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Statement By The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia on the Universal Periodic Review of Lao People's Democratic Republic

Ethiopia welcomes the delegation of Lao People's Democratic Republic led by H.E. Mr. Phongsavath Boupha Minister, Head of President Office to the 21st Session of the UPR Working Group. We thank the delegation for the comprehensive national report and the oral update. We welcome the constructive engagement of Lao with the UPR working Group and timely report.

We commend Lao People's Democratic Republic for implementing significant number of recommendations from the first UPR cycle.

We commend Lao PDR for identifying priority areas in the promotion and protection of human rights and further note with appreciation Lao's effort to enhance the legal and normative framework on the protection of human rights, *inter alia*, fighting discrimination, protection of the rights of the child, women's rights, gender equality, social assistance, education, health care, justice system and fight against corruption.

We particularly note with appreciation the 7th national socio economic development plan (7th NSEDP) of Lao PDR designed to reduce poverty and address the root causes of underdevelopment. It is also encouraging to note the overarching strategy to realize breakthrough in imagination, human resource development, improving management and governance regulations and poverty reduction to build the country on the principle of Self-reliance.

My delegation would like to recommend the following

1. To further work in empowerment of women at the decision making level
2. To provide more financial and technical support for the preservation of Lao traditional and cultural heritage.

Finally, we wish all the best to the delegation of Lao People's Democratic Republic in its engagement with the Human Rights Council. **Thank you**