STATEMENT

BY

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PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE LAO PEOPLE’S
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC TO THE UNITED NATIONS

AT

THE GENERAL DEBATE
OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

OF

THE 60th SESSION OF THE
UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, OCTOBER 6, 2005

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Mr. Chairman,

Allow me first, on behalf of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, to congratulate you on your election as Chairman of this Committee. Our congratulations also go to other members of the Bureau. We are confident that with your large experience and skills, you will guide the work of our Committee to a successful conclusion. We can assure you of our full support and cooperation in the discharge of your delegated mandate.

We also would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Ambassador Luis Alfonso de Alba, Permanent Representative of Mexico to the International Organizations in Geneva for the excellent manner in which he has guided the work of the Committee during the 59th session.

Mr. Chairman,

We align ourselves fully with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of Indonesia, on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the statement to be delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Union of Myanmar, on behalf of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN). However, we would like to highlight some points regarded as important to us on the issue of disarmament and international security.

Mr. Chairman,

This current session is taking place on the occasion of the sixtieth anniversary of the United Nations. What as the only universal multilateral organization, the UN has accomplished in the field of disarmament and international security. A candid and honest overview of the global situation in this field is required, not only for the purpose of taking stock of it but for evolving joint and collective measures in order to remedy the situation and advance further in promoting the noble cause of disarmament. Today, our world is still filled with insecurity and injustice. Armed conflicts, acts of aggression and violence, terror, interferences in the internal affairs of states, ethnic strife, civil wars, hunger, disease, poverty... are the major threats to international peace and security. Weapons of mass destruction also pose great danger to the very survival of humankind. To ensure enduring global peace and security, together we must exert all-out efforts and act collectively to address and overcome those challenges. One can not seek security for oneself alone, only collective approach can bring about positive result, including in the field of international arms control and disarmament.

Mr. Chairman,

The World Summit held two weeks ago adopted an outcome document which to our regret, omitted the issue of disarmament and non-proliferation. This is a missing opportunity at a crucial moment for the world community to give a direction and to address the critical issues confronting us all. In this regard, the Lao PDR cannot but share the disappointment of the Peace-loving Community at this critical omission. We must therefore at this session reaffirm the need to uphold multilateralism and work for multilaterally agreed solutions, the only efficient method of addressing disarmament and world security issues.
Mr. Chairman,

The Lao PDR remains concerned about the danger of weapons of mass destruction, in particular nuclear weapons which constitute a threat not just to international peace and security but to the very existence of life in the planet. In this regard, we regret that the Review Conference of the State Parties of the NPT held in May this year was unable to reach consensus on the substantive questions surrounding the three pillars of NPT. We are of the view that commitments to the NPT should be lived up to by State Parties and NPT should remain being an cornerstone for global nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and peaceful use of nuclear technology. Recognizing the importance of the CTBT which contributes to the process of nuclear disarmament, the Lao PDR has deposited an instrument of ratification of the treaty with the UN since October 2000 and has actively participated in the seminars organized by the Provisional Technical Secretariat of CTBO in the region. This shows our strong commitment to nuclear disarmament and to the creation of a world free from nuclear threat. In this context, we welcome the convening of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry Into Force of the CTBT held in New York, from 21-23 September 2005. We also welcome the adoption by the Conference of Final Declaration and Measures to promote the entry into force of the CTBT. In this regard, in order to make this Treaty effective, we deem it necessary for all States who have not done so to sign and ratify the Treaty, and in particular the nuclear weapons States.

The Lao PDR strongly believes that the creation of nuclear weapons free zones (NWFZs) is a positive, helpful step towards the goal of nuclear disarmament and freeing humankind from nuclear weapons. In this spirit, we welcome the convening of Conference of States Parties and Signatories of Treaties that Establish Nuclear Weapons Free Zones held in Mexico, from 26-28 April 2005. We also welcome and support the strong aspirations of the peoples in many parts of the world in their efforts towards the establishment of nuclear weapons free zones. We underscore that the total achievement of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation is important to enhancing international peace and security. As a State Party to the Bangkok Treaty establishing the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (SEANWFZ), the Lao PDR has done its best to contribute to the ASEAN’s common efforts in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

The Lao PDR remains of the view that the absolute and most credible guarantor against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons is the total elimination of nuclear weapons. We believe that only the total elimination of nuclear weapons can prevent terrorists from acquiring nuclear weapons. We, therefore, welcome all efforts at the international, regional and national levels aimed at reducing and eliminating nuclear weapons. In this regard, we are of the view that urgent consideration must be given to the conclusion of a universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument on security assurances to non-nuclear weapons States. It is our delegation’s hope that the ASEAN-sponsored draft resolution initiated by the Union of Myanmar on nuclear disarmament...
would be rendered considerate support from all member states, especially nuclear weapons States.

Mr. Chairman,

Like many other delegations, the Lao PDR regrets very much that the Conference on Disarmament as the only multilateral disarmament forum for deliberation and negotiation on the questions of arms control and disarmament agreements, has again failed to agree on the program of work this year. We hope that all parties concerned would redouble efforts, demonstrate the necessary flexibility and move forward in their efforts to pursue both nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation. The failure of the United Nations Disarmament Commission to agree on an agenda for its session this year is another setback to multilateral disarmament efforts. In this context, we underscore that the multilateral disarmament machinery should be strengthened so that it can move the process forward to overcome the deadlock.

Mr. Chairman,

Although mixed is the progress the United Nations has achieved in all areas of activity during the past 60 years, including in the field of disarmament and international security there should be no room for despair and discouragement. Our joint mission, is to move forward if we are to succeed. Therefore, one of the most urgent tasks at the United Nations is to seriously work together towards the common objective of achieving general and complete disarmament, and in particular nuclear disarmament. Disarmament cannot be fully attained without political will and support of all members of the United Nations. It is time that we spare no effort to get the disarmament process back on track, move forward and build a world filled with peace, equitable development and free from nuclear weapons. On this note, I wish the present session of our Committee a great success.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.