



**Lao People's Democratic Republic**  
**Peace Independence Democracy Unity Prosperity**

Government

No. 473 /GOL  
Vientiane Capital, Date: 12 July 2021

**DECREE**  
**ON OLDER PERSONS**

- Pursuant to the Law on Government, No. 04/NA, dated 08 November 2016;
- Pursuant to the Request by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, No. 0969/MoLSW, dated 26 March 2021.

**The Government Issues the Decree:**

**Part I**  
**General Provisions**

**Article 1 Objectives**

This Decree defines principles, regulations, and measures regarding the management, monitoring and inspection of older persons affairs in order to implement such affairs efficiently and effectively, with an aim to protect rights and legitimate interests of older persons, for older persons to receive care, have a good livelihood and wellbeing, and contribute to national socio-economic development.

**Article 2 Older Persons**

Older persons are Lao citizens who are over sixty years of age.

**Article 3 Definitions**

Terminologies used in this Decree are defined as follows:

1. **Family** refers to one cell of society consists of husband, wife, child or other family members who are related to one another and living together, authenticated by a verified family book;
2. **Society** refers to interaffairs between a person and persons, groups of people, community or social organizations;
3. **Aging Society** refers to the society in which the population over sixty years of age accounts for over ten percent of the total population;
4. **Healthcare** refers to a movement to maintain health of older persons in order to improve physical health and mental wellbeing of older persons in accordance with the age of older persons;
5. **Public Place** refers to a place that can be accessible and used by everyone, such as hospitals, schools, temples, public parks, tourism sites, stadiums, airports, public transport stations, railway stations, markets, parking lots, gas stations, banks;
6. **Accessibility** refers to the receiving of service without any obstruction, barriers, in terms of environment and attitudes.

#### **Article 4 Government Policy on Older Persons Affairs**

The Government promotes older persons affairs by allocating budget, building infrastructure and basic facilities as appropriate for the implementation of such affairs.

The Government encourages and promotes the development of older persons affairs for such affairs to be operationalized in parallel with economic growth and population change.

The Government encourages and promotes individuals, legal entities, domestic and international organizations to contribute funds, materials-equipment, technical expertise, facilities in the development of older persons affairs.

#### **Article 5 Principles of Older Persons Affairs**

Older persons affairs shall abide by the following principles:

1. To comply with policy directions, constitution, laws, national socio-economic development plan, conventions and international agreements in which Lao PDR is a signatory;
2. To manage in a centralized and harmonized approach nationwide;
3. To respect the rights of, and express gratitude toward, older persons, and be acceptant of aging society;
4. To mainstream gender perspective into older persons affairs by taking into consideration different needs and experience of female and male;
5. To not discriminate, neglect, commit violence, abuse physically and mentally, violate the dignity of, and take advantage of, older persons;
6. To engage all stakeholders in society in the protection, assistance, and care of older persons.

#### **Article 6 Scope of the Decree's Application**

This Decree applies to individuals, legal entities, and domestic and international organizations whose works are relevant to older persons affairs in Lao PDR.

#### **Article 7 International Cooperation**

The Government promotes foreign, regional, and international cooperation on older persons affairs by sharing lessons learned, information, science, technology, human resource development, in order to develop older persons affairs, and comply with conventions and international agreements in which Lao PDR is a signatory.

## **Part II Rights and Duties of Older Persons**

#### **Article 8 Rights of Older Persons**

Older persons have the following rights:

1. To ensure basic livelihoods, such as food, shelter, clothing, mobility and healthcare;
2. To choose to live together with children, grandchildren, relatives, or by themselves;
3. To be prioritized in care, treatment and health rehabilitation;
4. To be prioritized in the use of public services as well as receiving discounts on service fees as appropriate;
5. To be exempt from contributing to social activities unless the contribution is voluntary;
6. To participate in social activities and receive appropriate working conditions;
7. To become a member of the Older Persons Association;

8. To have other rights as stipulated in laws.

#### **Article 9 Duties of Older Persons**

Older Persons have the following duties:

1. To be a role model on living with good manners to the family and society;
2. To instruct younger generation, preserve traditional culture and good traditions and customs of the nation;
3. To transfer lesson learned and good experience to the younger generation;
4. To perform other duties as stipulated in laws.

