



**Convention on the Elimination
of All Forms of Discrimination
against Women**

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**Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination
against Women**

**Ninth periodic report submitted by the Russian Federation
under article 18 of the Convention, due in 2019***

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



Article-by-article review of the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

1. The present report was prepared pursuant to article 18 of the Convention. In preparing the report, the authors referred to the compilation of guidelines on the form and content of reports to be submitted by States parties to the international human rights treaties ([HRI/GEN/2/Rev.6](#)) and General Assembly resolution [68/268](#) on strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system. They also took into account the concluding observations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on the eighth periodic report of the Russian Federation on the implementation of the Convention ([CEDAW/C/RUS/CO/8](#)).

2. The report makes use of information submitted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Science and Higher Education, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Economic Development, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Culture, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Federal State Statistics Service, the Federal Penal Service, the Office of the Procurator General of the Russian Federation, the Federal Agency for Ethnic Affairs, the Federal Labour and Employment Service, and the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation.

Part I

Article 1

Paragraphs 9 and 10 of the concluding observations

3. In accordance with article 19 of the Constitution, the State guarantees equality of human and civil rights and freedoms, regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, language, origin, financial status, official capacity, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs, membership of voluntary associations or other circumstances; any form of restriction of civil rights on social, racial, ethnic, linguistic or religious grounds is prohibited. The Constitution states that men and women have equal rights and freedoms and equal opportunities to exercise them. The wording to the effect that men and women also have equal opportunities to exercise their rights and freedoms is aimed at achieving the full enjoyment by women of their rights and freedoms and true equality. The Constitution also guarantees the protection of maternity, paternity and childhood. The principle of the equal rights of men and women is enshrined in family, labour, civil and tax law.

4. Article 5.62 of the Code of Administrative Offences provides for administrative liability for discrimination.

5. The principle of the prohibition of discrimination is also reflected in criminal law: article 136 of the Criminal Code provides for criminal liability for discrimination committed by a person using his or her official position. Under article 145 of the Criminal Code, unjustified refusal to hire, and unjustified dismissal of, a woman on grounds of pregnancy, or on the basis that she has a child under 3 years of age, incur criminal liability.

6. Detailed information was provided in the eighth periodic report on the legislative provisions aimed at ensuring equality of men and women and prohibiting discrimination. No additional provisions on the prohibition of discrimination are required in federal legislation.

Article 2

7. The 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women was adopted in order to advance women, guarantee their rights and empower them. The Strategy establishes the main areas of focus of State policy on women and is intended to give effect to the principle of equal rights and freedoms and to create equal opportunities for women’s enjoyment of such rights and freedoms, in accordance with the Constitution, the generally recognized principles and standards of international law and the international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party. The Strategy is based on the idea that women’s rights form an integral part of general human rights. Creating an environment conducive to women’s full and equal participation in political, economic, social and cultural life is a priority of State policy. More details in this regard are contained in the information provided by the Russian Federation in follow-up to the concluding observations on the eighth periodic report (CEDAW/C/RUS/CO/8/Add.1).

8. An action plan for the implementation of the Strategy was approved by government order. In accordance with the plan, efforts are under way to: create conditions for the protection of the health of women of all ages; enhance the economic status and prosperity of women; redress the social hardships faced by women and prevent violence against women; increase women’s participation in public and political life; and improve State statistics relating to the situation of women in society. These efforts take account, inter alia, of the Committee’s concluding observations.

9. A coordinating council has been set up to implement the Strategy; the council, which reports to the Government, ensures cooperation among the federal authorities, the authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, local government bodies, voluntary associations and academic and other organizations in considering issues relating to the Strategy’s implementation. The council includes members of the Federation Council, the upper house of the Federal Assembly; deputies of the State Duma, the Assembly’s lower house; senior officials of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation (heads of the executive branches); and representatives of federal executive authorities and civil society organizations. The Chair of the coordinating council is the Prime Minister of the Russian Federation.

Paragraphs 6 to 8 of the concluding observations

10. The implementation of the Committee’s recommendations forms part of the ongoing work of the federal executive authorities. A section entitled “Gender Policy” has been created on the official website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection for posting material on issues relating to the status of women, including the texts of the Convention and the Optional Protocol thereto and the Committee’s concluding observations on the eighth periodic report (<https://rosmintrud.ru/ministry/programms/8>). International human rights instruments, including the Convention, have also been posted on the official website of the Commissioner for Human Rights and the website of the Women’s Union of Russia, a national civil society organization with State involvement.

11. In accordance with the Committee’s recommendations, the parliament of the Russian Federation takes an active part in the implementation of gender policy. The Eurasian Women’s Forum was held in 2015 and 2018 under the auspices of the Federation Council and the Interparliamentary Assembly of the States Members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The Forum provides a platform for discussion at the international level of the role of women in contemporary society and is aimed at consolidating and expanding cooperation among women leaders in addressing current issues and reinforcing trust and mutual understanding in the world.

A standing advisory body, the Council of the Eurasian Women's Forum, works with the Federation Council.

Paragraphs 11 and 12 of the concluding observations

12. In accordance with Federal Act No. 59-FZ of 2 May 2006 on the procedure for considering citizens' petitions, citizens of the Russian Federation, both men and women, have the right to submit oral and written petitions and complaints; this enables them to claim their rights. There are no barriers to the submission by women of complaints and petitions. Federal law applies uniformly throughout the country.

13. In the Russian Federation, there is a Commissioner for Human Rights, a Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights, a Presidential Commissioner for Protection of Entrepreneurial Rights and a Commissioner for the Rights of Financial Service Customers.

14. There are regional commissioners for human rights, children's rights and entrepreneurial rights in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. In certain regions, posts of commissioner for the rights of indigenous peoples have been established.

15. A section for the protection of the rights of women, families and children has been established in the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation. In 2018, the Commissioner received 440 petitions from women (compared with 243 in 2017). These petitions mainly concerned issues relating to the protection of families, maternity, paternity and childhood, and employment.

16. The regional commissioners for human rights travel to remote rural districts to provide rural dwellers, including women, with legal assistance and support or to take urgent steps to provide redress for violations of their rights and legitimate interests. This allows women to receive direct, qualified and timely assistance and advice on all current issues.

17. The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation constantly conducts legal education efforts: a gaming platform, "Legal Volunteers", which has existed since 2013, includes interactive legal education activities for schoolchildren such as a legal marathon, a human rights defence adventure game, a television show and a creative competition. The platform helps to familiarize schoolchildren from all regions with the work of the State's defender of human rights and with best practices in the field of legal education. Since 2017, legal aid clinics have been established in the regions as part of an educational project entitled "School for Human Rights Defenders"; these clinics are spaces for the provision of free legal aid to various categories of citizen. To date, 243 such spaces have been set up. A social and educational project entitled "Legal Marathon for Pensioners" has been under way since 2017.

