

**Governance Sector Working Group Meeting on  
14th October 2009  
Closing Remarks by Mme. Sonam Yangchen Rana  
UN Resident Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative**



*Your Excellency Mme. Bounpheng Mounphoxay, Minister to the Prime Minister and Chairperson PACSA  
Your Excellency Dr. Chaleune Yiapaoher, Minister of Justice,  
Representatives of the Government of Lao PDR and Development Partners, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I am very pleased to have had the opportunity to Co-Chair this meeting. We have listened to a number of important presentations built around the good progress made in all four major governance themes (Public Service Improvement, People's Participation, Rule of Law and Sound Financial Management).

We have also listened to the presentation of the Decree of Associations. It is the first piece in the legal framework for civil society which will allow civil society to perform a stronger role in poverty alleviation. It will also increase possibilities for the Lao people to express their concerns and aspirations and to actively get involved in the development of their country.

The presentation on Enhanced Gender Equality in Governance highlighted that gender equality is a real concern for government and the importance of political commitment to it. As mentioned by me during various occasions: the achievement of the gender equality MDG will be central to the achievement of many other MDGs such as MDG1, halving the amount of people living in extreme poverty. Without gender equality there will be no sustained and equitable development.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I would like to emphasize that the support of Development Partners for the operationalization of the recently adopted Legal Sector Master Plan and the implementation of the Associations Decree is crucial at this stage. Likewise we are all called upon to assist the government in formulating the next NSEDP which will be fully MDG based and also include costed sector plans.

I am very satisfied with the constructive discussions we have had and I am looking forward to a number of thematic workshops and other activities to be held at Sub-Sector Working Group level to take these discussions further.

Let me again summarize the key themes the group as a whole needs to take further in these workshops and other fora:

- Drafting of the Governance Road Map
- Operationalization of the Roadmap, monitoring of its implementation
- Policy Inputs into the next NSEDP and Strategic Plan on Governance will form part of the Roadmap
- Assist the government to operationalize and implement its legal sector master plan and support civil society associations
- GSWG to strengthen its coordination mechanisms. Therefore a strong GSWG Secretariat will be required.

[Ends]

**Notes:**

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