### **Part III Care and Development of Older Persons**

#### **Chapter 1 Care of Older Persons**

#### **Article 10 Care of Older Persons**

Care of older persons is a movement to support older persons to gain access to health services, social activities, and public place, which is a responsibility of the family, society, and the State.

#### **Article 11 Responsibilities of Care by the Family**

The family has responsibilities to take care of older persons as follows:

1. To respect, worry about, attend to, assist, take care of, and look after older persons to ensure physical, mental, and property's safety in their daily lives;
2. To ensure that older persons receive care, primary healthcare;
3. To facilitate lifelong learning for older persons;
4. To facilitate employment and income generation for older persons;
5. To assume other responsibilities as stipulated in laws.

#### **Article 12 Responsibilities of Care by Society**

Society has responsibilities to support, cooperate, enable, and facilitate older persons for them to be able to operate and participate in activities in society, including building solidarity, expressing gratitude and appreciation, and protecting rights and legitimate interests of older persons.

#### **Article 13 Responsibilities of Care by the State**

The State has responsibilities to take care of older persons by providing mechanisms, disseminate knowledge, building infrastructure, technology, building basic facilities, and providing services related to care for older persons.

### **Chapter 2 Health Promotion, Treatment and Rehabilitation of Older Persons**

#### **Article 14 Health Promotion**

Health promotion is a sharing of information and recommendations on the promotion and maintenance of health, and creating an enabling environment for the livelihood of older persons for their good health and wellbeing.

Individuals, families, community, society, and organizations must put an effort into caretaking by allowing leisure, exercise, receiving health check-up, receiving appropriate nutrition, treatment, and regularly participating in social activities.

#### **Article 15 Treatment of Older Persons**

Older persons must be prioritized in testing, diseases case findings, diagnosis, medication, medical procedures, in order for older persons to be rested, rehabilitated, recovered from illness, and to have good health, strength, including health promotion.

Health sector to collaborate with Labour and Social Welfare sector and relevant stakeholders to establish coordination mechanism and referral system for older persons among treatment in the community, basic treatment, and long-term treatment, in order for older persons to receive continuous treatment.

Older persons with severe illness will receive appropriate assistance and treatment.

Older persons who are poor, disadvantaged, and older persons who are alone, helpless, with no caregivers, will be exempt from or receive discount from treatment service fees as stipulated in relevant laws.

#### **Article 16 Health Rehabilitation**

Older persons must be provided with consultation, rehabilitation, therapy, physically and mentally, as well as provided with devices, prosthetics, and orthotics according to medical principles.

Older persons who are poor, disadvantaged, alone, helpless, and with no caregivers, will be exempt from or receive discount from service fees on rehabilitation, therapy, devices, prosthetics, and orthotics.

### **Chapter 3 Welfare for Older Persons**

#### **Article 17 Health Insurance**

Relevant sectors to support, promote, and enable older persons with access to health insurance scheme in accordance with the Law on Health Insurance to ensure treatment services provided to older persons.

#### **Article 18 Social Assistance**

Relevant sectors, community, society have responsibilities to assist older persons who are poor, such as caregiving, nurturing, providing food, clothing, shelter, medicines, and establishing appropriate and safe facilities.

In case of emergency or death, individuals, families, organizations, and relevant stakeholders must attend to, and provide assistance to, older persons in a timely manner.

### **Chapter 4 Education and Sports**

#### **Article 19 Education Promotion**

Education and Sports sector, relevant sectors, and other stakeholders, to promote and enable older people to receive education enhancement, trainings or vocational trainings at educational institutions, community centers, with access to information for education; and to encourage older persons to transfer their knowledge and experience through teaching, giving lectures, through print media and electronic media as appropriate.

## **Article 20 Sports-Physical Activity for Older Persons**

Older persons can practice sports-physical activity by playing, exercising, competing in local sports-physical activity that are the tradition of all ethnicities, and international sports.

Education and Sports sector, relevant sectors, and other stakeholders, to encourage and promote the operations of sports-physical activity of older persons through different forms and methods as appropriate.

## **Chapter 5 Promoting Employment**

### **Article 21 Promoting Employment**

Family, society, and the State give opportunity to and support older persons with employment and having appropriate jobs, such as business operators, advisors, specialists, teachers, researchers, creators.