18. The Presidential Council for the Development of Civil Society and Human Rights, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and other coordination bodies, in particular the citizen councils set up under the federal executive authorities and the heads of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, provide a forum for engagement by civil society with the public authorities.

19. Since 2017, a nationwide open lesson on human rights has been conducted each year on 1 December under the "Human Rights" project. Activities are conducted in schools in the Russian Federation as part of the "shared human rights lesson".

Article 3

20. Guaranteeing equality of rights and empowering all women and girls to exercise their rights are among the main aims of the Government. Activities in this regard are carried out in conformity with the Convention. Practical efforts take account of the Committee's recommendations, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other documents.

21. Measures taken over the past five years that have contributed to the advancement of women include: improving the system of allowances for maternity and child-rearing, and implementing a programme of payments from a maternity (family) fund; increasing women's competitiveness on the labour market by organizing vocational training for women who are on parental leave; gradually raising salaries in the public sector in fields in which women predominate (education, science, health care, culture and social protection); creating an enabling environment in which family obligations involving the care of children, including children with disabilities, can be combined with work (ensuring access to preschool education for 3- to 7-year-olds and, in 2015, enacting into law a provision on the granting of annual paid leave, upon request, to employees with three or more children aged up to 12 years as well as to one of the parents of a child with a disability aged up to 18 years, at a time of the employee's choosing); increasing the quality of health care for women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period, including as part of the "Birth Certificate" programme, and building perinatal centres; providing State support for small and medium-sized businesses, including those in which women are involved; and providing State support for socially-oriented non-profit organizations whose activities are aimed at the advancement of women, families and children.

22. The progress made in this area was facilitated by the implementation of the Framework for the Demographic Policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, the 2012–2017 National Children's Strategy, the Framework for the Family Policy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, the National Strategy for Older Persons in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, the 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women, and State programmes in the fields of education, health care and social welfare.

23. More detailed information on the 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women is provided in paragraphs 7 and 8 of the present report.

24. A set of measures implemented to support women entrepreneurs has resulted in an increase in the Women's Business Index (WBI). The Index takes account of social attitudes towards women entrepreneurs, assesses the environment in which women-led businesses operate and reflects the personal qualities of women entrepreneurs. When the Index is over 50, this means that assessments are mostly positive, whereas an Index of below 50 indicates negative ratings. According to data from a study conducted by the Analysis Centre of the National Financial Research Agency together with Opora Rossia, a national civil society organization supporting small and medium-sized businesses, the Index reached 69.4 in Russia in August 2018. That represented an increase of 0.2 percentage points compared with the same period in 2017 and 13 percentage points since the study began in 2015.

25. A community of women board members is being actively developed in Russia with the aim of sharing corporate governance best practices to facilitate sustainable economic growth that takes account of gender balance. Information on women's participation on boards of directors in Russia and the world is posted on a specialized information resource tool about and for women directors, womenonboards.ru, along with case studies concerning the personal and professional development of women leaders. According to data from a study entitled "Women on boards of the top 100

Russian public companies, 2019”, which was published on the portal, Russia is one of the top three countries in the world in terms of the proportion of top managers who are women.

Paragraphs 13 and 14 of the concluding observations

26. More detailed information on the 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women is provided in paragraphs 7 to 9 of the present report.

27. Ensuring gender equality falls, to varying degrees, within the remit of the different federal authorities, authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and local government bodies.

Paragraphs 15 and 16 of the concluding observations

28. Federal Act No. 121-FZ of 20 July 2012 amending certain legislative acts of the Russian Federation with regard to the regulation of the activities of non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents ensures that there is appropriate monitoring of the activities of non-profit organizations that are funded from foreign sources and pursue political goals, including in the interests of their financial backers. For a non-profit organization to be deemed to be acting as a foreign agent, it must have two features: it must receive cash or other assets from foreign sources and it must engage in political activities (in the areas of activity laid down in law and in one of the forms enumerated in law).

29. In April 2014, the Constitutional Court considered the constitutionality of the Act and concluded that the institution of monitoring it established did not run counter to the norms of the Constitution and international law.

30. Constitutional Court Decision No. 10-P of 8 April 2014 provides that non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents are obliged to apply for inclusion in the register of non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents, but that that does not prevent them from receiving financial support, in the form of cash or other assets, from foreign and international organizations, foreign nationals and stateless persons, or from participating in political activities in the territory of the Russian Federation. Accordingly, they are not discriminated against in comparison with non-profit organizations that do not receive foreign funding.

31. Under article 19.34 of the Code of Administrative Offences, entitled “Breach of the procedure for the activities of non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents”, where a non-profit organization acting as a foreign agent breaks the law, administrative liability is incurred in the form of a fine ranging from 100,000 to 300,000 roubles in the case of officials and from 300,000 to 500,000 roubles in the case of legal persons.

32. In 2016, amendments were made to the legislation in force on voluntary associations and non-profit organizations to clarify the concept of “non-profit organization acting as a foreign agent” by incorporating lists of areas and forms of political activity.

33. In accordance with the Council of Europe Fundamental Principles on the Legal Status of Non-governmental Organizations in Europe (2002), designated supervising bodies have the right to require such organizations to submit reports on their accounts and activities, to inspect their books, records or activities and to require that they make known the percentage of their funds used for fundraising purposes. This document also provides for the accounts of non-governmental organizations to be audited by an institution or person independent of their management. Thus, the requirements established in the legislation on non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents – that such organizations submit to the competent authority a report on

their activities and the composition of their management every six months, along with documents on the purpose of their expenditure of cash and use of other assets, including those received from foreign sources, every quarter, and an audit report every year – do not go beyond what is provided for in international standards. Furthermore, the requirement for accounts to be audited annually applies not only to non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents but also to State corporations, State companies and branches of foreign non-governmental organizations.

34. The language used in the Federal Act on non-profit organizations is “non-profit organization acting as a foreign agent”, not “non-profit organization that is a foreign agent”. In public discourse, the terms are used interchangeably, with the result that the meaning laid down in law is becoming distorted. The real meaning of the term “non-profit organization acting as a foreign agent” is a non-profit organization acting in the interests of its foreign sponsors. There is a similar concept in the legislation of the United States of America. The term “agent of a foreign principal” in the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA) of 1938 means any natural or legal person, including a non-profit organization, engaged in the United States in political activities, the collection or disbursement of contributions, public relations or lobbying of federal agencies and officials in the interests of any foreign client. However, unlike in the legislation of the Russian Federation, under §611, paragraph (c) (1), of this Act, receipt of foreign funding is not a required element. A person acting in the interests of a “foreign principal” may be deemed an “agent of a foreign principal” even without receiving such funding.

