

## **Political report of the 9th Party Central Committee**

*Every five years the Lao People's Revolutionary Party holds its National Congress to review the implementation of the resolution of the previous congress, make any necessary amendments to the Party Statute and elect the supreme national leadership body for the next five year period. The following is an unofficial translation of the political report released by Secretary General of the Lao People's Revolutionary Party Mr Choummaly Sayasone.*

On behalf of the 8th Party Central Committee, I would like to present briefly a political report to the 9th Party Congress under the theme "Enhancing the cohesive solidarity of the entire Lao nation and the unity within the Party; upholding the leadership role and capacity of the Party; devising breakthrough approaches for the implementation of the renovation policy; creating a solid basis for lifting the nation from underdevelopment by 2020; and advancing it further towards the set goal of socialism".

First of all we must objectively sum up and assess the outcome of the implementation of the resolution of the 8th Party Congress and draw valued lessons to properly lay down targets and define directives and tasks for the next five years.

Over the past five years, the external environment has changed with complexity, and within our country we have experienced severe natural disasters and many other challenges. But we are pleased to see that our entire Party, state, armed forces and people, under the leadership of the Party Central Committee, have been active in implementing the resolution of the 8th Party Congress, which has brought about significant achievements in many areas. Our most beloved nation has a foundation and new momentum to continue growth along the set directives and goals.

1. The most significant and fundamental achievement is that we are capable of maintaining our nation's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, while our political regime has seen firm stability, and our society has enjoyed general security and social order.

This achievement has resulted from carrying out the Party's comprehensive policy of national defense and public security with focus and proper direction. For instance, we have applied a strategic measure to build up political grassroots linked with the creation of development villages and development village clusters based on four contents and four targets. We have made close coordination between development and national defense- security and foreign affairs. All this has facilitated the livelihood of the population, and created confidence for both domestic and foreign entrepreneurs to invest in the country. As a result, development has been sustainable and successful.

2. Socio-economic development has been successful in various areas. Most prominent is the continued growth of the national economy, which averaged 7.9 percent per year over the past five years. Average per capita income for the 2009-2010 fiscal year reached 8.7 million kip or US\$1,069, exceeding expectations.

The macro-economy is stable. It is satisfactory to note that addressing poverty alongside building development villages and development village clusters has seen good results in many fields. The number of poor families across the country decreased from 27.7 percent in 2002-2003 to 20.4 percent in 2009-2010. Creating development villages and merging villages has had a positive result. Some larger villages have become economic and cultural hubs and begun to develop into small towns in rural areas. Importantly, there exists a new factor as well as innovation in the way of living among local people. Ethnic people have actively and broadly participated in the development drive.

The Party has followed a policy of promoting small and medium enterprises and handicrafts in parallel with creating conditions for larger scale projects to become operational, for instance, development projects in energy, mining, communications, processing industry, and construction material production. The Party has also pushed the services sector for faster growth towards modernization. This sector contributes significantly to the changed economic structure and boosts continued economic growth. Especially, we have successfully opened the Lao Stock Exchange as another form of raising funds from throughout society to contribute to national development.

Our Party has pursued a policy of building a socialist oriented market economy by boosting the role and strength of various economic sectors.

Our Party has also sought to improve and raise the capacity and efficiency of the economic management of the state, increased the strict management of national resources and environmental protection, for instance, forest protection linked with reforestation promotion to expand green areas across the country. At the same time, we have carried out land allocation across the country, and adopted a national policy on the sustainable use of land and natural resources.

Generally, our Party has conducted the economic renovation policy with creativeness, prompting economic growth along the right track. A great number of personnel have been trained and upgraded in their professions. Factors fundamental to industrialization and modernization have become visible. Economic growth has changed along a sustainable direction.

In parallel with economic development, the Party has directed the implementation of a social policy, taking human resource development as a priority. Initial steps in national educational reform have seen positive outcomes.

It is praiseworthy that educational tasks have become the task of the entire society since all economic sectors and people of all social strata have supported and involved themselves in education development.

At the same time, public health policy has been implemented as planned, by improving central and regional hospitals, as well as expanding primary healthcare facilities and public health networks to rural areas and remote focal development areas while pushing hard a

campaign on health education and mother and child healthcare through a process of establishing model sanitation villages and vaccination against diseases. As a result, serious communicable diseases have been prevented and controlled in a timely manner, maternal and infant mortality rates have decreased, and life expectancy has increased.

We are pleased to witness that national culture as well as the culture of every Lao ethnic group has been conserved with cherishment and promoted through festivals and various activities at national and local levels. Another prominent point was the integration of cultural performances with the organization of the 25th SEA Games, the celebration of the 35<sup>th</sup> founding anniversary of the Lao PDR and the 450th founding anniversary of Vientiane as the Lao capital, as well as the hosting of important international conferences in our country.

Cultural life has been further enhanced through expanding television and other media outlets. As a result, people living in remote areas have enjoyed news, information and entertainment in various forms. The implementation of a social policy and the solution of social issues has been improved; notably the implementation of a policy to reward more people who have demonstrated virtue in their involvement with the nation and the Revolution. We have raised the indices of salaries and allowances, enlarged the social insurance system, and paid more attention to employment, management and protection of the interests of laborers and various other social welfare schemes.

### 3. The country's political system has shown firm stability.

This is due to the fact that the Party has directed improvements in the political system at the grassroots level in parallel with consolidating central state authorities in an effort toward building a state governed by the rule of law.

The National Assembly is able to perform its legislative role and act as a representative of the power and legitimate interest of the multi-ethnic people by appropriately improving its organizational system and working style, making sure that the legislative body and its members gain the confidence and trust of the people.

The government and local administrations have run the state and society by law, and eased the processes of administrative and public service work. The government has divided managerial levels and adjusted coordination between sectors at central and local levels. Also, the government and local state administrations including village administration have been consolidated by applying measures to build political grassroots in partnership with establishing villages and village clusters for development.

The people's courts and prosecutors have actively improved their organizations and work, prompting a faster, objective, proper and fair examination and trial of cases.

The Lao Front for National Construction has carried out work in the new era in an active manner capable of rallying solidarity and building unity among the entire Lao people. The front has also mobilized the people of all strata in society, including compatriots living abroad, to

participate massively in implementing the policy of the Party and state, for instance, addressing grassroots poverty.

The Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union has made great efforts to implement its tasks in leading, educating and training young people through various forms focusing on realizing the slogan "two solidarities, three goods and four developments" in various fields, making young people successors of the Party and the future of the nation.