### **Article 22 Employment of Older Persons**

State and private organizations, both domestic and international, can employ older persons to do certain tasks that are suitable to their knowledge, capacity, and area of expertise, in accordance with laws and regulations.

## **Chapter 6 Culture and Leisure**

### **Article 23 Cultural Participation**

Older persons can participate and carry out cultural activities, such as art, literature, traditional ceremony, creative works, and participating in the celebration of important national and international days.

### **Article 24 Leisure**

The State, society, community, and family to promote and enable older persons with leisure at leisure places, as well as listening to radio programs, watching televisions, watching plays, and films.

## **Chapter 7 Accessibility to Public Buildings, Venues and Transports**

### **Article 25 Accessibility to Public Buildings, Venues**

Older person can gain access to public buildings, venues conveniently, safely, and receive discounted service fees as stipulated in relevant regulations.

Individuals, legal entities, and organizations who own buildings, facilities, must build, install, or improve facilities for older persons, such as footpaths, ramps, rails, elevators, toilets, parking lots, symbols and other signages.

### **Article 26 Accessibility to Public Transports**

Older persons can gain access to public transports for convenient and safe travel, and receive discounted service fees as stipulated in relevant regulations.

Individuals, legal entities, and organizations who own public transports must build, install, or improve facilities for older persons, such as embarking or disembarking vehicles, allocating specific seats, and services in the public transports system.

## **Chapter 8 Older Persons Statistics**

### **Article 27 Statistics**

Older persons statistics are data and figures that reflect the real context of older persons in each period, such as number, sex, age, residence, ethnicity, migration status, disability, livelihood of older persons, to be used as a reference for the management and development of older persons affairs.

### **Article 28 Statistics Collection**

Statistics collection on older persons is a collection of data on older persons through the process of interview, collection, consolidation, processing, analysis, analytics, in accordance with scientific principle on statistics as stipulated in the Law on Statistics.

Labour and Social Welfare sector to collaborate with relevant sectors to collect statistics and create a database on older persons.

## **Part IV Older Persons Association**

### **Article 29 Older Persons Association**

Older Persons Association is a civil society organization established voluntarily and is permitted to be established in accordance with regulations, with a mandate to represent and build solidarity among older persons, in order to support, promote, provide assistance to, and protect the rights and legitimate interests of, older persons.

### **Article 30 Rights and Duties of Older Persons Association**

Older Persons Association has the following rights and duties:

1. To develop its own operational plan periodically in collaboration with the management organization of older persons affairs;
2. To build solidarity, instruct its own members to comply with the Party's directions, constitution, and laws of the State;
3. To encourage, promote older persons affairs to ensure viable, conducive, prompt, and effective affairs;
4. To explore methods, collaborate, monitor, and solve issues that hinder the operation of older persons affairs;
5. To evaluate, summarize, and report the implementation of older persons affairs to the management organization of older persons affairs on a regular basis;
6. To exercise rights and perform other duties as stipulated in laws and regulations.

### **Article 31 Older Persons Association Fund**

The State supports the Older Persons Association to establish the fund to mobilize and collect funds for the operation of its own affairs.

## **Part V Prohibitions**

### **Article 32 General Prohibitions**

Individuals, legal entities, and organizations are prohibited to conduct as follows:

1. Limit, obstruct the opinions expressed by older persons;
2. Take advantage of older persons;
3. Disrespect personal lives, families of older persons;
4. Advertise, disseminate, or provide information in a misleading, degrading manner about older persons and older persons affairs;
5. Discriminate or insult and defame individuals, legal entities or organizations operating on older persons affairs;
6. Conduct other acts in violation of laws.

### **Article 33 Prohibitions for Relevant Personnel-Civil Servants**

Personnel-civil servants are prohibited to conduct as follows:

1. Abuse rights, duties and positions; impede, withhold, demand a bribe for personal gain, for families or friends, which cause damages to the interests of older persons;
2. Perform duties in a negligent, reckless, ignorant manner, lack responsibilities or lack ethics, which cause damages to older persons;
3. Demand or claim for fees, service charges, or misuse technical revenues from older persons affairs illegally;
4. Disclose personal information of older persons or official confidential documents, of individuals, legal entities, or organizations related to older persons affairs, without permission;
5. Issue inaccurate documents related to older persons affairs or forge such documents;
6. Conduct other acts in violation of laws.

