

Share opportunities and seek common development through cooperation
Promote the building of a Lancang-Mekong community with a shared future in the
new era

**-- Speech at the Fourth Summit of the
Mekong River Commission**

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LI Guoying

H.E. Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone,

H.E. Prime Minister Samdech Akka Moha Sena Padei Techo Hun Sen,

H.E. Prime Minister Pham Minh Chinh,

Distinguished Ministers and delegates from Mekong Countries,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to attend the fourth Mekong River Commission Summit. Let me extend warm congratulations on the opening of the Summit. I also wish to express my heartfelt thanks to H.E. Prime Minister Sonexay Siphandone and the Lao government for the thoughtful arrangements they have made for this summit.

As an important cooperation mechanism in the Mekong Sub-region, the Mekong River Commission has played an important role in promoting cooperation among Mekong countries as well as sub-regional economic and social development. The convening of this summit is of great significance to further build sub-regional consensus on cooperation, promote management innovation in the Mekong Basin, and promote water security in the Mekong Basin and sustainable economic and social development in the sub-region.

Lancang-Mekong, a natural ribbon connects China and five Mekong countries, and the status of sharing of the same river inevitably unites China and five countries into a shared community. As a member of the Lancang-Mekong river basin, China is willing to be a dialogue partner of MRC and has held 26 consecutive dialogues with the Mekong River Commission in an active manner and conducted diverse and fruitful practical cooperation with the Mekong River Commission and its member states in information sharing, technology exchange, project cooperation, capacity building, personnel training, joint research and other areas over the years, making positive contributions to the realization of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Lancang-Mekong River is the mother river for the people along its banks. It is also a valuable resource and common asset for these countries. It is the common

aspiration of residents of all countries along the Lancang-Mekong River to promote the sustainable utilization of water resources and protect the ecological environment in the region. However, due to extremely uneven distribution of rainfall in the basin in time and space, with overlapping impact of global climate change, flood and drought disasters have always been a sting in our heart. China persistently adheres to principles of shared interests and the greater good, gives equal priority to conservation and development, and fulfills its commitment, showing the sense of responsibility with on-the-ground action. After providing flood season hydrological data of the Lancang River to the Mekong River Commission free of charge for 18 years in a row, China started to share the year-round hydrological information of the Lancang River with the Mekong River Commission free of charge since November 2020, and is actively promoting the building of the information sharing platform for Lancang-Mekong water resources cooperation.

At the same time, China has scientifically regulated the cascade hydropower stations on the Lancang River and achieved the disaster prevention function by storing rainfall in wet season and improve hydrological conditions in dry period. Namely, when a deluge may take place in the Lancang River and could possibly end up in flooding disaster along the Mekong, the cascade

hydropower stations contain part of flood, reducing the flood peak. When drought happens along the Mekong River, cascade hydropower can release flood water stored before in the form of increased discharge volume to meet demand of water use of Mekong countries.

The research has indicated that on the condition of average mean, by containing flooding water the discharge volume in the flood season could be reduced by around 30% and the discharge flow in July and August could be decreased by 1, 300 m³, lowering water level at Vientiane Station by about 0.8m so as to effectively release the pressure of flood control in the middle and upper reaches of the Mekong river. As the pre-stored flood water is steadily discharged in dry season, contributing to a 70% increase of volume from November to April in the following year. From January to April the increased discharge could lift water level in Vientiane Station by about 1m, playing an crucial role in production, domestic water use, navigation and irrigation of residents of the Mekong river. We still remember that when severe droughts hit the Lancang-Mekong River in 2016 and 2019, though China was also being stricken, we made every efforts to ensure proper discharge into downstream, and carried out emergency water supplementation with a total volume of 12.65 billion m³ at the request of downstream countries, playing a positive and effective role in

helping Mekong countries effectively and energetically coping with the drought, achieving an objective of no catastrophe in a serious drought year.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

China is pursuing a path of modernization that takes on its own features. The Chinese way to modernization upholds peace and the harmony between man and nature. China and Mekong countries are developing countries and are facing valuable development opportunity, urgent demands for further development, and diverse challenges. The Lancang-Mekong cooperation has a solid foundation, huge potential and broad future. China is ready to work with Mekong countries to share opportunities, pursue cooperation and promote development under the guidance of the Global Development Initiative, the Global Security Initiative and the Global Civilization Initiative, all proposed by Secretary General H.E. Xi Jinping, and jointly build a Lancang-Mekong community of shared future in the new era.

In this connection, I wish to make the following three proposals:

First, collaboratively promoting development and prosperity in the region. The six Lancang-Mekong countries drink from the same river and share a common future. It is our common goal and mission to properly utilize, protect and manage the Lancang-Mekong River and make it a river of happiness for riparian people. We need to adhere to a people-centered development philosophy, adapt to the

profoundly changing international landscape with a spirit of solidarity, address complex and changing security challenges with a win-win approach, build a stronger and more resilient Lancang-Mekong economic belt, deliver tangible benefits to people in all countries, and contribute to the vision of sustainable development and common prosperity in the region.

Second, collaborative building an even closer community of shared future. Lancang-Mekong River basin is the basin of the 6 Lancang-Mekong countries. Lancang-Mekong cooperation should be led by the 6 countries ourselves. In accordance with the principle of discussions, we should fully respect the legitimate rights and interests of all countries in the rational development and utilization of water resources, and also take care of each other's interests and concerns, discuss more and thoroughly when there are things that need discussions, and strive to seek the greatest common divisor and draw the largest concentric circle. At the mean time, we should also work together to deal with the negative factors and noise that undermine sub-regional cooperation, and help build a closer Lancang-Mekong community with a share future.

Third, collaborative upgrading the quality of water resources cooperation to make it deeper and more concrete. Water is fundamental guarantee for human survival and economic and social development and closely

related to national strategy and people's livelihood. At present, Lancang-Mekong countries are at a stage of accelerating industrialization, urbanization and agricultural modernization. They have a common need to accelerate water infrastructure construction and improve water resources management. Guided by the new vision of innovative, coordinated, green, open and shared development, China will further deepen practical cooperation on water resources along the Lancang-Mekong River, enhance international exchange and cooperation aiming at governance and management of the whole basin in the fields of water resources development and utilization, hydrometeorology, disaster prevention and reduction, information sharing, capacity building and personnel training, etc, and provide a strong water security guarantee for peaceful and stable life of people and economic and social development along the Lancang-Mekong River.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Lancang-Mekong River is a natural gift on which we depend for our survival and development. China is ready to work hand in hand with Mekong countries to collaborative make greater contribution to water security and a brighter future in the Lancang-Mekong region.

In conclusion, I wish the summit a complete success.

Thank you.