



# International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination

Distr.: General  
11 February 2026

Original: English  
English, French and Spanish only

## Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

### List of issues prior to submission of the combined nineteenth to twenty-first periodic reports of the Lao People's Democratic Republic\*

#### General information

1. Please outline any significant developments of a legislative, institutional or policy nature that have taken place in the State Party that have contributed to the promotion and protection of human rights, in particular those covered by the Convention.
2. Please provide disaggregated statistics on the ethnic composition of the State Party's population, including on ethnic minorities and on non-citizens such as asylum-seekers, refugees, stateless persons and migrants, taking into account the Committee's general recommendations No. 8 (1990) and No. 24 (1999) and paragraphs 10 and 12 of its revised reporting guidelines.<sup>1</sup>
3. Please indicate the status of the Convention in the domestic legal order and indicate, providing examples, whether the Convention has been or can be directly invoked in the domestic courts. Please also detail action taken or planned by the State Party to make the optional declaration provided for in article 14 of the Convention.
4. Please describe measures taken to ensure the effective participation of representatives of ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples in national development planning, including in the formulation of the forthcoming tenth national socioeconomic development plan (2026–2030), the monitoring framework on the Sustainable Development Goals, and local-level decision-making bodies. Please also describe how national climate and environmental policies, including its most recent nationally determined contributions and the Green Growth Strategy, safeguard the rights of ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples affected by climate change, deforestation and resource extraction, and how they participate in decision-making on adaptation and mitigation measures.
5. Please provide information on the institutional mechanisms for integrating ethnicity-, gender- and disability-disaggregated indicators into the monitoring and reporting framework on the Sustainable Development Goals, and on the participation of ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples in data-collection and -validation processes. Please also indicate how fiscal and debt constraints, including those arising from the high public debt ratio and related austerity measures, have affected investments in education, health and social protection for ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and which, if any, corrective measures have been adopted to ensure non-discrimination and equality in access to essential services.

#### Article 1

6. Please indicate whether the prohibition of discrimination between ethnic groups under article 8 of the State Party's Constitution includes direct and indirect discrimination. Please

\* Adopted by the Committee at its 116th session (17 November–5 December 2025).

<sup>1</sup> CERD/C/2007/1.



provide information on whether further legislation will be adopted that expressly prohibits racial discrimination, taking into account the Committee's previous recommendations, as well as its general recommendations No. 1 (1972), No. 7 (1985) and No. 15 (1993), with regard to the preventive value of such legislation.

7. Please provide information on whether the legal system of the State Party provides for differential treatment on the basis of citizenship and migration status, and on the compliance of any such differentiation with article 1 (2) and (3) of the Convention. Please also provide information on whether the State Party's legal system allows for the adoption of special measures to ensure adequate opportunities for individuals and groups protected by the Convention, including ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples, tribal peoples, migrants, refugees and asylum-seekers.

#### **Article 2**

8. Please outline the legal framework, policies, strategies and other measures in place to eliminate racial discrimination and to give effect to the provisions of article 2 of the Convention. Please also provide information on steps taken to enact comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation, including prohibiting and penalizing acts covered by the Convention.

9. Please detail cases in which the Convention has been applied or invoked before courts, tribunals or other relevant bodies in the State Party. Please also include the number and nature of cases brought, investigations undertaken, convictions made and sentences imposed, and information on any reparation or other remedies provided to victims. Please also outline legislation, policies and other measures in place to protect the rights of ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples, asylum-seekers, refugees, migrants and stateless persons.

10. Please provide information on whether action has been taken to review the mandates of the various governmental bodies relating to human rights to include specific mandates to combat racism and racial discrimination, and whether the State Party plans to establish a national human rights institution in full compliance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles).

11. Please provide information on special and concrete measures taken in the social, economic, cultural and other fields to ensure the adequate development and protection of minority groups, including pertaining to poverty reduction.

#### **Article 4**

12. Please indicate steps taken to ensure that racial motives, including all the grounds specified in article 1 (1) of the Convention, are considered to constitute an aggravating circumstance under domestic criminal legislation. Please also provide information on whether criminal legislation is fully in accordance with the provisions of article 4 of the Convention and covers all the grounds outlined in article 1 (1) of the Convention, in particular with regard to the criminalization of:

(a) All dissemination of ideas based on racial superiority or hatred and incitement to racial discrimination;

(b) All acts of violence or incitement to such acts against any group of persons on the grounds of race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin;

(c) The provision of any assistance to racist activities, including the financing thereof;

(d) Organizations, and organized and all other propaganda activities, that promote or incite racial discrimination, and participation in such organizations or activities;

(e) Incitement to or encouragement of racial discrimination by public authorities or public institutions, whether national or local.

