

Opening remark for the Seventh Session for the East Asia Plant Variety Protection Forum

Honorable Dr. Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham, Vice Minister of Agriculture and Forestry,
Dr. Monthathip Chanpengxay, Director General, Department of Agriculture,
Dr. Khanlasy Keobounphanh, Director General, Department of Intellectual Property Rights,
Mr. Tadaatsu Iwase, Deputy Director General, Food Industry Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, Japan

Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to start by thanking the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) for hosting this 7th EAPVP Forum Meeting and the Government of Japan for its financial support. It is a great pleasure to have the opportunity to visit Vientiane and the Lao People's Democratic Republic for the first time and I am sure that we will have a fruitful meeting in this wonderful setting.

As I have previously remarked, the EAPVP Forum and UPOV have two important long-term challenges in common – firstly, to explore the role of plant variety protection (PVP) for the future success of agriculture and, secondly, to support the effective implementation of PVP.

Therefore, I am very pleased that the occasion of the 7th EAPVP Forum Meeting has provided an opportunity to organize a symposium on the theme “Plant Breeding and Protection of Breeders' Rights are Key to Agricultural Development”. This is an essential theme and reflects the origin of UPOV. It will provide an excellent basis to explore the role of plant variety protection in securing food security and delivering economic development in the rural sector.

It is increasingly recognized that PVP has a vital role to play in ensuring that plant genetic diversity can be utilized effectively in responding to the challenges facing agriculture. Indeed that message was included in the remarks of H.E. Dr. Phouang Parisak Pravongviengkham, Vice Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, in which he emphasized the synergies of technology and natural resources and the importance of local and international resources.

The benefit of UPOV lies in its international system of plant variety protection and the opportunities that legal harmonization provide for cooperation and capacity-building. However, I should also like to take this occasion to recall the opportunities for participation in UPOV's meetings and activities by EAPVP Forum countries and the mutual benefits that such participation can provide.

I am pleased to offer the continued support of UPOV for the work of the Forum as we work to explain the important role that plant variety protection has to play for the future success of agriculture and to support the implementation of PVP.

Thank you.