35. The legislation of the Russian Federation does not distinguish between non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents (including those working in the field of women’s rights) on the basis of their spheres of activity. Nor does the State place on such organizations any obligations that would be impossible or difficult to fulfil and could lead to the termination of their activities. The recommendations for the Russian Federation to ensure an environment in which women’s associations and non-governmental organizations may operate freely are being implemented.

36. The Ministry of Justice and its local agencies carry out State registration of non-profit organizations and monitor (oversee) their activities. These activities by the justice authorities do not involve direct interaction with non-profit organizations working to advance women. As at 18 March 2019, 182 organizations were listed in the register of non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents, 74 of which were active, including 4 working on gender issues: Women of Eurasia (Chelyabinsk), a women’s voluntary association; the Anna Resource Centre (Moscow), a regional voluntary organization providing assistance to women and children in crisis; Population and Development (Moscow), a regional voluntary organization promoting reproductive health care; and the Samara Centre for Gender Studies (Samara), a municipal voluntary organization.

37. The Ministry of Justice may decide to remove an organization from the register of non-profit organizations acting as foreign agents on the following grounds: the activities of the organization have been terminated because it has been wound up or because it has been reorganized in such a way that it has ceased to operate as a legal person, or because the organization has been removed from the consolidated State register of legal persons having ceased to operate as such; it has been established through an unannounced inspection that, during the year preceding the date of submission of the organization’s application for removal from the register, it has not received any funding or other assets from foreign sources and/or has not taken part in any political activities in the Russian Federation; during the three years preceding the date of submission of the organization’s application for removal from the register, it has not received any funding or other assets from foreign sources and/or has not taken part in any political activities in the Russian Federation; or, not later than three months

from the date on which it was included in the register, the organization ceased to receive funds or other assets from foreign sources and returned any such funds or other assets to the foreign source from which it had received them.

38. Thus, there are no provisions in current legislation that prevent women's associations and non-governmental organizations working on gender equality and women's empowerment from operating freely and raising funds.

Article 4

Paragraphs 17 and 18 of the concluding observations

39. There are no plans to introduce temporary special measures in the Russian Federation. Detailed information on this subject was provided in paragraph 140 of the eighth periodic report.

Article 5

Paragraphs 19 and 20 of the concluding observations

40. The 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women is aimed at empowering women in education and science so that they can, inter alia, obtain vocational education in the most advanced areas of the economy, which offer a wide range of highly paid job opportunities that are compatible with family life; reducing the gender wage gap; increasing employment for women in small and medium-sized businesses, the cultural sector and public and political life; and providing women with legal education. Where there is de jure equality, creating opportunities for the practical enjoyment of all human rights leads to de facto equality.

41. In order to develop and promote positive images of women in the public consciousness, showcase women's role in changing the world and increase the number of positive stories in the media about women's achievements in various spheres of life, in 2018 a non-State, independent media outlet, the Eurasian Women's Association web portal, was created under the auspices of the Eurasian Women's Forum. In the two years of its existence, more than 2,000 original items have been posted on the portal, including features about women active in society such as politicians and entrepreneurs. In 2018, over one and a half million people from 150 countries visited the portal.

42. A unique register of 2,000 women's organizations of the Russian Federation has been set up on the portal. All women's organizations have the chance to create their own pages on the portal containing their informational materials. This information resource allows women's organizations to collaborate more actively with one another and facilitates their involvement in various programmes; it also makes it possible to coordinate the activities of all websites belonging to women's organizations and to maintain a regular news section.

43. The State provides support to organizations that produce or publish, disseminate and/or distribute socially significant outputs in the print and electronic media.

Paragraphs 21 and 22 of the concluding observations

44. During the reporting period, efforts to prevent violence against women have involved educating women about their rights and how to exercise them; increasing women's knowledge of the law and their legal literacy; explaining the procedures and means whereby women may secure the protection of their rights; providing assistance to women who are victims of domestic violence or find themselves in difficult

situations, at crisis centres and other residential or semi-residential social service facilities in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation; developing legislation on the prevention of family and domestic violence against women; conducting information and awareness-raising measures in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation as part of the global United Nations 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign; and providing support to organizations that assist victims of violence.

45. Citizens who commit family or domestic offences are placed on a register and prevention work is subsequently conducted with them. As at 1 January 2019, there were 88,700 perpetrators of family or domestic offences on the register of the internal affairs agencies with whom police officers were carrying out individual prevention work.

46. In 2014, the State Duma developed a draft federal act on the prevention of family and domestic violence. This draft act was sent to the Government under the legislative initiative procedure. In its response, No. 2307p-P4 of 17 April 2015, the Government noted that it would support the draft act subject to its reworking to take account of observations concerning: contradictions in the text, overlapping legal norms, unclear definitions, and the need to define funding sources and procedures for implementing the new types of expenditure obligation envisaged, including, if necessary, the transfer of resources into the relevant budgets of the Russian Federation. Once it had been reworked in line with those observations, the draft act was resubmitted for consideration by the Government and, on instructions from the Government, was again reviewed by the federal executive authorities.

47. On 1 November 2016, following its consideration by the State Duma's specialized Committee on Issues relating to the Family, Women and Children, it was decided to return the draft act to the entity that had proposed it so that the requirements of the Constitution and the Regulations governing the State Duma could be met. In July 2019, on instructions from the President of the Federation Council, V.I. Matvienko, an interdepartmental working group was set up to refine legislation and law enforcement practice in the field of family and domestic violence prevention.

48. With a view to making criminal law more humane, in 2016 the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure were amended to provide more detail on the grounds and procedure for exemption from criminal liability; pursuant to those amendments, battery and other violent acts that cause pain without resulting in injury were decriminalized. At the same time, a new article, article 6.1.1 (Battery), was inserted in the Code of Administrative Offences, establishing administrative liability for battery where the acts concerned do not involve any criminally punishable conduct. This innovation did not, however, apply to family members and other close relatives who inflicted physical pain. They continued to be held criminally liable.

49. In 2017, the Criminal Code was amended to reclassify the commission of a single act of battery against a family or household member as an administrative offence, punishable under article 6.1.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences. The commission of a second act of battery by a person held administratively liable under article 6.1.1 incurs criminal liability under article 116.1 of the Criminal Code (Battery committed by a person who has incurred an administrative penalty). Invoking criminal liability for a repeat administrative offence is intended to ensure, inter alia, that instances of family violence or unlawful conduct by parents or other persons prone to committing violent acts are detected and addressed in a timely manner. The objective is also to prevent the commission of more grievous crimes, such as domestic homicides that follow protracted domestic conflict. More details in this regard are contained in the information provided by the Russian Federation in follow-up to the concluding observations ([CEDAW/C/RUS/CO/8/Add.1](#)).

