



PRESS RELEASE

04 NOVEMBER 2009

“Realising the Opportunities Ahead” at the 9th Round Table Implementation Meeting

Government of Lao PDR, the United Nations and development partners discusses sustainable and equitable development paths at UNDP-supported High-level forum

The 9th Round Table Implementation Meeting was held in Vientiane on 3 November, attended by Ambassadors and senior dignitaries from 64 countries and by representatives of development partner organizations. This annual meeting in the Round Table process, chaired in 2009 by His Excellency Mr. Sinlavong Khoutphaytoun, Minister of Planning and Industry and Ms. Sonam Yangchen Rana, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, enables extensive policy dialogue between the Government of the Lao PDR, the United Nations and all development partners. The Process, implemented by the Ministry of Planning and Investment, Department of International Cooperation supported by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), has the objective to further improve the effectiveness of international assistance, in line with the Vientiane Declaration, for key development issues in the Lao PDR.

The Meeting was opened by His Excellency Mr. Bouasone Bouphavanh, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR, as, he outlined “the appropriate forum for the exchange of in-depth and constructive dialogue on how we can best deal with the adverse impact and the emerging challenges so that we can create enabling conditions of the Lao PDR to pursue its development path in a more consistent and sustainable manner.”

Of particular importance for the 2009 RTIM were examining the impacts of the global economic crisis, discussing progress in attaining the Millennium Development Goals and working towards the development of the Government’s key strategic planning document, the 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan.

UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative Ms Sonam Yangchen Rana congratulated the Government of the Lao PDR for the country’s many achievements this year despite the global financial crisis. Noting that “Important progress has been underpinned by continued macro-economic stability, strengthening institutional development and increasing integration in to the regional and global economy,” she also emphasized that “Graduating from LDC status will also require much greater focus on the quality and sustainability of growth and development.”

Since 1983 the Lao PDR has participated in the Round Table Process, with the support of UNDP, as the primary platform for in-depth dialogue between the Government of Lao PDR and Development Partners on key development issues.

The Round Table Process comprises Round Table Meetings held every three years to review plans, strategies and programmes as well as commit funding pledges, and annual Round Table Implementation Meetings to review achievements and recommend further actions. Eight Sector Working Groups work throughout the year to discuss and provide advice on specific sectoral themes - Macroeconomics and the

Private Sector, Agriculture and Forestry, Infrastructure, Education, Health, UXO and Cluster Munitions and Drugs.

At the 2009 Round Table Implementation Meeting, presentations were made and discussion held on the 7th National Socio-Economic Development Plan and the Millennium Development Goals, as well as by the eight Sector Working Groups.

His Excellency Mr. Sinlavong Khoutphaytoun, Minister of Planning and Industry, declared that "Our Development Partners are vital in helping us meet our development goals, and together we can continue to work towards a strong future for the people of the Lao PDR".

Ms Sonam Yangchen Rana, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative, reaffirmed the statements of support and commitment made during the day and highlighted the strong partnerships developed by all participants. "The collective efforts of all of us," she concluded, "the United Nations and all development partners supporting the leadership provided by the Government of Lao PDR – are directed towards improving the lives of all the people in the Lao PDR."

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United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

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