

Intervention by:

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Agenda item 3: Special Body on Least Developed Countries, Landlocked  
Developing Countries and Pacific Island Developing Countries

At the 78th Session of the UNESCAP, 25 May 2022, 14:00-16:00.

Mr. Chair,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of the Lao Delegation, I would like to commend UNESCAP for the comprehensive preparation Summary of the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2022 on Financing a Sustainable Recovery from COVID-19 and Beyond, which is timely and relevant to our current situation. My delegation concurs with the main findings, and taking this opportunity, allow me to share some of our views in this regard.

Mr. Chair

Lao PDR has been recommended to graduate from LDC category in 2026. Graduating from LDC status has always been an ambitious goal for the Lao government. Towards this end, since early 2000, our National Social-Economic Development Plans have outlined specific targets toward achieving this objective, taking into account the specific development situation emerged in each period. The newly adopted Doha Programs of Action for LDCs will also be streamlined into the national planning process in order to lay a strong foundation for smooth and sustainable graduation.

To ensure smooth and sustainable graduation, necessary support measures must be put in place to graduating country during and after the preparatory period to ensure that resources are made available in-line with country's specific development situation, priorities and needs. Closer attention must be given to the affected sectors so that they can adjust to new circumstances. In this regard, the Lao Government is developing a national Smooth Transition Strategy in close collaboration

with development and trading partners and we count on the continued support from UN system and international community, both financially and technically.

Mr. Chair,

Despite successfully meeting LDC graduation thresholds criteria, there still remain challenges that lie ahead for us to overcome. The issue such as financial gap and external debt have remained a big challenge and the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic further exacerbated the existing financial constraints. In this connection, ODA continues to be a significant source of external financing for development in countries with special needs including Lao PDR. With ODA shrinking, new sources of innovative finance and development financing are needed more than ever, and scaling up support from Development Partners, UN system, financial institutions, and the private sector remain critical.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Lao PDR's firm commitment to continue working closely with all partners and we count on the continued support from international community to implement the national Smooth Transition Strategy to ensure smooth and sustainable graduation.

I thank you