

Draft Opening Remarks - UN Resident Coordinator, a.i.

SWG and SSWG Chairs and Co-Chairs Meeting

Thursday 29 June 2017, 2-4 pm at MPI Conference Hall (6th Floor)

4.5 minutes at medium speed

Excellency Dr. Kikeo Chanthaboury, Vice-Minister of Planning and Investment,

Excellencies Chairs and Co-Chairs of the Sector Working Groups,

Esteemed Ambassadors and Representatives of development partners, civil society and private sector,

Distinguished colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

- As United Nations Resident Coordinator ad interim, it is my great pleasure to co-chair this meeting.
- Today, we take stock of the progress achieved since the Round Table Meeting in November 2016, and prepare for this year's Round Table Meeting, which - as in the previous years - is expected to take place in November.
- The feedback received by both the Government and its partners on the last Round Table Meeting was resoundingly positive. Among other things, participants appreciated:
 - The frank and open dialog and the inclusiveness of all partners in development, ensuring all voices are heard;
 - The pre-consultations and the panel discussions, that focused our attention on priority development issues; and
 - The field visits that grounded our discussions in the reality outside the capital.

- After the Round Table Meeting, His Excellency the Prime Minister issued an instruction to line ministries and provinces to implement the outcomes and recommendations from the meeting. This highlights the importance of our dialogue.
- At the same time, I would like to support the important the remarks made by Dr. Kikeo. We need to improve our focus on joint results - across partners, across sectors, and across provinces. We need to reduce fragmentation and enhance synergies to make better use of the limited resources available. This is a call to action for us, the development partners, as well as for the Government, to improve our coordination, to strengthen the Sector Working Groups and the various other inter-sectoral bodies, and to better link up at the local level. As in previous years, the sectoral progress reports will provide the opportunity to highlight joint successes as well as obstacles, challenges and lessons learned.
- We have also received the feedback that we need a better online platform, to improve information-sharing. An improved Round Table website will soon be launched.
- And we have received reactions on the timeliness of the pre-consultations, which in the last year were packed into the three weeks leading up to the Round Table Meeting. Ideally we would plan further in advance this year.

Esteemed ladies and gentlemen,

- In addition to hearing your views on the venue, one key question we would like to consult today is the thematic focus of the Round Table Meeting. Your feedback on the four priority areas suggested by the Government, based on prior consultations, would be appreciated. These four priority areas are:
 - LDC gradation and SDG Integration;
 - Realizing quality private sector investment for development;

- Investment in skills for human development; and
 - South-south cooperation and triangular cooperation, in particular ASEAN engagement in the Round Table Process.
- I look forward to an interesting discussion, and a frank exchange of views on these and other points. I am convinced
 - that together we further improve the Round Table Process;
 - that together we will make the coming meeting an equal success; and
 - that together we will continue to accelerate sustainable human development in Lao PDR.
- Thank you for your attention.