

**Current Status and Future Perspectives on National Intellectual Property
Education and Training Programs**

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Distinguished guests,
Dear participants,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure and honor for me to be invited to the WIPO Regional Workshop on Effective Management of Intellectual Property Academies: Challenges and Responses. In addition, it is the first time that I have attend at such the workshop. First of all, on behalf of the National University of Laos and myself, I would like to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation to the organizers for your generous and active support of my participation in this seminar.

Allow me now to take this opportunity to briefly introduce my university to you.

National University of Laos (NUOL) was established in 1997. NUOL comprises of 11 faculties, including the Faculty of Law and Political Science (FLP). We have approximately 30,000 students, including those who study full time and part time.

Faculty of Law and Political Science consists of four departments namely Department of Law, Department of Political Science, Department of International Relation and Department of Business Law. The department of business law is the newest department in FLP which just established in the academic year 2007 - 2008. Beside, we also have several administrative organs such as administration division, student activities division, Academic Administration Division, Academic Research Division, and Library.

At the present time, we have 80 staffs including teachers and administrative officers. Within this number currently we have 22 people received the master degree. We have more than 4,000 students in FLP including the part time and full time study. We divide into three session of teaching such as the morning session, afternoon session and evening session.

Dear participants, currently, there is no IP training institute exist in Lao PDR yet. Therefore, IP education in Lao PDR remains undeveloped if we compare to other countries in the region. The most important issue for Lao PDR is the lack of knowledge, familiarity, and understanding of the concept of IP in both public and private sectors. However, the Government of Lao PDR is trying very hard to ask the assistance from international and local organizations to organize the workshops and seminars on the IP matters for the government officers and private sectors several times in a year.

As we all have known that intellectual property has been playing a very important role in socio-economic development and become a big concern of many countries. And Lao PDR is not an exception. Recently, Lao PDR is desiring to become a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO); therefore, intellectual property protection is extremely important for Lao PDR in order to comply with international requirements. Consequently, the Lao National Assemble passed the law on Intellectual Property in December, 2007 and become enforcement in January, 2008.

With the kind help and support from National Authority for Science and Technology of Lao PDR and the ECAP project, National University of Laos decided to establish the department of business law within the FLP in 2007. For that reason, IP was put into the curriculum of the department of business law in the academic year 2007-2008.

Intellectual property teaching is the compulsory subject in the department of business law. We teach this subject to the third year students for two hours per week, which is 30 hours in total. After finish this course, students will receive two credits from the instructor. We use

the lecture as the teaching and learning method. For assessment purposes, the students are required to take the final examination. In this subject, students will learn the basic knowledge about the copyrights and related rights, industrial property rights, rights of plant varieties, and enforcement of intellectual property rights.

In Lao PDR, especially, in the National University, faculty of law and political science remains several limitations. Firstly, we are lacking of the experts (teachers) to deal with the IP teaching. Secondly, the learning hours are insufficient for delivering basic knowledge of the IP to students. Finally, it lacks of the teaching materials on IP matters for teachers as well as students because teaching materials on IP is written in foreign language.

In the near future, we need to have a short and long term training of teachers on IP in Lao PDR and abroad through the international program and cooperation. We will expand the IP teaching to all of the departments in FLP as a compulsory subject and we will increase time for IP teaching. Beside, we will expand the IP teaching to other faculties in NOUL, law school of the ministry of justice and private colleges. We will ask the assistance and support from local and international donors to translate the teaching materials from foreign language to Lao language and we will also encourage the teacher to write the basic knowledge of IP textbook.

In conclusion, in order to succeed in IP teaching in Lao PDR, we need your assistance through the term of academic exchange and share experience with each other frequently in order to establish the better IP teaching system in my country in the near future. The most important thing is that we will learn from you how to design and offer IP course in your countries. Finally, I would like to wish all participants here happiness in your life and increasing success in all your endeavors.

Thank you very much for your attention!