## **Part VI**

### **National Committee for Older Persons**

#### **Article 34 National Committee for Older Persons**

National Committee for Older Persons is a non-standing committee, with a mandate to support, promote older persons affairs to ensure efficient, conducive, and prompt affairs, with progress and growth, and contribute to national socio-economic development.

National Committee for Older Persons consists of:

1. Committee for Older Persons at the central level;
2. Committee for Older Persons at the provincial level;
3. Committee for Older Persons at the district level.

#### **Article 35 Committee for Older Persons at the Central Level**

Committee for Older Persons at the central level is appointed by the Prime Minister as proposed by the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare, with the Department of Policy for Devotees, Disabilities and Older Persons acting as a secretariat.

National Committee for Older Persons at the central level consists of:

1. Minister of Labour and Social Welfare as a Chair;
2. Vice Minister of Labour and Social Welfare as a Deputy Chair;  
and a standing committee;
3. Vice Minister of Health as a Deputy Chair;
4. Vice Minister of Finance as a Deputy Chair;
5. Vice Minister of Education and Sports as a member;
6. Vice Minister of Planning and Investment as a member;

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| 7. Vice Minister of Foreign Affairs  | as a member;                            |
| 8. Vice Minister of Justice  | as a member;                            |
| 9. Vice Minister of Public Works and Transport   | as a member;                            |
| 10. Vice Minister of Information, Culture and Tourism  | as a member;                            |
| 11. Vice Minister of Industry and Commerce   | as a member;                            |
| 12. A Representative of Older Persons Association  | as a member;                            |
| 13. Director General of the Department of Policy<br>for Devotees, Disabilities and Older Persons | as a member<br>and Head of Secretariat. |

**Article 36 Committee for Older Persons at the Provincial level**

Committee for Older Persons at the provincial level is appointed by Vientiane Capital Mayor, Provincial Governor, as proposed by the Director General of the Department of Labour and Social Welfare, with Section of Policy for Devotees, Disabilities and Older Persons acting as a secretariat.

Committee for Older Persons at the provincial level consists of:

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| 1. Vice Provincial Governor, Vice Mayor of<br>Vientiane Capital               | as a Chair;                                     |
| 2. Director General of the Department of Labour<br>And Social Welfare         | as a Deputy Chair;<br>and a standing committee; |
| 3. Deputy Director of the Department of Health                                | as a Deputy Chair;                              |
| 4. Deputy Director of the Department of Finance                               | as a Deputy Chair;                              |
| 5. Deputy Director of the Department of Education<br>and Sports               | as a member;                                    |
| 6. Deputy Director of the Department of<br>Planning and Investment            | as a member;                                    |
| 7. Deputy Director of the Department of<br>Foreign Affairs                    | as a member;                                    |
| 8. Deputy Director of the Department of Justice                               | as a member;                                    |
| 9. Deputy Director of the Department of<br>Public Works and Transport         | as a member;                                    |
| 10. Deputy Director of the Department of<br>Information, Culture and Tourism  | as a member;                                    |
| 11. Deputy Director of the Department of<br>Industry and Commerce             | as a member;                                    |
| 12. A Representative of Older Persons Association                             | as a member;                                    |
| 13. Head of Section of Policy for Devotees,<br>Disabilities and Older Persons | as a member<br>and Head of Secretariat.         |

**Article 37 Committee for Older Persons at the District level**

Committee for Older Persons at the district level is appointed by district governor, head of municipality, city mayor, as proposed by Head of the Office of Labour and Social Welfare, with Unit of Policy for Devotees, Disabilities and Older Persons acting as a secretariat.