The Lao Women's Union has actively educated and mobilized Lao women of all ethnic groups to contribute to the common tasks of the Party and state, besides self-development. The implementation of a policy to boost the role and advancement of women in society has seen prominent achievements in various fields. For instance, this involves enhancing the cultural traditions, diligence and creativeness of Lao women by organizing various suitable activities rich in forms, meeting the basic interests of Lao women.

The Lao Trade Union has played its role to protect the interests of all Lao multiethnic working people in a suitable manner by enhancing campaigns to disseminate relevant policy and laws and raising discipline and a sense of responsibility among workers and Lao working people in a process of development and innovation in various sectors.

The Lao National Veterans' Federation has been improved in its organization and role. Activities in several areas have seen a positive change, better meeting the desire of the majority of the members at central and local levels throughout the country.

Our Party is pleased to see that all bodies within the democratic people's political system have continued to hold faith and confidence in the leadership of the Party, contributing to the implementation of the two strategic tasks by their respective roles. Such organizations are worthy of being a strong force of the Party.

4. We have made significant achievements in implementing a foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation by expanding relations in various forms - multidirectional, multilateral and multi-dimensional – in close coordination with activities on foreign relations conducted on the part of the Party, state and mass organizations in political, economic, cultural and national defense and public security areas. The move in foreign relations has suitably contributed to the common cause of nations for peace and cooperation, hence raising the country's reputation and influence at the regional and international stages.

Our Party and state have consistently upheld friendly relations, special solidarity and comprehensive cooperation with Vietnam. Prominent outcomes include completing the project of the edition on the history of joint combat and special solidarity over many decades as a document for learning and educating people in both Laos and Vietnam, particularly the younger generation, to preserve and develop these fine traditions forever.

The Party and state have actively increased friendship and traditional solidarity between Laos and China. The Party and state have also encouraged and supported expansion and strengthening of comprehensive cooperation between the two countries, based on the comprehensive strategic partnership for long-lasting and stable Lao–Chinese relations. In addition, the Party and state have devoted to developing cooperative relations with other fraternal socialist countries based on supporting and helping each other for development.

We are pleased to see that cooperation with countries in the Asian family has grown closer, on the basis of adhering to the basic principles and moving in the same direction towards the Asian Community.

Relations of friendship and equal and reciprocal cooperation with foreign countries as well as with United Nations agencies, other international organizations and non-governmental organizations have been further broadened in an effective way. Relations with communist and workers' parties as well as ruling parties and progressive organizations around the world have been developed.

In summary, our foreign relations and international cooperation have expanded in a comprehensive manner; our friends have increased day by day and have trust in the good partnership of our country.

5. Over the past five years, our Party has been pro-active in improving and building itself in terms of political ideology, organizational structure and style of leadership. Our Party stands as a strong political force leading the entire society to continue implementing the two strategic tasks in line with the renovation policy, making achievements in many areas.

Research of theories and synthesis of practices of our Party and other foreign countries have been improved and upgraded, matching with the currently required leadership standard. This has enabled our Party to consolidate its political line and programmed in various fields.

Work on the Party's political ideology has been inserted with work on Party building and personnel training and the national development drive. A dry, unrealistic work style has been addressed to some extent.

Work on Party organizational building has been carried out on a regular basis. The organizational system and the rank of cadres from the central to the grassroots level have unanimity based on Party policy and principles. Democracy within the Party and the rights of Party members have been further developed.

The Party Central Committee and Party committees at all levels follow work and leadership styles that are closely attached to the grassroots people and real work.

Our Party has strongly pushed the work style "dare to think, dare to do and dare to be responsible", linked with developing a leading role model of Party members.

At the same time more attention is being given to personnel work according to current requirements.

In particular, the Party regularly selects and sends cadres for professional and political training both at home and abroad through training programmers for each level. Over recent years, we have also increased the number of personnel in districts and villages.

The number of personnel trained by schools of Policy and Administration Studies has increased and an increasing number of personnel with professional skills and work experience have been placed in different executive ranks.

Inspection work, both on the part of the Party and state, has been gradually improved. Through systematic checks or specific checks, we have been able to develop the positive sides and active factors of a great number of Party committee members and Party members. At the same time, we have been able to limit negative instances that occur within Party-state organizations and society. This work contributes to improvements in Party building and state management with transparency and strength.

All the fruits gained have affirmed clearly that the political line as well as directives adopted at the Eighth Congress have conformed with the implementation capacity.

The significant successes are the fruit of the efforts and responsibilities of Party committees, administrations and Party members at all levels. These are fruits that are borne of the diligent Endeavour for their livelihood and national development by Lao people of all ethnic groups across the country.

They are also the fruit of the support and assistance of sister countries and international friends.

We express our wholehearted appreciation and thanks for these endeavors and valuable contributions.

Along with the pride in these successes, our Party admits that in its leadership and direction, there are shortcomings to be addressed as follows:

1. Supervision to translate the resolution of the 8th Party Congress into detailed work plans in some sectors and provinces is still slow, causing Our Party has strongly pushed the work style “dare to think, dare to do and dare to be responsible”.

a loss of working time, particularly in addressing poverty among the people linked with promotion of commercial production in order to generate real income in families. These tasks have not reached their targets.

2. Implementation of the two strategic tasks lacks harmony in some areas. Some sectors, provinces and people still do not take an active part in a regular, continuous and comprehensive manner in national defense and public security. The problems of insecurity and negative setbacks in society, especially in some large towns, have not been firmly addressed with overall strength.

3. Economic growth is still mainly based on the exploitation and export of natural resources. Public investment in some projects does not meet the focus and lacks efficiency. Agricultural productivity remains low. Development of the agricultural processing industry and light industry is also at a low level. Macro-economic management in some areas is not strong enough.

Violation of planning and financial disciplines remains widespread. State economic units in general met with difficulties in many sectors and are often inefficient. Commercial production and the cooperative economy of the people lacks the support of clear policies, including tax policy, credit policy and marketing policy.

4. Some areas of social development do not go hand in hand with the economy. The creation of a moral civilization has not kept pace with material development and social change. The income gap between different social strata has tended to increase. Development gaps between towns and remote areas remain very large.

5. Management of the state and society is not strict or effective as defined in the law. The delivery of services by state bodies at all levels to the people is neither easy nor quick.

The organizational structure, procedures and mechanisms of action in some areas tend to be bureaucratic and non-transparent, and even create loopholes conducive to corruption.

6. The Lao Front for National Construction and other mass organizations have still experienced slowness in their change of form and activities. The content and form tend to overlap or are similar to those of state administration organizations.

