**Universal Periodic Review, 35th session**

**Human Rights Council**

**UPR of Lao PDR, 21 January 2020**

**Intervention by Denmark**

*[Check against delivery]*

Mr. President,

Denmark welcomes the delegation of the Lao People’s Democratic Republic and thanks it for its presentation today.

We commend progress made by Lao PDR in strengthening the legal and policy framework related to children’s rights. However, significant challenges remain.

*Denmark recommends the Government to adopt legislative measures to ensure that all forms of sexual abuse, exploitation and sale of children are prohibited and criminalized.*

The protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms for all is at the heart of the 2030 Agenda and is indispensable in the pursuit of sustainable development.

*Denmark recommends the Government to guarantee the peaceful exercise of the right to freedom of expression by revising relevant legislation, including article 65 of the Criminal Code.*

*Finally, Denmark recommends the Government to ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture.*

Denmark wishes Lao PDR a successful review.

I thank you.