



**THE 17th ANNUAL MEETING OF
THE ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)**

11-15 January 2009, Vientiane Capital, Lao PDR

Opening address

By Hon Thongsing THAMMAVONG, President of National Assembly of the Lao PDR
at the Opening Session of the 17th APPF Executive Committee meeting,
11th January 2009, Vientiane, Lao PDR

Heads of delegation of APPF members countries,

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the National Assembly of Lao PDR, I feel greatly privileged and very proud that Lao PDR has the privilege to host for the 17th Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum in Vientiane Capital. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all delegates for accepting our invitation to attend this meeting and I would like to extend my warmest welcome to all of you.

In recent years, Vientiane has been given the honor to host some significant regional and international events such as the 10th ASEAN Summit in 2004, the 26th AIPO meeting in 2005, the CLV Summit in May 2008. I am confident that all delegates will be provided necessary facilities during the meeting and may I suggest that they should find time to go sightseeing around Vientiane and visit other interesting and beautiful places in Vientiane.

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This meeting is being held at a time when nations are deploying their efforts to promote cooperation for development and maintain peace. At the same time, the international community is also facing many challenges among which the financial crisis, food shortage, climate change and others. I therefore earnestly hope that this meeting will focus on the discussion on important issues related to economic and trade, political and security matters, the cooperation between parliaments in Asia Pacific region and other issues related to the stability and prosperity of our region. I therefore would like to urge all parliaments on the Asia Pacific region to continue providing mutual cooperation and support in order to tackle those challenges.

I would like to conclude by highly appreciating and expressing my profound gratitude to all distinguished delegates and guests who are attending this meeting today.

May I take this opportunity to extend to all honorable delegates and guests my best wishes of good health and brilliant success in performing their duties thus contributing to further enhancing a more effective cooperation Asia Pacific Parliaments.

On this auspicious occasion, may I officially declare the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum open from this moment onward.

I thank you.