

Check Against Delivery

Statement by

H.E. Dr. Thongloun SISOULITH,
Deputy-Prime Minister, Head of Delegation
of the Lao People's Democratic Republic

at the Second South Summit,

Doha, 15 June 2005

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Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,

On behalf of the Lao Delegation, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of the Second South Summit. May I also take this opportunity to convey our sincere thanks to the Government and people of Qatar for the generous hospitality accorded to our delegation since our arrival and for the excellent arrangements made to ensure the success of this Summit.

Mr. President,

The South Summit held in 2000 in Havana has charted our vision, roadmap and strategy for promoting south-south cooperation. Therefore, our task today is to take stocks of what we have achieved thus far and what challenges we are yet to overcome in the future. I am gratified to learn that over the past decades, there has been considerable progress and new dynamism in the cooperation among developing countries in the area of trade and investment, among others. The share of countries of the South in the world trade accounts for 40 percent. This is mainly attributed to the promotion of South-South Cooperation. Such form of cooperation not only remains relevant, but it is also becoming a vital tool for developing countries, particularly the most vulnerable among them to achieve their national development goals. Despite this progress, there is yet a need to strengthen its mechanism and institutions as well as to expand the scope of its activities so that all developing countries can fully benefit from such cooperation..

Mr. President,

The specific needs and problems of Landlocked Developing Countries, which are caused by their lack of territorial access to the sea compounded by their remoteness and isolation from major world markets should also be addressed in the framework of South-South Cooperation. In 2003 the international community adopted the Almaty Programme of Action (APoA). Such adoption reflected the strong commitment of the world community to address the specific problems and needs of LLDCs as called for in the United Nations Millennium Declaration. The Almaty Programme of Action is aimed at forging partnerships between landlocked

and transit developing countries and their development partners in this effort. In this context, South-South Cooperation is proved to be the relevant form of the effective implementation of Almaty Program of Action. In my capacity as Chairman of the Group of Landlocked Developing Countries, I would like to express our group's appreciation to all members of the Group 77 and China for their continued support for the cause of LLDCs.

Mr. President,

As a beneficiary, the Lao PDR is well aware of the relevance and importance of South-South Cooperation. In 2003 the Lao Government adopted a national poverty eradication strategy called National Growth and Poverty Eradication Strategy with a view to halving poverty by 2010 and quitting the LDCs status by 2020. This strategy provides a benchmark for the Lao Government to intensify its effort in the fight against poverty and for the national prosperity. To this end, the support of the international community is extremely important and South-South Cooperation can play a pivotal role. Over the past decades, the Lao PDR has benefited from technical cooperation among developing countries in the area of human capacity building, information technology, trade and investment promotion. In this regard, on behalf of the Lao Government, I would like to express our sincere appreciation to all friendly countries who have provided us with support in the framework of South-South Cooperation and I am confident that such assistance would continue to be forthcoming.

Mr. President,

A strong and effective South-South Cooperation requires first and foremost greater dynamism and genuine political will from all countries of the South. The implementation of the Doha Declaration and Doha Plan of Action to be adopted by this Summit would greatly contribute to the strengthening of cooperation among countries in the South, thus helping them to achieve their set goals and targets. In this spirit, I wish our Second South Summit a great success.

Thank you.