

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Alounkeo Kittikhoun,  
Minister to the Prime Minister's Office, Deputy Chairman of the Lao National  
Commission for the Advancement of Women and Mothers-Children, Head of the Lao  
Delegation to the Seventy-ninth Session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child,  
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Madame Chairperson,

Distinguished members of the Committee,

At the outset, the Lao delegation is honored and delighted to participate in the Seventy-ninth Session of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The Lao PDR recognizes the Committee as an important mechanism of the UN human rights system, composed of 18 highly competent independent experts. We have to have a constructive engagement with the Committee for both today and tomorrow's session. Together, we shall assess the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Lao PDR, with objectivity, equal treatment and respect for state sovereignty. The Lao PDR takes the CRC reviewing process seriously, as it provides an opportunity for the government to showcase what we have been done for children, in terms of promotion and protection of their rights and interests, and also to inform the international community about our national policies, actions and achievements in implementing the rights of the child, to share our experiences and also learn the good practices of other countries. Subsequently, we shall also receive the valuable and constructive observations from the Committee.

Madame Chairperson,

Following the Lao PDR's second UNCRC periodic review report in 2010, all recommendations have been translated into Lao and disseminated to government officials, stakeholders and the general public. From the very beginning, the Government has assigned the line-ministries and state organizations through the NCAWMC, both at central and local level, to implement the CRC recommendations that were related to their respective roles and functions. Many CRC recommendations have been integrated into the 7th and 8<sup>th</sup> Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plans for the period 2011-2015 and 2016-2020 respectively and they are being implemented through laws, policies, strategies and action programmes.

To enhance the level coordination, monitoring and reporting on the implementation of obligations and rights of the child, including the two CRC optional protocols to which the Lao PDR is Party, the Lao Government established the National Commission for Mothers and Children in 1992 and until now it still plays the key role in the promotion and protection of the children's rights in the Lao PDR.

Distinguished members of the Committee,

In preparation of the National Report for the third to sixth periodic review report, the Commission took the leading role with the participation of all relevant government agencies. Consultation were held with stakeholders, including with the children, mass and civil society organizations, international non-governmental organizations and international development partners based in the Lao PDR. These consultation workshops were made possible through the technical cooperation and support from two development partners, UNICEF and Child Fund Laos. The current national periodic review report gives full accounts on the achievements and challenges in implementing the recommendations of the CRC and its optional protocols.

I would like to express our appreciation to the Committee for the useful and meaningful recommendations which helped the Government to enhance children's rights in the Lao PDR. Due to time constraints, I would like to highlight only some of the achievements, the Lao delegation will provide more information, especially those are related to their respective functions and responsibilities.

Esteemed members of the Committee,

The Lao Government attaches the importance to the rights and interests of specific groups in the country. The Lao PDR is a multi-ethnic nation consisted of 49 ethnic groups living in harmony. The Constitution and law and policies of the Lao PDR has always been to encourage solidarity, non-discrimination and equal treatment of all ethnic groups. Any acts of division of solidarity among ethnic groups are prohibited and punishable by Law. The rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities are protected and promoted through the implementation of the relevant provisions of the Constitution and law, lower legislations, national strategies and action plans. This includes Law on the Development and Protection of Women, Law on the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children, Law on Juvenile Criminal Proceedings, the Prime Minister's Decree on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the recently adopted Law on Violence against Women and Children and Law on the Juvenile Justices.

The Lao PDR has continued to improve its governance and public administration to be more effective, transparent, accountable and participatory to provide better services to the children. The Lao Government is currently implementing the Legal Sector Master Plan on the Development of the Rule of Law by 2020 taking into account the UN Declaration on the National and International Rule of Law adopted by the UN General Assembly in 2012. In strengthening the national rule of law, the National Assembly has adopted or amended more than 100 laws in the political, judicial, national defense, public security, economic, social, cultural and environmental domains.

One of the most important developments currently on national databases, two important national surveys has been conducted and made available for public on the Violence against Children and the Lao Social Indicator Survey (LSIS) II. These two important national survey data are the main achievements of the government contributed to the implementation of our commitments on numbers of obligations, including but not limited to, (i) the Plan of Action for Implementing the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s, (ii) the World Fit for Children Declaration and Plan of Action; and (iii) similarly, the Millennium Development Goals and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Madame Chairperson.

The Lao PDR is in the process of implementing the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> Five-year National Socio-Economic Development Plan with significant achievements being made. As such, most of the MDGs and SDGs have been achieved or are on track to be achieved by the end of 2030 and most of the CRC recommendations especially those related to rights to health, education, nutrition, survival, development, protection and participation have been progressively realized. The national children forum was also successfully conducted in May 2018 under the theme “Culture of Prevention”.

At regional level, the Lao PDR has contributed to the development of children rights in ASEAN in terms of institutional building and standard setting. The Lao PDR actively participates in the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC) and has contributed to the drafting of the ASEAN Human Rights Declaration, the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the ASEAN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Children and the ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children. The Lao PDR is also leading in the ACWC thematic studies on Regional Review on Laws, Policies and Practices within ASEAN relating to the Identification, Management and Treatment of Victims of Trafficking, especially Women and Children.

Esteemed Madame Chairperson, finally,

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the secretariat of the Committee for providing all the necessary facilitation. I trust that this UNCRC dialogue session for the Lao PDR will be successful and productive. The Lao delegation looks forward to comments and inputs from the committee in this interactive dialogue.

Thank you for your kind attention.