Statement by
Mr. Kham-Inh Khitchadeth,
Chargé d'affaires of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to the United Nations
at the General Debate of the First Committee
of the 67th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
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Mr. Chairman,

1. At the outset, on behalf of the Lao delegation, allow me to join other delegates to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of the First Committee this year. My congratulation also goes to the members of the Bureau. Let me assure you our full support and cooperation as you discharge your responsibility.

2. My delegation also associates itself with the statements made by Iran on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and by Myanmar on behalf of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, I would like to make further remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairman,

3. In the past year, there has been some promising development and achievement in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arm control. The successful NPT Review Conference has brought out its result on the 22-point action plan on nuclear disarmament for the follow-up actions on the Final Document of 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The Lao PDR welcomes the successful conclusion of the first session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2015 NPT Review Conference on 30 April-11 May 2012 in Vienna, Austria and calls for the full implementation of the action plans adopted in 2010 on nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation, peaceful use of nuclear energy, and the implementation of the 1995 resolution on the Middle-East.
4. This year marks the 15th anniversary of the opening for signature of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), which has 183 signatories, including 157 state parties. This is another significant instrument to promote nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The achieving universal adherence to the Treaty and accelerating its early entry into force are therefore important matter and should be developed without any further delay. In this regard, the Lao PDR welcomes the launch of the Sixth CTBT Ministerial Meeting held in New York on 27 September 2012, which is facilitating the entry into force of the Treaty. In this context, my delegation welcomes the recent ratification of CTBT by Indonesia, Central Africa Republic, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana, Guatemala and Guinea and we are hoping to have more states, particularly those who have not done so to sign and ratify the CTBT at the early date.

5. The creation of Nuclear-Weapon-Free-Zones has a significant contribution to strengthening global nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation as well as enhancing regional and global peace and security. The Lao PDR supports the establishment of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zones in the Middle East. In this regard, we wish to reiterate that it is essential that Nuclear Weapons States adhering to these zones and providing unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of the zones. We also wish to reemphasize the full operation of the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and encourage the Nuclear Weapons States to accede to the Protocol annexed to the Treaty as soon as possible.

6. 2012 marks another important landmark- the 15th anniversary of the opening for signature of Chemical Weapons Convention "CWC" and the establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons "OPCW". The Lao PDR welcomes the upcoming Third Special Session of the Conference of State Parties to the Operation of the Chemical Weapons Convention to be convened at The Hague in April 2013, which will review the implementation the CWC worldwide.

7. Another positive development is in the area of small arms and light weapons. We welcome the outcome document adopted by consensus of the Second Review Conference 2012 of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons held in New York from 27 August to 7 September 2012.

Mr. Chairman,

8. While the focus on the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction and their proliferation, we cannot afford to ignore the challenge posed by conventional weapons, particular cluster munitions, which constitute a threat to peace, human security, the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, poverty eradication and social-economic development. As one of the most-affected countries by cluster munitions, the Lao PDR welcomes the third year of the entry into force of the Convention on Cluster Munitions "CCM" and the recent growing number of states ratified the Convention reaching 77 countries. The Lao PDR, as the state party to the CCM, has committed to implement the provision of the Convention by destroying and clearing the contamination of cluster munitions in the country. Meanwhile, we support efforts to ensure the effective
implementation of the Convention. In this regard, we welcome the successful outcome of the Third Meeting of State Parties to the Convention on 9-16 September 2012 in Oslo, Norway that measured the progress in implementation of the Convention, particularly the 2010 Vientiane Action Plan. The Lao PDR also welcomes the offer by Zambia to host the Fourth Meeting of the Convention in 2013 and looks forwards to working closely with Zimbabwe to ensure a success of the Fourth Meeting.

Mr. Chairman,

9. Despite such progress, a number of difficulties remain. The continuation of the stalemate of the disarmament machinery, the progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation progressed at a very slow pace. Expenditure on armaments has sky-rocketed while human races are struggling in extreme poverty. In this regard, the Lao DPR wishes to stress the need for strong political will and collective efforts to overcome these difficult impasses and to reemphasize the multilateral approach to achieving the ultimate goal of disarmament, non-proliferation and arm control.

10. The Lao PDR strongly believes that political wills and flexibility of member States are vital for progressive development in the field of disarmament and non-proliferation as well as for overcoming the challenges posting on international community. It requires much effort from every country working together closely in achieving the common goals so that the world would be free from fear and all threads. My delegation remains committed to constructive engagement to contribute to the work of the committee for its successful.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.