



LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE LAO PEOPLE'S DEMOCRATIC TO UNITED NATIONS

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STATEMENT

BY

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DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

AT

**THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE
61ST SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

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Madam Chairperson,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you and other members of the Bureau, on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic, on your respective election to steer the work of the present session of the First Committee. We are confident that with your rich experience in multilateral diplomacy, you will guide this important session to a successful conclusion. My delegation assures you of its full support and cooperation in the discharge of your duties.

We also would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to your predecessor Ambassador Choi Young-Jin, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Korea for the work he performed as Chairman of this committee during the previous session.

Madam Chairperson,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Myanmar, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, we would like to highlight some points which we think, are of great significance to world peace and security as follows:

Madam Chairperson,

Today's international situation continues to undergo rapid and complex changes. Our world remains plagued with insecurity, injustice, armed conflicts, acts of aggression, terror, ethnic strife, interferences in the internal affairs of states, civil wars, natural disasters, disease, poverty and energy instability which all pose major threats to international peace and security.

At the same time, humankind still lives under the threat of nuclear weapons. This is due to the fact that the commitment the international community made 35 years ago to rid the world of nuclear weapons has not been met. Nor have nuclear arsenals been decreased or dismantled. On the contrary, those weapons grew tremendously, both in quantity and quality. So did the number of nuclear-weapon States (NWS). All this has also increased the risk of WMDs falling into the hands of terrorists. In the face of such a situation, efforts should be made seriously and honestly by all states concerned, particularly the nuclear-weapon States which have the legal obligations to fulfill under article VI of the Treaty, namely to pursue in good faith and bring to a conclusion negotiations leading to nuclear disarmament in all its aspects.

Madame Chairperson,

The performance of the NPT over the past years has not yielded expected results. The negotiations on banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices have yet to begin. It is regrettable that very little progress on this

issue has been achieved. In this regard, we earnestly hope that the Conference on Disarmament would early conclude the negotiations for a non-discriminatory, multilateral and internationally and effectively verifiable treaty banning the production of fissile materials for nuclear weapons and other explosive devices, taking into account both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation objectives.

The Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) is a corner - stone of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. As party to CTBT since October 2000 the Lao PDR has actively participated in the seminars organized by the provisional Technical Secretariat of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty , and Annual Meeting of ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in the region and in this regard, we welcome the Socialist Republic of Vietnam's ratification of the CTBT in March 2006, and reaffirm the importance and urgency of the entry into force of the instrument. We also would like to seize this opportunity to call upon all States that have not yet ratified the Treaty, particularly those States whose ratification is required for its entry into force, to do so without delay.

Madam Chairperson,

The Lao PDR supports the efforts aimed at establishing Nuclear- Weapon-Free Zones in all regions of the world and calls for cooperation and broad consultations in order to achieve agreements freely arrived at among the States of the regions concerned. We strongly believe that the creation of nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZs) constitutes a positive step towards freeing humankind from Nuclear weapon's threat and achieving the goal of nuclear disarmament. In this regard, we welcome and support the NWFZs in the regions created by the treaties of Tlatelolco, Rarotonga, Pelindaba and the Bangkok Treaty also known as Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons free Zone (SEANWFZ) to which Lao PDR is the state party and as such, has done its best to contribute to the ASEAN's common efforts in this respect . We also welcome the Mongolia's nuclear weapons free status and the signing of the treaty on a nuclear weapons free zone in Central Asia in Semipalatinsk on 8 September 2006 by five Central Asian countries . In this context, it is essential that Nuclear-Weapon States should provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons to all States of these concerned nuclear weapons free zones.

Madam Chairperson,

Like many other delegations, Lao PDR is of the view that, in addressing the important issues in the field of Disarmament and International Security, the role of the UN Conference on Disarmament as the multilateral negotiating body on disarmament should be reaffirmed. In this regard, we reiterate our principled position of supporting the initiative of convening the Fourth Special Session of the UN General Assembly devoted to Disarmament (SSOD IV) and express the hope that the Open ended working group on SSOD IV would be reconvened at an early date as mandated by the General Assembly with a view to reaching agreement on its objective and agenda .

In the light of the negative developments, we can not but share the concern of the world community about the failure of the recent United Nations Conference to Review the Progress made in Implementation of the Program of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapon in All Its Aspects. Lao PDR, however, considers that the said Program of Action is a living document and remains a cooperation framework that empowers states to continue to work for its full and effective implementation.

Madam Chairperson,

Equally essential for the maintenance of international and regional peace and security is the universal adherence to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC), especially the strengthening of it through multilateral negotiations for a legally binding Protocol to the Convention.

Our Delegation is also of the view that the threat of biological weapons as instruments of war and terror has stressed the necessity and urgency to ensure the effectiveness of this Convention. In this respect, we commend the positive efforts made by the State Parties to the BWC in the last Fifth Review Conference and we look forward to further progress to be achieved for the strengthening of the Convention, in the upcoming Sixth Review Conference of the BWC, to be held in Geneva.

Madame Chairperson,

Having learnt from experiences of the past about nuclear weapons danger, we can not but stress the need for the international community to make every effort to ensure that mankind live in a world of 21st Century without the threat of nuclear weapons. We strongly believe that the total elimination of nuclear weapons is the only absolute guarantee against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons and also of the view that non-nuclear-weapon States should be effectively assured by nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons. To this end, my delegation hopes that this current session, will provide an excellent opportunity for all of us to look into all possible ways and means for the implementation of all the commitments made. With concerted efforts and high sense of responsibility for world peace and security and destiny of mankind, we should all work together towards the common objective of achieving general and complete disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament. Disarmament cannot be fully attained without political will and support of all members of the United Nations. It is time that we spare no effort to get the disarmament process back on track, move forward and build a world filled with peace, equitable development and free from nuclear weapons. On this note, I wish the present session of our Committee a great success.

I thank you, Madam Chairperson.