7. The implementation of agreements signed with foreign countries in various areas remains slow due to a lack of systematic monitoring, follow up and evaluation.

Grant aid or loan project management and the supervision of activities in foreign affairs lacks a centralized and uniform character.

8. Work on Party building and personnel training in some areas is still not sufficiently run in depth and fails to respond to urgent needs in current political, management and administration tasks. The development of democracy and rights of Party members has lacked clear direction and been superficially carried out. Some Party committees of ministries and departments at central and local levels have not strictly followed the principle of centralization.

The division of labor and responsibility is unclear. Supervision of work and officials concerned is not strict in some areas, creating a situation of "do or not do is equally OK". The situation is developing. Struggle within the Party as well as self-criticism or mutual criticism

based on the spirit of sharing common ideology is declining. Disciplinary measures against guilty persons are not seriously or timely applied.

A few Party members have degraded their political nature and revolutionary morale, exhibited extravagance, exploited opportunities for personal gains, and committed corruption.

As a revolutionary Party, we should have a more serious attitude towards the shortcomings within the Party.

The important thing is that we identify and define the causes, and also that we are committed to easing the situation and reducing such problems in the future. The Party Central Committee has found that these shortcomings were born from several factors, both objectively and subjectively, but the most important are:

1. The organized learning and study of Party lines was not in sufficient depth. The translation of the Party lines into work plans and projects did not to some extent reflect reality.

2. The fund allocation did not completely conform to the work plan or focal project, even lacking systematic continuity. This caused slow or delayed implementation resulting in low efficiency. The management of projects was not properly performed.

3. Creativeness and the concept of “dare to think, dare to do and dare to be responsible” was inadequate. The implementation of the Party resolutions and state orders in certain areas was not strict. Some cadres and Party members did not act as role models in their responsibilities.

4. The increased number of public servants did not respond to the demand of work in the current period. Salaries and other incentives still cannot create motivation for public servants to fulfill their assigned duties.

With the successes as well as shortcomings and causes mentioned above, our Party was able to conclude lessons learned from practices in leadership and implementation.

1. The enhanced unity among Lao people and unanimity within the Party are key factors to ensure political stability. It is the only way to create a socially secure environment and achieve the two strategic tasks as well as international integration as indicated in the set goals.

2. Enhancing the leading role and capacity of the Party in all areas of work, notably the direction by state organizations to translate the political lines and overall policies of the Party into action plans and detailed projects properly and timely, according to the characteristics and potential of each area, in parallel with developing the strengths of economic sectors and the tradition of the social sectors to participate in the implementation. This is also an important factor in enabling successful implementation of the Party lines.

3. Uniform and realistic direction by Party committees at each level and in each sector with more attention to developing the knowledge and capacity of staff, and raising the leadership role model of Party members and cadres in performing their duties with high responsibility. This represents a guarantee for success in the realization of the Party lines.

4. Moving down to the grassroots, attachment to the real situation, more systematic and consistent monitoring and evaluation of each implementation step. Looking into issues in a realistic way with pro-active thinking and a high determination to solve problems. Granting rewards and applying appropriate policies for those who work hard and produce real outputs. Imposing strict and timely discipline against guilty persons depending on the offence, whether indictable or no indictable. All these are important measures to ensure the effective and productive implementation of Party lines.

5. Upholding the foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation, together with increasing responsibilities for improving internal strength. Creating a favorable environment, and honoring commitments with other countries. This is an indispensable factor to maintain the role of being a trustworthy, reliable partner towards international friends. This will also help us to win more external support to ensure the success of the Party's lines.

The five lessons drawn from the practical deeds of Party leadership are of great significance for Party members and cadres, especially executives and core cadres, who need to understand perfectly how to make use of them in accordance with reality for the coming years.

To develop the success obtained in the past years, our Party must base on the overall trend of change in the international and regional situation. We must dare to use the positive aspects and limit the challenging aspects on time.

First of all, we must understand that the situation over the next five years will continue to change with complexity, but we must understand that many circumstances are hard to predict. Wars and armed confrontations will occur in some regions. But the trend of peace and cooperation for development will remain as a fundamental one.

Development is yet to take place vigorously in several countries, through globalization with wider cooperation and with very strong competition. The knowledge economy will grow stronger. Progress in science and technology plays a more important and decisive role in increasing production capacity and quality of services and is an important factor in driving the growth of the world economy.

The building of the Asian Economic Community in 2015 will transform Asian into a single production base and a common market to be integrated with other economies and other economic blocs. Cooperation within the sub-region and the Mekong Basin (GMS) will grow and will play a role in bridging development gaps among Asian countries.

The economic development triangle areas between the countries of the sub-region will be further pushed and promoted for the wealth and prosperity of each country. With a clear vision of opportunities and challenges for the situation surrounding the region and the world, our Party believes that the cause of national defense and national development will achieve even greater success because over the last 35 years our country has developed in several areas, and our position and power have been strengthened significantly.

The renovation policy has been proved through practical deeds and widely supported by all our people and friendly countries. The ethnic Lao people have unity, a tradition and consciousness in leading their life and development, while having confidence in the Party.

Therefore, our Party will raise its loyalty to the country and to the people by increasing its responsibility and management capacity in order to bring the country out of least developed country status by 2020 and achieve certain goals by 2015 as follows:

1. The political situation is fundamentally stable based on improving the people's democratic regime in which our Party is the leading core, making it stronger, more stable and more democratic. National unity and national harmony among ethnic groups is steady. Society has enjoyed peace, security and social order.

2. The national economy is developing continuously and steadily. The gross domestic product will grow by about 8 percent annually. In 2015, income per capita will be US\$1,700 per year. Development has changed towards sustainability because economic and social development goes hand in hand with environmental protection. The country has the necessary basis for transformation to industrialization and modernization.

3. In 2015, the number of poor families will fall below 10 percent. Through compulsory education at primary level, the majority of the population will graduate from secondary school and the average life expectancy of the population will reach 68.3 years. The country will achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). National culture will maintain its good value and will be taken over and developed continuously.

4. The Lao PDR has a large number of international friends. It is able to actively participate in regional and international integration and contribute actively to the establishment of peace, friendship and cooperation.

To achieve the set goals, our Party has defined the following tasks: Enhancing leadership in implementing Party and state policies, creating transformation for development by ensuring an appropriate rate of growth that is stable and sustainable; implementing comprehensive renovation policy according to the six principles defined, and creatively exploiting the overall strength and making use of opportunities to create breakthrough steps.

