

Closing Remarks of His Excellency, Mr. Somdy Douangdy
Minister of Planning and Investment
2012 Round Table Implementation Meeting
Don Chan Palace, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR
23 November 2012

- Mr. Minh Pham, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative
- Excellencies, Ministers, Provincial Governors, Diplomatic Corps and Head of Delegations
- Distinguished Guests
- Ladies and Gentlemen

The meeting today was conducted in a fruitful and lively atmosphere with better understandings among stakeholders on common development agenda in Laos and as recently highlighted by Mr. Minh Pham, my co-chair, in principle, I fully agreed with his conclusion. In this regard, on behalf of the government of Laos, I am honored and pleased to close the meeting, by expressing our sincere thanks to His Excellency, Dr. Thongloun Sisoulith, Deputy-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs, for the opening remarks of 2012 Round Table Implementation Meeting, which helped guide us in our dialogues throughout the day, namely related to the continued stabilization of macro economic growth, food security, human resource development, support of commercial production activities, increased support and enhancement of small and medium enterprises as well as better management and utilization of the Official Development Assistance in an effective and transparent manner, with positive impacts to target beneficiaries. The suggestions and recommendations are crucial inputs for us to take into account and pay more attentions to the implementation of Official Development Assistance Projects and Programs to achieve the goals and objectives. In this connection, the Official Development Assistance is to support the prioritized projects and programs of the government to achieve the Goals and Objectives of 7th Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan as well as the Millennium Development Goals by 2015.

As the target year 2015 is approaching in the next few years, from now onwards, we will continue to stay focused to deal with the constraints and challenges through the continuing and regular dialogues and cooperation with all development partners at multilateral and bilateral levels in order to achieve the set goals and objectives. In addition, with your constructive comments and strong support and commitments, expressed during this meeting, we will bring up on tables for discussion and consultations among stakeholders at all levels, to identify practical remedies, and ensure that all recommendations are implemented based on actual conditions. Furthermore, we need to increase our own ownership and work harder to jointly implement all programs to achieve the goals. Importantly, we need to capture today's momentum and build on it to develop our future activities to achieve those goals with better and tangible results.

On this auspicious occasion, on behalf of the government of Lao PDR, I would like to express our thanks to the government agencies at all levels and all Development Partners for the hard work, undertaken at each sector from the beginning of this year, in the lead-up to the Annual Round Table Implementation Meeting and today's deliberations.

In addition, I also would like to express sincere thanks and gratitude to all Development Partners for valuable support and contributions, not only today but also throughout the past years as well as those in the future. Your support and contributions have made successes and achievements to the 2012 Round Table Implementation Meeting. Most importantly, may I express our special

thanks and deep appreciation to all development partners, who explicitly announced future supports, that would greatly contribute to the achievement of the 7th NSEDP as well as the Millennium Development Goals by 2015, that will lay foundations for Lao PDR to graduate from the Least Developed Country status by 2020.

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To ensure the transformation from Aid Effectiveness to Development Effectiveness, it is crucial to noted that there are a number of significant dimensions, needing attentions for the development of Lao PDR as follows:

First, it is important that the development is for all Lao multi-ethnic people and all agencies at all levels, where community participation, including women, in the development process is of importance;

Second, it will need to be transparent with good governance in term of the management and utilization of the Official Development Assistance by ensuring that all stakeholders are informed and well-understood on all strategic policy directions, priorities and programmes with better sharing of and access to information through improved communication infrastructures and channels;

Third, it will be necessary to ensure that all resources are effectively utilized with clear benchmarks and indicators for joint monitoring on a regular basis and implementation of sectoral strategies and programmes at all levels;

Fourth, there is a need to continue to improve enabling environments and mechanisms to ensure aid effectiveness; and

Fifth, the government is committed to expand the scopes of work of the Round Table Process, related to its agendas and improved performances with functional aid coordination mechanisms at provincial levels, with more delegation of responsibility to local bodies, which clearly links to the national Round Table Process, namely the work of Sector Working Groups. The implementation of the 5 mentioned areas is in line with the Resolution of the 9th Party Congress, in relation to Four Breakthrough Approaches and locally called Sam Sang in relation to building Province as Strategic Unit, District as Comprehensively Strengthened Unit and Village as the Development One, aiming at defining clearer work division among line agencies at central and local levels, transferring more responsibilities and increasing more involvement and ownership of line agencies in development process, aiming at gradually building capacity of local line agencies.

Finally, I would like to conclude by once again thanking all Government Agencies and Development Partners for the continued support. In particular, I would like to express my gratitude to the UNDP for their significant contributions and assistance in preparation for today's meeting, with special thanks to Mr. Minh Pham, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to Laos, as well as all staff concerned for the support and contributions to this crucial meeting.

Thank you all for being here with us today. I wish you good health, happiness and prosperity. For those who travelled long distances to be here, I wish you a pleasant stay in Laos and a safe journey back home. **I now officially declare this meeting closed. Thank You**