

**Thank you Mr Chair**

**Your excellencies, Distinguished delegates**

The Lao PDR congratulates ESCAP States members, Regional Steering Groups, Co-organizers of this conference for highlighting the importance of civil registration and vital statistics in the regional development agenda, and in particular, for putting forward the draft ministerial declaration and regional action framework for the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific region.

Civil Registration and Vital Statistics is crucial a comprehensive social and economic development and is therefore a priority for all our government. It must be mentioned, however, that some of us are still struggling with several challenges such as :

- Lack of well-trained staff with thorough knowledge of the civil registration and vital statistics;
- Experience in the establishment of a universal civil registration and vital statistics system; and
- Limited financial resources which allow for full coverage and the implementation of an efficient civil registration and vital statistics system.

To ensure the implementation of the Regional Action Framework, the Lao government has raise the civil registration and vital statistics work into the national agenda. Currently, we have the national coordinating committee overlooking the general implementation of civil registration at the country level, as well as established local level coordinating mechanism to manage registration at the sub-national plane.

Distinguished delegates, on behalf of the Lao Government I want to inform you that by the end of decade on civil registration and vital statistics 2015-2024, with the support of our fellow Asia and the Pacific peers, as well as with the assistance of international organizations and donors, Laos aims to achieve the target of at least 70 percentage of births being registered.

The Lao Government does believed that the ministerial declaration and regional action framework will truly contribute to ' get everyone in the picture ' in the Asian and the Pacific

region. To attain such a goal, the Lao PDR Government requests our colleagues' technical and financial support in order to successfully achieve this ambitious target.

Let me finalize by saying, on behalf of Lao PDR Government that we are proud to endorse the ministerial declaration and regional action framework presented at this conference.

Thank you very much.