

ADVANCE UNEDITED VERSION

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**List of issues prior to submission of the nineteenth to twenty-one reports of Lao People's Democratic Republic*****General information**

1. Please outline any significant developments of a legislative, institutional or policy nature that have taken place in the State Party that have contributed to the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular those rights covered by the Convention.
2. Please provide disaggregated statistics on the ethnic composition of the State Party's population, including on ethnic minorities and on non-citizens such as asylum seekers, refugees, stateless persons, and migrants, taking into account the Committee's general recommendations No. 8 (1990) and No. 24 (1999) and paragraphs 10 and 12 of its reporting guidelines.
3. Please indicate the status of the Convention in the domestic legal order and indicate, providing examples, whether the Convention has been or can be directly invoked in domestic courts. Please also detail actions taken or planned by the State Party to make the optional declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention.
4. Please describe measures taken to ensure the effective participation of representatives of ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples in national development planning, including in the formulation of the forthcoming Tenth National Socio-Economic Development Plan (NSEDP 2026–2030), the SDG monitoring framework, and local-level decision-making bodies. Also please describe how national climate and environmental policies, including NDC 3.0 and the Green Growth Strategy, safeguard the rights of ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples affected by climate change, deforestation and resource extraction, and how they participate in decision-making on adaptation and mitigation measures.
5. Please provide information on the institutional mechanisms for integrating ethnicity, gender- and disability-disaggregated indicators into the SDG monitoring and reporting framework, and on participation of ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples in data-collection and validation processes. Please also indicate how fiscal and debt constraints, including those arising from the high public debt ratio and related austerity measures, have affected investments in education, health and social protection for ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and which, if any, corrective measures have been adopted to ensure non-discrimination and equality in access to essential services.

* Adopted by the Committee at its 116th session (17 November-5 December 2025).

Article 1

6. Taking into account the fact that the State Party's Constitution's article 8 prohibits discrimination between ethnic groups, please indicate whether that includes direct and indirect discrimination. Please provide information on whether further legislation will be adopted that expressly prohibits racial discrimination, taking into account the Committee's previous recommendations, as well as its general recommendations No. 1 (1972), No. 7 (1985) and No. 15 (1993), with regard to the preventive value of such legislation.

7. Please provide information on whether the legal system of the State Party provides for differential treatment based on citizenship and migration status, and on the compliance of any such differentiation with article 1 (2) and (3) of the Convention. Please also provide information on whether the State Party's legal system allows for the adoption of special measures to ensure adequate opportunities for individuals and groups protected by the Convention, including ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples, Tribal Peoples, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

Article 2

8. Please outline the legal framework, policies, strategies and other measures in place to eliminate racial discrimination and to give effect to the provisions of article 2 of the Convention. Please also provide information on steps taken to enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including prohibiting and penalizing acts covered by the Convention.

9. Please detail cases in which the Convention has been applied or invoked before courts, tribunals or other relevant bodies in the State Party. Please also include the number and nature of cases brought, investigations undertaken, convictions made and sentences imposed, and information on any reparation or other remedies provided to victims. Please also outline legislation, policies and other measures in place to protect the rights of ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples, asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants and stateless persons.

10. Please provide information on whether actions have been taken to review the mandates of the various governmental bodies with mandates relating to human rights to include specific mandates to combat racism and racial discrimination, and if the State Party plans to establish a national human rights institution in full compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

11. Please provide information on special and concrete measures taken in the social, economic, cultural and other fields, special to ensure the adequate development and protection of minority groups, including pertaining to poverty reduction.

Article 4

12. Please indicate steps taken to ensure that racial motives, including all grounds outlined in article 1 (1) of the Convention, are considered as an aggravating circumstance under domestic criminal legislation. Please also provide information on whether the criminal legislation is fully in accordance with the provisions of article 4 of the Convention and covers all the grounds outlined in article 1 (1) of the Convention in particular with regard to the criminalization of:

(a) All dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred, and incitement to racial discrimination;

(b) All acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any group of persons on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin;

(c) The provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof;

(d) Organizations that carry out organized propaganda activities or spread any other type of propaganda and that promote or incite racial discrimination, and participation in such organizations or activities;

(e) Incitement to or encouragement of racial discrimination by public authorities or public institutions, whether national or local.

13. Please provide detailed statistics on complaints filed, investigations carried out, prosecutions undertaken, decisions taken and sentences passed by national tribunals and other State institutions regarding acts of racial discrimination, in particular offences covered under article 4 of the Convention. Please also provide information on any reparation or other remedies provided to victims of such acts. Please also describe the mechanisms established for monitoring and collecting data on racist incidents, including acts of racist violence and hate speech, including online, in the State Party, and information on the data collected through such mechanisms.

