

Statement by
H.E. Mr. Sithong CHITNHOTHINH, Ambassador, Resident
Representative, Head of Lao Delegation
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Madam President,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the 63rd Session of the IAEA General Conference. I am confident that with your wealth of experience you will guide us towards a successful conclusion. Please rest assured of my delegation's full support in the discharge of your duty.

May I join other delegations in expressing our deep condolences on the passing away of the late Director General of IAEA, Ambassador Yukiya Amano in July this year. His legacy under the motto of "Atoms for Peace and Development" will remain an integral part of the Organization as we continue to promote the application of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes in a safe and security manner towards sustainable development.

Madam President,

Over the past years, peaceful uses of nuclear technology have been contributed greatly to the socio-economic development of many countries. The application of nuclear science and technology is even more on the rise, thus creating risks and challenges for the IAEA to effectively perform its mandates. On this note, the cooperation in good faith from member states

is the key in promoting and facilitating the peaceful uses of nuclear energy that ensured safety, security and safeguards.

In this regard, let me highlight some of our significant achievements in cooperating with the IAEA. Lao PDR joined IAEA in 2011 and we have the first CPF 2014-2018 of which it has just been successfully implemented. Under this CPF a total of 12 TC projects have been carried out and Lao PDR has been benefited greatly, particularly the provision of necessary laboratory equipment and human resource development. In health sector, radiotherapy has been introduced in my country not long ago. We are grateful to the IAEA for providing support to my country in addressing the challenge we are facing the insufficiency of qualified human resource in this sector.

During the first CPF, more than 200 participants from Lao PDR participated in various workshops, trainings, seminars and scientific visits organized by the IAEA. To further enhance our technical cooperation with IAEA, we are now finalizing the new CPF 2019-2024 between the Lao PDR and the IAEA that will lay a good platform for our future cooperation.

We have also benefited significantly of the expertise and advice from the IAEA during the drafting process of our Law on Radiation Protection and Safety of which it was promulgated at the beginning of this year. This is a major milestone achievement and a good foundation for a step forward for the work on safe management of the application of nuclear science and technology in my country. Under this law, we are now under the process of establishing a National Regulatory Authority on radiation and nuclear safety and security.

Madam President,

Lao PDR believes that the cooperation in the region will significantly complement the successful work of the Agency in driving to achieve our common objectives. Hence, we take the good opportunity of attending this Conference to sign the Practical Arrangements on Cooperation between ASEAN and IAEA in the areas of Nuclear Science and Technology and Applications, Nuclear Safety, Security and Safeguards. Apart from this, there is also a signing of “Practical Arrangements between IAEA-Lao PDR-Vietnam on Triangular Cooperation for Enhancing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries and Strengthening South-South Cooperation” which is focused on educational scientific research, development and training programme of radiation applications in food and agriculture, radiation and nuclear safety, regulatory infrastructure and radiation medicine to strengthen the national capacity and cooperation among the countries in the region.

Lao PDR also supports and benefits from the RCA. On this note, we will continue to actively participate in this cooperation framework.

Madam President,

Lao PDR has a firm support for the world free of Nuclear Weapons. We hold the view that the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of WMD, in particular, nuclear weapons is their total elimination. Therefore, Lao PDR signed the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in September 2017 and we are planning to ratify the treaty during this year UN Treaty Event in New York.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of the Government of the Lao PDR, to express our sincere thanks and deep appreciations to the Agency for the continued support and assistance provided to us. Lao PDR will continue to collaborate with the Agency to contribute to the global nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and we believe that political will to work together in good faith is a key to the success.

I thank you Madam President.