

Your Excellency Vice President Choummali Saignason and Mrs. Saignason, distinguished guests,

My wholehearted congratulations to you on the opening of the Korea-Laos Vocational Training Center.

I am the first head of the state of the Republic of Korea to visit Laos. Having just arrived a little while ago, it is a great pleasure for me to attend this opening ceremony as the first event on my itinerary.

Relations between our two countries have been rapidly developing since we established diplomatic relations in 1995. There are many more areas, however, suitable for cooperation. I will hold a summit with President Khamtai Siphandon tomorrow to discuss how to further develop bilateral relations.

This training center will serve as a symbol of friendship and cooperation between our two countries.

Distinguished guests,

Excellent human resources and high educational zeal constituted the driving force enabling Korea to achieve the economic growth it has enjoyed. In particular, the outstanding technicians that our schools and vocational training centers have nurtured have been key players leading Korea ' s industrialization. Now we are going to share with you this expertise. I expect that the excellent and talented students to be nurtured here will help Laos achieve industrialization in a short period of time.

The success of Laos will be a great help to Korea, too. The reason is that I take Laos as a good partner for cooperation in our bid for common prosperity.

Koreans treasure bonds once they have been forged. I will exert every effort to help further expand our friendship and cooperative efforts, now being confirmed at this place.

I hope the Korea-Laos Vocational Training Center will make great progress, and I wish every one of you success.

Thank you.