

Speaking Note
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Hanoi, Vietnam
11-12 Feb 2025

- **H.E. Mrs. Phonevanh Outhavong, Vice-Minister of MPI**
- **H.E. Ambassadors**
- **Mr. Bukhodir BERKHANOV, UN Resident Coordinator to Lao PDR**
- **Ladies and Gentlemen, esteemed colleagues**

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- On behalf of Round Table Process Secretariat, Department of International Cooperation/Ministry of Planning and Investment, it is my great honor and pleasure to meet with you and debrief on the **outcomes of the Round Table Implementation Meeting 2024**.
 - Today is a very good time to collectively inform and consult with you for the concept note of upcoming the 2025 HL-RTM is expected to be held on November 2025.

The outcomes of the Round Table Implementation Meeting 2024

- We would like to let you know on the **efforts of the MPI** in ensuring that the Round Table Process continues to be a rich and insightful engagement. The RTIM once again achieved this goal.
- 2024 was **an important year for the country**. I would like to share with you on the success of the year-long ASEAN Chairmanship. International partners rallied behind Laos' role as Chair, in solidarity with the goals of the ASEAN Community and our collective commitment to Lao PDR's success. The Government started the process of developing the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan, which will run through to the 2030 deadline for achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. And Lao PDR submitted its third Voluntary National Review (VNR) on the implementation of SDGs during the year.
- The country is also approaching the anticipated date for **LDC graduation**, with the UN Committee for Development Policy completing Lao PDR's triannual review in 2024 and confirming that the country continues to meet the essential graduation criteria. Excellency Prime Minister, you raised this important point during your meeting with the UN Secretary-General in October. Following your request, the UN System and our partners have begun work to better understand

the consequences of graduation in close concert with our Government counterparts. More work lies ahead on the implementation of the Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC graduation, which requires continued steer from the Government under the leadership of the Prime Minister's Office to coordinate efforts across sectors, ministries and institutions.

- With these points in mind, allow me to structure my **summary of the Roundtable Meeting** in two parts:

First, with regards to **the implementation of the 9th NSEDP**:

- We note that **continued macroeconomic imbalances** weighed on the achievement of targets under the 9th NSEDP, though sustained economic growth in 2024 saw targets for employment perform relatively better.
- In this context, the strategic direction for 2025 under the 9th NSEDP to focus on **high-quality human resources, addressing rural development and poverty, and conserving natural resources** is a welcome development, directing the efforts of policymakers towards those most at risk of being left behind.
- The RTIM discussions on **sustainable financing of development priorities** highlighted the need for improved macroeconomic management, stronger public-private sector collaboration, and targeted policy actions to boost sustainable and green growth.
- Once again, RTIM renewed the call to reverse the **declining trend in budget allocations for health and education**, threatening to undermine efforts to promote human capital development. It was stressed that these allocations are not sunk costs; they are crucial for a healthy, educated and empowered population, which in turn is a bedrock of a competitive economy
- On **education**, recommendations focused on promoting education and lifelong learning; expanding more equitable access through scholarships, community-based programmes for 5-year-old children and learning support for non-Lao-Tai children; increasing teacher quota and upgrading teacher education policy and training. Further ideas include exploring two streams in upper secondary education, and reassigning surplus secondary teachers to primary schools with targeted training.
- The RTIM stressed the connectivity of education and **employment** for Lao PDR's sustainable growth, with proposed measures such as supporting jobseekers with training and skills development to meet the needs of the evolving labor market, including improvement in the quality and relevance of TVET.
- On **health**, recommendation included a stronger focus on equitable access to essential health services, and reduction of malnutrition and non-communicable diseases. Proposed measures include strategically investing in a prioritized package of cost-effective nutrition interventions across sectors, including health, agriculture, education and social protection; improving strategic donor transitions in view of LDC graduation while

increasing domestic resources including through health taxes; and adopting public-private approaches for better nutrition and health outcomes.

Let me now move to the second set of RTIM outcomes regarding the **10th NSEDP**, and cite some reflections from the development partners.