50. Reclassifying the unlawful act of battery as an administrative offence has proved to be an effective way of avoiding the serious consequences of such wrongdoing. Furthermore, the fact that liability is now incurred for battery irrespective of the “wishes” of the victim has brought to light a significant number of unreported acts and ensured that punishment for such acts is inevitable.

51. While the number of reports of battery fell by 16.9 per cent in 2018, the number of persons who incurred administrative or criminal liability for committing battery increased by 9.9 per cent.

52. The measures taken have yielded positive results. Whereas, in 2015, 4,300 serious and especially serious family and domestic offences were committed, in 2016, thanks to the detection of 48,000 cases of “administrative” battery in the second half of that year, the number of criminal acts fell to 3,900 (a reduction of 9.5 per cent). In 2017, as a result of the steps taken to address the 224,300 infractions under article 6.1.1 of the Code of Administrative Offences (up 367.3 per cent), the number of serious and especially serious offences committed against family or household members fell by 11.3 per cent (to 3,400). The reduction was 4.6 per cent (to 3,300) in 2018, while 248,300 administrative offences in this area were dealt with (an increase of 10.7 per cent).

53. In 2018, 34,000 crimes involving family or domestic violence were recorded. Of those offences, 69.1 per cent were committed against women and children. Overall, 8,000 cases of battery were recorded in 2018 and 2,600 offences under article 116.1 of the Criminal Code involving battery committed by persons who had incurred an administrative penalty. The number of women who were victims of the offences specified in article 116 of the Criminal Code was 1,800 and the number of minors 1,100. In four years (from 2015 to 2018), the number of serious and especially serious family and domestic offences fell by one quarter (or 23.4 per cent). In 2018, the number of women who were victims of crime fell to 299,200 (a drop of 6.7 per cent); in the case of crimes against life or health, the number fell to 43,000 (down 9 per cent). The legislative amendments thus allowed this type of crime to be substantially reduced.

54. Social service facilities have been established in all the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, including crisis centres or women’s units that provide social services and socio-medical, psychological, educational, employment and legal services to women who are in crisis, including on account of family or domestic violence. The social service facilities, in addition to the services they provide, conduct measures to prevent family dysfunction, child neglect and abuse in the family, and lend comprehensive assistance to all members of the family and to each family member individually, including men who have been abusive. Families at risk are offered rehabilitation and comprehensive social support with a view to the early detection and prevention of dysfunction and abuse. Specialists from institutions visit the families and various services are provided to stabilize the family situation.

55. Women in crisis can get help in medical and social care units in women’s clinics and at centres for the provision of medical and social support to pregnant women in difficulty, which have their own psychologists and social work specialists.

56. Issues relating to the protection of women’s rights, the prohibition of discrimination against women and the application of criminal law provisions on violence against women are included in the training and further training programmes for procuratorial staff offered by the Academy of the Procurator’s Office and its affiliates. These issues are elucidated through courses of study on procuratorial oversight in the following areas: investigations, initial inquiries and police operations; compliance with the established procedures for conducting criminal investigations;

and application of the law, lawfulness of legal instruments, and observance of human and civil rights and freedoms.

57. The Academy carries out scientific research on the protection of women's rights through procuratorial oversight, international legal cooperation and criminal law measures to protect the rights and legitimate interests of women who are victims of crime, and also on the criminological aspects of crime against women.

58. In 2018, informational and analytical materials concerning the prevention of violence against women were sent to local offices of the Ministry of Internal Affairs with a view to developing the professional skills of staff of the internal affairs agencies.

59. To raise awareness among employees of the penal correction system and strengthen capacity to combat violence against women in penal correction institutions and agencies, from October to November 2018 additional classes on issues relating to violence against women were conducted as part of the in-service training for those employees.

60. Information and awareness-raising efforts aimed at preventing violence against women are carried out in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation. International theoretical and practical conferences have been conducted on the themes "Children and the family: the role of the State and society in preventing family violence" (Lipetsk, 2017) and "Women against violence" (Moscow, 2017).

61. A project on cooperation for the implementation of the 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women is being undertaken jointly with the Council of Europe and with financial support from the European Union; an area of focus is the prevention of social disadvantage among women and violence against women. The participants are the Council of Europe and, for the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

62. As part of the project, a seminar on the theme "Interdepartmental cooperation: models for preventing and combating violence against women in the regions" was held in Astrakhan in 2019. Representatives of the Council of Europe, the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation, the Federal Assembly, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the commissioners for human rights in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the deputy leaders of the Volga and Southern Federal Areas with responsibility for social issues, and representatives of academia and non-governmental organizations took part in the seminar. Models for interdepartmental cooperation in response to violence against women were presented at the seminar, along with best practices in this regard from the following regions: Astrakhan, Saratov, Ulyanovsk and Volgograd provinces, Perm Territory and Udmurt Republic. International experience in preventing violence against women was presented by experts from Sweden, the Netherlands and Bulgaria.

Paragraphs 23 and 24 of the concluding observations

63. Since no specific instances of violations of the rights of women and/or girls in the North Caucasus are cited in the concluding observations, it is impossible to verify the assertion that such harmful practices as child and/or forced marriage, abduction of women and girls for forced marriage, crimes in the name of so-called honour, female genital mutilation and polygamy are becoming increasingly prevalent in the North Caucasus.

64. According to information from the investigative bodies in the North Caucasus region, procedural checks and pretrial investigations in cases involving crimes committed against women are conducted under the standard procedure in accordance

with the legislation of the Russian Federation; no separate legal or organizational measures have been adopted. At the same time, special attention is paid to organizing the review of reports and the investigation of cases involving crimes committed against minors and to preventing crime against children. In 2012–2015, virtually all investigation departments concluded agreements with commissioners for human rights and commissioners for children’s rights. The agreements provide for cooperation through the regular exchange of information, including on cases in which discriminatory acts have been committed.

Article 6

Paragraphs 25 and 26 of the concluding observations

65. Efforts are constantly under way to identify individuals engaged in trafficking in persons, recruitment into prostitution and organization of these criminal activities through the Internet. A range of measures is being implemented to combat sexual exploitation of women and trafficking in persons and to promote a zero-tolerance attitude in society towards such phenomena.

66. A number of acts connected with trafficking in persons and their exploitation are offences under the Criminal Code. Detailed information on this subject was provided in paragraphs 112 to 115 of the eighth periodic report.

67. In July 2018, the State Duma adopted on first reading a draft federal act amending the Criminal Code and Code of Criminal Procedure to enhance the mechanism for combating crimes against the sexual inviolability of minors.

