



Lao People's Democratic Republic

Statement by

**H.E. Maj. Gen. Somkeo Syravong, Minister of Public Security of Lao PDR
at the Bali Process Government and Business Forum
Perth, Australia, 24-25 August 2017**

- Excellency the Hon Julie Bishop, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Australia,
- Excellency Retno L.P. Marsudi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia,
- Distinguished Delegates and Business Leaders,
- Ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honor for me to represent the Lao People's Democratic Republic to attend this important Bali Process Government and Business Forum. I would like to express our sincere thanks and appreciation to the governments of Australia and Indonesia for co-organizing this Forum and for the excellent arrangements and the kind hospitality extended to our delegation since our arrival in Perth, one of the most beautiful cities of Australia.

Excellencies
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is widely recognized that since its inception in 2002, Bali Process has been playing an active role in raising public awareness on the consequences of trafficking in persons, people smuggling and related transnational crime. It is also a well-known Forum for policy dialogue, information exchange and practical cooperation to help countries in the region to tackle these challenges. The government of the Lao PDR highly values the contribution of the Bali Process to the fight against such crime in the region.

It is the vital interest of the government of the Lao PDR to address the so-called 'modern slavery' in cooperation with other countries, regional and international

organizations. We have attached importance to and focused our efforts to the prevention, suppression of trafficking in persons, victims assistance and prosecution of perpetrators by developing national policies and laws to combat trafficking in persons, establishing the National Committee on Anti-human Trafficking, the Anti-human Trafficking Department, and other relevant agencies from central to local levels have been improved with the Ministry of Public Security plays a central role as the coordinating agency.

We have been implementing the 2nd National Action Plan on Prevention and Combat Trafficking in Persons from 2017-2020 adopted in April 2017 and the Law on Anti-Human Trafficking approved promulgated in February 2016. In addition, the Lao PDR has been a signatory to international and regional conventions relevant to anti-human trafficking and anti-people smuggling, including the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Person which ratified by the Lao National Assembly in April 2017.

The Lao PDR has concluded a bilateral cooperation MOU on anti-human trafficking with Viet Nam, China and Thailand. We have also implemented many cooperation programs and activities within sub-regional, regional and international frameworks, including the Coordinated Mekong Ministerial Initiative Against Trafficking in Persons (COMMIT), Bali Process and Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons (AAPTIP).

We have also paid attention to raising public awareness of the consequences of human trafficking. Recently, on 29 July 2017, we organized a large event to celebrate the World Day Against Trafficking in Person, and launched a TV program and radio program titled “Join hands to combat trafficking in persons”.

Excellencies

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Lao PDR supports the initiative to engage the private sector in the fight against trafficking in persons. I do believe this Bali Process Government and Business forum will provide an excellent opportunity for the representatives from the governments and the business sector to exchanges their views on how to better address trafficking in persons in the region. With close cooperation and assistance from the private sector, our

efforts to suppress and prevent this terrible crime will definitely be more effective and successful.

On our part, we are working on the labor-related issues under the tripartite cooperation between the Ministry of Labor and Social welfare, the Lao National Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the Lao Trade Union with the support from the International Labor Organization.

We believe that to effectively tackle these challenges, we need to have sufficient capacity and support financially and technically, we need to have practical mechanism and frameworks, and active participation of all relevant stakeholders.

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to, once again, thank the governments of Australia and Indonesia for their active contribution and leadership this Bali Process. Under the able leadership of Co-Chairs and active participation of all of us here, I am convinced that this Forum would be productive and successful.

Thank you