

Foreword

The Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) has achieved remarkable high economic growth. Its average gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate was 7.79% during the period 2000–2016, the highest growth rate amongst the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) member states during the same period. In 2016, its real GDP per capita was US\$2,352. This strong economic growth in the 6 years from 2000 to 2016 was also accompanied by an increase in energy consumption by all sectors. To facilitate the energy policy planning of the Lao PDR, the Ministry of Energy and Mines with technical and financial support from the Economic Research Institute for ASEAN and East Asia (ERIA) successfully launched the *Lao PDR Energy Statistics 2018*, providing overall energy information about energy demand and supply. The data and statistics have greatly benefited the policy planning in areas of energy efficiency, renewable energy, and best energy mix to maintain energy security. As the Ministry of Energy and Mines and involved agencies continued to collect the updated energy data with the support from ERIA, it has facilitated technical staff from the Ministry of Energy and Mines and ERIA's experts to produce this *Lao PDR Energy Outlook 2020*.

As the Lao PDR continues to rely on electricity exports, hydropower and renewable energy will play a crucial role in the country's energy sustainability. It is also important to note that the Lao PDR's reliance on fossil fuel imports to meet the growing energy demand in the transport and industry sectors will need to be diversified to other possible fuel mixes such as the introduction of electric vehicles as the country has abundant electricity produced from hydropower and coal-fired power plants.

On behalf of the Ministry of Energy and Mines, I am very grateful for the technical and financial support for this *Lao PDR Energy Outlook 2020* project. We will continue to consult with ERIA to build the energy data to support energy policies and planning in the Lao PDR.



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