

Opening Remarks
By H.E Mrs. Phonevanh Outhavong
Vice-Minister of Planning and Investment
Meeting with Non-Resident Development Partners for RTIM 2024
26th September 2024

UN Office: from 14:00 – 15:45

Dear:

- **Mr. David McLaughlin-Karr, Regional Director, UN Development Coordination Office**
- **Mr. Bakhodir Burkhanov, UN Resident Coordinator**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed colleagues**

On behalf of Ministry of Planning and Investment as well as the Government of Lao PDR, I would like express my profound thanks to all of you for participating, despite your busy schedule, in this briefing session for Non-resident Development Partners supporting the development of Lao PDR.

Today session provides an opportunity for us to update on a preparation for Round Table Implementation Meeting 2024 and exchange views with our Non-resident Development Partners on key issues that will determine development cooperation contributing to the development of Lao PDR.

The Department of International Cooperation, Ministry of Planning and Investment will update in more details on concept note, the preparation and agenda of the Round Table Implementation Meeting 2024 which has now scheduled to take place on 14th November 2024 and we will keep our development partners informed on the news and any information well ahead of the meeting via Round Table Meeting Website (<https://rtm.org.la/>) and emails.

We are highly committed to ensure the great success of RTIM last year 2023, as 2024 is an important year for our government as the country met the economic difficulties resulted since year 2022 that we were faced new and unexpected shocks due to the ongoing geographical conflict, disaster and rapidly increasing prices for our basis needs like food, fuel, fertilizer, and so on and a tightening financing situation which led to a severe increase in the cost of living in the country like other parts around the world. As well as it is a year that we implementing recommendation on the Mid-Term Review of 9th NSEDP 2021-2025.

We need to put all efforts toward mitigating the negative impacts of current shocks and disasters on our people especially in the Lao PDR and to better equip our national to be resilient to future challenges. At the same time, we will continue to work with our partners to address various challenges and bottlenecks we have been encountering, for instance:

- Ensuring political stability, peace and social order to creating favorable conditions for development;
- Ensuring continuation of national economic growth with peace, stability and sustainability;
- Human resource development, focusing on the improvement of education and health service quality and quantity, developing labour skill that is fundamental to achieve SDGs and the LDC graduation;
- Rural development and poverty eradication;
- Promoting investment in commercial production and export to strongly promote domestic and foreign investment policies;
- Increasing effectiveness, simplicity, justice and transparency of public administration and local authority through enhancing the rule of law mechanism;
- Environment protection and natural resources are effectively protected and utilized according to sustainable principles; and
- Implementing policy on increasing regional and international cooperation and integration.

Keeping these in mind, the RTIM 2024 is an important platform to discuss with our partners on key achievements made so far, identify lessons learnt and challenges and discuss the need to further enhance partnership and effective development cooperation to accelerate efforts or adjust programmes to achieve the desired targets in the remaining period of the 9th NSEDP (2021-2025).

It also gives us an opportunity to identify and draw upon lessons learnt to gain valuable insights and formulate recommendations for implementation the National Strategies such as:

- ✚ The formulation of the 10th NSEDP (2026-2030): Currently the Government (MPI) is in the process of formulation of the 10th NSEDP (2026-2030) in this draft there are 6 goals: (1) The economy is continuously growing, strong and stable; (2) Quality human resources and use of modern technology; (3) Enhanced well-being of the people, the society is livable; (4) Preservation of natural resources and environment; (5) Effective state management and administration, stable politics and peaceful and orderly; and (6) Regional and International Link and Efficiencies.

- In term of consultation process, we will organize pre-consultation meeting on the draft of 10th NSEDP 2026-2030, incorporating inputs from various consultations with line ministries, local government agencies, Development Partners and multiple stakeholders including academia, official think tanks, and business associations;
- ✚ The results of the 3rd Voluntary National Review (VNR3): we submitted the final version and presented to the 2024 High Level Political Forum (HLPF) in NY, USA; and prepare to publish the report;
- ✚ The progress of implementation the Lao PDR Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC Graduation (2022-2026 with a Vision to 2030) and Beyond:
 - Disseminate and raise awareness and understanding about the Lao PDR's LDC graduation;
 - Mobilization of international support and ODA, including access to LDC International Support Measures (ISM) on financing for development, social sectors, trade facilitation, climate change, digitalization, infrastructure development;
 - Coordinate with UN Agencies and Partners to closely review the Lao PDR's development trajectory though the Enhance Monitoring Mechanism; and Urgently implement and integrate, and monitor the STS.
- ✚ Population and Housing Census 2025: Reliable statistics and a strong data governance system are key to ensuring evidence-informed National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP) and its subsequent monitoring and evaluation. In this regard, the Government of Lao PDR, in partnership with UNFPA, is preparing for the 5th and 1st ever digital Population and Housing Census in 2025. The Census will serve as an essential source of data for tracking and monitoring of the 10th NSEDP as well as SDGs. Up to 107 of the 247 indicators of the SDGs require population data for monitoring progress

This briefing session is a good opportunity for the Government of Lao PDR and our Non-resident Development Partners to commitment our development and find ways for strengthening our development cooperation for greater benefits of our nation and partners.

I would like to acknowledge with full appreciation that our development partners are a strong advocate for development effectiveness and as such actively participates in the Round Table Process. The support from all development partners is important for the development of our countries as sustainable development means exchange of skills,

technologies and other related policies which are suitable for the future of the Lao PDR.

Before I end my remarks, I would like to stress that the in-country Round Table Process has now been underway for 26 years. Since then, under the leadership of the Government of Lao PDR, we've seen the active participation of all stakeholders across government ministries and provincial authorities, development partners and other stakeholders including private sector, civil society and other to better coordinate our joint efforts across the country. I am looking forward to active participation and constructive dialogues for achievement of our national development goals as specified in the 9th NSEDP (2021-2025) including SDGs and LDC graduation and also developing the 10th NSEDP (2026-2030).

I will end my remarks here and look forward to our fruitful discussion bringing great values to enrich our partnerships and cooperation. On behalf of the Government of Lao PDR and Lao people in general, please allow me to express our gratitude and thank you for your on-going collaboration and kind assistance to Lao PDR. Your continued support will certainly enhance our government's efforts for the achievement of our national development goals including SDGs – most importantly, the graduation from the LDC status in the near future.

For more information you access to RTP official Website by this link: <https://rtm.org.la/>

Once again, thank you very much.