Committee for Older Persons at the district level consists of:

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| 1. Deputy District Governor, Deputy Head of<br>Municipality, Vice Mayor of City | as a Chair;                                     |
| 2. Head of the Office of Labour and Social Welfare                              | as a Deputy Chair;<br>and a standing committee; |
| 3. Deputy Head of the Office of Health  | as a Deputy Chair;                              |
| 4. Deputy Head of the Office of Finance   | as a Deputy Chair;                              |



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| 5. Deputy Head of the Office of Education and Sports                    | as a member;                         |
| 6. Deputy Head of the Office of Planning and Investment                 | as a member;                         |
| 7. Deputy Head of the Office of Justice                                 | as a member;                         |
| 8. Deputy Head of the Office of Public Works and Transport              | as a member;                         |
| 9. Deputy Head of the Office of Information, Culture and Tourism        | as a member;                         |
| 10. Deputy Head of the Office of Industry and Commerce                  | as a member;                         |
| 11. A Representative of Older Persons Association                       | as a member;                         |
| 12. Head of Unit of Policy for Devotees, Disabilities and Older Persons | as a member and Head of Secretariat. |

**Article 38 Meetings of the Committee for Older Persons at the Central, Provincial and District levels**

Meetings of the Committee for Older Persons at the central, provincial and district levels consist of Annual General Meeting and Extraordinary General Meeting.

The Annual General Meeting is held once a year, chaired by the Chair of Committee for Older Persons at the central, provincial and district levels, to consider and agree upon important issues related to the support and promotion of older persons affairs.

The Extraordinary General Meeting can be held at any time to consider essential, significant, and urgent matters, as arranged and chaired by the Chair of Committee for Older Persons at the central, provincial and district levels, or as proposed by Head of Secretariat of Committee for Older Persons at the central, provincial and district levels.

Meetings of the Committee for Older Persons at the central, provincial and district levels can only be convened with the presence of at least two-thirds of the total Committee's members.

A meeting's decisions can only be effective with the majority's votes from more than half of the members present. In the event of equal votes, the Chair's vote is considered a final vote.

**Article 39 Rights and Duties of the Committee for Older Persons at the Central, Provincial and District levels**

Committee for Older Persons at the central, provincial and district levels have rights and duties within their scopes of responsibility as follows:

1. To advocate, disseminate policy directions, strategic plans, laws and regulations on older persons affairs within their scopes of responsibility;
2. To research and propose to the management organization of older persons affairs to identify support and promotion mechanisms for older persons affairs from the central down to the local level;
3. To collaborate with relevant stakeholders from government and private sectors on the implementation of conventions, agreements, treaties, declarations, and other regional and international agreements on older persons, in which Lao PDR is a signatory;
4. To mobilize, convince the public to contribute to the development and protection of rights and legitimate interests of older persons within their mandate and scopes of responsibility;
5. To cooperate and partner with foreign, regional and international partners to support older persons affairs as assigned;

6. To summarize and report their operations to their management on a regular basis;
7. To exercise rights and perform other duties as stipulated in laws, or as assigned.

## **Part VII**

### **Management and Inspection of Older Persons Affairs**

#### **Article 40 Management and Inspection Organization of Older Persons Affairs**

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare is directly responsible for the management and inspection of older persons affairs, and takes lead in collaborating with ministries, ministry-equivalent government organizations, other sectors, and relevant local authorities to implement such affairs.

Management and inspection organization of older persons affairs consists of:

1. Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare;
2. Provincial, Vientiane Capital Department of Labour and Social Welfare;
3. District, Municipality, City Offices of Labour and Social Welfare.

#### **Article 41 Rights and Duties of Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare**

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare has rights and duties within its scope of responsibility as follows:

1. To consider, develop or improve policies, strategic plans and laws on older persons affairs to propose to the Government for consideration;
2. To translate policies, strategic plans and laws on older persons affairs into regulations, plans, programs and projects, and implement them;
3. To advocate, disseminate and advise on policies, strategic plans and laws on older persons affairs;
4. To issue decisions, instructions, guidelines and notices on older persons affairs;
5. To supervise and monitor, inspect the implementation of older persons affairs nationwide, in accordance with its own vertical structure;
6. To consider proposal to establish, dissolve and manage civil society organization on older persons;
7. To build, train, capacitate, manage and use personnel on older persons affairs;
8. To receive, consider and settle requests from individuals, legal entities or organizations on older persons affairs;
9. To cooperate and partner with foreign, regional, and international partners on older persons affairs;
10. To summarize and report the implementation of older persons affairs to the Government on a regular basis;
11. To exercise rights and perform other duties as stipulated in laws.