- The 10th NSEDP cycle will start in 2026, the year that Lao PDR is scheduled to graduate from LDC status. The period of the 10th NSEDP would therefore coincide with the LDC transition period. The 10th Plan could therefore align its overall direction to reflect this milestone, and reflect the opportunity this transition brings to set ambitions for more domestically-driven reform and development. The Plan will also end in 2030, which coincides with the deadline for the 2030 Agenda, presenting a final opportunity to get as close as possible to fulfilling the country's SDG aspirations.
- The draft NSEDP is a long and detailed document. This makes it challenging for decision-makers to use it as a practical reference document to guide decisions. Simplifying, clarifying and shortening the document could help bring out the priorities, and support improved understanding amongst stakeholders who will implement it. As the apex planning document, the NSEDP need only set out the broad framework; details can be included in corresponding sector and sub-national plans.

2025 High-Level Round Table Meeting

- **Theme:**

`` **Enhanced Partnership for Effective Implementation of the 10th National Socio-Economic Development Plan – Achieving SDGs and the LDC Graduation by 2026**``

- **Objective:**

The HL-RTM provide inclusive forums to discuss the final assessment of the 9th NSEDP (2021-2025), the finalization of a next NSEDP (2026-2030) and means of the implementation. The results of a HL-RTM are reported to the Prime Minister and the President. It will be pursued through the following specific objectives:

Pilar #1: Review 9th NSEDP and consult on the drafting of 10th NSEDP

- **Conclusion on National Socio-Economic Development Plan 2024 and Plan for 2025 and Draft of the 10th NSEDP (2026-2030).**

Pilar #2: LDC Graduation 2026

- **The Lao PDR's Progress toward LDC Graduation and Outcomes of the Participation in the Summit of the Future in New York**

Pilar #3: Further enhance effective development Cooperation

- Follow up Action on the progress of development cooperation (The 4th Global Partnership Monitoring Round of Global Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation and adaptation of Vientiane Declaration on Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2026-2030) Review.

- **Format:** One full day meeting with parallel panel discussion and pre-consultation Meeting
 Date: Second Half of November 2025
 Venue: Hotel or National Convention Center, Vientiane Capital
 Format: 1 full-day meeting (including 2 panel discussions)
 Official Opening: **Official Opening Keynote Address:** H.E Sonexay Siphandone, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR, and **Keynote Address:** UNDP Administrator and Chair of the UN Development Group
 Co-Chairs: Deputy Prime Minister and UN Assistant Secretary-General, UNDP Assistant Administrator and Regional Director of UNDP Bureau for Asia and the Pacific

- **Participants:**
 Invitations will be extended to:
 - Ministers from all Line Ministries, Secretary General of National Assembly, President of Standing Committee of National Assembly;
 - Governors from 17 provinces and Vientiane Capital;
 - Ambassadors and Embassies accredited to Lao PDR (Residents and Non-Residents);
 - High Level delegates from HQ of Development Partners
 - UN agencies, Representatives of Development Partners and international organizations;
 - Director Generals/Deputy Director Generals;
 - Directors of Planning and Investment of Provinces and Heads of International Cooperation Section;
 - President of INGOs Network, NPAs and CSOs;
 - President of the private sector (LNCCI).

- **Related document:**
 - Concept Note
 - Background Document;
 - Logistic Note
 - Report on the Progress of Implementation of the 9th NSEDP (2021-2025) and the 10th NSEDP (2026-2030);
 - The Lao PDR Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC Graduation in 2026 and beyond;
 - Report on the Implementation of ODA in 2025;
 - Report on the progress of the Vientiane Declaration on the Partnership for Effective Development Cooperation (2016-2025) and Draft of Vientiane Declaration (2026-2035);
 - Consolidated SWG Progress Reports;

– Other documents.

Finally

- My appreciation is also extended to Ambassadors for continues support to the Round Table Process and will attend HL-RTM 2025.
- I, on behalf of Round Table Process Secretariat, Department of International Cooperation/Ministry of Planning and Investment, would like sincere thanks to H.E.....to supported this meeting. I hope that, this 2025 HL-Round Table Meeting will identify various key important elements for further strengthening our partnership for the benefit of Lao PDR.

Thank you very much.