



Statement by H.E. Maythong THAMMAVONGSA,
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Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR, Head of Delegation to the IAEA
International Conference on Nuclear Security
10-11 February 2020

Co-Presidents,

Director-General of the IAEA,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

1. At the outset, the Lao delegation would like to commend the IAEA and the Co-Presidents for their work in preparing and organizing the 2020 International Conference on Nuclear Security. Please allow me to congratulate H.E. Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi for his new assignment as a Director General of the IAEA. My delegation re-affirms that the Lao PDR stands ready to support the DG in fulfilling his mandate and the functions of the IAEA.
2. My delegation also congratulates the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration which sets political commitments and priorities aimed at strengthening nuclear security. We hope that through the realization of the declaration adopted today, the nuclear security regime will be further strengthened globally.

Mr. Co-Presidents,

3. The Lao PDR currently neither has nuclear facilities nor nuclear material. Nonetheless, like many other developing countries, we have a very small amount of radioactive sources being used for educational and development purposes such as in medical, industrial, agricultural or research sectors. The Lao PDR fully supports the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology, and the

numerous benefits derived from nuclear applications, but also the equal access to it by all States. My country is also a strong supporter of the global nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime.

4. Despite the absence on its territory of nuclear facilities, the Lao PDR has been prioritizing the strengthening of efforts towards a comprehensive and sustainable nuclear security regime. This is because my country recognizes the threats posed by malicious non-state actors on the access to nuclear technology, nuclear material and other radioactive materials may be compromised in this globalized environment. In this context, my delegation is of the view that international cooperation should be strengthened and in particular the role of the IAEA in the work of coordination of and support to nuclear security should be further enhanced. My country also supports the implementation of international instruments relevant to nuclear security. Therefore, it has joined the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and is fulfilling its obligations under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540.

Mr. Presidents,

5. In strengthening its national nuclear security framework, the National Assembly of the Lao PDR has promulgated the Law on Radiation Protection and Safety, which lays down the foundation for ensuring the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear science and technology. In order to make further progress on the national nuclear security framework, with the support of the IAEA, the Lao PDR has organized national consultations to establish the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan (INSSP) in 2014 and 2017. It is expected that the Lao PDR will be able to adopt its INSSP in the near future.
6. At the regional level, ASEAN members have been working closely in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy in the region. In this regard, I would like to welcome the recent signature of the Practical Arrangements between ASEAN and the IAEA to promote regional cooperation in nuclear science and technology, applications, nuclear safety, security and safeguards. In addition, the ASEAN Network of Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy or ASEANTOM continuously exchanges experiences with the IAEA on a wide range of topics at a regional level, including on emergency preparedness and response in the case of a nuclear or

radiological emergency. Overall, these initiatives have played a significant role in increasing awareness and building capacity in nuclear safety, security and safeguards at the regional and national levels.

Mr. Presidents,

7. To conclude, my delegation underscores the importance of strengthening international cooperation to address all challenges pertaining to nuclear security. We reaffirm our support to the IAEA in strengthening the global nuclear security regime and in leading the coordination of the related international activities, including by providing assistance to States in implementing their commitments. We hope that the IAEA and development partners will continue to support the Lao PDR in this regard.

Thank you.