

**Statement by Hungary on Lao People's Democratic Republic**  
**21<sup>st</sup> Session of the UPR Working Group**  
**20 January 2015**

**Mr. President,**

Hungary welcomes the delegation of the Lao PDR to the 21<sup>st</sup> session of the UPR Working Group and thanks for the report and the update on the human rights situation in the country.

We commend the Lao PDR for the ratification of the CAT in 2012 and recognize the efforts it took to amend the provisions of the Penal Law and the Law on Criminal Procedure. In order to fully implement the obligations of this convention, Hungary **recommends** that the Lao PDR include a definition of torture in line with CAT and add specific offences relating to torture and other ill-treatment into the relevant legislation.

While the Lao Constitution guarantees the right to freedom of religion or belief, we are concerned by the reported cases of discrimination against Christians in some communities and certain ethnic groups on the grounds of their religions or beliefs. We take note that the Government is in the process of amending the Prime Minister's Decree on Management and Protection of Religion to implement the recommendations from the previous UPR session, from the Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion and Belief, and from consultations with the representatives of various religious groups. However, we **recommend** to the Lao PDR the intensification of the dialogue with religious leaders in order to erase all remaining restrictions on religions by law.

Finally, we note that the Lao PDR could improve its cooperation with the United Nations special procedures. The requests for country visits by the Special Rapporteurs on summary executions, adequate housing and the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association are still pending and some communications remained unanswered. Therefore, we **recommend** to the Lao PDR to issue a standing invitation to all United Nations special procedures.

**Thank you, Mr. President!**