

Unofficial translation



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

**The Government**

**No.: 377/GOV**  
**Vientiane Capital, 24 November 2015**

## **Decree**

**On the Press Activities of Foreign Mass Media Agencies,  
Foreign Diplomatic Missions, and International Organizations in the Lao PDR**

- Pursuant to the Amended Law on Government of the Lao PDR No. 02/NA. dated 06 May 2003;
- Pursuant to the Law on Mass Media No. 01/NA, dated 25 July 2008;
- Pursuant to the Resolution of the Ordinary Cabinet Meeting for July 2015 No. 07/GOV, dated 10 August 2015;
- Pursuant to Proposal Letter No. 1440/MOFA. Dpt. of Press. 3, dated 07 October 2015 Ministry of Foreign Affairs

**The Government hereby issues a Decree:**

### **Chapter 1** **General Provisions**

#### **Article 1      Objective**

This Decree determines principles, procedures, and measures for the management, monitoring, and inspection of the press activities of foreign mass media, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations in the Lao PDR to facilitate their effective operation, to ensure their compliance with laws and procedures of the Lao PDR, to contribute to socio-economic development, and to further promote foreign cooperation .

#### **Article 2      Press Activities of Foreign Mass Media, Foreign Diplomatic Missions, and International Organizations in the Lao PDR**

Press activities of foreign mass media, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations in the Lao PDR refers to press operations of foreign mass media in the form of print media, electronic media, mass media products (including their dissemination), and mass media activities operations in the Lao PDR.

**Article 3      Scope of Application**

This Decree applies to foreign mass media, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations, including their personnel, which carry out press activities in the Lao PDR.

**Article 4      International Cooperation**

The Government promotes mass media relations and cooperation with foreign countries, regional and international, on the basis of respect for mutual independence and benefits in compliance with treaties and international agreements to which the Lao PDR is a party.

## **Chapter 2**

### **Press Activities of Foreign Mass Media**

**Article 5      Press Activities**

Foreign mass media may engage in press activities by sending their journalists to cover news and establishing their offices in the Lao PDR.

**Article 6      Foreign Journalists Accompanying a Foreign Delegation**

Foreign journalists who wish to accompany a particular foreign delegation to work in Laos must inform the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Laos by providing a list of the names of journalists, their equipment, and additional work plans (if any) at least three official days before entering Laos for proper consideration and facilitation.

**Article 7      Foreign Journalists Working in Laos**

Foreign journalists employed by foreign media agencies that do not reside in Laos and wish to visit Laos for their assignment must request permission from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR at least 15 official days before entering Laos.

The following documents are required to request permission:

1. Application letter;
2. Profile of journalist;
3. Copy of journalist card;
4. Work plan (in detail);
5. Report, press release, or any press production related to Laos in the past (if any);
6. Equipment list;
7. Copy of valid passport;
8. Two 3cm x 4cm photographs.

**Article 8      Establishing Foreign Mass Media Offices in Laos**

Foreign mass media agencies who wish to establish offices in Laos must send a proposal letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Laos for the Government's consideration and approval.

Establishing a foreign mass media office requires the qualifications listed below:

1. Be a foreign mass media agency which is legally registered in a particular country;
2. Have a license issued by foreign mass media agencies;
3. Have an office and a site utility license from an individual or legal entity recognized by the relevant authorities;
4. Have equipment and technical knowledge to service the press activities.

**Article 9      Application Form for Establishing an Office**

Documentation for applying to establish a foreign mass media office comprises:

1. Establishment proposal from foreign mass media;
2. Analysis of foreign mass media office establishment proposal in the Lao PDR;
3. Copy of business license or foreign mass media agency establishment license recognized by the embassy or Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the country concerned;
4. Bank statement from the foreign mass media agency.

**Article 10      Office Opening**

After receiving permission from the government to establish an office, the foreign mass media agency must send a representative to introduce himself or herself to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Laos at least two months before opening the office.

A foreign mass media agency whose establishment is permitted in Laos will not be regarded as a legal entity separated from the category of foreign mass media agencies.

**Article 11      Appointing Personnel to Agency**

Below are the details for appointing personnel in foreign mass media agencies:

1. The Office Head is a person appointed by the foreign mass media agency and agreed to by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Laos;
2. Auditors, journalists, and all press technical staff are people appointed by the headquarters in the Lao PDR and agreed to by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Laos.

**Article 12      Visa Application**

Journalists who wish to visit Laos for a short assignment or work in foreign mass media agencies in the Lao PDR must apply for a journalist visa (M-B2) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR and must have the following documents:

1. Visa Proposal letter and completed visa application form;
2. Copy of passport;
3. Copy of journalist card;
4. Two 3cm x 4cm photographs.