68. The law enforcement agencies recorded 24 offences under article 127.1 of the Criminal Code (Trafficking in persons) in 2018 (21 in 2017), of which 18 were cleared up (13 in 2017), including 2 committed by an organized group or criminal association (1 in 2017). A total of 27 perpetrators were brought to justice (28 in 2017).

69. In particular, the law enforcement agencies put an end to the activities of an organized group whose members, over the course of five years, committed offences for the purpose of sexual exploitation involving the recruitment, transportation, concealment and subsequent transfer of persons across the border of the Russian Federation and to Bahrain. As a result of the investigations carried out, criminal proceedings were initiated against members of the group under articles 127.1 (Trafficking in persons), 240 (Recruitment into prostitution), 241 (Organizing prostitution) and 325 (Theft or alteration of documents, stamps or seals or theft of excise labels, special labels or conformity marks) of the Criminal Code. Six members of the group were prosecuted.

70. Inquiries were made to check information concerning members of the group who engaged in trafficking in persons, recruitment into prostitution and organization of prostitution through the Internet. In March 2018, these inquiries led to the arrest at Domodedovo International Airport of two members of the group, who were in the process of transferring funds in the amount of 1.5 million roubles received for the sale of minors with a view to their subsequent prostitution in Turkey. The Investigative Committee of the Russian Federation brought criminal cases against those involved on the basis of evidence of an offence contrary to article 127.1, paragraph 1, of the Criminal Code.

71. To combat sexual exploitation of women and trafficking in persons, six coordinated preventive and special operations were carried out in 2017–2018.

72. According to monitoring data on the outcome of efforts to combat trafficking in persons, 98 per cent of trafficking offences involve some form of sexual exploitation:

these include such criminal acts as recruitment into prostitution (Criminal Code, art. 240), receiving sexual services from a minor (Criminal Code, art. 240.1), organizing prostitution (Criminal Code, art. 241), manufacture and circulation of materials or objects containing pornographic images of minors (Criminal Code, art. 242.1) and use of minors to produce pornographic materials or objects (Criminal Code, art. 242.2). The law enforcement agencies are conducting a range of measures to detect, suppress and investigate offences of this type on an ongoing basis.

73. In 2018, 148 offences under article 240 of the Criminal Code were recorded (a reduction of 11.9 per cent), of which 124 were cleared up (down 31.1 per cent); 65 perpetrators were identified (up 20.4 per cent). Eight offences under article 240.1 were recorded (down 20 per cent), of which two were cleared up (down 71.4 per cent); two perpetrators were identified (down 50 per cent). Under article 241, 202 offences were recorded (a reduction of 24.9 per cent), of which 139 were cleared up (down 24.9 per cent); 276 perpetrators were identified (down 12.1 per cent). Some 290 offences were committed under article 242.1 (a reduction of 0.7 per cent), of which 194 were cleared up (up 8.4 per cent); 114 perpetrators were identified (down 5.8 per cent). Some 140 offences were detected under article 242.2 (an increase of 91.8 per cent), of which 94 were cleared up (up 38.2 per cent); 35 perpetrators were identified (up 45.8 per cent).

74. Information on measures to prevent sexual exploitation of women and trafficking in persons and on the prevention of this type of offending is posted on the official websites of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Procurator General. More than 4,000 informational items on the work of internal affairs officers in preventing these offences were published in the media and online during the reporting period, including over 1,000 in the federal media and around 3,000 in the regional media.

75. When trafficking-related offences are detected and investigated, broader international cooperation is particularly important. During the reporting period, measures were implemented under the 2014–2018 Programme of Cooperation in Combating Trafficking in Persons, approved by the Council of Heads of State of the CIS Member States. Efforts to counter trafficking in persons are traditionally among the topics of discussion not only within the CIS framework, but also in other multilateral forums, such as the Collective Security Treaty Organization, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, the Council of the Baltic Sea States, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the United Nations and the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation (Europol).

76. In 2016, the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation, with support from the Moscow office of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), led a round table on the theme “Trafficking in persons: a contemporary threat to individuals and society in the Russian Federation”. Based on the outcome of the comprehensive and substantive analysis of that issue and taking into account the expert assessments provided, specific recommendations were made to the Government and the State Duma aimed at making efforts to counter trafficking in persons more effective and further refining and modernizing federal legislation in that regard.

77. The following international events have been held to exchange experience among organizations working to counter trafficking in persons and protect victims of such crimes: a round table on the theme “Trafficking in persons: a contemporary threat to individuals and society in the Russian Federation”, organized by the Civic Chamber of the Russian Federation and the IOM Moscow office (Moscow, 2016); a seminar on the theme “Combating trafficking in persons and the organization of illegal migration: protecting human rights when prosecuting offences connected with trafficking in persons and the organization of illegal migration”, in which the Office

of the Procurator General of the Russian Federation and the Ministry of Justice of Finland took part (Moscow, 2017); a round table on the theme “Practice of cooperation between financial intelligence units and law enforcement agencies in countering trafficking in persons”, with the participation of the Office of the Procurator General of the Russian Federation and representatives of the law enforcement agencies of Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan (Moscow, 2017); and round tables organized by the Council of Europe, together with the State Academy of Justice of the Russian Federation, on countering violence and discrimination (Kazan and Irkutsk, 2018).

78. The authorities in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation carry out legal education as part of their efforts to counter trafficking in persons. In 2017 in Saint Petersburg, recommendations to strengthen measures for countering trafficking in persons in the city and in the province of Leningrad were developed and issued in the context of a project entitled “Strengthening the role of municipalities in efforts to prevent trafficking in persons”, with support from the offices of the regional commissioners for human rights, the Saint Petersburg Committee on Inter-Ethnic Relations and Migration Policy, the Social Welfare Committee of the province of Leningrad and other State and civil society entities.

79. Oversight of the application of legislation on health care occupies an important place in the system for the prevention of trafficking-related offences. The checks conducted help to prevent the development of enabling conditions for potential abuse by health-care workers and the commission of offences linked to the donation and transplantation of human organs and tissue and the illicit traffic in biomaterials. In Russia, the prohibition on the purchase and sale of human organs and tissues is embodied in law and criminal liability is provided for these acts.

80. The procuratorial authorities engage in international cooperation involving the provision of judicial assistance in criminal matters with more than 80 countries. The Office of the Procurator General of the Russian Federation maintains a register of requests for such assistance in trafficking-related cases. In 2016–2018, 67 petitions concerning such cases were considered (17 petitions from the Russian Federation addressed to the competent authorities of foreign States and 50 foreign requests addressed to the competent authorities of the Russian Federation). Eight requests from the Russian Federation were executed in the territory of foreign States, while 50 foreign petitions were executed in the territory of the Russian Federation.

