



## **Press Conference to announce the proceedings for the 11<sup>th</sup> High-level Round Table Meeting**

*13 November 2013, Vientiane* - This year's Round Table Meeting will bring together the Government of Lao PDR and its national and international development partners from more than 37 countries and 35 development agencies.

Media were briefed on the proceedings of the upcoming Meeting by H.E. Mr. Somchith Inthamith, Deputy Minister of Planning and Investment and H.E. Mr. Minh Pham, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative at a press conference today, held at the Lao Journalists' Association.

The 11<sup>th</sup> High-Level Round Table Meeting, which will take place on 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at the National Conference Center, aims to provide a forum to further strengthen the cooperation between the Government of Lao PDR and Development Partners and to promote partnerships for effective development results.

The meeting, to be organized under an overall theme "Accelerating MDG Achievement and Inclusive Development", will be opened by H.E. Mr. Thongsing Thammavong, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR, The meeting will be chaired by H.E. Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister and co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Haoliang Xu, the UNDP Assistant Administrator and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific.

Up to 400 participants, including representatives from the Government (Line Ministries and Provinces), Development Partners, as well as the National Assembly, Civil Society and Private Sector are expected to attend the meeting.

During the various sessions of the meeting, the participants will be briefed on Lao PDR's current development status based on the recent Mid Term Review of the 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2011-2015) and the MDG Progress Report launched in September 2013. The meeting is expected to create high quality policy dialogue and facilitate a mutual understanding of the key priorities for the remaining of the current Plan. In addition, the Meeting outcomes are expected to contribute to the formulation of the next five years plan, the country's development agenda beyond the 2015, as well as for the Least Developed Country (LDC) graduation by 2020.

The meeting will be followed by a courtesy visit by a delegation of development partners to H.E. Mr. Choummaly Sayasone, the President of Lao PDR on 20<sup>th</sup> of November to brief him on the results of the meeting.

On 20<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup> November, the Round Table participants will visit Luang Prabang province to observe development initiatives that are addressing off track Millennium Development Goals. These will include MDG1: Eradicate Extreme poverty and hunger, as well as MDG9: Reduce the impact of UXO, which is a localized and unique MDG for Lao PDR.

As part of the Round Table Meeting, the Ministry of Planning and Investment in collaboration with Development Partners through the Sector Working Groups will organize a Development exhibition, including an MDG photo exhibition, on 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at the National Convention Center. The exhibition will be opened on 18<sup>th</sup> November at 10am by H.E Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs. After the official opening ceremony, the Exhibition will remain open for general public for one day. On 19<sup>th</sup> November it will be restricted to RTM participants only.

### Background information

Lao PDR has participated since 1983 in the Round Table Process, which is implemented by the Government of Lao PDR facilitated by Ministry of Planning and Investment, Department of International Cooperation, and supported by UNDP. The Process comprises Round Table Meetings organized every three years to review plans, strategies and programmes and commitments from the Development Community, while annual Round Table Implementation Meetings review achievements and recommend further actions. The key driver of the process also includes the Sector Working Group which is the mechanism that facilitates and coordinates the exchange of ideas, discussion and support at sectoral level.

Over the year, various activities and consultations have been carried out in preparation for the 11<sup>th</sup> Round Table Meeting. Some key events include:

- Retreat organized early 2013 among government agencies, DPs and other related stakeholders to identify the 11<sup>th</sup> RTM themes and necessary milestones
- Series of consultations among the 10 Sector Working Groups (SWGs)
- Round Table Provincial Consultation took place in June 2013 in Luang Namtha Province to help government officials and development partners to gain a better understanding of the challenges and causes driving food and nutrition security at the local level
- The National Steering Committee (NSC) on the Round Table Process met on 3<sup>rd</sup> November to provide guidance for the RTM preparation and again on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2013 to review the progress of RTM preparation
- In order to strengthen the friendship and harmony between the Government and development community, the Ministry organized a football match between Government officials and development partners on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013 at 15:00 at the Chao Anouvong Stadium.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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