

The Lao People's Democratic Republic

Remarks by

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Agenda Item 4: "Special Body on Least Developed, Landlocked Developing and Small Island Developing States: Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2025: Harnessing a New Generation of Programmes of Action for Sustainable Development Ambitions"

- ***Mr. Chair,***
- ***Madam Executive Secretary,***
- ***Excellencies,***
- ***Distinguished Guests,***
- ***Ladies and Gentlemen,***

1. At the outset, on behalf of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, I would like to express our *sincere* appreciation to ESCAP for its continued commitment to addressing the specific priorities of countries in special situations. The *Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2025* is timely and highly relevant, as it underscores the urgent need for **targeted support and inclusive regional cooperation** to achieve sustainable development for all.

2. As both a LDC and LLDC, the Lao PDR faces complex, overlapping, and structural challenges that continue to hinder our development. These include **limited access to global and regional markets**, **insufficient infrastructure**, and **high vulnerability to external shocks**—particularly those arising from climate change and global economic instabilities. Such persistent barriers delay our efforts to achieve **inclusive, equitable, and sustainable growth**.

3. In this context, international action programmes that are **tailored to the unique circumstances** of countries like ours remain indispensable. The **VPoA** for LLDCs and the **DPoA** for LDCs continue to provide comprehensive frameworks for addressing our priority needs—particularly in the areas of infrastructure development, trade facilitation, productive capacity, and human resource development. The Lao PDR has actively **mainstreamed these frameworks into our national development plans** and has made

steady progress in strengthening resilience and moving toward graduation from LDC status. However, the road ahead remains challenging. To ensure a **smooth, sustainable, and irreversible transition**, it is crucial that LDCs continue to have access to **preferential support, technology transfer, capacity-building, and predictable financing mechanisms**.

4. At the national level, the Lao PDR is undertaking important reforms and initiatives to advance sustainable development. We are implementing policies to promote **economic diversification**, **social protection**, and **climate resilience**. Our **Smooth Transition Strategy** is guiding our LDC graduation process, while the **National Green Growth Strategy** and the **Digital Economy Development Vision** are laying the foundation for an inclusive and future-oriented economy. Furthermore, we are working to expand **access to quality education, vocational training, and healthcare**, with a particular emphasis on **reaching remote, rural, and marginalized communities**. However, we recognize that **national efforts must be complemented by robust regional and international cooperation**. In this regard, we call for enhanced collaboration in key areas such as:

    (1) Sustainable trade and transport connectivity,
    (2) Green infrastructure and resilient urban development, and
    (3) Inclusive digital transformation and innovation.

We also encourage development partners to align their support with the **specific and evolving needs** of LDCs and LLDCs, especially through **long-term, concessional, and predictable financing**.

5. Lastly, the Lao PDR remains fully committed to transforming commitments into concrete action. Through **stronger regional partnerships**, **multilateral cooperation**, and **inclusive national efforts**, we aim to build a resilient, equitable, and sustainable future for our people. We look forward to continued collaboration with ESCAP and our development partners to **translate global and regional frameworks into tangible progress**—ensuring that no country is left behind in our collective journey toward sustainable development.

Thank you.