

**STATEMENT BY DELEGATION OF SINGAPORE
DURING THE UNIVERSAL PERIODIC REVIEW (UPR)
WORKING GROUP SESSION ON LAOS ON 20
JANUARY 2015**

[Speaking time: 1 minute 40 seconds]

Mr President,

Singapore welcomes the Laotian delegation led by [*Head of the President's Office and Chairman of the National Committee for Human Rights Phongsavath Boupha*] to the UPR Working Group.

Since its last review, Lao PDR has bolstered its domestic policies to strengthen governance and to better promote and protect human rights. Laos has also implemented good programmes to reduce poverty, attain the Millennium Development Goals, and graduate from Least Developed Country (LDC) status.

We **recommend** that Laos continues to strengthen the rule of law and improve governance. We also **recommend** that Laos continues socio-economic reforms to better the lives of its people, in particular by investing in education.

Singapore enjoys longstanding cooperation with Laos, particularly in capacity-building areas both bilaterally and through ASEAN channels. We will continue with such collaboration, investing our limited resources, sharing our experiences and working with Laos to reach its development goals.

Mr President,

Singapore remains concerned about the disappearance of Sombath Somphone, who is the Laotian husband of a Singaporean citizen.

This has been a very trying period for Sombath's family. We acknowledge that the Laotian Government has taken steps to reassure Sombath's family they are dealing with this issue, but we urge it to do its utmost to resolve this case expeditiously and judiciously.

We join the many friends of Laos in wishing it every success in its development and reforms.

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