14. Please describe measures taken to address de facto assimilationist policies, including the promotion of a single “model cultural village” and discouragement of traditional cultural expressions, as well as measures taken to ensure that policies value and protect the cultural diversity of all Indigenous Peoples and ethnic groups, including those with distinct beliefs, livelihoods and languages.

15. Please provide information on measures taken by the State Party to ensure that tourism and heritage development respect cultural diversity and community ownership of traditions, avoiding the folklorization or commercial exploitation of minority cultures. Please also describe the responsibilities of private companies and international donors under the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to prevent adverse cultural impacts.

Article 5

16. Please indicate whether the State Party intends to give legal or constitutional recognition to ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, including the Mon-Khmer, Sino-Tibetan and Hmong-Iu Mien. Please also provide information on the enjoyment of the rights enshrined in article 5 of the Convention regarding ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, including the Hmong People on:

(a) Allegations of acts of violence, forced displacement and restrictions on humanitarian access against Hmong people, including ChaoFa communities in Xaysomboun Province, and steps taken to guarantee their access to food, health care, education and livelihood;

(b) Measures taken to protect Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities from forced displacements;

(c) Measures taken to ensure the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

(d) Measures taken to recognize and protect the right of Indigenous Peoples to own, develop, control and use their communal lands, territories and resources, including through customary land-use rights of ethnic minorities and Indigenous communities;

(e) The implementation of the Land Law (2019), the Forestry Law (2020) and the Compensation and Resettlement Decree (2016);

(f) Measures taken to ensure that free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) is obtained for development projects under the “Turning Land into Capital” policy, and how affected communities receive adequate compensation and benefit-sharing;

(g) Measures taken to ensure that large-scale projects, such as hydropower, mining, road corridors and special economic zones, do not result in discrimination or disproportionate harm to ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples. Please provide examples of social and

environmental impact assessments conducted with community participation and measures to secure equitable benefits.

17. With regard to non-citizens residing in the territory of the State Party, including migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons, please provide information on:

- (a) Statistics, disaggregated by age, sex and nationality, on the number of migrants detained for violations of immigration laws;
- (b) Measures in place to effectively address irregular migration, including measures against exploitation that may result in bodily harm or the deaths of migrant workers;
- (c) National legislation and procedures governing the protection of refugees and asylum seekers, including whether Lao PDR has considered accession to the 1951 Refugee Convention and its 1967 Protocol;
- (d) How the principle of non-refoulement is upheld in practice, especially with respect to members of ethnic minorities and stateless persons seeking protection in Lao PDR.

18. Please provide information on cooperation with other states concerning returns, deportations, or informal transfers of persons of Lao origin (including Hmong and other minorities) from abroad, including how the State Party ensures that such returns comply with international human rights standards, and that returnees are protected from discrimination, arbitrary detention, or reprisals. Please also describe mechanisms to prevent statelessness and ensure access to birth registration and identity documents for children of ethnic minorities, migrants, and cross-border populations, particularly in remote or border areas. Include data on the number of persons lacking nationality documentation and on measures taken to facilitate civil registration and documentation in minority languages.

19. Please detail efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in persons, in particular:

- (a) Updated information on the ongoing review and amendment of the Law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons (2016), including whether the revised law will explicitly criminalize trafficking for forced criminality and ensure the non-criminalization of victims coerced into illegal activities, as well as article 215 of the Penal Code criminalizing sex trafficking and labour trafficking, including enforcement hereof in special economic zones;
- (b) Measures taken to implement the National Plan of Action on Anti-Trafficking in Persons Phase III (2021-2025), including its monitoring, evaluation, and budget allocation. Please indicate whether the Plan integrates gender-responsive and culturally appropriate interventions for ethnic minority women, girls, and persons with disabilities;
- (c) Please explain how the State Party ensures protection and access to justice for victims of trafficking in persons, including within Special Economic Zones and cross-border areas, including measures taken to strengthen victim identification, referral mechanisms, and access to shelters, psychosocial care, legal aid, and livelihood support;
- (d) Please indicate awareness-raising and prevention efforts aimed at ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and whether training has been provided to law-enforcement officers, labour inspectors, and border guards on culturally sensitive and gender-responsive victim protection;
- (e) Support provided for victims of trafficking in terms of rehabilitation, access to care and reintegration or repatriation;
- (f) Education and awareness-raising campaigns on the risks and the criminal nature of trafficking, aimed at ethnic minorities, among others, and trafficking-specific training provided to law enforcement officials, border guards, judges, prosecutors, labour inspectors, teachers, healthcare providers and social services personnel;
- (g) Remedies provided and protection measures offered to victims of trafficking, including legal, medical and psychosocial assistance, and protection from retaliation;
- (h) Statistics on or the number of cases of trafficking that have been addressed by national or local authorities, including investigations, prosecutions, convictions and

sentences handed down to those responsible, including officials complicit in trafficking crimes, and the remedies and protection offered to the victims.

