

# UN Human Rights Council 45: Statement for the Universal Periodic Review Adoption – Lao People’s Democratic Republic

World news story

The UK statement delivered during the Universal Periodic Review Adoption on Lao People’s Democratic Republic



The Human Rights Council takes place in Geneva.

Madam President,

The United Kingdom welcomes the Lao People’s Democratic Republic’s (PDR) engagement with the UPR. We commend the Lao PDR for its cooperation and engagement with UN Treaty Bodies and Special Procedures, as well as its economic development and poverty reduction strategies and work on children’s rights, including its very effective response to COVID-19.

The UK notes the Lao PDR’s statement that the constitution and relating laws guarantee freedom of expression. However, we remain concerned about restrictions on foreign news agencies, and the use of intimidation against critics of the State. We urge the Government to promote and protect the right to freedom of expression for all. The UK remains concerned that the case of Sombath Somphone is yet to be resolved, and asks that investigations into all enforced disappearances are carried out thoroughly.

We welcome Lao PDR’s support for the UK’s recommendations to develop and implement a national action plan on human trafficking and modern slavery, and to repeal all legislation inhibiting freedom of opinion and expression. However, we regret that Lao PDR did not support the UK’s recommendation to undertake impartial, thorough and transparent investigations into all enforced disappearances.

We remain open to discussing these recommendations with the Lao PDR and would welcome further discussion on next steps for implementation.

The UK encourages the Lao PDR to engage fully with the UN and the international community on their accepted recommendations, and to implement them fully.

Thank you.

Published 28 September 2020