Firstly, we must achieve the breakthrough in thinking by liberating or doing away with such ideas as dogma, stereotype, easiness, laziness, and extremism.

Secondly, we undertake breakthroughs in human resource development, especially in training and improving knowledge and techniques in various fields, so that we have a qualified workforce to meet the demands of development.

Thirdly, we have to make a breakthrough in removing administrative and managerial orders and methods that block production business and services.

Fourthly, we must achieve a breakthrough in addressing poverty by seeking funding sources and introducing special promoting policies, and creating social and economic infrastructure with focus, so that it becomes a driving force for development in other areas.

We must all understand that a breakthrough in all areas has to be carried out harmoniously and comprehensively, not just in one particular area. But most importantly, the Party executive committee at the central level and Party committees at all levels must lead and guide in practice in a way that is uniform and consistent with reality.

In the next five years, to achieve four set breakthrough steps, the entire Party, government, armed forces and entire society have to implement and accomplish focused duties and tasks as below:

1. We must continue to regard the economic sector as a central point of development by strongly focusing on the expansion of production capacity and turning the agriculture-based economy into a market economy, while realizing the market economy in line with socialist directions.

We have to review and exchange lessons regarding new changes in the economic sector and implement policy related to a multi-sector economy as well as adjusting it appropriately.

First of all, we should improve legislation and the rule of law to ensure all economic sectors are indeed equal before the law and able to actively contribute to expanding production capacity.

Concerning the state economic sector, especially state enterprises, improvement is needed so that the enterprises together with other economic sectors can become important drivers for national socioeconomic development.

In future, we have to modernize state enterprises under direction to become state enterprise joint ventures, by listing those enterprises that meet the requirements of the stock market, while studying the establishment of other state enterprises in some sectors that we believe to have the necessary capacity to operate their business effectively.

In addition, we have to more strongly promote the economic sector in cooperation with local people, family enterprises, small and medium enterprises and the domestic and foreign

private sectors by improving the business climate, enabling greater synergy and competitiveness within the national economic base.

2. Enhancing capacity and effectiveness in state management of the national economy while improving the rule of law and economic management mechanism in a promotional and advantageous manner.

Ministries and organizations at the central level have to focus on playing a macro management role, as follows:

One focus is on formulating plans to translate and realize the resolution of the Party Congress and development strategy under their respective responsibilities.

A second focus is on conducting research regarding the amendment or enactment of policies and laws for managing all sectors comprehensively. A third focus is on formulating plans to determine and organize the training of officials throughout all sectors.

A fourth focus is on scientific research and disseminating instructions about the use of new science and technology, and a fifth is on monitoring, evaluating and assisting local authorities and micro units to follow the laws, policies and work plans of all sectors properly and effectively.

The state has to wisely play a management and adjustment role to ensure proper economic growth is on track and avoid too much development disparity between different regions and rich and poor.

3. Focusing on reducing individual poverty at the basic level with measures to promote commercial production and rural development.

Our Party regards poverty reduction, building well-being for Lao families and rural development as the focal tasks in both the short and long term that all sectors at central and local levels need to join within their responsibilities.

The urgent task in poverty reduction is to develop infrastructure to facilitate productivity and livelihood improvement for all citizens in parallel with information provision. This includes learning about agriculture production and animal breeding for commercial purposes.

Each local and grassroots area needs to study and properly determine projects, then develop agriculture production, animal breeding and service potential in their respective local areas.

In order to ensure poverty reduction by accomplishing set targets and the Millennium Development Goals in 2015, the Party and state must urgently study and promulgate a special

promotion policy for investment in the economic sector, including foreign investment in rural development and areas inhabited by poor communities.

Our Party and state should clearly define poor areas and focal development areas at central, provincial and district levels in association with formulating development projects, then identify measures for the implementation process by focusing on revolutionary strongholds, focal areas for national defense and public security, areas related to natural resource and environmental preservation, and allocation of land for people's settlement and livelihood in association with the creation of permanent jobs to bring an end to slash and burn cultivation.

We have to strongly encourage activities to create villages for development in line with the direction to create larger villages as economic and cultural hubs to become small towns for rural areas.

4. Developing integrated agriculture production, ensuring food security and forestry preservation and rehabilitation to increase forest cover.

Agriculture and forestry is currently a fundamental sector of our national economic structure therefore we have to make changes in line with a modernized, efficient and clean agriculture directive.

In the near future, we have to speed up allocation of agricultural land nationwide to ensure land is available to produce enough foodstuffs to ensure food security.

Of great importance is the need to focus on improving irrigation systems and managing the sustainable use of water while appropriately establishing agriculture promotion centers or agriculture development centers and farming groups.

We have to continue to implement the policy on land allocation and ensure that long-term land use rights are given to each farmer in rural areas, while providing training for farmers on improving soil fertility and using land effectively.

In addition, we have to initiate large-scale projects related to irrigation and processing to modernize the agriculture sector.

In the near future, we have to pay more attention to forestry management to increase green areas to cover the majority of the country's terrain by implementing measures to systematically address arbitrary logging.

We also have to pay more attention to turning forestry management and wood processing to more sustainable directions, allocating settlements and areas for villagers to earn a living as well as increasing advocacy campaigns and awareness raising regarding forest conservation, while encouraging business operators, villagers and the general public to plant

trees in an expansive manner, contributing together with the global community to fighting global warming and climate change.

5. Implementing a strategy that leads the country towards industrialization and modernization while allocating and making effective use of natural resources.

Leading our country towards industrialization and modernization is an action that needs to be carried out both in the short and long term, and operated with appropriate steps starting from sectors and regions that have advantages and potential in connection with the traditional ones.

Small, medium and major projects need to be undertaken at the same time in order for Laos to become an industrialized nation while focusing on depth, efficiency and quality when it comes to production and services. Another focus will be related to saving raw materials, energy and reducing pollution, promotion of new innovation and the use of new technologies that are friendlier to the environment and society, contributing to the creation of human security and sustainable development.

With the goal of leading Laos towards industrialization and modernization, we continue to give priority to the expansion of the agriculture and forestry products processing industry, and the development of industrial energy production including hydropower in connection with the protection of forests and water sources, thermal energy and alternative energy such as biogas and solar power.

In addition, we will continue to develop the mining industry in a focused and thorough manner, starting from the necessity for us to create initial funding to develop the necessary sectors and create the foundation for future national growth.

We will pursue a policy to develop special economic zones at several forms and levels, while upgrading economic corridors into motorways to connect with neighboring countries.

