

Speech by H.E. Pany Yathotou  
President of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR  
at the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly  
**“PROMOTING PEACE AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA”**  
Siem Reap, Kingdom of Cambodia

- Samdech Akka Moha Ponhea Chakrei HENG Samrin, President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia and President of the APA,
- Speakers, Heads of Delegation, Honourable Members of Parliament of the APA Member Parliaments, Secretary-General of APA,
- Distinguished Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the National Assembly of the Lao PDR, I would like to express my deep appreciation to the President of the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia and APA President for inviting the delegation of the Lao National Assembly and for the warm welcome extended to us during our participation in this 9<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the Asian Parliamentary Assembly, which is being held here in Siem Reap Province, the land of ancient cultural wonders, and world heritage. I also wish to express my congratulations to the National Assembly of the Kingdom of Cambodia for the excellent arrangements made for the effective inaugural of this Meeting today. I would like to take this opportunity to also extend my congratulations on the successful convening of the 9<sup>th</sup> Cambodia-Laos-Viet Nam (CLV) Development Triangle Area Summit hosted by the Government of the Kingdom of Cambodia here in Siem Reap Province last week.

**Mr. President,  
Honourable Members of Parliaments,**

The Asian Parliamentary Assembly (APA) is an important forum for consultation among parliaments of Asia on regional and international political, economic, and socio-cultural issues of common interest and concern with the aim of building an Asian continent that is politically stable and economically resilient, thereby contributing to the promotion of peace, cooperation and sustainable development.

In the spirit of these objectives, the 9<sup>th</sup> Plenary Session of the APA has chosen the topic: ***“Promoting Peace and Sustainable Development in Asia”***, which is very relevant and in line with the current needs of each country, the region and the world at large.

**Mr. President,**

Peace and development are both our goals and common aspirations of all mankind including the people in our Asian continent. However, the current regional and international environment continues to be confronted with various challenges. To name a few, terrorism and extremism remain a threat to regional and global peace and security. More than 800 million people across the world still live in extreme poverty, while epidemics, natural disasters and climate change have caused tremendous damage to social and economic development of various parts of the world. At the same time, the global economy is still fragile and growing at a slow pace.

Against this backdrop, the international community has, over the past years, made collective efforts to respond to and address those challenges on the basis of continuing to uphold the fundamental principles of the United Nations in addressing various issues of the region and the world through peaceful means, and by adopting various policies, measures and mechanisms within both bilateral and multilateral frameworks in order to work together to address, among others, the issues of climate change and natural disasters, which are a major hindrance to development and a risk to life and property of the people in the region, and no single country can handle the problem on its own. Recognizing the importance of this issue, the Lao PDR formally joined the Paris Agreement on Climate Change, and the National Assembly has ratified the said Paris Agreement. Moreover, the Lao Government has submitted its Nationally Determined Contributions and integrated climate change, natural disaster risk reduction and management into its National Socio-Economic Development Plan, and this is being implemented through annual work plans and projects of the different sectors and local authorities.

**Mr. President,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

2016 is the first year of the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development, including the Sustainable Development Goals as set out by the United Nations. It is my view, therefore, that we need to deepen our understanding of the SDGs at the national, regional and international levels in order to integrate these goals into our respective national development plans, and to mobilize sufficient resources for the effective implementation of this Agenda.

Early this year, the Lao PDR held an election of the 8<sup>th</sup> Legislature of the National Assembly which subsequently approved, at its inaugural session, the Vision 2030, the 10-year Development Strategy (2016-2025) and the 8<sup>th</sup> Five-Year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (2016-2020), which include the goals of green growth and sustainable development, maintaining steady economic growth, achieving continuous reduction of poverty and graduating from the least developed country status, among others. In addition to the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) over the past 5 years, the Lao PDR has implemented the Sustainable Development Goals, and has also adopted its national SDG 18: "Lives Safe from UXO", which was formally launched by the Prime Minister of the Lao PDR and the United Nations Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on 7 September 2016 in Vientiane. The objective of this particular SDG is to ensure clearance of unexploded ordnance (UXO) contamination, reduction in casualties from UXO accidents and assistance to UXO survivors and victims to the highest extent possible. Moreover, as a landlocked country, the Lao PDR attaches great importance to being a good partner in effectively implementing the Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity. We very much hope that we will receive full support and assistance from our friendly countries in this endeavour.

As representatives of the rights and benefits of the people, the National Assembly of the Lao PDR has over the years considered and approved laws and policies that directly promote sustainable development in line with green growth as well as played the role of encouraging and monitoring of the implementation of laws, work plans and projects that have been approved towards concrete results and real benefit for the people.

The Asian Parliamentary Assembly as representative of the people, has the important task of promoting peace, solidarity, and cooperation among members of the international community with the aim of developing peace and stability, and creating conditions that are conducive to sustainable socio-economic development for the region and the world as a whole.

It is my high hope that under the able leadership of Samdech President of APA and through contributions from APA Member Parliaments, we will be able to achieve our set objectives, thereby contributing to the maintenance and promotion of peace, stability, cooperation and sustainable development in the region and the world, and toward real benefit for the people in our Asian region.

Finally, I would like to extend my best wishes to the Bureau of our Plenary Session, Members of Parliament, and all distinguished guests attending this Meeting for good health and happiness, and I wish this Meeting great success.

Thank you.