

Mrs. Samantha Jayasinghe
Charge de Affaires.

13



**Statement by the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka
21st Session of the Universal Periodic Review
Review of Lao People's Democratic Republic – 20 January 2015**

Mr. President,

The delegation of Sri Lanka extends a warm welcome to the High Level delegation from Lao People's Democratic Republic (LAO PDR). We thank LAO PDR for its national report and update made this afternoon.

At the outset, Sri Lanka wishes to recognize LAO PDR's achievements, in the promotion and protection of human rights. In this regard we commend LAO PDR for becoming a party to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel or Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment in 2012. Sri Lanka welcomes the adoption of the Decree on People with Disabilities in 2014, which is the first legal instrument dealing with the promotion and protection of the rights and interests of people with disabilities. We also note the allocation of approximately 75 million USD for the development of the national prison system during the period of 2008-2014.

Sri Lanka commends the LAO PDR for making poverty reduction as a priority in its national socio-economic development programme, designed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2015, and note a significant drop in the percentage of people living in poverty during the period from 2008 to 2014 (from 27% in 2008 to 20.5% in 2014).

We also note the progress achieved by the LAO PDR in the Educational sector, and recognize the reforms on vocational education and higher-level education sectors, aiming to enhance the human resource development, access to education for all, improve quality of education, and elevate the standards of education service and its administration. We are encouraged by LAO PDR's continued efforts in implementing the policies to improve the general health of the people in the direction of disease prevention.

Sri Lanka recommends LAO PDR:

1. Continue with the efforts of realizing the MDG targets in the areas of nutrition, gender equality in primary education, reduction of maternal and child mortality ~~and~~
~~and~~
2. Takes concrete steps to tackle human trafficking, in particular, by strengthening the work of the National Steering Committee on Anti Human Trafficking

Finally, we wish LAO PDR success in its UPR engagement.

Thank you.