

Presentation on Laos' experiences in public sector capacity and innovations
by H.E.Mrs. Bounpheng Mounphosay, Minister, Chairperson of the Public
Administration and Civil Service Authority of the Lao PDR
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- Mr. Chairperson,
- Distinguished Guests,
- Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to express our sincere thanks to the Ministry of Government Administration and Home Affairs of the Republic of Korea and all relevant UN agencies for the kind invitation extended to us as well as for the excellent arrangements made for the Forum.

We would also like to take this opportunity to share our own experiences with and draw lessons learned from the participating countries on good governance so that we can apply best practices into the Lao context.

- Mr. Chairperson,

Since the proclamation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic on 02 December 1975, our Government has been striving to truly build a State of the people, by the people and for the people as demonstrated by the reform of the rules of law, organizational apparatus and official cadres from the central to local levels aimed at building up the Government's capacity in further improving the national socio-economic development management and services delivery.

On the legal side, while gradually striving to establish a State of law, the Government has conducted a thorough study and made recommendations to the National Assembly for enacting a series of laws on administration, economics, socio-culture and others accounting for more than 60 bills. Some laws have also been revised and amended in line with the situation and new circumstances including the amendment of the Constitution of the Lao PDR.

In the drafting process of any legislation, every law has been enacted based on the studies and inputs made democratically and with a high sense of responsibility from all institutions and social strata.

On the reform of the organizational apparatus, the Government has laid down a policy to reform the organizational apparatus at all levels so as to remain relevant and efficient through defining the role and mandate of each institution from the central to local levels in a clear and comprehensive manner so as to avoid duplication of each other's work. Since 1975, the Government has steadily carried out a series of reform and alignment of the State apparatus both at the central and local levels. For instance, from 1982 to 1986, the State apparatus which comprised 23 Ministries and Ministry-equivalent agencies was considered to be too big. Therefore, realignment of the State apparatus was done in 1991 right after the enactment of the first Constitution reducing the number of Ministries and Ministry-equivalent agencies to 13 and 3 respectively, and the same number remains up to now.

The Lao Government has paid attention to the improvement of operational activities, in particular the provision of better services to the people in order to

ensure better access for the people to information and monitoring of Government's activities. In 2005, the National Assembly adopted the law on anti-corruption that was later promulgated by the President of the Republic. In this connection, the Government has set up an ad-hoc committee to oversee this undertaking. As you may be aware, negative phenomena namely corruption is still relatively prevalent in a number of least developed countries, and Laos being a least developed country itself is also not spared from this scourge. While remaining alert to the threat of this problem, the Lao Government has exerted tireless efforts to tackle it. In so doing, the Lao Government has given instructions to central and local government agencies to carry out studies and execute the pilot project on one-stop service at the earlier stage. At present, the Government is introducing this pilot project to some government agencies and intends to further expand its coverage aimed at providing better services to the people.

As far as the civil servants are concerned, the Lao Government has attached great importance and due attention to upgrading the knowledge and capacity for its state officials; improving the cadre of civil servants to be honest and accountable and serving the public with efficiency and affection. In parallel, the Government is also striving to seriously address the violation of law by offenders. Furthermore, in the line up of state officials both at central and local levels, equality among ethnic groups has been ensured in terms of gender and ethnicity that can be reflected in the Constitution and existing laws as well as in the actual practice. Especially, our Lao women had fought alongside their men during the period for national salvation as well as at the time of national socio-economic development. In terms of State management, our Lao women have also taken part and shared important responsibilities at various institutions. Right now, in the legislative organ, there is 25 % of female deputies out of 115 deputies in the National Assembly, and there is one female Vice President among the top leadership of the National Assembly. Some are Head or Deputy Head of various Commissions at the National Assembly; in the Executive organ, there are 2 women out of 28 Government members. Besides, there are also a number of women who occupy Vice Ministerial position at some Ministries and Ministry-equivalent agencies.

- Mr. Chairperson,
- Distinguished Guests,

In spite of the achievements gained in building trust in our Government, we are still faced with a number of challenges and difficulties. For instance, the Government's outlined policies have not been implemented efficiently due to a number of causes such as: low knowledge and education of the people, poverty, remoteness, poor infrastructure and others.

Therefore, it is our sincere hope that through our own efforts coupled with the assistance of friendly countries and international organizations like the UN system, we will be able to truly build a State of law and lead the nation towards prosperity.

While looking forward to a productive discussion, I wish every success to the Forum.

I thank you.