Lao People’s Democratic Republic

STATEMENT BY

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At Twenty-Fourth Mekong River Commission Council Meeting

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Pattaya City, Kingdom of Thailand

Your Excellency H.E. General Surasak Karnjanarat
Minister of Natural Resources and Environment  
Chairperson of the Thai National Mekong Committee  
Member of MRC Council of Thailand  
Chairperson of the MRC Council for 2017

**Your Excellency H.E Mr. Bun Hean**  
Secretary of State of Ministry of Water Resources and Meteorology  
Permanent Vice-Chairman of CNMC  
Alternate Member of the MRC Council for Cambodia

**Your Excellency H.E Mr. Nguyen Linh Ngoc**  
Deputy Minister of Natural Resources and Environment  
Vice Chairman of Viet Nam National Mekong Committee  
Alternate Member of MRC Council for Viet Nam

**Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is my indeed great honour and pleasure to be here on behalf of the delegation of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic at this Twenty-fourth Meeting of the MRC Council and the Joint Meeting of the Twenty-second Development Partner Consultative Group in the Pattaya City, Thailand. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for the generous hospitality and extended to our delegation. I also would like to take this this opportunity to express my heartfelt appreciation to **H.E General Surasak Karnjanarat,** for his invitation and chairmanship of MRC Council for 2017 with value of outstanding achievements. My deep thanks would also go to the MRC Secretariat for the excellent arrangements they made for this Council Meeting.

I sincerely praise that the MRC’s main achievements since the 23rd MRC Council Meeting, namely progressive implementation Study of Sustainable Management and Development of The Mekong River including the Impact of Mainstream Hydropower Project (Council Study), The MRCS restructuring and the progress of the implementation of MRC procedures as well as the steady
implementation of the IWRM-based Basin Development Strategy through its Strategic Plan.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Lao PDR attached the great importance of the Hochiminh city declaration and its MRC decentralization process as well as its commitment to gradually increase financial responsibilities and become self-financial reliance by 2030. At National level, several activities and event that support the implementation of Basin Development Strategy are being implemented by our line agencies with high responsibility, these were highlighted under the MRC decentralization process. In addition, The government of Lao are also actively and play great attention to implement the National Indicative Plan by acceleration development of Project Identification Note and establishment their national working group to support the coordination and negotiation among MRC Country in sharing the identified Joint Projects.

The Government of Lao People Democratic Republic is implementing its 8th Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan to reflects the Socio-economic Development Strategy and its Vision of the Government with the aim to build a new foundation for graduating from Lease Developed Country status, and becoming high-middle income country by 2030. Towards this end, the Lao PDR pursues a policy of sustainable hydropower development that recognized hydropower development is clean, zero carbon emission and renewable would bring all benefit to all member countries, Aiming for up grading the Lao PDR that ranked as a developing country to the upper-middle income and sound innovative, green and sustainable economic growth manner through implementation of poverty reduction strategy and improving rural livelihood.
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today the current global and regional landscape is fraught with myriad of challenge which post a major threat to our prosperous, social just and environment and adverse hamper development of our countries and region. Therefore its call for our concerted effort to overcome those obstacles and challenge so that people in difference countries in the region can live their lives in a durable peace and prosperity that required the promotion and coordination on sustainable management and development of water and related resources for the countries' mutual benefit and the people's well-being. **In this spirit**, The Lao PDR calls on all states involve is the disputes or challenge in this region to exercise the utmost restraint and resolve such challenge through our MRC approach and promote sustainable development in the region, as we firmly believe that only peaceful environment can form a fundamental ground for advancing national social and economic development.

I would like to reiterate that the current status of the Mekong River Basin which is odd in the past when our government signing the 1995 Mekong Agreement. It is more advancing and abundance with river and its ecology. Population is increasing and wide range of human activities are undertaken in the basin, along with increasingly severe floods and droughts attributed to climate change, are conspiring to alter its ecology and its shape, and threaten its sustainability as a source of life. Therefore, the government of Lao are fully recognize the challenges posed by climate change as a critical development issue. We are implementing our Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) and have mainstreamed Climate Change and Disaster Risks Reduction, along with the Sustainable Development Goals, in our Social Economic Development Plan together with the expectation that Mekong Adaptation Strategy and Action Plan (MASAP) would bring better action to handle these challenges.
The government of Lao has full time recognize the cooperation and partnership among the MRC Member Countries determine the continuation of cooperation and promotion sustainable development in a constructive and mutually beneficial manner. With this respects, Lao PDR congratulated the MRC Joint Committee for their hard working over the 6 months period of Pak Beng Prior Consultation Process and finally came up with consensus on end of the Prior Consultation Process for Pak Beng Hydropower Project on 19th June 2017. When it come to the implementation of Statement on conclusion of the 6 months prior consultation process for the Pak Beng Hydropower Project, the government of Lao PDR welcomed the Joint Action Plan in order to address the transboundary impacts in parallel with the implementation of Joint Monitoring for two Mainstream Hydropower Projects to reduce the knowledge gap and minimize risk for our people.

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Meanwhile preparing the 3rd MRC Summit which is scheduled in April 2018, I believe that our strong cooperation among MRC, dialogue partner, international organizations and development partners would enhance and achieve our objective towards achieve the MRC strategic goal in the regional. Again I extend my heartfelt appreciation to MRC Member Countries for your active participation, to our Development Partners and International Organizations for their kind assistance to MRC activities, and to the Secretariat for its effective support in implementation of over the period of 6 months of Pak Beng Prior Consultation Process. My profound thanks also go to the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand for successfully hosting this 24th Council Meeting.

I wish you all have the great success and looking forwards to seeing all of you at 3rd MRC Summit in April 2018.

Thank you very much