



## Meeting Minutes: Local Project Appraisal Committee International Law Project Phase III Project Document

**Date:** 10 December 2008  
**Time:** 1.30pm-4pm  
**Venue:** Novotel Vientiane, Lao PDR

### Agenda:

1. Welcome – Mr. Stéphane Vigié, Deputy Resident Representative UNDP (Chair), Mr. Khamkheuang Bounteum, NPD and Director General of the Treaties and Law, Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
2. Presentation – Mr. Phoukhong Sisoulath, Project Manager, International Law Project
3. Discussion
4. Closing – Mr. Stéphane Vigié

### **1. Introduction**

Mr. Vigié welcomed participants to the LPAC meeting and noted that amongst the many projects supported by UNDP in Laos the International Law Project was one of the most successful. The project began in 2001 working with the government to help accelerate the integration of Laos into the global and regional legal system. Two recent examples of the achievements of the project include:

- 1 – On December 9 the GoL celebrated the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights with high level public events.
- 2 – In November in Oslo the GoL was the second signatory to the new Convention on cluster munitions and offered to host the first meeting of states parties to the Convention.

It was appropriate to be ambitious about the next phase of the programme. Mr. Vigié reflected that Phase 1 had been about raising awareness, advocating for ratification, translating documents etc while Phase 2 focused on implementation. The midterm evaluation was very positive but also highlighted the need for more targeted capacity building which is the focus for phase 3.

Mr. Vigié thanked Mr Khamkeuang and his team for their remarkable work.

**Mr. Khamkheuang Bounteum, National Project Director and Director General of the Treaties and Law, Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs:**

Mr Khamkeuang, thanked the attendees for their participation, including the former National Project Director of the International Law Project Mr. Phoukhao Phommavongsa. Contributions from all ministries have ensured the success of this project to date and it is hoped that there will be continued support and success in the future. Thanks also expressed to UNDP, Finland and the European Commission, and Professor Sam Blay for his dedicated work on the project document.

**2. Presentation of the International Law Project Phase III Project Document**

Mr. Phoukhong Sisoulath, Project Manager, International Law Project: presentation of Prodoc phase III (attached)

Mr Phoukhong noted that Phase III of the Project will be devoted to building a strong capacity building framework in international law for the Lao PDR and that good foundation of national capacity will ensure sustainability. The focus of the Project is therefore to build capacity for the immediate and long term needs of the Lao PDR by providing specialized training for personnel in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs with particular attention to the DLT and International Organisation departments; strengthening the capacity of selected institutions that provide training infrastructure in international law; providing training to the judiciary, Line Ministries, law enforcement agencies and civil society organisations in monitoring international law application and raising awareness about it in the Lao PDR; strengthening the capacity of the National Assembly in the adoption and implementation of treaties. The new phase has a duration of 4 years with an estimated budget of USD3.8 million.

***Comments from Finland***

Mr Vigié relayed comments from Helena Ahola, Development Counsellor Embassy of Finland who was unable to attend the meeting but wished to express her thanks to the Project and endorse the Phase III Project Document (comments attached).

**3. The chair opened the floor for discussion:**

**Mr. Francesco Straniero, Attache Cooperation, European Union, Delegation of the European Commission:**

Mr. Straniero noted that Finland is a major contributor. Together with the European Commission they will contribute almost \$3m. This contribution illustrates the EU commitment to governance and human rights in Lao PDR. Mr. Straniero said that the Commission was awaiting for the signature of a bilateral agreement between the Government of Lao PDR and the Commission to sign the contribution agreement with UNDP. He sought UNDP's assistance to speak with the Department for International Corporation on this matter.

**Mr. Phasith Phommarath, Member of the Lao Bar Association**

Mr. Phasith expressed his thanks to Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UNDP and noted that UNDP assistance to Laos is very advantageous for Lao PDR. Mr. Phasith raised questions about the quality of teachers in Laos and asked that curriculums and courses within the new project would assess people to ensure they were capable of performing tasks.

**Mr. Phoukhao Phommavongsa, Director General of the Office of the National Boundary Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

Mr. Phoukhao was pleased to see project progressing to a third phase and thanked Finland and EC for their support. Mr. Phoukhao thought it was important to support border issues and highlighted recent events between Cambodia and Thailand. Support is also key in ensuring integration with ASEAN countries. Mr. Phoukhao would like to see International Law curriculum to include private international law as well as public international law. There was a need for more information about resolution of conflicts and need to raise awareness amongst population about seeking third party resolution to disputes i.e. court processes and for the government to be better equipped to negotiate large contracts.

