

Statement
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Minister
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

**High-Level Segment of the 29th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on
Substances that Depletes the Ozone Layer**
23-24 November 2017
Montreal, Canada

Excellency Ministers, Vice-Ministers of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol
Executive Secretary to the Vienna Convention and the Montreal Protocol
Distinguished Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

It is a great pleasure for me to attend the 29th Meeting of the Parties to the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in Montreal, Canada especially this year marks 30th Anniversary of the Montreal Protocol, the most successful international treaty. Therefore, the organization of the Meeting of the Parties this year in Montreal has reminded us to the memory where the Protocol was established.

On behalf of the Government of Lao PDR, may I express our deep and sincere appreciation to the Government of Canada and their officials for their graciously hosting the 29th Meeting of the Parties as well as their excellent arrangements and hospitality made for the Meeting. I also extend my appreciation to the Executive Director of the UN Environment, the Ozone Secretariat and all associated staff for their excellent preparedness and organization of this important Meeting.

Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Currently, Lao PDR is implementing the HCFC Phase-out Management Plan Stage I. Under the HCFC Phase-out Management Plan, the Government of Lao PDR has established the ODS legislation and enforced the quota and licensing system of HCFCs since 2013. The local capacity on the enforcement of national licensing system and on good servicing practices has been strengthened. As Lao PDR is a land-lock country, we have closely coordinated with our neighboring countries to prevent illegal movement of ozone depleting substances at international and local customs check points along the land border through the informal prior-informed consent (iPIC) mechanism. As a result, Lao PDR has been able to meet compliance with HCFC reduction schedule under the Montreal Protocol during from 2013 onwards and we strongly believe that this momentum would be maintained to achieve 35% reduction of HCFC consumption by 2020.

While we successfully phased out most ozone depleting substances, we are facing a new challenge attributed to the rising trend of extremely potent greenhouse alternatives - hydrofluorocarbons or HFCs that replace ozone depleting substances. The 28th Meeting of the Parties held in Kigali, Republic of Rwanda last year has marked our history as Kigali Amendment was adopted to control HFCs, which have higher global warming potential than carbon-dioxide for thousand times to address these challenges. This is also aligned with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement that we must work toward a secure and sustainable world and one of which is avoiding the use of high global warming alternatives.

Having said the above, our responsibilities have not yet been finished. Everybody, the government agencies, private sectors and general public must join hands to work together to make the world better off. Like other Parties, Lao PDR confirms our commitment to join hands toward the protection of the Ozone Layer and at the same time maximize the climate benefits through the ratification and implementation of the Kigali Amendment. While Lao PDR has put in place compulsory licensing system for HCFCs, the Government of Lao PDR has controlled the import and export of HFCs and other low-GWP refrigerants on a voluntary basis, which provided experiences and lessons learned for Lao PDR to extend our licensing system to cover HFCs and other low-GWP refrigerants in the future. Based on these experiences, the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment has initiated the dialogue with the Customs Department and concerned stakeholders on the mechanism and actions required to control, track and monitor the import and export of HFCs and other low-GWP refrigerants.

Excellency, Ladies and Gentlemen;

The Government of Lao PDR had given priority to the ratification of the Kigali Amendment under the Montreal Protocol to phase-down the production and the use of HFCs. We would like to express our appreciation for the Multilateral Fund support to assist Lao PDR to undertake the ODS Alternatives Survey at the national level, which has been completed with assistance of UN Environment as implementing agency. Based on the survey, it is anticipated that alternatives to ozone depleting substances in Lao PDR will be dominated by HFCs. Outcomes of the ODS Alternatives Survey have been used by the Government of Lao PDR as supporting information for the decision making in the ratification of the Kigali Amendment. Lao PDR is pleased to announce that last week on 15 November 2017 Instrument of Acceptance to ratify the Kigali Amendment has been issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and on 16 November 2017 has been deposited to UN Headquarter in New York.

On behalf of the Government of Lao PDR, I wish to extend my sincere appreciation to donor countries, the Executive Committee, and the Multilateral Fund Secretariat in providing continue support to Lao PDR through assistance of the UN Environment. This has allowed Lao PDR to smoothly implement activities necessary for the phase-out of ODS and meet all obligations under the Montreal Protocol. I would like to emphasize the importance of continued assistance to Article 5 countries to phase-out remaining consumption of HCFCs and to address identified challenges from the implementation of the Kigali Amendment especially how to strengthen the country licensing system to control HFC and to strengthen local capacity on the safe handling of low-GWP alternatives that are flammable, toxic or higher pressure. The enabling activities will be the first important step to address our challenges.

Finally, may I wish you all good health, prosperity, and wish the 29th Meeting of the Parties a success. I wish that this Meeting of Parties would finally had the fruitful outcomes to guide the way forwards for the Parties in the phase-down of HFCs and adoption of low-GWP alternatives. Again, thank you much for very warm hospitality of the Government of Canada and the Ozone Secretariat in arranging the venue and accommodation to facilitate this important meeting in a smooth manner.

I thank you very much for your kind attention!