

**Statement**  
**by H.E.Dr. Ty Phommassack,**  
**Vice Minister of Agriculture and Forestry**  
**Deputy Head of Delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic**  
**To the World Summit on Food Security**  
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Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me a great pleasure to be here today and take the floor on behalf of the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. Allow me first to convey my gratitude to FAO for organizing this important World Summit on Food Security.

As we all know, two greatest challenges that our world faces today are food insecurity and climate change, the both challenges require urgent, innovative and holistic response.

Tackling hunger in the context of Laos require strong coordination, collaboration and cooperation among all stake holders which include government institutions, mass organizations, private sector, academia, local community, Lao professional organizations and international agencies to engage in this fight.

With regard to climate change, Laos is preparing its self to take part in a number of activities related to climate change and adaptation. Reduced of agricultural productivity is of particular concern. As the rain pattern change, the Lao PDR will be faced by unparallel agricultural challenges. The environment and natural resources are the foundation of livelihood for most people in Lao PDR, as well as the foundation for its development strategy. The forest provides poor people with shelter, fuel, food and a source of income. Over 80% of population of the Lao PDR are engage in agriculture and fisheries, and are thus directly dependence on national resource base. Given this, the effect of climate change are likely to have a drastic impact on the people of Laos.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The agriculture and forestry sector is the main contributor to the GDP and overall economic development, and in particular to the government's food production and poverty reduction targets.

Lao PDR's agriculture was impacted by the global downturn, especially supply of key imported inputs require for agriculture and encountered relatively severe disasters in 2008 and in 2009 which had damaged a large number of irrigation scheme and destroyed agriculture areas of approximately 42,000 ha. However, agriculture and fisheries

production has recorded satisfactory performance in the last few years. This is, to a great extent, due to gradually increasing and well-programmed investment in the agriculture and rural development sector. It is estimated that total rice production will reach 3.2 metric tons in 2009 and thereby meet its rice requirement and self-sufficiency.

Distinguished delegates,

While any people have benefited from investment in agriculture and natural resources development, there have been concerns about social and environmental impact. This concern became more intense as commodity prices fell and food prices rose; thereby showing that regional and global integration could bring cost and vulnerabilities, not just benefits.

We all agree that the gravity of the current food crisis is the result of 20 years of under-investment in agriculture and negligence of the sector. However, I would also like to add that it is just important to invest in farmers. Investing in farmers means making sure they have secured land tenure, making sure they have fair contracts, they have access to information, and improving the reach of services for health, education and extension.

The crisis should encourage all of us to look for ways of improving resilience, reducing vulnerability, and improving the adaptive capacity of governments, development workers and farmers to adjust to the fast changing environment that are taking place in due to engagement with the private sector and regional markets as well as due to climate change.

Once again, I thank FOA for convening this important conference and I hope that all of us will work together to come up with implementable and actionable agenda for the coming years which would focus on addressing the challenges of food insecurity and climate change and turning them into opportunity for our future generations.

Thank You.