### **Chapter 3**

#### **Rights, Duties, and Obligations of Foreign Mass Media Agencies and Foreign Journalists**

**Article 13      Rights and Duties of the Foreign Mass Media Agency Office and Foreign Journalists**

A foreign mass media agency office and foreign journalists have the rights and duties to carry out press activities in the Lao PDR as follows:

1. To operate press activities outlined in the plan and in approved news formats;
2. To propose to import equipment and vehicles for press work complying with the laws and procedures of the Lao PDR;
3. To apply for multilateral departure and arrival visas complying with the laws and regulations of the Lao PDR;
4. To employ staff, local or foreign academic staff, in compliance with the agreement of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR;
5. To hold press ID cards issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR during their assignment.

**Article 14      Obligations of Foreign Mass Media Agency Offices and Foreign Journalists**

The obligations of foreign mass media agency offices and foreign journalists are as follows:

1. To respect and comply with the constitution, laws, procedures, traditions, and fine culture of the Lao PDR;
2. To submit mass media products to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR for consideration; the ministry will coordinate with relevant authorities to check the context before permitting dissemination;
3. To pay income tax for foreign journalists working in the Lao PDR, including local staff who work for the agencies, in accordance with the law;
4. To creatively promote bilateral and multilateral cooperation ties;
5. To return press ID cards and other relevant documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR after the completion of the press assignment in the Lao PDR.

**Chapter 4**  
**Status Modification and Dissolution of**  
**Foreign Mass Media Agency Offices**

**Article 15      Status Modification of a Foreign Mass Media Agency Office**

A foreign mass media agency that wishes to modify its status and operations must submit a proposal letter, analysis of new activity, and other relevant documents to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR for permission.

**Article 16      Dissolution of Foreign Mass Media Agency Office**

The office of a foreign mass media agency will be dissolved in the following cases:

1. For voluntary dissolution, the foreign mass media agency office must submit a proposal letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Lao PDR in order to request the government's permission for dissolution;
2. An office has not yet been opened within three months after permission has been given;
3. Serious violation of laws and procedures.

**Chapter 5**  
**Press Activities of Foreign Diplomatic Missions and**  
**International Organizations in the Lao PDR**

**Article 17      Creating Mass Media Products**

Foreign diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR who wish to create mass media products must submit the products' content to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and comply with the Law on Mass Media and other relevant laws.

**Article 18      Disseminating Mass Media Products**

Foreign diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR who wish to disseminate their mass media products through the Lao mass media must submit a proposal letter to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for consideration by coordinating with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism as set forth below:

1.      Thirty days before a film screening;
2.      Ten days before displaying, contributing, or broadcasting material;
3.      Five days before holding a press conference or publishing in a newspaper.

**Article 19      Foreign Electronic Media**

All electronic media activities of foreign diplomatic missions and international organizations in the Lao PDR must comply with the laws and relevant procedures of the Lao PDR.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Responsibilities for Foreign Mass Media**

**Article 20      Responsibilities of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs have the following responsibilities for foreign mass media:

1.      To study and propose to government for consideration the granting of permission to foreign mass media agencies to establish an office;
2.      To study, consider, and permit press activities of foreign mass media agencies, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations in the Lao PDR;
3.      To check the content of foreign mass media products;
4.      To provide advice and consultation to foreign mass media agencies, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations in the Lao PDR on principles and procedures relating to press activities;
5.      To coordinate with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism, relevant ministries, and relevant local administrative agencies to check and facilitate the press activities of foreign mass media agencies, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations in the Lao PDR;
6.      To regularly summarize and report to government on the activities of foreign mass media agencies.

**Article 21      Responsibilities of the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism**

The Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism is responsible for studying and considering the activities of foreign mass media agencies as proposed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in compliance with its mandate as regulated in the Mass Media Law and other relevant laws and regulations.

**Article 22      Responsibilities of Local Sectoral and Local Administrative Agencies**

Local sectoral and local administrative agencies are responsible for coordination and cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism to manage and check the press activities of foreign mass media agencies, foreign diplomatic missions, and international organizations in compliance with their mandate.

**Chapter 7  
Final Provisions**

**Article 23      Implementation**

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is assigned for coordinating with the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism and relevant sectors to strictly and effectively implement this Decree.

Ministries, equivalent ministerial agencies, local administrative agencies, legal entities, and individuals shall be aware of and strictly implement the Decree.

**Article 24      Effectiveness**

This Decree is effective from the date of signature by the Prime Minister and fifteen days after posting on the Lao Official Gazette.

Any regulations or provisions that contradict to this Decree shall be canceled.

**The Government of the Lao PDR**

**The Prime Minister**

*[Signature and seal]*

**Thongsing THAMMAVONG**