81. In the course of such international cooperation, information is exchanged concerning offences that have been committed or are being planned and the persons responsible. As a rule, such exchanges take place when a request for judicial assistance is transmitted. When information is received concerning an offence that has been committed or is being planned in the territory of the Russian Federation and the persons responsible, the Office of the Procurator General instructs the bodies carrying out preliminary investigations to conduct the procedural checks and take the measures provided for in articles 144 and 145 of the Code of Criminal Procedure.

Part II

Article 7

Paragraphs 27 and 28 of the concluding observations

82. Issues relating to women’s participation in political and public life are governed by federal law (eighth periodic report, para. 133). Women participate actively in political and public life: they are deputies in legislative bodies and members of civic

chambers, citizen councils and commissions at all levels. The activities of women's voluntary organizations are generally socially oriented, aimed at supporting families, women and children, and cover such areas as education, culture, social welfare, the environment, legal education, citizen activism, charitable works, volunteering and assistance for victims of violence. Financial support for women's organizations is provided from the Presidential Grants Foundation and the budgets of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

83. According to data from the Ministry of Justice, as at 17 June 2019 there were 59 registered political parties in the Russian Federation that could nominate candidates and lists of candidates for election without being required to collect signatures from voters. Of those political parties, seven were headed by women: the United Democratic Party of Russia, known as Yabloko; the Agrarian Party of Russia, a nationwide political party; the People's Party for the Women of Russia, also a nationwide political party; the Socialist Party of Russia; Women's Dialogue, another nationwide political party; Alternative for Russia (the Socialist Choice Party); and the Parents of the Future Party, a voluntary organization and political party.

84. Information and awareness-raising measures are carried out continuously in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation to increase women's participation in political and public life. The executive authorities of the constituent entities provide support in the form of grants for socially significant projects and programmes implemented by women's organizations.

85. For a number of years, competitions have been held for women active in business and society. In 2018, the following events took place: the awarding of a national "Woman of the Year" prize (with nominations in the categories "Political activities and service to the State"; "Education", "Public and charitable works"; "Culture"; "Science"; "Manufacturing and industry"; Beauty and fashion"; "Physical fitness and sport", "Media and advertising"; "Small and medium-sized business"; "Military, security and law enforcement agencies" and "Medicine and health"); the "Woman Who Matters" forum, aimed at identifying the best initiatives, practices and programmes when it comes to campaigning for women; and the twenty-second nationwide "Woman Director of the Year" contest, the goal of which is to showcase the role of women leaders in society and their contribution to the development of various spheres of activity.

86. The Women's Union of Russia is implementing a project entitled "School for Active Citizens" on an ongoing basis. As part of the project, citizens' legal competence is being raised (by learning about the practical application of the law, mechanisms for civil society involvement in law enforcement and means of obtaining State support and exchanging positive experiences).

87. Increasing women's participation in political and public life is an area of focus of the project on cooperation for the implementation of the 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women, which is being undertaken jointly with the Council of Europe and with financial support from the European Union. The participants are the Council of Europe and, for the Russian Federation, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Commissioner for Human Rights and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

88. The number of women in the Government has increased. Two women are Deputy Prime Ministers and two are federal ministers (for education and health). The Federation Council has 28 women members, including the President and one Deputy President. The deputies of the 7th State Duma include 70 women, compared with 21 in the previous cohort. Women preside over 4 of the 25 committees of the State Duma, while 8 women are first vice-chairs of committees and 10 are vice-chairs. Women occupy the posts of President of the Central Bank, Commissioner for Human Rights and Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights.

89. Women's right to promotion in State agencies is governed by the Federal Act on the State civil service. The competitive selection procedure is open to citizens of the Russian Federation (men and women) who have reached 18 years of age, are proficient in the official language of the Russian Federation and meet the requirements for appointment to a post in the civil service, as set out in the relevant legislation of the Russian Federation. To be appointed to a post in the civil service, candidates must meet requirements relating to their level of professional education, previous experience in the civil service or in their specialized field, training, possession of the knowledge and skills necessary to carry out the duties in question, and, if the representative of the recruiter so decides, their area of specialization and training.

90. Information on vacancies in the State civil service, the requirements for appointment to those posts and the competitive selection and evaluation procedures are posted on the official websites of State agencies and in the consolidated human resources management information system of the State civil service (<http://www.gossluzhba.gov.ru/>), a federal State information system. The consolidated information system provides for interaction between citizens of the Russian Federation who are interested in entering the State civil service and the human resources management services of State agencies and affords access to complete and regularly updated information on the State civil service. After registering in the consolidated information system, every candidate, irrespective of sex, may complete a questionnaire in due form, which is then accessible to the human resources management services of State agencies, courts and State corporations and organizations, according to a list drawn up by the Government.

91. In the past two years, the selection and training procedure for managerial staff has changed significantly. On instructions from the President of the Russian Federation, the Office of the President and the Higher School of Public Administration in the State Academy of the National Economy and Public Administration are implementing a project entitled "Leaders of Russia", the goal of which is to select talented people to form a pool of prospective managers. The project is aimed at reforming human resources management policy and introducing key performance indicators for the evaluation of the work of State civil servants. It involves a competition that provides opportunities for young people to develop their managerial abilities and motivation.

92. The finalists receive a grant for further study in the amount of 1 million roubles. For one year, the winners enjoy personalized careers consultations with top managers from the largest companies and prominent State figures. The participants are evaluated on the basis of the managerial abilities and leadership skills they display when carrying out the tasks that make up the competition. There were 300 finalists in 2018–2019, of whom 46 were women (15 per cent); the 104 winners included 13 women (12.5 per cent). One of the project's mentors is the President of the Federation Council, who called on more women to take part in the competition.

Article 8

93. Women have the opportunity, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, to represent the country at the international level and to participate in the work of international organizations.

94. At present, women with diplomatic rank employed in the central administration of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs constitute 32 per cent of all the Ministry's diplomatic staff. Furthermore, 65 women occupy leadership positions. In the Ministry's missions abroad, 12.7 per cent of all diplomats are women; during the

reporting period, four women were ambassadors or minister counsellors. The Ministry is pursuing a deliberate policy of attracting women to the diplomatic service. Women account for 40 per cent of graduates of higher education institutions recommended for employment in the Ministry by the Ministry's graduate outreach commission. Since the decision to enter the diplomatic service is a personal one, each year only 20 per cent of those recruited by the Ministry to work in diplomatic posts are women.

