

**Statement**

**By**

**H.E Mr. Saleumxay Kommasith, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Lao People's  
Democratic Republic**

**at the**

**2021 High-Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF)**

“Sustainable and resilient recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic that promotes the economic, social and environmental dimensions of sustainable development: building an inclusive and effective path for the achievement of the 2030 Agenda in the context of the decade of action and delivery for sustainable development’

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(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

The serious outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a major disaster to the people's livelihood and severely impacted the global socio-economy in all dimensions. This unprecedented global health crisis has posed serious immediate and long-term challenges for countries to respond and overcome, in particular, the least developed one. Lao PDR is no exception. Although, at the national level we are able to swiftly control the infection cases to its minimal rate, however, a number of challenges still remain. The pandemic has undermined decades of national socio-economic development efforts and disrupted years of progress made on the implementation of the sustainable development, as well as exacerbated the already existing vulnerability and challenges that we have prior to the pandemic. As a result, our sustainable development aspiration, particularly on eliminating poverty and the path toward LDC graduation will be even more difficult and challenging tasks.

In order to build back better and allow the society to return to the 'new normal' lifestyle and leave no one behind in this crisis, we need to ensure equitable, affordable and universal access to COVID-19 vaccines and treatment. This will be pivotal and the determined factors for us to get back on track in implementing the 2030 Agenda. Another important task is the post Covid-19 socio-economic recovery efforts. These may include the international trade, funding and technology access and build mutual

trust for a win-win cooperation. We urge the international community to enhance a policy of open trade and cooperation, integration and connectivity, as well as to address the debt issue, promote access to low or zero interest credit in order for the world economy to be able to recover. Particularly, the most vulnerable countries like LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS must be upfront to receive assistance and support from international community so they will not be left behind in the global efforts to meet the 2030 Agenda and be more resilient to any unexpected pandemics in the future.

Mr. President,

It is now more important than ever to uphold the multilateral cooperation and international solidarity. We must work together to make collective response, concrete action and bold decisions in order to address the global challenges and safeguard our future for sustainable development and leave no one behind. Lao PDR stands ready to work closely with the international community and all partners to achieve the SDGs and lift the country out of LDC status. Taking this opportunity, I wish to conclude by expressing my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to international organizations and development partners that have provided invaluable assistance and support to my country and hopes to receive your continued support.

I thank you.