

Lao People's Democratic Republic (Laos)

National Day:	December 2, 1975
Capital:	Vientiane
Population:	3.81 million (1985)
Political System:	The effective political authority is the Lao People's Revolutionary (Communist) Party
Head of State:	President Souphanouvong
Minister of Foreign Affairs:	Phaun (Phoune) Sipraseth
Economy:	About 90% of the population is involved in agriculture, primarily subsistence. Expenditures in 1981 exceeded revenue by 250%.

Relationship with Canada: The Laos/Canada bilateral relationship exists primarily at the diplomatic level. Canadian funds for Laotian refugees in Thailand have been provided. Trade relations are minimal.

President Souphanouvong: Born a Prince in 1902 and educated in France, he returned to Laos in 1938. He joined Pathet Lao and fought against the French. He eventually became leader of the Pathet Lao. After the 1973 cease fire in Laos, he became Chairman of the Joint National Political Council and, in December 1975, President of Laos. He is concurrently Chairman of the Central Committee, Lao Front for National Liberation and a member of the Politbureau.