



Lao People's Democratic Republic
Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity

PRIME MINISTER

Congratulatory Message

from

**His Excellency Thongloun SISOULITH, Prime Minister of the Lao People's
Democratic Republic and Chairman of ASEAN**

**to His Excellency Li Keqiang, Premier of the People's Republic of China
on the occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN-China
Dialogue Relations**

On behalf of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and as Chair of ASEAN, I have the pleasure and honour to extend our warmest and most cordial congratulations to the Government and people of the People's Republic of China on the memorable occasion of the 25th Anniversary of the establishment of ASEAN-China Dialogue Relations on 19 July 2016.

ASEAN-China relations have come a long way since the establishment of dialogue relations on 19 July 1991. ASEAN-China Cooperation has gradually widened and deepened, covering political and security, economic, and socio-cultural areas. China was the first dialogue partner of ASEAN to accede to the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC) on 8 October 2003 and the first to be accorded recognition as ASEAN's strategic partner in the same year. For the past 25 years, we have witnessed a number of significant achievements, which include the signing of the Declaration on the Conduct of Parties in the South China Sea (DOC) on 4 November 2002, the realisation of the ASEAN-China Free

Trade Area (FTA) on 1 January 2010, the establishment of the ASEAN-China Centre on 18 November 2011 and the establishment of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) on 25 December 2015.

As our strategic and comprehensive cooperation continues to be further strengthened, China has become and remains ASEAN's largest trading and investment partner. As we strive to prosper together, people-to-people exchanges are playing an important role in building trust and promote understanding between ASEAN and China. As such, we should further strengthen this momentum.

As a strategic dialogue partner, ASEAN hopes that China continues to reaffirm its commitment to supporting ASEAN Community building and ASEAN Centrality. ASEAN believes that the Commemorative Summit will be another important opportunity to set out our future direction and to bring us even closer in achieving our common goals for the benefit of the people of ASEAN and China.

I am confident that with our shared strong determination to further strengthen a rules-based ASEAN Community and deepen our strategic partnership, ASEAN-China relations will continue to grow significantly in the years to come. ASEAN looks forward to developing friendly and mutually beneficial relations with China with a view to promoting and contributing to global peace, security, stability, and prosperity, as well as sustainable development in the region.

Please accept the assurances of my highest consideration and my best wishes for your greater success in the fulfilment of your noble tasks ahead to bring about happiness and prosperity to the people of China, as well as to further strengthen ASEAN-China relations.

Thongloun SISOUUTH
Prime Minister