

Statement
By Mr. Phouvong Luangxaysana, Director General, Department of Disaster
Management and Climate Change, Ministry of Natural Resources and
Environment, Lao PDR at the High-Level Segment
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20 to 22 November 2013

Mr. President,

Excellencies

Distinguished delegates

Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset we would like to convey our sincere appreciation and gratitude to the Government and people of Poland for their warm hospitality, and a great thank to the UNFCCC Secretariat for their excellent arrangements of this conference.

Mr. President,

At this point, Lao people share their heartfelt condolences and their deepest sympathies with the people of the Philippines, Vietnam and others for their losses caused by the powerful typhoon that occurred recently.

We are now witnessing a high increase in extreme weather events that cause devastating loss of lives and properties. These types of extreme events seem to become more severe and to happen more and more frequently and it is likely that this is a pattern that will continue in the future.

Like many other LDCs, Lao PDR is very vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and this combined with a low adaptive capacity and limited preparedness, makes the challenges even bigger.

We have come to Warsaw with a great sense of urgency, because Climate Change is real and it affects all of us without exemption or distinction. Therefore, there is an immediate need for all of us at this COP19 to overcome existing divergences.

We must find acceptable solution and be willing to compromise to reach a common framework with effective measures to address climate change in the interest of a safer world and a sustainable future.

Mr. President,

May I also take this opportunity to express my Government's full commitment to the world's collective efforts to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Lao PDR is a country rich in forests, water, minerals and other natural resources and as such we have a special responsibility to preserve and protect biodiversity and ecosystems ; not only because our own economy and the livelihoods of our people depend on it, but equally so for the region and the world as a whole.

And we take this responsibility very serious.

Actively pursuing such synergies and co-benefits, is a core element in our policies and action plans towards eco-efficiency, greening of the economy, disaster prevention and management, and sustainable socio-economic development.

Thus, Lao PDR has identified a series of priority actions on nationally appropriate mitigation actions towards a low carbon economy. Climate change has been mainstreamed in our national legislation and development planning process. Both unilateral and supported efforts are currently underway. We continue to formulate policies and institutional frameworks to achieve our goals of:

- Reducing the vulnerability of our country to natural disasters;
- Increasing the use of renewable energy;
- Mitigating emissions from the transport sector;
- Achieving 70% forest cover by 2020.

The key measures and initiatives in our roadmap towards reaching these goals and addressing the challenges of climate change involves:

- building-up a strong public sector, based on professionalism, integrity and transparency
- promoting and fostering a homegrown resilient private business sector
- encouraging and supporting a “green” business to business, and business to government cooperation in order to develop our local businesses to become more eco-efficient, using less resources and improving their general environmental management
- combining local knowledge with scientific research to identify and develop “green” solutions and investment opportunities in new productions and advanced technologies for mitigation and adaptation , and

- reliable financing systems that translate our plans into actions

Mr. President,

With all the good work already done leading up to this COP 19 conference, we have a unique opportunity to make real progress towards reaching new legally binding agreement in 2015, and I may urge all of us to put our best efforts into realizing this.

In conclusion, I wish to reaffirm the strong commitment of Lao PDR in working closely with all countries to realize the ultimate goal of the Convention. I wish to emphasize again to all parties the urgency of making a historic breakthrough at this COP19 to make the meeting in Warsaw a very successful one.

I thank you for your attention.