



**Statement by**

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**On Agenda Item 3:**

Special Body of Least Developed Countries (LDCs), Landlocked Developing  
Countries (LLDCs), and Small Island Developing States (SIDs)

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– **Mr. Chair**

– **Distinguished delegates,**

1. My delegation would like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat for its detailed report on **the Asia-Pacific Countries with Special Needs Development Report 2024: Leveraging Digitalization for Productivity and Decent Employment**, which corresponds with this year's theme of UNESCAP.

– **Mr. Chair,**

2. Digitalization plays a vital role in narrowing the digital gap and enhancing connectivity and infrastructure in countries with special situation. For instance, the Government of the Lao PDR has adopted strategies and visions to help transform itself from a landlocked to a land-linked country. This includes the implementation of the Lao-China Railways project, which has enhanced connectivity and supported the country's vision to serve as a regional hub. Such connectivity initiative is crucial for facilitating trade, investment, people-to-people exchange, and regional integration, as well as creating employment opportunities, ultimately contributing to socio-economic development.
3. Being both an LDC and LLDC country, we have attached great importance to the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, particularly those contained in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Doha Program of Action for LDCs and the Vienna Programme of Action for LLDCs.
4. With the aim to maintain the country's development momentum in graduating from the Least Developed Countries status by year 2026, the Government of Lao PDR has adopted the country's Smooth Transition Strategy for LDC Graduation or STS. While recognizing some progress has been made, there remains much more work to be done, including the need for the country to apply digital innovation to not only ensure the smooth, quality and sustainable graduation, but also to bridge the persistent divides in infrastructural, technological and human capabilities, and to accelerate shift towards greater reliance on digital solutions.
5. Against this backdrop, the Lao PDR has been working closely with the UN Technology Bank for Least Developed Countries to jointly conduct its Technology Needs Assessment. This ongoing process is crucial to clearly see the country's technology needs so as to better formulate relevant policies and actions that could help leapfrog the country's socio-economic development progress.
6. Towards this end, the Lao PDR has continued to enhance closer cooperation and collaboration with international organizations and countries in the region in order to

mobilize adequate financial resources and technical support, draw best practices and promote technology transfer including through UNESCAP framework, South-South Cooperation and regional framework such as ASEAN, among others; so that the country could be in a better position to build its Digital Government, Digital Economy, and Digital Society.

**I thank you**