We have to zone industrial factories in areas located near the source of raw materials and large pools of manpower, while studying urban planning and shaping towns into development hubs to stimulate growth in the immediate and surrounding areas. We should use towns to stimulate rural development to reduce development disparities step by step.

Thus we have to actively implement a master plan related to multi-nation economic development, or a master plan to develop regions that share borders with neighboring countries.

Other sectors that need to be industrialized and modernized include telecommunications, communications, trade, finance, banking, and state administration.

We continue to focus on developing the service sector based on potentials while promoting natural, cultural and historical tourism to enable Laos to become a public transport hub within the sub-region.

With the commitment of the Party to harmonies and sustain development, in upcoming years we have to give attention to development of the socio-cultural sector with education or human resource development at the centre and as one of the breakthrough goals.

Of primary importance is the need to develop skilled and qualified mechanics, technicians, engineers, managers and entrepreneurs to meet the demands of the growing work of the Party, state and society. Therefore, the Party continues to implement policies to promote the participation of all economic sectors and social strata to expand education, in particular vocational education at all levels and subjects, which are essential for economic development.

At the same time, we have to promote expansion of education strongly and objectively, in particular in rural areas for poverty reduction and to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The primary task will be the elimination of illiteracy, and training on basic technical knowledge in agriculture and livestock for commercial purposes and how to maintain sanitation.

We have to increase and strengthen the intellect of the nation by instilling people with revolutionary ideology, qualification, vision and advanced concepts, to preserve and enhance national culture and adopt valuable international culture. We also have to develop people with a civilized spirit.

In parallel with the development of people with knowledge, profession, good qualifications and morals, we have to increase efforts to ensure that Lao people have physical health and hygiene. To achieve these goals, we need to continue our health policy, with a primary focus on disease prevention and promotion of a healthy lifestyle.

We will also place importance on work to deliver quality health care services sufficiently, provide free healthcare for targeted poor and disadvantaged people and expand healthcare networks to rural and mountainous areas.

Conducting studies and processing traditional medicines to deliver treatment, using scientific principles as well as encouraging the planting of trees of medicinal value, improving legislation and systems of food and drug management to ensure effective enforcement at all levels, continuing policy to encourage the economic sector to take part in the development of modern health care, service and treatment facilities designed for service users so they have more options and satisfaction.

At the same time, we will increase efforts to address social problems such as unemployment, corruption, drug addiction, social gaps, income gaps, gender inequality, family

problems and other negative phenomena. We have to pay attention to reducing social problems as this is the reflection of successful development.

The Party reaffirms implementation of policies to reward people who have taken part in the tasks of national liberation, protection and development. In particular the Party aims to reward retired senior officials who took part in the liberation process, outstanding combatants and national heroes and their families sufficiently and completely.

At the same time we have to improve salaries, pensions and other policies for civil servants and senior revolutionaries more appropriately.

To establish and strengthen trust funds and foundations to assist poor and disadvantaged people so they have more capacity to deliver services to the targeted people.

As the ruling Party, it understands clearly that the new circumstances require the enhancement of the role of the authorities and the renovation of the people's democratic state and people's state of law by the people and for the people gradually. To simplify and strengthen state agencies so they comply with the governance strategy of our country, to implement a working style that clarifies the roles of the legislative, administrative and judicial bodies based on the principle of centralized and uniform state power under the leadership of the Party.

In the immediate future, we have to put into practice guidance to "establish provinces as strategic units, districts as all comprehensive strong units and villages as development units."

All authorities and officials must develop a strong service ethic, dedicating themselves to the interests of the nation and people and delivering services honestly, wholeheartedly and quickly, and avoiding abuse of their own positions to oppress other people and engage in corruption.

State bodies and officials must rule the state and manage the socio-economy in accordance with laws effectively, enhance democratic rights and protect the legitimate interests of citizens.

Therefore we have to enhance the roles of the National Assembly as the representative body of the rights, power and interests of Lao ethnic groups and as a legislative body to inspect the operation of executive and judiciary bodies in accordance with the constitution and laws.

The administrative body must be improved so that it is focused, appropriate and effective in its operations, and able to translate the resolutions of the Party into plans and projects in a timely and practical manner, to ensure fruitful outcomes. At the same time, it has to enforce the laws approved by the National Assembly, and coordinate with and join with local administrations to enforce guidance for local development.

In the immediate future, the legislative body must decisively abolish policies, mechanisms, legislation and procedures that are no longer in keeping with the state mechanism for a market oriented economy, and expand one stop services sufficiently to enable people and entrepreneurs to access easier and faster state services, as well as decisively abolishing bureaucratic administration and loopholes that enable officials to be corrupt and seek opportunities for personal gain.

The Party reaffirms that the enhanced unity of Lao ethnic groups, social strata, genders and religions and the establishment of the general strength of the Lao people to support the Party plays a decisive role in the complete victory of the national and democratic revolution as well as the security and sustainable development of Laos.

We have to enhance the front affairs of the Party, the role of the Lao Front for National Construction and mass organizations widely, and the Party has to consider this work as one of its short and long term tasks.

The Party will have to more closely lead and supervise the Lao Front for National Construction, Youth Union, Women's Union and Lao Trade Unions and the Lao Veterans' Federation so these organizations can improve their working plans, style, method, content and movement models to meet the expectations of target groups.

Of great importance is creating a place where people can study politics and receive information on Party and government policies as well as their action plans; this will create public awareness and unite them to implement the policies and plans of the Party and state.

Based on the Lao reconciliation policy, the Party always considers Lao expatriates part of the national family. Therefore the Party welcomes expatriates who still have national patriotic spirit and want to return to the country to contribute their intellect, physical skills and funding to develop the motherland.

The Party will continue to promote professional organizations and associations which are legally established and perform their duties in accordance with set roles and goals. This will create opportunities for these organizations to mobilize members to formulate socioeconomic development plans that more effectively respond to public interest and help society, particularly poor and disadvantaged people.

The Party reaffirms its respect for religious freedom and belief in social movements, as is laid down in the constitution, aiming to build a harmonious and happy society.

We have learnt that maintenance of security and social order is fundamental for successful development, therefore we have to implement an all round national protection and security policy more deeply and widely, integrating the national protection and security tasks with economic and social development and international cooperation.

The people's armed forces must enhance their revolutionary nature, becoming a force loyal to and operating under the direct, comprehensive and decisive leadership of the Party. The security force has to be active in tasks of grassroots construction and socio-economic development, alongside ensuring people are ready to protect security.