95. In 2016, an international meeting of female members of the military Christian movement was held in Moscow, organized by the Society of Holy Grand Duchess Olga, Equal of the Apostles. Christian women from the United States of America, Serbia, Great Britain and Bulgaria spoke about their missionary work among armed forces personnel.

96. In 2017, the following events took place: the first international congress of women from the countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa (BRICS) on the theme "The role of women in modern society: cooperation in politics, economics, science, education and culture", one outcome of which was the proposal by women's business groups from Russia to establish the BRICS Businesswomen's Alliance (Novosibirsk); the first meeting of women's organizations from the countries of the Eurasian Economic Cooperation Organization (Moscow), at which participants from Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Russia discussed pressing issues relating to the development of the women's movement, official policy on promoting equal rights for women and men in their countries, efforts needed on the part of women's organizations to achieve sustainable development, and attaining consensus and mutual understanding among CIS countries (in 2018, the attendees at the meeting also included participants from Azerbaijan and Tajikistan); and a joint Russia-Belarus forum on the theme "Women for uniting creative forces for the sake of peace" (Moscow).

97. In 2018, the first summit of women diplomats took place as part of the Second Eurasian Women's Forum. The participants discussed opportunities for and obstacles to the development of diplomatic careers for women in different countries and shared experiences of the work of women diplomats in promoting the peace and security agenda.

98. Also in 2018, the Women's Union of Russia organized an international meeting for representatives of CIS women's organizations on the theme "Partnership among CIS women's organizations for the sake of peace and stability for sustainable development".

Paragraphs 29 and 30 of the concluding observations

99. The implementation of the Convention in the territory of the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic is not within the purview of the Russian Federation. The situation in the Donbass is an internal Ukrainian conflict. Questions concerning the protection of women in Lugansk and Donetsk provinces should be addressed, in the first instance, to the authorities of Ukraine and also to the representatives of the Lugansk and Donetsk People's Republics. The key to resolving the internal armed conflict in Ukraine is the strict and scrupulous observance by the parties to the conflict of the Minsk agreements.

100. The Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol became part of the Russian Federation following a referendum held on 16 March 2014 in full compliance with the standards of international law. Through the referendum, the population of Crimea realized its right to self-determination, enshrined in such fundamental international instruments as the Charter of the United Nations and in article 1 of both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant

on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and also in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

101. The Constitution, legislation and other laws and regulations of the Russian Federation are fully applicable in the territories of the Republic of Crimea and the city state of Sevastopol, as constituent entities of the Russian Federation, as are the international treaties to which the Russian Federation is a party, including human rights instruments (among them the Convention).

102. Residents of these constituent entities enjoy all the human rights and freedoms set forth in the human rights instruments in question, on the same footing as, and without any discrimination compared with, residents of other regions of Russia. All credible reports of possible violations of human rights standards that warrant attention are checked by the competent authorities of the Russian Federation. If any persons consider that they have been victims of such violations, they have every opportunity to defend their rights within the national legal framework, including in the courts. The law enforcement agencies and judicial bodies in the Republic of Crimea and the city state of Sevastopol function no differently from those in the other constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

103. The Russian Federation maintains a position of principle against politically motivated and selective country-specific resolutions, such as in particular General Assembly resolution [68/262](#), which was adopted by vote. This position on the aforementioned resolution and similar resolutions of the General Assembly is well known and has been set out in statements by representatives of the Russian Federation upon the adoption of these resolutions and in comments by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

104. No reports of cases of violence against women or reprisals against women human rights defenders in the territory of the Crimean Peninsula have been received by the investigation departments concerned since their establishment.

Article 9

105. During the reporting period, amendments were made to the Federal Act on citizenship, the Federal Act on the procedure for exit from and entry into the Russian Federation and the Federal Act on the legal status of foreign nationals in the Russian Federation to simplify the procedures whereby foreign nationals may obtain a change of status, including a temporary residence permit enabling them to reside lawfully pending the receipt of a residence permit. In addition, Russian-speaking nationals of former republics of the Soviet Union were given the opportunity to acquire civil status on a preferential basis. In 2019, amendments were made to the Federal Act on citizenship stating that a foreign national could become a citizen of the Russian Federation either under the general regime or, where the requisite conditions were met, under the preferential regime. The new regulations on obtaining citizenship make it possible to attract to the country entrepreneurs, investors and professionals in various spheres of activity, irrespective of sex.

106. The State Programme to Assist the Voluntary Resettlement in the Russian Federation of Ethnic Russians Living Abroad, approved pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 637 of 22 June 2006, continues to be implemented.

107. Participants in the Programme and their family members who are resettling together in a permanent residence in the Russian Federation are entitled to State guarantees and social support, including: compensation for the cost of travel to their future residence, compensation for the payment of official fees for documents

defining their legal status in the territory of the Russian Federation, and an installation allowance; a monthly allowance for those who have no income from work, entrepreneurial or other activities not prohibited by the legislation of the Russian Federation, until the date on which they obtain citizenship of the Russian Federation but for not more than six months (in the areas in which they have been resettled); the right to import personal property into the Russian Federation, without restriction as to the total value and irrespective of the weight of the goods; a temporary residence permit not subject to the quota regime, a residence permit and the right to obtain citizenship of the Russian Federation under the simplified procedure; and the right to work in the Russian Federation without obtaining a work permit. All these State guarantees are granted until the expiry of the certificate of participation in the Programme.

108. Issues relating to the review of applications for payments to participants in the Programme and their family members and for the issuance of temporary residence permits or residence permits, along with questions concerning citizenship of the Russian Federation, are resolved within the time frames stipulated in the relevant laws and regulations.

109. Migration policy is conducted in accordance with the Framework for the Migration Policy of the Russian Federation for the period 2019–2025, which was approved pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 622 of 31 October 2018, and taking into account current demographic trends, socioeconomic development, economic needs and national security. Emphasis is placed on establishing conditions and incentives for the permanent settlement in the Russian Federation of ethnic Russians living abroad, qualified specialists (men and women) and other foreign workers needed on the labour market in the Russian Federation.

Part III

Article 10

110. State policy and legal regulation with regard to education are based on the principles of ensuring the right of all to education and prohibiting discrimination in education, in accordance with the Federal Act on education. In the Russian Federation, public access to free education is guaranteed in accordance with federal State educational standards for preschool, primary, lower secondary, upper secondary and secondary vocational education; free higher education is also guaranteed on a competitive basis if a citizen is studying at that level for the first time. The strengthening and development of a common educational framework guarantees equal access to quality education for all children in our country.

111. The National Education Project was launched in 2019 and includes 10 federal projects: “Modern School”, “Success of Every Child”, “Support for Families with Children”, “Digital Educational Environment”, “Teacher of the Future”, “Young Professionals”, “New Opportunities for All”, “Social Engagement”, “Exporting Education” and “Social Mobility for All”.

