



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by

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Mr. Chair,
Madame Executive Secretary,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, I would like to express my profound congratulation to you and to all members of the bureau for organizing this Regional Review on the Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration (GCM) during this most challenging time of Covid-19 pandemic.

Mr. Chair,

The GCM has been adopted in 2018 with its comprehensive objectives to fostering international cooperation in the area of migration. The convening of the Asia-Pacific Regional Review of the implementation of the GCM is timely relevant.

As a least developed and the only landlocked country in the region has given Lao PDR a more complex phenomenon on migration flow and has been considered as a country of origin, transit and destination for migration. My delegation shares the view that apart from the increasing levels of connectivity, poverty and inequality in development remain a major driving force for people to migrate in searching for better economic opportunity and better livelihoods. While recognizing the significant role of migrants in poverty reduction, they are often among the most vulnerable groups in the situation of uncertainty such as the current global health crisis. The recent Socio-

Economic Impact Assessment of Covid-19 in the country showed that the lockdown in neighboring countries at the start of the crisis led to significant increases in unemployment and subsequent loss of income among migrant population. It is believed that not only migrants themselves are at great risk but it adds to the distress of poor households that rely on remittances for a large share of their income, and where households lack social protection options, job opportunities and affordable credit.

In this connection, the Lao Government attaches great importance to addressing migration and migration-related issue, especially during the time of the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes the issuing of responding measures, the revision and the adoption of relevant regulation and law related to migration, set up public employment centers to provide information on safe migration and job counselling. Poverty eradication and improving the wellbeing of people has always been the utmost priority in the implementation of its Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSED). Proper migration will contribute to reducing poverty, inequality and organized crime, including trafficking in persons. It is believed that effective cooperation and joint efforts by international community in addressing migration challenges will contribute to positive development outcomes and to realizing the implementation of the lofty 2030 Development Agenda. At the same time, we should enhance our effort to reduce the incidence and negative impact of irregular migration through regional international cooperation and measures put forward in this GCM. To

this end, all member states, together with UN Agencies and other stakeholders have to identify a number of actions for further cooperation on the implementation of the GCM. On this note, it is important to highlight a few key areas that require special attention namely:

- To encourage member states to develop networks for exchange of knowledge and best practices, peer learning and co-coordination among countries in the region.
- To scale up the ways and means to enhance initiatives at strategic, policy and project levels;
- To deepen understanding of the objectives and modalities of the GCM among authorities concerned at all levels.

In conclusion, Lao PDR reaffirms its commitment to the implementation of the GCM. We would also like to thank the UN Country Team, including IOM and other Development Partners for the valuable and continued support and assistance rendered to the Lao Government in addressing its development challenges. We look forward to further enhancing our partnership for the realization of our national socio-economic development plan as well as the effective implementation of the GCM at the national level.

I thank you for your kind attention.