13. Please provide detailed statistics on complaints filed, investigations carried out, prosecutions undertaken, decisions taken and sentences passed by national tribunals and other State institutions regarding acts of racial discrimination, in particular offences covered

under article 4 of the Convention. Please also provide information on any reparation or other remedies provided to victims of such acts. Please describe the mechanisms established for monitoring and collecting data on racist incidents, including acts of racist violence and hate speech, including online, in the State Party, and information on the data collected through such mechanisms.

14. Please describe measures taken to address de facto assimilationist policies, including the promotion of a single “model cultural village” and discouragement of traditional cultural expressions, as well as measures taken to ensure the cultural diversity of all Indigenous Peoples and ethnic groups, including those with distinct beliefs, livelihoods and languages, are valued and protected in policies.

15. Please provide information on measures taken by the State Party to ensure that tourism and heritage development respect cultural diversity and community ownership of traditions, avoiding the so-called folklorization or commercial exploitation of minority cultures. Please also describe the responsibilities of private companies and international donors under the Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to prevent adverse cultural effects.

### Article 5

16. Please indicate whether the State Party intends to give legal or constitutional recognition to ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, including the Mon-Khmer, Sino-Tibetan and Hmong-Iu Mien. Please also provide information on the protection of the enjoyment by ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, including the Hmong people, of the rights enshrined in article 5 of the Convention, in particular with regard to:

(a) Allegations of acts of violence, forced displacement and restrictions on humanitarian access against the Hmong people, including ChaoFa communities in Xaisomboun Province, and steps taken to guarantee their access to food, healthcare, education and livelihood;

(b) Measures taken to protect Indigenous Peoples and ethnic minorities from forced displacement;

(c) Measures taken to ensure the enjoyment of economic, social and cultural rights.

(d) Measures taken to recognize and protect the right of Indigenous Peoples to own, develop, control and use their communal lands, territories and resources, including through customary land-use rights of ethnic minorities and Indigenous communities;

(e) The implementation of the Land Law (2019), the Forestry Law (2020) and the Compensation and Resettlement Decree (2016);

(f) Measures taken to ensure that free, prior and informed consent is obtained for development projects under the “Turning Land into Capital” policy, and how affected communities receive adequate compensation and benefit-sharing;

(g) Measures taken to ensure that large-scale projects, such as hydropower projects, mining projects, road corridors and special economic zones, do not result in discrimination against or disproportionate harm to ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples; and examples of social and environmental impact assessments conducted with community participation and measures to secure equitable benefits.

17. With regard to non-citizens residing in the territory of the State Party, including migrants, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons, please provide:

(a) Statistics, disaggregated by age, sex and nationality, on the number of migrants detained for violations of immigration laws;

(b) Information on measures in place to effectively address irregular migration, including measures against exploitation that may result in bodily harm or death among migrant workers;

(c) Information on national legislation and procedures governing the protection of refugees and asylum-seekers, including whether the State Party has considered acceding to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto;

(d) Information on how the principle of non-refoulement is upheld in practice, especially with respect to members of ethnic minorities and stateless persons seeking protection in the State Party.

18. Please provide information on cooperation with other States concerning returns, including deportations and informal transfers, of persons of Lao origin (including Hmong and other minorities) from abroad to the country, including how the State Party ensures that such returns comply with international human rights standards and that returnees are protected from discrimination, arbitrary detention or reprisals. Please also describe mechanisms to prevent statelessness and ensure access to birth registration and identity documents for children belonging to ethnic minorities, migrant children and children in cross-border populations, particularly in remote or border areas. Please include data on the number of persons lacking nationality documentation and on measures taken to facilitate civil registration and documentation in minority languages.

19. Please detail efforts to prevent and combat trafficking in persons. In particular, please:

(a) Provide updated information on the ongoing review and amendment of the Law on Anti-Trafficking in Persons (2016), including whether the revised law will explicitly criminalize trafficking for forced criminality and ensure the non-criminalization of victims coerced into illegal activities, as well as article 215 of the Penal Code criminalizing sex trafficking and labour trafficking, including enforcement thereof in special economic zones;

(b) Provide information on measures taken to implement the third phase of the national plan of action to combat trafficking in persons (2021–2025), including monitoring, evaluation and budget allocation, and indicate whether gender-responsive and culturally appropriate interventions for ethnic minority women, girls and persons with disabilities are integrated into the Plan;

(c) Explain how the State Party ensures the protection of and access to justice for victims of trafficking in persons, including within special economic zones and cross-border areas, including measures taken to strengthen victim identification, referral mechanisms and access to shelters, psychosocial care, legal aid and livelihood support;

(d) Indicate awareness-raising and prevention efforts aimed at ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, and specify whether training has been provided to law enforcement officers, labour inspectors and border guards on culturally sensitive and gender-responsive victim protection;

(e) Describe the support provided for victims of trafficking in terms of rehabilitation, access to care and reintegration or repatriation;

(f) Provide details of education and awareness-raising campaigns on the risks and the criminal nature of trafficking, aimed at ethnic minorities, among others, and trafficking-specific training provided to law enforcement officials, border guards, judges, prosecutors, labour inspectors, teachers, healthcare providers and social services personnel;

(g) Provide details of the remedies provided and protection measures offered to victims of trafficking, including legal, medical and psychosocial assistance and protection from retaliation;

(h) Provide statistics on or the number of cases of trafficking that have been addressed by national or local authorities, including investigations, prosecutions, convictions and sentences handed down to those responsible, including officials complicit in trafficking crimes, and the remedies and protection offered to the victims.

