank you