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**LAO PEOPLE’S DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC**

**PEACE            INDEPENDENCE            DEMOCRACY            UNITY            PROSPERITY**

People’s Supreme Assembly

The Constitution of the Lao PDR

**Constitution**

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**PREAMBLE**

Article 3

The right of the multi-ethnic people to be the masters of the country is exercised and ensured through the functioning of the political system, with the Lao People's Revolutionary Party as its leading nucleus.

Article 4

The National Assembly is the representative organ of the people. The election of members of the National Assembly shall be carried out through the principles of universal, equal and direct suffrage, and secret ballot. Voters have the right to propose the dismissal of their own representatives if they are found to be unworthy and lose the people's confidence.

Article 5

The National Assembly and all other state organisations are established and function in accordance with the principle of democratic centralism.

Article 6

The state protects the inviolable rights and democratic freedoms of the people. All state organisations and functionaries must inform the people of and educate them in the policies, regulations and laws, and together with the people, to implement them in order to guarantee the legitimate rights and interests of the people. All acts of bureaucracy and harassment that can be detrimental to the honour, body, lives, conscience and property of the people are prohibited.

Article 7

The Lao Front for National Construction, the Lao Federation of Trade Unions, the Lao People's Revolutionary Youth Union, the Lao Women's Union and other social organisations are the organs that unite and mobilise all strata of all ethnic groups in order to take part in the tasks of national defence and development; to develop the right to mastery of the people and to protect the legitimate rights and interests of their members.

Article 8

The State pursues the policy of unity and equality among all ethnic groups. All ethnic groups have the right to protect, preserve and promote their fine customs and culture as well as those of the nation. All acts of division and discrimination among ethnic groups are prohibited.



Article 16

Economic management is carried out according to the mechanism of the market with the adjustment by the State, and is implemented by the principle of the centralised, unified management of branches at central level in combination with a reasonable delegation of the responsibility to local authorities.

Article 17

All organisations and citizens must protect the environment and natural resources: land, underground, forests, fauna, water sources and atmosphere.

Article 18

The State promotes and advises on the development of economic relations with foreign countries in many forms, on the basis of the principle of respect for each other's independence, sovereignty, equality, and mutual benefit.

Article 19

The State strives to develop education in combination with raising the new generation to be good citizens. The objectives of the educational, cultural and scientific activities are to augment levels of knowledge, the spirit of patriotism, the spirit of cherishing the People's Democratic Regime, the spirit of maintaining unity and harmony among the people of various ethnic groups; and to enhance the peoples' sense of being masters of the country. The State implements a compulsory education system at primary levels. The State authorises the operation of private schools, which utilise the curricula of the State.

The State, together with the people, builds schools at all levels in order to assure a comprehensive system of education, and to pay attention to develop education in the areas where the ethnic minority people reside.

The State develops the fine, traditional culture of the nation in combination with promoting the progressive culture of the world and eliminating any regressive phenomena in the ideological and cultural spheres. The State promotes culture, art, literature and information activities, including in mountainous areas. The State protects the nation's antiquities and shrines.

Article 20

The State strives to expand public health services and authorises the private sectors to provide medical services in accordance with state regulations. The State promotes the expansion of sports, physical education and tourism and provides care for disabled veterans, families of those who have sacrificed their lives and who have performed good deeds for the nation, as well as for pensioners.

The State pursues a policy, which favours mothers and children.

Chapter III

Fundamental Rights and Duties of the Citizens

Article 21

Lao citizens are the persons who hold Lao nationality as prescribed by law.



Article 22

Lao citizens, irrespective of their sex, social status, education, faith and ethnic group are all equal before the law.

Article 23

Lao citizens 18 years of age and over have the right to vote, and those 21 years of age and over have the right to be elected, except for insane persons and persons whose rights to vote and to be elected have been revoked by a court.

Article 24

Lao citizens of both sexes enjoy equal rights in political, economic, cultural, social and family affairs.

Article 25

Lao citizens have the right to education.

Article 26

Lao citizens have the right to work and engage in occupations, which are not forbidden by law. Working people have the right to rest, to receive medical treatment in time of ailment, to receive assistance in case of incapacity and disability, in old age and other cases as prescribed by law.

Article 27

Lao citizens have freedom of movement and residence as prescribed by law.

Article 28

Lao citizens have the right to lodge complaints and petitions and to propose ideas to relevant state organisations in connections with issues pertaining to the rights and interests of collectives or of their individuals.

Complaints, petitions and ideas of citizens must be considered for solutions as prescribed by law.