At the same time we have to continue the active implementation of an open and cooperative foreign policy, first of all to reaffirm commitment to implementing the consistent foreign policy of peace, independence, friendship and cooperation, while enhancing the multidirectional, multilateral, multidimensional and multiform foreign policy based on the principles of independence and mutual benefit.

We reaffirm our enhanced friendly relations, solidarity and cooperation with socialist countries. In this work, we will continue to protect and enhance the tradition of special solidarity and all round cooperation with the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, enhance traditional relations with China based on the spirit of an all round, long term strategic cooperation partnership, enhance cooperation with brotherly countries, tighten relations with neighboring countries and pay attention to participation in the Asian framework for mutual benefit and assistance in accordance with the fundamental principle of the Asian charter.

Relations are to continue with developed and developing nations, non-aligned movements, the group of 77, the Francophone countries, other landlocked developing nations and international organizations.

Solidarity, cooperation and support will be enhanced with other communist parties, labor parties and other left groups, and relations will continue with ruling parties, coalition government parties and progressive movements around the world.

We will seek participation in conflict mediation in the region and world in support of peace and the prevention of war, arms races and terrorism and through just and democratic political and economic orders of the world; participate in the reform of the United Nations and implement obligations of conventions to which Laos is a member.

One outstanding issue is to participate in resolving the issue of global warming and climate change for the legitimate interests of our country, other developing nations and mankind throughout the world.

Vigorous practice has proven that the leadership of the Party is a decisive factor in ensuring the success and victory of the revolutionary task in Laos. But, under new circumstances, in a rapidly changing world situation with both opportunities and challenges, whether our new regime will continue to exist and grow strongly, whether the country will successfully develop in a socialist direction, depends on the Party being able to raise its leadership role and capacity to meet the demands of the general situation as well as current developments, and whether it will be able to act as the leading force of the nation. This shows

that Party building is a major and important task vital to the cause of national defense and development.

Over the coming years, Party building must achieve the targets and directives as follows: embrace the nature of Marxism-Leninism; strive to build and improve itself to keep pace with the new era and become a Party which is capable of ruling and rules the country for the people, for development and the prosperity of our nation; a Party with strong organizational structure, firm unanimity, sound management, strict discipline; scientific, creative and realistic leadership style; a clean Party strictly preventing and suppressing corruption and other forms of negative problems within the Party state machinery and among cadres and Party members. To realize the above mentioned targets and general directives, we must focus on implementation of the following work:

1. Step up Party building work in political ideology and pay attention to improving theory research. Further embrace Marxism-Leninism and socialism ideology resolutely; devote to research, grasp and make good use of the basic essence of Marxism- Leninism into our country's peculiarities in an innovative way, associated with the regular assessment of lessons from the practices of our country in order to consolidate the Party's lines in line with the real needs of the nation's development to give direction to the Party leadership and address occurring issues in a timely and correct manner; consistently embrace the renovation policy associated with action against stereotype, subjectivity, haste, unsteadiness, and failure to grasp the principled renovation policy; and raise the political morale, knowledge and capacity of Party cadres to ensure the whole Party is confident with the socialist ideology without any irresolution despite the challenges ahead.

Increase efforts and capacity to research theory and practice related to the ways and steps of consolidating the people's democratic regime, creating primary factors towards socialism gradually in our country; research elements to be included as a firm basis of theory for creating Party policy, particularly on the following issues: protection and enhancement of the nature and leading character of the Party in the capacity of a ruling party implementing market-oriented mechanisms; sustainable development; creation of a caring, harmonious society with democracy, justice and civilization; enhancement of democracy within the Party and society; impacts of globalization; and international integration of the country.

In the near future, the Party must review and improve the research projects of theory and practice, push the implementation of approved projects, recruit sufficient qualified officials to meet requirements, and upgrade theory and practice research institutions so they are able to manage and supervise research work in a centralized manner and better implement research projects.

Associated with theory and practice research, we must further raise the quality of ideology work by improving content and method linked with explanations of and solutions to real issues occurring in the evolution of the Party leadership so the Party can lead society in a

timely and realistic manner; actively adapt and address formal, dry, superficial characters in running the ideology work.

In the future, we must pay attention to ideology education in order to upgrade knowledge on Party guidelines and policy with the aim of creating unanimity in terms of thinking, vision, and action in implementation and enhancement of the tradition, nature and ideology of the Party. We have to combine ideology work with Party and personnel building, socioeconomic development, creation of new advanced elements along with actions taken against backward elements; increase special attention to preventing and opposing degradation in morale and lifestyle; protect Marxism-Leninism and Party lines; and be active in opposing and defeating schemes of hostile forces attempting to create turmoil and ruin ideology within the Party.

We need to edit and improve the curriculum, teaching and learning content of political theory in the Party's academic system and schools of administration nationwide, as well as political and social textbooks in various academic institutes that set political theory as a compulsory subject in all school systems including private-run educational institutes. Simultaneously, we must train and upgrade the knowledge and competence of teachers who teach political theory for better quality of teaching.

Also needed is more attention to upgrading the standard of organizations in charge of ideological affairs, in particular to personnel building and placement, especially researchers and theorists to meet demand; building and training educators, lecturers and teachers to meet the required standard, in parallel with the improved organizational system to meet the current requirements. Increased budgets, vehicles and modern technical equipment are also necessary for work in this sector.

Party committees at all levels must increase their leadership, overseeing ideological affairs and incorporating it into action plans and projects in all sectors.

2. Continue to strengthen the Party's organizational system. Strengthen the internal unity of the Party; embrace a centralized democratic principle; enhance democracy associated with the increased discipline within the Party. Democracy within the Party guarantees the liveliness of the Party, also a factor ensuring unity within the Party. Consequently, we must consider enhancing democracy within the Party as a model, impetus and directive for enhanced democracy in society, make sure that Party members are able to fully exercise their rights as specified in the Party's Statute, particularly the right to receive information, right to join in exchange of views, ideas, and participate in decision-making of Party issues, as well as the right to protect their own views and ideas, creating an atmosphere conducive to broad democratic discussions within the Party.

The broadening of democracy must go hand in hand with the strict implementation of a centralized - democratic principle, reflected by the fact that once a unanimous resolution is made, one must obey it, meaning that individuals must abide by organizations,

lower level organizations follow higher ones, and Party committees at all levels and the entire Party abide by resolutions of the Party Central Committee.