20. Regarding asylum-seekers, refugees and stateless persons, please provide information on:

(a) Steps taken to ensure respect for the right to seek asylum by enabling effective and unhindered access to the State Party's territory and fully complying with the principle of non-refoulement;

(b) Measures taken to promote peaceful co-existence and relations between refugees and asylum-seekers and host communities;

(c) Access to economic, social and cultural rights, including access to education and health, for those internally displaced following the collapse of the Xe-Pian Xe-Namnoy dam in 2018;

(d) Whether refugees and asylum-seekers have benefited from public programmes, similarly to nationals of the State Party; the action taken to register all children born to refugee and asylum-seeking parents on the territory of the State Party; and efforts made to ensure that children born to stateless parents do not become stateless and can obtain citizenship at birth.

21. Please describe measures taken to ensure that restrictions on freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly do not hinder the ability of ethnic minorities, Indigenous Peoples and artists to express their cultural identities and advocate for their rights, in accordance with articles 4, 5 and 7 of the Convention.

22. Please provide information on restrictions affecting the operation of ethnic and cultural associations, particularly in view of article 117 of the Penal Code (on propaganda against the State), the Decree on Internet-based Information Management and Control (No. 327 of 2014), the Law on Preventing and Combating Cybercrime (2015) and the recently amended Decree on Management of Non-Profit Associations (No. 536 of 2025), and the steps taken to ensure that these laws and decrees are consistent with articles 4 and 5 of the Convention and the rights to freedom of expression and association.

23. Please provide information on the legal and policy framework regulating freedom of religion or belief and indicate how the State Party ensures that the implementation of articles 8, 9, 43 and 44 of the Constitution is consistent with article 5 (d) (vii) of the Convention. Please also describe measures taken to prevent discrimination, harassment or arbitrary detention of persons belonging to Indigenous Peoples, ethnic or religious minorities, including Christians, animist practitioners and spiritual groups, particularly in rural and upland areas.

24. Please indicate whether the State Party plans to revise or adopt specific legislation guaranteeing freedom of religion or belief, in conformity with international human rights standards, ensuring the right to manifest religion or belief individually or in community, in public or private, and without prior authorization. Please also provide data, disaggregated by religion, ethnicity and gender, on registered religious organizations, places of worship and reported incidents of interference or sanctions against religious groups. Please provide information on measures to address multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination faced by women and girls belonging to ethnic minorities, including in access to land, inheritance, political participation, employment and protection from gender-based violence, early marriage and trafficking.

25. Please indicate how national disability policies address the situation of persons with disabilities belonging to ethnic minorities, particularly in rural areas, and whether disability data are disaggregated by ethnicity and gender. Please also indicate measures taken to promote mother-tongue and bilingual education in early grades, the recruitment of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds and the inclusion of ethnic culture and history in school curricula. Please describe initiatives to preserve intangible cultural heritage and ensure that media representation of ethnic groups is respectful and diverse.

## Article 6

26. Please outline the legislative, judicial, administrative or other measures that give effect in the State Party to the provisions of article 6 of the Convention. Please provide information about the steps taken by the State Party to educate and inform the public about their rights under the Convention, the laws prohibiting racism and racial discrimination and the availability of redress mechanisms and remedies in relation to such acts. With regard to cases relating to racial discrimination, please provide detailed information on any complaints received, investigations conducted and recommendations made by legislative, judicial and administrative bodies, including the National Committee on Human Rights. Please also provide information on the burden of proof required in civil proceedings in cases involving racial discrimination.

27. Please indicate measures taken to provide capacity-building and training for law enforcement and judicial officials to ensure respect for and the protection of human dignity without discrimination on the grounds of race, colour or national or ethnic origin in their work. Please also indicate measures taken to ensure access to justice for persons belonging to ethnic minorities and Indigenous Peoples, including the provision of interpretation and translation services in criminal and civil proceedings, training in cultural sensitivity for law enforcement and judicial officials, and the accessibility of village mediation units for non-Lao-speaking communities.

**Article 7**

28. Please outline measures taken to implement article 7 of the Convention, in particular with regard to the dissemination of information to promote mutual understanding, tolerance, dialogue and friendship among Indigenous Peoples, tribal peoples and ethnic groups in the country. Please also detail action taken to preserve minority cultures and languages, as well as measures taken to promote access to and participation in cultural heritage and creative expression, including by minorities, tribal peoples and Indigenous Peoples. Please provide information on human rights education in the State Party, including in relation to the rights contained in the Convention, both as provided in school curricula and as made available to the population in general.

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