**Response from Mr. Vigié:**

Since GoL sees private sector as main area for growth, it does make a lot of sense to also address capacity building for private international law. This should be done in consultation with the MOiC, the Lao Chamber of Commerce and Industry, as well as the ASEAN department of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

**Ms. Chandy Pankeo, Head of the Secretariat, LaoNCAW:**

Requested whether any assistance was available to fund LaoNCAW and NOSPA

**Mr. Vigié noted** that there was a need for activities and indicators targeting support to women and that this should be included in the project document.

**Dr. Bounmy Paphavong, Assistant Minister, MPI**

Noted he had attended seminars organized by project, found participants from many different ministries and provinces who paid serious attention to the contents of the seminars on International Law and Human Rights and were very grateful for the inputs of the project ; thanked the donors for their support.

The accelerated capacity development in phase 3 was well targeted but he would like to ensure that awareness raising was maintained at the central level along with new initiatives for local authorities.

**Response from Mr. Blay:**

1) Document title was chosen as after extensive consultations it was apparent the Lao PDR needs capacity to further engage in the international legal framework.

2) Support to provincial authorities were singled out but would naturally include central authorities in activities.

2) Question from LaoNCAW: yes there is assistance and gave examples such as seminars specifically targeting women and women's issues, targeted language training for women and seminar quotas to ensure a gender balance

3) Question about curriculum development: it was anticipated under the new phase that a curriculum consultant would be engaged to develop curriculum strategies. In particular, there will be gender issues developed as part of the curriculum

4) Quality of education: two issues: general legal education and, international law. LSMP looks at the first, ILP looks at the second. Anticipated under phase 3 that two visiting professors will come to assist colleagues at law schools in Lao PDR and explained that they would devise curriculums and provide teaching training in conjunction with their Lao colleagues. Assistance in the form of computers and library books would also be provided.

5) Private International Law is inclusive in the term International Law therefore consideration given in the document

**Mr. Teu Phommavong, Deputy Chief of Office, Police Academy:**

Thanked the project for support to the academy and pointed out areas of further support such as curriculums, anti corruption and trainings, investigation, international law.

**Ms. Emily Johnson, Lao Disabled people's Association:**

Was grateful for opportunity to be involved in formulation and thanked the project for its support to the LDPA and for recognizing importance of Convention on People with Disabilities and moves to ratify it and hoped that this will be mainstreamed into other project activities (i.e. come into play within curriculum development etc)

**Response from Mr. Vigié**

Noted that the Convention on People with Disabilities is very important, especially in light of the recently signed cluster munitions convention which makes reference to people with disabilities.

**Response from Mr. Phoukhong:**

Police academy noted there will be continued support to teach international law in Master programme – lectures include subject in HR and trafficking. All line ministries will be beneficiaries of language training and project and will organize the intensive courses in English and International Law at VC and this will include Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor staff

**Mr. Francesco Straniero, Attache Cooperation, European Union, Delegation of the European Commission:**

Noted the importance of training on child protection, human rights and human trafficking.

**Response from Mr. Vigié:** The future programme of support to the implementation of the Legal Sector Master Plan will also provide support in these areas.

**Ms. Bounthai Pankeo, Director of Division, Office of the Supreme people's Prosecutor**

Grateful for previous assistance given to Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor and continued support under phase 3. Highlighted need for capacity building in English language training to enable study of law for Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor.

**Mr. Sida Lokamphone, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Justice**

Thanks to support from project to Ministry of Justice in terms of legal master plans and legal education. The national strategic plan for the ministry is still in question so need assistance with the strategic plans. Note a typo at page 55. Wants a soft copy of the presentation – get Phoukhong to email out.

**Mr. Vigié:**

Noted that support to the LSMP in general will come through a different initiative but that of course some support will also be made available through ILP.

**Ms. Anouphone Kittarath, Deputy Director of Division, Secretariat of the National Commission for Mother and Child**

In the past received assistance from this project but directly receive support from UNICEF to implement Convention on rights of child – GoL already signed optional protocol on rights of child – any room in phase III to support implementation of the optional protocol would be welcomed as GoL needs to prepare report, although UNICEF and Save the Children do provide assistance.

**Mr. Khamkheuang Bounteum – final remarks**

Many comments and questions raised in positive and active way. On behalf of Ministry of Foreign Affairs we will make sure that every partner in the government agency will have a role in implementation in of various international conventions Lao PDR become party to. Officials in ministry are specializing in conventions and hope coordination will be strengthened to benefit people with this knowledge. Dissemination is important to assist NA members and government officials to participate in integration of protocols into domestic legislation. Thanks to UNDP and donors especially Finland and the EC

**4. Conclusion:**

Mr. Vigié thanked all participants for their contribution to the formulation process and noted that there had been endorsement of the proposed new project phase. The comments from today will be included in the final project document to be signed by the UNDP Resident Representative and the Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs. The final document and minutes will be sent out shortly.

