

Message by H.E. Mr. Saleumxay KOMMASITH

Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR

On the Occasion of the 57th Anniversary of the Founding of ASEAN

And the 27th Anniversary of the Lao PDR's Accession to ASEAN

Vientiane, 8 August 2024

- Excellencies, Leaders of the Party and State,

- Fellow Compatriots, Soldiers, Police Officers and People of the Lao PDR,

1. On the occasion of the 57th Anniversary of the founding of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN (8 August 1967 - 8 August 2024) and the 27th Anniversary of the Lao People's Democratic Republic's accession to ASEAN (23 July 1997 - 23 July 2024), on behalf of the Government of the Lao PDR, I would like to take this opportunity to extend my warmest greetings to Leaders of the Party and State, officials, soldiers, police officers, and all Lao people, including overseas Lao as well as foreigners working and residing in the Lao PDR.

- Dear Lao People,

2. ASEAN is an inter-governmental regional organisation that is diverse and yet united by the common objective of maintaining and promoting peace, stability, and cooperation for the prosperity of ASEAN.
3. Over the past 57 years, the "ASEAN Way" of cooperation has proven to be suitable for particularities and unique characteristics of the Southeast Asian region that is exemplified by diversity.
4. Intra-ASEAN cooperation and ASEAN's cooperation with external partners through ASEAN-led mechanisms with ASEAN at the Centre, have been gradually deepened and widened, thereby contributing to the strengthening of the ASEAN Community as well as to the common course of maintaining and promoting peace, stability, and development in the region and wider region.

5. 2024 is not only 57th anniversary of ASEAN and 27th anniversary of the Lao PDR's accession to ASEAN, but it is also a significant year as the Lao PDR has the honour of assuming the ASEAN Chairmanship for the third time under the theme "ASEAN: Enhancing Connectivity and Resilience". This theme not only is reflective of the policy and objective of the Lao PDR to turn itself from a land-locked country to a regional connectivity hub in the region, but also is in line with ASEAN's common goal of building a more connected and integrated region that is able to respond to emerging challenges in this complex and rapidly-changing environment in the region and the world.
6. Over the past seven months, the Chairmanship of the Lao PDR has been progressing well. The line Ministries of the Lao PDR under the three ASEAN Community pillars have successfully hosted and chaired ASEAN meetings at various levels within their respective purviews with commendable outcomes. The most outstanding one is the successful convening of the ASEAN-Australia Special Summit to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of ASEAN-Australia Dialogue Relations in March 2024 in Melbourne, Australia which was co-chaired by H.E. Mr. Sonexay SIPHANDONE, Prime Minister of the Lao PDR. The Lao PDR has also successful convened and chaired various ASEAN ministerial-level meetings, particularly the 57th ASEAN Foreign Ministers' Meeting and Related Meetings which was recently held on 24-27 July 2024 in Vientiane. The outcomes of these meetings under the three ASEAN Community pillars serve as a solid foundation in the preparation for the 44th and 45th ASEAN Summits and Related Summits, which will be held on 8-11 October 2024 in Vientiane.

- Dear Lao people,

7. The Lao PDR's accession to ASEAN and its assumption of ASEAN Chair for three times, have not only raised the profile of and significant role played by the Lao PDR in the regional and international arena, but also attracted support from ASEAN Member States and external partners towards the implementation of the task of safeguarding and developing the Lao PDR.
8. I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere thanks and congratulations to the line Ministries, private sectors, and all Lao people for their active contributions to ASEAN affairs in the past as well as to Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship this year. We together will continue to be a good host and to ensure that the Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship 2024 will be crowned with a great success.

9. On this auspicious occasion, once again, on behalf of the Government of the Lao PDR, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to ASEAN Member States, Dialogue Partners of ASEAN, as well as other external partners, friendly countries, and regional and international organisations for their continued cooperation and support extended to the Lao PDR's ASEAN Chairmanship. I am confident that with such cooperation and support, Lao PDR's ASEAN affairs and ASEAN Chairmanship 2024 will be a success.

- Fellow Compatriots, and all Lao people,

10. Happy 57th ASEAN Day, 8 August, and 27th Anniversary of the Lao PDR's accession to ASEAN.

Thank you