#### **Article 42 Rights and Duties of Provincial, Vientiane Capital Departments of Labour and Social Welfare**

Provincial, Vientiane Capital Departments of Labour and Social Welfare have rights and duties within their scopes of responsibility as follows:

1. To implement policies, strategic plans, laws, regulations, plans, programs and projects on older persons affairs;
2. To advocate, disseminate, advise on policies, strategic plans, laws and regulations on older persons affairs;
3. To supervise Offices of Labour and Social Welfare at the district level in the implementation of older persons affairs;
4. To train, build, and capacitate personnel on older persons affairs;

5. To monitor and support the operation of civil society organization on older persons;
6. To receive, consider, and settle requests from individuals, legal entities or organizations on older persons affairs;
7. To collaborate with other relevant provincial departments and stakeholders in the management, monitoring and promotion of older persons affairs;
8. To cooperate and partner with foreign partners on older persons affairs as assigned;
9. To summarize and report the implementation of older persons affairs to the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare and provincial authorities on a regular basis;
10. To exercise rights and perform other duties as stipulated in laws.

**Article 43 Rights and Duties of District, Municipality, City Offices of Labour and Social Welfare**

District, Municipality, City Offices of Labour and Social Welfare have rights and duties within their scopes of responsibility as follows:

1. To implement policies, strategic plans, laws, regulations, plans, programs and projects on older persons affairs;
2. To supervise and monitor the implementation of older persons affairs;
3. To disseminate policies, strategic plans, laws and regulations on older persons affairs;
4. To monitor and support the operation of civil society organization on older persons;
5. To receive, consider, and settle requests from individuals, legal entities or organizations on older persons affairs;
6. To propose for training and capacity building of personnel on older persons affairs;
7. To collaborate with other relevant offices and stakeholders in the management, monitoring and promotion of older persons affairs;
8. To summarize and report the implementation of older persons affairs to the Provincial Department of Labour and Social Welfare and district authorities on a regular basis;
9. To exercise rights and perform other duties as stipulated in laws.

**Article 44 Rights and Duties of Other Relevant Sectors and Local Authorities**

Other relevant sectors and local authorities have responsibilities in accordance with their mandates to cooperate, manage, monitor, inspect, implement, collaborate, facilitate the implementation of older persons affairs as stipulated in this Decree, relevant laws, and regulations.

**Article 45 Contents of the Inspection**

Inspection of older persons affairs consists of these following key contents:

1. Compliance with laws and regulations on older persons affairs;
2. Performance of duties of personnel-civil servants on older persons affairs;
3. Development and implementation of plans on older persons affairs.

**Article 46 Forms of Inspection**

The inspection of older persons affairs consists of three following forms:

1. Regular inspection refers to a planned inspection, conducted on a regular basis, and with a certain schedule;

2. Inspection with advance notice refers to an extraordinary inspection when deemed necessary, with an advance notice given to the inspectee at least twenty-four hours;
  3. Immediate inspection refers to an ad hoc inspection where it is deemed necessary, urgent, with no advance notice given to the inspectee.
- Inspection of older persons affairs must strictly abide by laws.

## **Part VIII**

### **Incentives for Good Performers and Measures against Violators**

#### **Article 47 Incentives for Good Performers**

Individuals, legal entities, or organizations with outstanding performances in implementing this Decree shall be commended or offered other incentives in accordance with laws and regulations.

#### **Article 48 Measures against Violators**

Individuals, legal entities, or organizations who violate this Decree are subject to re-education, disciplinary sanctions, fines, civil compensation, or criminal prosecution in accordance with laws.

## **Part IX**

### **Final Provisions**

#### **Article 49 National Day for Older Persons**

The State recognized the 1<sup>st</sup> October International Day for Older Persons as the National Day for Older Persons.

#### **Article 50 Implementation**

The Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare effectively implements this Decree. Ministries, organizations, local authorities, and relevant stakeholders shall acknowledge and strictly implement this Decree.

#### **Article 51 Effectiveness**

This Decree enters into force on a date of signature and after 15 days of publication in an Official Gazette.

On behalf of the Government of Lao PDR  
Prime Minister

**Phankham Viphavanh**