Date: 7 January 2009

Approved:



(Mr. Stéphane Vigié, DRR)

**Participants:**

**Chair:**

*Mr. Stephane Vigie, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP*

**UNDP, donors and international development partners:**

*Mr. Dirk Wagener, Assistant Resident Representative, Chief Governance Unit, UNDP*

*Ms Gemma Archer, Governance Programme Associate, UNDP.*

*Mr. Francesco Straniero, EC*

*Mr. Laurent Pouget, LSMP, UNDP*

*Dr. Frank Boulon, STA, NA Project, NA*

*Ms Amy Delneuvillle, Child Protection Officer, UNICEF*

*Mr. Somsouk, National Coordinator, UNFEM*

**Lao Government and National stakeholders:**

*Dr. Bounmy Paphavong, Assistant Minister, MPI*

*Mr. Sida Lokamphone, Assistant Minister, Ministry of Justice*

*Mr. Khamkheuang Bounteum, NPD and Director General of the Treaties and Law, Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Mr. Bouathong Chanthamalin, Chief of Cabinet, People's Supreme Court*

*Mr. Khamkong Liemphrachanh, Director General of the Law Department, Ministry of Justice*

*Mr. Phoukhao Phommavongsa, Director General of the Office of the National Boundary Committee, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Mr. Phetsamone Phanthavong, Director General of the Research and Analysis Department, Presidential Office*

*Ms. Chandy Pankeo, Head of the Secretariat, LaoNCAW*

*Mr. Kingpheth Vanachareun, Deputy Director of the Treaties and Law Division, Department of International Relations, Ministry of National Defence*

*Mr. Teu Phommavong, Deputy Chief of Office, Police Academy*

*Mr. Nuannkhamchai Vongphet, Lecturer of International Law, Police Academy*

*Ms. Anouphone Kittarath, Deputy Director of Division, Secretariat of the National Commission for Mother and Child.*

*Ms Emily Johnson, Project Officer, Lao Disabled People's Association*

*Ms Misouda, Legal Officer, Lao Disabled People's Association*

*Mr. Chanhsook Khamphou, Officer, Judge Training Center, People's Supreme Court*

*Ms. Bounthai Pankeo, Director of Division, Office of the Supreme People's Prosecutor*

*Mr. Pathana Souk-Aloun, Officer of the Secretariat to the Government, PMO*

*Mr. Sengouthai, Law Lecturer, Faculty of Law and Political Science, NOUL*

*Mr. Phasith Phommarath, Member of the LBA*

*Mr. Souphi Norintha, Director of Division, Law Research Institute and International Cooperation*

*Mr. Souphavong Vanthanouvong, Director of the Int'l Relations Department, SIA*

*Mr. Bounphak Sombandith, Lecturer of International Law, National Academy of Politics and Public Administration*

*Ms. Vongsi Thongsamay, Officer of the Human Rights Center, National Academy of Social Sciences.*

*Mr. Soukhin Manosinh, Acting Director of the Research Division, Institute of Foreign Affairs.*

*Mr. Thiphasone Sengsourigna, Officer of the Human Rights Division, DTL, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Mr. Daovy Vongsay, Officer of the ASEAN Department, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

**International Law Project:**

*Mr. Phoukhong Sisoulath, Project Manager, International Law Project, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Prof. Sam Blay, International Law Consultant, International Law Project, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

*Mr. Manith Sengsathid, National Technical Advisor, International Law Project, Ministry of Foreign Affairs*

His Excellency  
Dr. Sinlavong Khoutphaythoune  
Minister  
Ministry of Planning and Investment  
Vientiane

Mr. Bouakhong Nammavong  
National Project Director  
GPAR Luangprabang  
Luangprabang Province

Ms. Fiona Farrell  
PACSA Coordinator  
SBSD Project  
Prime Minister's Office  
Vientiane

Mr. Bounpone Sangsomsack  
Vice-President  
State Inspection Authority (SIA)  
Prime Minister's Office  
Vientiane

Mr. Khingsavanh Southammavong  
Office Manager  
PACSA  
Vientiane

Dr. Sayamang Vongsak  
Vice-President  
Lao Front for National Construction  
Vientiane

Ms. Thongdy Soulichack  
Deputy Director General  
Department of Fiscal Policy  
Ministry of Finance  
Vientiane