20. Regarding asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons, please provide information on:

(a) Steps taken to ensure respect for the right to seek asylum by enabling effective and unhindered access to the State Party's territory and full compliance with the principle of non-refoulement.

(b) Measures established to promote peaceful co-existence and relations between refugees and asylum-seekers and host communities.

(c) Regarding the internally displaced persons following the 2018 Xe-Pian XeNamnoy dam collapse, please provide information on their access to economic, social and cultural rights, including access to education and health.

(d) Whether refugees and asylum-seekers have benefited from public programmes, similarly to nationals of the State Party. Please provide information on the actions taken to register all children born to refugee and asylum-seeking parents on the territory of the State Party. In that vein, please indicate efforts taken to ensure that children born to stateless parents do not become stateless and can obtain citizenship at birth.

21. Please describe measures taken to ensure that restrictions on freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly do not hinder the ability of ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples and artists to express their cultural identities and advocate for their rights, in accordance with Articles 4, 5 and 7 of the Convention.

22. Please provide information on restrictions affecting the operation of ethnic and cultural associations, particularly in view of Penal Code Article 117 on “propaganda against the State”, Decree No. 327 on Internet-Based Information Management and Control (2014), the Law on Prevention and Combating Cyber Crime (2015), and the recently amended Decree on Management of Non-Profit Associations (No. 536/2025), and the steps taken to ensure that these laws are consistent with Articles 4 and 5 of the Convention and the right to freedom of expression and association.

23. Please provide information on the legal and policy framework regulating freedom of religion or belief and indicate how the State Party ensures that the implementation of Articles 8, 9, 42 and 44 of the Constitution is consistent with Article 5(d)(vii) of the Convention. Please also describe measures taken to prevent discrimination, harassment or arbitrary detention of persons belonging to Indigenous Peoples, ethnic or religious minorities, including Christians, animist practitioners, and spiritual groups, particularly in rural and upland areas.

24. Please indicate whether the State Party plans to revise or adopt specific legislation guaranteeing freedom of religion or belief, in conformity with international human rights standards, ensuring the right to manifest religion or belief individually or in community, in public or private, and without prior authorization. Please also provide data, disaggregated by religion, ethnicity, and gender, on registered religious organizations, places of worship, and reported incidents of interference or sanctions against religious groups. Please also provide information on measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by ethnic minority women and girls, including in access to land, inheritance, political participation, employment, and protection from gender-based violence, early marriage and trafficking.

25. Please indicate how national disability policies address the situation of ethnic minority persons with disabilities, particularly in rural areas, and whether disability data are disaggregated by ethnicity and gender. Please also indicate measures taken to promote mother-tongue and bilingual education in early grades, recruitment of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds, and inclusion of ethnic culture and history in school curricula. Please

also describe initiatives to preserve intangible cultural heritage and ensure that media representation of ethnic groups is respectful and diverse.

Article 6

26. Please outline the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures that give effect in the State Party to the provisions of article 6 of the Convention. Please provide information about the steps taken by the State Party to educate and inform the public about their rights under the Convention, the laws prohibiting racism and racial discrimination and the availability of redress mechanisms and remedies in relation to such acts. With regard to cases relating to racial discrimination, please provide detailed information on any complaints received, investigations conducted and recommendations made by legislative, judicial and administrative bodies, including the National Committee on Human Rights. Please also provide information on the burden of proof required in civil proceedings in cases involving racial discrimination.

27. Please indicate measures taken to provide capacity-building and training for law enforcement and judicial officials to ensure respect and protection for human dignity without discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or national or ethnic origin in their work. Please also indicate measures taken to ensure access to justice for persons belonging to ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, including the provision of interpretation and translation services in criminal and civil proceedings, cultural sensitivity training for law enforcement and judicial officials, and accessibility of village mediation units for non-Lao-speaking communities.

Article 7

28. Please outline measures taken to implement article 7 of the Convention, in particular with regard to the dissemination of information to promote mutual understanding, tolerance, dialogue and friendship among Indigenous Peoples, Tribal Peoples, and ethnic groups in the country. Please also detail actions taken to preserve minority cultures and languages, as well as measures taken to promote access to and participation in cultural heritage and creative expression, including by minorities, Tribal Peoples, and Indigenous Peoples. Please also provide information on human rights education in the State Party, including in relation to the rights contained in the Convention, both as provided in school curricula and as made available to the population in general.
