

Speech by
Hon Chanthavong SENEAMATMONTRY,
Vice-Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the Lao PDR National
Assembly at the 151st Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly
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Honorable Chair;
Esteemed Parliamentarians, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The world is facing unprecedented humanitarian challenges. Armed conflicts are ongoing across the world, with more than a millions of people displaced and countless people in urgent need of assistance. Women, children and vulnerable groups face the greatest difficulties from food insecurity and tragically to prevent loss of life. These realities highlight the urgent need to strengthen international humanitarian law and ensure the principled humanitarian action.

As a small country that has experienced the legacy of war, the Geneva Conventions carry profound meaning for the Lao PDR. The ongoing presence of unexploded ordnance, which remains a daily threat to our people and a major obstacle to development, is a stark reminder that the humanitarian consequences of war for future generations. For this reason, the Lao PDR has made UXO clearance a national priority by designating “Lives Safe from Unexploded Ordnance” as its 18th National Sustainable Development Goal. As this issue is cross-cutting in nature, progress on this goal is a fundamental prerequisite for achieving broader sustainable peace and prosperity. At the same time, we have taken steps to align governance with humanitarian principles through constitutional and legal reforms to uphold the rule of law. These efforts reflect our conviction that respect for human dignity must be realised both in times of crisis and in daily life.

Distinguished Colleagues,

The Lao PDR reaffirms its unwavering commitment to the Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols, recognising international humanitarian law not merely as a legal framework but as a moral covenant binding all nations. We stand in solidarity with all peoples affected by crises and congratulate the valuable work of humanitarian stakeholders and relief workers who often at great personal risk and provide life-saving assistance. At the same time, the Lao PDR underscores the importance of multilateral cooperation and the role of parliaments in translating humanitarian norms into national legislation, oversight and resource allocation to protect the most vulnerable. As a nation committed to peaceful coexistence, non-interference and international cooperation, the Lao PDR is convinced that by adhering to the principles of distinction, proportionality, precaution, and humanity, parliaments can help alleviate suffering while fostering peace, stability and sustainable development for future generations.

Excellencies,

On behalf of the Lao National Assembly, I wish to call upon all parliamentarians to prioritise three key areas:

First, Strengthening Multilateralism by encouraging public participation across all sectors, while upholding the common interests of society in a spirit of unity, solidarity and international cooperation remain essential.

Second, Parliaments play a vital role by adopting laws consistent with international principles while respecting national, Ensuring protection of vulnerable groups contexts.

Third, Promoting parliamentary diplomacy. as bridges of dialogue during crises, fostering trust and cooperation while upholding principles of the International humanitarian law.

Finally, I extend my best wishes to the President of the IPU, the Secretary-General, Heads of Delegations and all distinguished representatives for good health, happiness and success in your noble endeavours.

Thank you.