Increase Party building. Attach great attention to ideological education and follow up on how Party cadres perform their duties, lead their lives and train themselves in moral discipline; follow principles on regular assessments and categorization of Party members and cadres with strict practice of self-criticism and mutual criticism. Consider making rules and mechanisms to encourage the masses to participate in monitoring activities of Party members and presenting views to Party members. Introduce appropriate measures to dismiss degraded cadres from the Party organization in a timely manner; strictly implement directives on Party enlargement based mainly on quality aspects, hence enabling the Party rank and file to consist of more young people with sound knowledge and competence coming from different work movements.

Improve regulations governing the Party's roots with the aim of building and enlarging coverage of the Party membership in all economic sectors and all regions across the country. In the future, we must focus supervisory work on improving and strengthening Party roots where they are still weak for better and obvious changes.

Increase attention to improving Party committees at all levels by raising a strong sense of responsibility, boosting the courage of Party secretaries in performing their role and responsibilities; correct leadership style of Party committees as provided by the Party's Statute, be realistic in monitoring and addressing issues in a timely fashion, assuring that the leadership of Party committees reaches out to all levels and all fields of work under their scope of responsibility.

Improve the machinery in charge of assisting Party committees at the central and local levels to help the committees in supervising and guiding work to address various issues in a correct and timely manner and in upgrading further the leadership qualities of Party committees.

### **3. Improve leading style and upgrade the capacity of ruling Party**

At present, our Party is the ruling Party. So, it is necessary to improve leading style in order to upgrade the capacity of the ruling Party to realize Party ideology and goals. Under the current circumstances and with the observance and enhancement of the traditional leading style of the Party, particularly through the Party political lines and organizations, mass guidelines and role model of Party members and Party organizations, we must boost the leading method which is practical, scientific and democratic in order to make the leadership of Party committees of all levels become really objective, active and responsible. We must also be active in combating and getting rid of bureaucracy, inattention and irresponsibility, and in opposing the non-observance of discipline, autocracy, oligarchy and nepotism.

We must follow the principle that 'the ruling and leadership of the Party must conform with the law'. Therefore, we must strengthen both the Party and the state with a focus on

improving Party leadership over central and local state organizations, ensuring the principle that the Party never gives up its leadership role, but never takes over the duties of the state’.

The Party must boost the active, innovative and responsible character of the state in governing the nation. The Party leads society by giving guidelines and determining stances on major issues in the country, by transforming Party policy into the constitution, laws, plans and directives for the state to carry out work. The Party leads the state by creating a state governed by the rule of law, a state of the people, by the people and for the people, a transparent state with strength, effectiveness and efficiency. The Party leads the state by properly placing officials in important positions of state organizations and by monitoring their actions to realize the Party’s guidelines.

In the future, we must consider and work out an essential legal system defining detailed principles, content and mechanisms concerning the Party leadership over state organizations as well as the Party leadership at all levels over state organizations of equivalent status. We also need to improve coordination of Party and state inspections, creating coordination mechanisms among Party and state secretariat offices at the central and local levels.

Also needed is to further improve the leadership of the Party over the Lao Front for National Construction and mass organizations by developing the active and innovative character of those organizations in improving organizational systems as well as in defining the goals, directives and content of activities at each stage in line with their respective roles and duties.

Attention will be paid to studying and defining the necessary procedures and regulations in the management of Party activities to ensure sound management within the Party so that the Party leadership has a legal basis in accordance with laws.

Another important task is to set up and improve systems of studying and making Party resolutions, reporting systems of the Party Politburo and Secretariat of the Party Central Committee to the Party Central Committee, reporting systems of Party committees to Party members’ meetings, and reporting systems of Standing Party committees to meetings of the equivalent level of Party committees.

We must improve rules on the selection and election within the Party by having in place mechanisms to enable people and mass organizations to participate at each level. We must also work out rules on enhanced democracy within the Party, and follow rules on discussions and voting on the decision making of important issues of Party committees at each level. We must also increase supervision on translating the Party policy into detailed plans, laws, and legal documents in a bid to build and improve our state to be a transparent one that is strong, effective and efficient in governing the state and society by the rule of law.

Party committees at all levels must strictly follow the centralized-democratic principle of leading by teams and delegating tasks to individual officials, prevent and do away with

subjectivity, autocracy and non-democracy as well as formal democracy, and abuse of power by individuals and groups.

Another important issue in improving the leadership style is to increase the active and innovative character of the Party at all levels, particularly Party secretaries and Party members who must have a strong sense of responsibility and play a role model in all work. They must enhance the innovative character of their leadership in conformity with real circumstances, being decisive and responsible for all their assigned duties with regularly monitored implementation. Party committees at each level must follow systems of regular assessments of leadership movements to draw lessons in order to promptly enhance new factors behind the achievements and address shortcomings in a timely manner.

All Party members must be conscious of the order to participate in Party political life as provided by the Party Statute, and observe the principle of self-criticism and mutual criticism for unanimity within the Party and for the progress and completion of assigned duties.

Also to be done is assess the competence of Party committees at each level and each Party member accurately. We must implement the principle of delegating work and responsibilities by granting rights and facilitating the realization of work, do away with such approaches as “talk without action, or action without responsibility”, and address such approaches as “only complaint on issues happening but no discussion to find solutions and no delegation for any one or body to address definitely”.

We have to enhance the tradition of being realistic and closer to the masses. Once a resolution is made, it must be realized in the short term. We must avoid bureaucracy and the practice of just talking and adopting a resolution but taking no action, or taking action incompatible with reality, as well as action in a subjective, improper and formal manner.

#### **4. Strengthen inspection work**

To develop the Party as a transparent one with strength, we must attach greater importance to increasing the quality of inspection work along with upgraded auditors' capacity, speed up efforts to identify and work out inspection procedures and mechanisms, in particular inspection of organizations and individuals, and inspection of work and responsibilities. We also need inspection mechanisms among the organizations, inspection of individuals by organizations and inspection of higher level organizations by lower level organizations, in which inspection must be conducted regularly and systematically. Also to be done is to standardize inspections by the Party, state and people, increase inspection systems to prevent negative phenomena from occurring, while developing positive sides and new factors, creating conditions for active participation by the public in inspection.

We therefore must improve the efforts of Party and state inspection committees at each level to ensure effectiveness. Focus is placed on inspecting the observance of the Party Statute and the work performances of Party members and cadres. Also important is strictly implementing the findings of inspections so that when a problem is found it must be strictly

addressed without any delay or postponement. Wherever any issue occurs in their workplace the Party committee must be active to address the issue first through educative measures or legal measures if required. If the issue is beyond their scope of responsibility, the Party committee at that level must refer the issue to the higher level in a timely manner.