Article 29

The right of Lao citizens to be secure in their persons and houses shall not be violated. Lao citizens shall not be arrested or searched without warrant or approval by an authorised organisation, except in the case as prescribed by law.

Article 30

Lao citizens have the right and freedom to believe or not to believe in religions.

Article 31

Lao citizens have freedom of speech, press and assembly, of associations, and of demonstrations, which are not contrary to the law.

Article 32

Lao citizens have freedom to conduct research, to apply advanced sciences, techniques and technologies, to create artistic and literary works and to engage in cultural activities, which are not contrary to the law.

Article 33

The State protects the legitimate rights and interests of Lao citizens residing abroad.

Article 34

Lao citizens have the duty to observe the Constitution and the law, and to implement labour discipline, rules of good conduct in society and the public order.

Article 35

Lao citizens have the duty to pay taxes and duties in accordance with the law.

Article 36

Lao citizens have the duty to defend their country, to maintain security and to fulfil their military obligations as prescribed by law.

Article 37

Aliens and persons having no nationality have the right to enjoy those rights and freedoms protected by the provisions of the laws of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. They have the right to lodge petitions with courts and other concerned organisations of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. They have th



5. To exercise other rights and execute other duties as prescribed by law.

Article 50

Members of the National Assembly have the right to question the Prime Minister or members of the Government, the President of the People's Supreme Court and the Public Prosecutor-General.

Organs or persons called for questioning must give verbal or written answers before a session of the National Assembly.

Article 51

Members of the National Assembly shall not be subject to prosecution or detention without the approval of the National Assembly or, between its two sessions, the National Assembly Standing Committee.

In cases involving gross and urgent offences, any organisations detaining a member of the National Assembly must immediately report the detention to the National Assembly or, between its two sessions, to the National Assembly Standing Committee for consideration and decisions. Inquires and questioning are not valid reasons for causing the absence of a prosecuted member from any session of the National Assembly.

Chapter V

The President of the Republic

Article 52

The President of the Republic is the Head of State of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. He is the representative of the multi-ethnic Lao people both at home and abroad.

Article 53

The President of the Republic has the following rights and duties:

1. To promulgate the Constitution and the laws that have been duly approved by the National Assembly;
2. To issue Decrees and Acts on the recommendation of the National Assembly Standing Committee;
3. To appoint or remove the Prime Minister and the members of the Government; such appointments and removals must be submitted to the National Assembly for approval;
4. To appoint, transfer or remove the Governors of the provinces and the Mayors of municipalities on the recommendation of the Prime Minister;
5. To decide on the promotion to or demotion from the rank of General Officer in the national defence and security forces on the recommendation of the Prime Minister;
6. To be the Head of the People's Armed Forces;
7. To preside over meetings of the Government when necessary;
8. To decide on the conferment of the national gold medal, orders of merit, medals and highest honorific titles of the State;
9. To grant pardons;
10. To order general or partial military conscription and to declare a state of emergency over the country or in any particular locality;

11. To promulgate the ratification or abolition of any treaties and agreements signed with foreign countries;
12. To appoint or recall plenipotentiary representatives of the Lao People's Democratic Republic to or from foreign countries, and to accept the plenipotentiary representatives of foreign countries accredited to the Lao People's Democratic Republic;
13. To exercise other rights and execute other duties as prescribed by law.

Article 54

The President of the Republic is elected by the National Assembly with two-thirds of votes of the total members of the Natn(tedTc.0682 Tw(The )-5.1(P7tia)-5(f).2tPb)5cou fnd totssiedTc.on

Article 54

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Article 68

The People's courts make trials and pass sentence collectively. During the trials and sentence, judges are independent and must act only in accordance with the law.

Article 69

Chapter IX  
Language, Script, National Emblem, National Flag,  
National Anthem and Capital City

Article 75

The Lao Language and Lao script are the official language and script.

Article 76

The National Emblem of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is in the form of a circle, with its lower part depicting one-half of a cog wheel and a red ribbon with the inscription " Lao People's Democratic Republic ", framed on two sides with crescent-shaped ears of ripe rice with a red ribbon stretched between the middle of the rice ears with the inscription "Peace, Independence, Democracy, Unity, Prosperity" A picture of " That Luang " is located between the tips of the rice ears. A road, a paddy field, a forest, and a hydroelectric dam are depicted in the middle of the form of a circle.

Article 77

The National Flag of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is a dark blue background with red borders and a white moon. The width of the flag is two-thirds of its length. The area of each of the red borders on each side is one-half of the dark blue area. The area of the white moon is equal to four-fifths of the dark blue area.

Article 78

The National Anthem of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is "Xat Lao"

Article 79

The Capital city of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is "Vientiane"

Chapter X