**Statement by Iceland**

**UPR35 – Lao DPR**

Madam/Mr. President,

Iceland welcomes the delegation of Lao DPR.

We welcome the national report and the steps outlined therein and hope for their continued implementation. We particularly welcome the recent reduction in the scope of offences for which the death penalty may be imposed.

Iceland makes the following recommendations:

1. Fully abolish the death penalty and ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the ICCPR.
2. To expand and accelerate implementation of existing frameworks in order to reduce the high rates of child marriage in rural areas.
3. To address barriers preventing women and girls to access sexual and reproductive health services as made available by the 2016 Guidelines on the prevention of unsafe abortions.
4. Adopt comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation that addresses direct and indirect discrimination and encompasses all the prohibited grounds of discrimination, including sexual orientation and gender identity.

I wish Lao DPR all success for its review.

I thank you