



Lao People's Democratic Republic

In the committee of the Association of South East Asian Countries

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1. The Lao People's Democratic Republic aligns with and proud to be part of the ASEAN family. In the last 20 years since its accession ASEAN ¹has become an important part of Lao PDR's foreign policy, actively participating and contributing to all cooperation areas under and has been fulfilling obligations promoting peace, stability and development in the region.

2. The Lao PDR is a land-locked nation which accepted and ratified the principles of UNCLOS² submitting to its principles and those of international law. The disputes regarding South China Sea has stabilized remarkably through peaceful means especially with the acceptance of the Code of Conduct³, thus Lao PDR believes that the countries of ASEAN with the contribution of Present Countries of the region are capable and sage in managing divergencies and maintaining their good relationship for the region's peace and prosperity. Trade wars leave no winners, only disastrous outcomes for the countries and the rest of the region. Lao PDR believes in mutual trust and confidence for maintaining peaceful development and prosperity with the upmost respect to the sovereignty of each nation in the name of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation as a constitutional principle⁴. Without respect of the aforementioned, there can be a compromise to our unity which gives way to undesirable input of countries of no concern to our region or people.

3. The Lao PDR believes in the strength of maintaining good bilateral relationships alongside the aim for common goals. As such Lao PDR is proud to be partner of ASEAN Vision 2025⁵, the ASEAN Master Plan 2025 ⁶and China's Belt and Road Initiative⁷. Settling disputes by peaceful means and diplomatic solutions, introducing common initiatives proved in the past

¹ ASEAN Charter, Lao PDR accession in 1997 <http://asean.org/wp-content/uploads/images/archive/publications/ASEAN-Charter.pdf>

² United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, Montego Bay, 10 December 1982, registration number: 31363 http://www.un.org/depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/unclos_e.pdf

³ Final Chairman Statement on ASEAN and China Summit, Manila, 13 November 2017 <http://asean.org/storage/2017/11/FINAL-Chairmans-Statement-of-the-20th-ASEAN-China-Summit-13-Nov-2017-Manila1.pdf>

⁴ Constitution of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Consolidated version) Article 12 <http://confinder.richmond.edu/admin/docs/laos.pdf>

⁵ ASEAN Community Vision 2025 <http://www.asean.org/storage/images/2015/November/aec-page/ASEAN-Community-Vision-2025.pdf>

⁶ ASEAN Master Plan 2025 <http://asean.org/storage/2016/09/Master-Plan-on-ASEAN-Connectivity-20251.pdf>

⁷ Belt and Road country profile – Laos <http://beltandroad.hktdc.com/en/country-profiles/laos>

and proves today to be more durable and causes no loss of lives and properties of the people. Prosperity should not be compromised by territorial disputes as the well-being of the region's nations holds the upmost importance. It is incumbent upon us to enhance collaboration in the regional environment, taking into account the diversity and particularities.

4. As the Laotian proverb says: If you like to have things easy, you will have difficulties; if you like problems, you will succeed. Lao PDR strongly believes that the nations present are not afraid of problems and will succeed for the common goal.