

Universal Periodic Review – 21st Session

Statement by Ireland on the review of Lao People's Democratic Republic

20 January 2015

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

We welcome the progress Lao PDR has made since the first UPR cycle in relation to human trafficking, including establishment of a steering committee, elaboration of a national action plan and increased training.

Ireland is deeply concerned regarding the position of human rights defenders in Lao PDR and in particular by reports of enforced disappearances and failure to adequately investigate such alleged crimes. Ireland **recommends** that Lao PDR take all necessary steps to protect human rights defenders from intimidation, ill-treatment or violence, including enforced disappearances, and to ensure prompt, impartial and thorough investigation of all allegations, including those of enforced disappearances.

Further, Ireland is disturbed by reports of acts of discrimination and repression against religious and other minorities in particular Christians and the Hmong people. Ireland **recommends** that Lao PDR ensure the protection of the rights of persons belonging to religious and other minorities and effectively investigate all alleged abuses and violations.