



## Press Release

### **Lao PDR joins international community with three key human rights treaties**

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VIENTIANE – BANGKOK: The United Nations welcomes the Government of the Lao PDR in joining the international community in its commitment to ensure the further realization of civil and political rights, the rights of people with disabilities and protection against corruption.

During the current session of the UN General Assembly, Lao PDR ratified the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in New York.

By ratifying these treaties, Lao PDR further emphasizes its commitment to - among other actions - enact laws and other measures to improve the lives of those living with disabilities such as victims of cluster munitions, and to protect an individual's physical integrity (against e.g. torture and arbitrary arrest), explained the Office of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations Lao PDR and the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in South East Asia.

It also reflects a pledge to protect against all forms of discrimination and to promote equality before the law; to promote individual freedom of belief, speech, association, freedom of press, right to hold assembly and the right to political participation as well as to fight against corruption through prevention, criminalization, international cooperation and asset recovery.

“This is a significant moment in the evolution of the country’s commitment with the promotion and protection of human rights and the UN Country team stands ready to support the Government in the realization of these conventions,” said Mr. Serge Verniau, Resident Coordinator a.i, United Nations Lao PDR. “These ratifications herald a momentous step by the Lao PDR in its integration into the international legal framework.”

Ratification is an important but only a first step in a long process to ensure effective enjoyment of rights on ground. “There is therefore a need to move on the implementation now, which means translating the provisions of these conventions into national laws and changes in the realities of the people on the ground,” noted Mr. Homayoun Alizadeh, Regional Representative of the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights – Regional Office for South-East Asia. “With the entry into force for Lao PDR of these three treaties, those aspirations are now much closer to reality.”

With the ratification of ICCPR and CPRD, Lao PDR is now a state party to six out of the nine existing core UN human rights treaties. In South East Asia, Cambodia, Indonesia, Philippines, Thailand, Timor Leste, Vietnam, and now Lao PDR, have ratified the ICCPR. The Philippines and Thailand are the only other countries together with Lao PDR now in the region having ratified the CRPD.

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*For further information on the situation of human rights in the Lao PDR, visit:*  
<http://www.ohchr.org/EN/Countries/AsiaRegion/Pages/LAIndex.aspx>

*For more information on OHCHR's Regional Office for South-East Asia, visit:*  
<http://bangkok.ohchr.org/>

*For more information on the UN Country Team in the Lao PDR, visit:*  
<http://www.unlao.org>