Party committees at all levels must consider regular inspection, self-criticism and mutual criticism as important measures in preventing setbacks within the Party. Higher Party committees must set a role model for members, regularly following up and inspecting Party members and cadres under their responsibility. There must also be procedures allowing lower Party ranks to give comments on the leadership of higher Party committees.

We must educate Party members and cadres to constantly maintain their role model. In the near future, we must focus on setting up a role model that keeps the traditionally revolutionary nature of the Party cadres who are firm in ideology, conscious of organization and discipline, conscious of laws and regulations, courageous in the fight against negative phenomena, patient to overcome obstacles and difficulties, enthusiastic in constant study for advancement, and models of job performance with great devotion for the national interest and for the well-being of the people. Party members and cadres must be role models in living in an honest, diligent, thrifty and fair way and must never abuse their power for personal gain.

To achieve such goals, we must conduct regular trainings on standards of Party members, particularly standards relating to political ideology, knowledge and competence, in order to make Party members aware of their own self-discipline and responsibility. We must also follow the system encouraging organizations and masses to monitor and assess the activities of Party members more easily.

**5. Improve work** on Party management and protection systematically, particularly the protection of political lines, Party leadership, Party organizations and Party members, in a scientific, compatible and realistic way in the interests of both the country and its people.

We must ensure Party members and cadres are constantly conscious of self-discipline, and behave in conformity with the law and Party's Statute. In parallel, there must be a policy to praise and award outstanding cadres, and strict measures against infringers, to ensure that those with good performance and virtues receive praise and awards appropriately and timely. However, those infringing the Party's Statute, state laws, and ethics expected of Party members as well as officials must be disciplined or punished appropriately and timely. We must continue to distribute Party member ID cards, an important measure for Party member management.

#### **6. Personnel work and training for quality cadres**

Under current circumstances, our Party need to have a rank and file of cadres with sufficient knowledge, capacity, good morale, steadfast political stance, loyalty to the nation and Party's cause, a sense of serving the nation and the people with sincerity and a fine and progressive lifestyle, Endeavour to be self disciplined, diligence in study and learning, consciousness of organization and discipline, and respect for laws and the Party's Statute.

To achieve this, we must accelerate the review and improvement of personnel placement plans and strategies in order to form the rank and file of qualified cadres in a complete set with a suitable structure to meet future requirements, and assure sufficient qualified successors.

We must pay special attention to training key personnel to have unanimity, consensus on the Party stance, a high sense of responsibility, innovation, and realistic approach to problem solving, and great Endeavour to fulfill their duties. At the same time, we need to focus on forming more young, female and ethnic cadres, cadres of working origin, cadres who meet the standards and are outstanding from work forces of all sectors.

We should have the courage to assign responsibilities to them in order to test and train them to develop continuously. We should establish a policy regarding the placement of new graduates from universities and vocational colleges in all major subjects so as to train them on the job at the grassroots level with the aim of increasing grassroots manpower, while enabling them to have growing knowledge from the work force.

We must create evident and positive change in work on personnel, demonstrating a democratic, scientific and fair character in dealing with personnel, addressing manifestations of privates, subjectivism and prejudice, as well as tolerance in personnel affairs. We must implement principles of exploring collective opinions, competitiveness and democracy in assessment, selection and appointment of personnel. We must pair morale and competence as the main criteria for selecting personnel; meanwhile, we must consider work achievements and public opinion and confidence as important factors in selecting personnel.

In the near future we must immediately improve, establish and follow procedures regarding personnel, particularly procedures relating to the selection, use, management, promotion, position replacement, dismissal, and other necessary policies, in a correct and strict manner in line with the law. The Party must have the courage to assign duties and award promotions to personnel who have good morale and capability suitable for their duties and who have proven work achievements. The Party must also curtail the trend of selection and promotion of personnel according to connection backgrounds, for instance, same family lines, same clans, same regions or same groups without consideration of the required standard for that job.

Apart from this, the Party must establish and implement new mechanisms and policies on personnel in a systematic manner in order to be able to identify and select personnel with suitable qualifications and competence for further appropriate employment. The Party must have the courage to replace incompetent and dishonest personnel. The Party must be resolute in dismissing urgently personnel with degraded morale or serious faults, who will damage the Party and state's image.

Strengthen personnel management and improve the system of delegation of personnel management responsibilities among the Party Central Committee and Party committees at ministerial, ministerial equivalent and provincial levels.

Monitor the observance of civil servant statutes and the performance of responsibilities of personnel in order to enhance positive aspects and divest weak aspects, and assess performance of personnel in an objective, correct and fair manner.

Continue to implement strongly and broadly a system of removal of personnel in order to provide an opportunity for them to undergo practice and trial and develop from actual work force experience. The Party must be mindful of reviews of past practices to ensure effectiveness, which will help boost progress and increase experience for personnel.

Improve the systems of salaries, subsidies, bonuses, and material and spiritual incentives for personnel, military and police, so they match contemporary living costs and the recipients are satisfied and active in fulfilling their duty and able to support their families.

Determine appropriate policy for personnel who are sent to work in hardship circumstances and remote areas, improve incentives for retired personnel in order to provide them with satisfactory living conditions, and enable them to participate in political life and to receive healthcare and spiritual warmth.

Increase appropriate investment to improve the technical infrastructure of institutes of social and natural science research, institutes of administration and policy studies, and universities in order to increase their capacity to study theories and practice and to present ideas about policies and directives on national development. In addition, these institutions and universities can be centers to build and train officials in the fields of politics, administration, management, science, and technology according to their roles.

Our nation has developed amid a rapidly changing environment in a time of globalization and global integration. Our ethnic people wish to see successful national development and their country be a prosperous nation, and also wish to live a happier life free from poverty.

The Party is aware that its historic mission and heavy responsibility in the coming years is to boost its leadership capacity to fulfill the current political task to fundamentally alleviate poverty. This is for the Lao people to enjoy wellbeing and happiness, and for the country to graduate from the status of a least developed country by 2020, by creating the necessary technical infrastructure for the country to reach the set goal toward socialism.

The 9th Party Congress is a significant event in the social and political life of our country, which reflects the efforts and strong desire of the entire Party and the public. The Party urges all Lao people who love their nation from all social strata, living both in the country

and abroad, to enhance unity around the Party, enhance their efforts, hard work and courageous traditions to boost the country's overall strength.

We further carry out two strategic tasks in line with the renovation policy for greater achievements: build the Lao PDR as a wealthy and strong nation of rich and happy people, and build a society that enjoys concord, unity, democracy, justice and civilization.