112. The Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, an initiative of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, is being implemented; it involves a survey of key adult competencies and their impact on the success and personal fulfilment of human beings in technology- and information-rich environments, and is aimed at ensuring equal access to continuing education programmes, including adult literacy and functional literacy programmes aimed, inter alia, at reducing the knowledge gap between men and women.

113. According to data from the 2009–2013 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, Russian women achieved better results than men in all areas of functional literacy – reading literacy, mathematical literacy, and problem-solving in a technology-rich environment. The second cycle of the survey will be conducted in 2021.

114. Steps are being taken to educate girls and women in new and promising areas of activity, including science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM), digital technologies and entrepreneurship. The Federal Corporation for Small and Medium-sized Enterprise Development (SME Corporation) is implementing a training programme known as “The ABC of Entrepreneurship”, on starting a business from scratch, and “School of Entrepreneurship”, on business development. In 2018, 16,500 people received training; 58 per cent of the participants were women. The “Mother – Entrepreneur” training programme was designed specifically for women on parental leave, mothers of young children, and women registered with the employment service. The training takes the form of a five-day face-to-face course on the basics of entrepreneurship and effective business management, with immersion into the business environment. It involves experienced experts and representatives of regional support structures for small and medium-sized enterprises. Following the presentation and defence of participants’ business plans, an independent jury determines the winners, who receive grants to start their own business. In 2018, the programme was implemented in 52 constituent entities of the Russian Federation. A total of 2,170 women took part, 42 of whom were declared winners.

115. Under the federal project for the development and implementation of a programme of systemic support for senior citizens and improvement of their quality of life, which forms part of the National Demography Project, measures are being taken to arrange vocational training and additional vocational education for men and women of pre-retirement age (five years before they become eligible for an old-age pension) to provide them with the skills and competencies required in the economy. The project will create the economic and social conditions necessary to ensure that citizens of pre-retirement age do not suffer discrimination and will help them to continue working, both at previous places of work and at new ones, in accordance with their wishes and their professional skills and physical capabilities. Vocational training is aimed at helping persons of pre-retirement age to acquire professional competence, including for work with specific equipment, technologies, hardware and software and other professional resources, and at helping them to obtain the levels and categories of skills needed for blue-collar or white-collar jobs, without acquiring an additional level of education.

Paragraphs 31 and 32 of the concluding observations

116. The education authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation are responsible for ensuring that the compulsory curriculum for primary and secondary schools includes a comprehensive course on sexual and reproductive health that takes account of gender issues and is age-appropriate.

117. The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights conducts extensive work on legal education for school pupils and students. To mark Human Rights Day, secondary, specialized secondary and higher education institutions conduct activities as part of the “shared human rights lesson”. A national competition is being held on innovative technologies in legal education on civil rights and freedoms and ways and means of protecting them, along with a national professional competition known as “Legal Russia” organized by Garant, the Russian Association for Legal Information, with the support of the Council of Judges of the Russian Federation.

Article 11

Paragraphs 33 and 34 of the concluding observations

118. One of the aims of the 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women is to increase the competitiveness and employability of women with young children, and also to involve women in entrepreneurship and the study of mathematics and natural sciences and improve their digital literacy and digital skills.

119. Every year, more than 500 retraining programmes and 300 professional development programmes are conducted in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation for women who are taking parental leave to care for a child under 3 years of age.

120. Measures are being taken to develop flexible and remote forms of employment for women with children. The executive authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation are working to raise awareness among women with children under 3 years of age of the availability of flexible workplaces, where they can work partial days or partial weeks; to promote the development of remote, home-based forms of employment and to continue helping women with children aged between 1.5 and 3 years to find employment in flexible workplaces; and to arrange temporary employment for women graduates of vocational training institutions while they are on parental leave caring for a child aged between 1.5 and 3 years, in the form of traineeships with partial reimbursement of the employer's cost of paying them and their tutors.

121. As part of the State Programme for Employment Promotion, steps are being taken to promote the employment of women with children by providing them with the opportunity to undertake vocational training offered by the employment services and return to their previous job with updated professional knowledge and skills, or, after returning from parental leave for a child under 3 years of age, to find a new job that is most compatible with their childcare responsibilities.

122. This measure makes it possible to reduce the cost to employers of professional development and retraining of women who have returned to work after parental leave and encourages employers to develop workplace arrangements with this group of women. Vocational training is particularly important for women who are less competitive in the labour market, such as mothers of many children and mothers of children with disabilities, and for women in professions or areas of specialization that require constant updating of professional knowledge and skills. The employment rate of women with children of preschool age is expected to increase by 3.9 percentage points by 2024, to 68.5 per cent, compared with the average rate for 2015–2017.

123. From 2020, there are plans to arrange vocational training and additional vocational education for women taking parental leave to care for a child under 3 years of age, within the framework of the federal project for the promotion of women's employment and the promotion of preschool education for children under 3 years of age, which forms part of the National Demography Project. In addition, at least 255,000 new kindergarten places will be created by 2024 under the project.

124. Under Ministry of Labour Order No. 512n of 18 July 2019, a list of production processes, jobs and occupations with harmful and/or hazardous working conditions in which the use of women's labour is restricted was approved to replace the existing list of physically demanding jobs and jobs with harmful or hazardous working conditions in which the use of women's labour is prohibited, which was approved pursuant to Government Decision No. 162 of 25 February 2000. The new list is less than a quarter of the length of the existing list: under the Ministry of Labour Order, the number of approved items on the list is 100 instead of 456. The criteria for revising

and updating the list were risk factors for women's reproductive health that affect the health of the next generation and that have long-term effects.

125. The list rules out any arbitrary restriction on the use of women's labour, which serves as a guarantee of their right to fair working conditions. For example, restrictions for women in the following professions and jobs are being lifted: drivers of heavy-duty vehicles and special agricultural vehicles, such as trucks, tractors, dump trucks and KamAZ trucks, except for drivers of construction vehicles, such as bulldozers, excavators and motor graders; members of a ship's deck crew, such as boatswain, skipper and sailor, except for jobs in the ship's engine room; drivers of electric trains (commuter trains) and express and high-speed trains, such as the Lastochka and the Sapsan; and steeplejack work at heights above 10 metres.

126. The list also does not apply to women's labour in the pharmaceutical industry, medical facilities, research laboratories, or organizations providing consumer services to the public. When safe working conditions are created, an employer has the right to employ women without restrictions.

127. The following were involved in revising the list: the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia; the N.F. Izmerov Research Institute for Occupational Medicine (a federal State-funded scientific institution); the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs; and industry associations of employers and trade unions. A number of meetings were held with representatives of employers' associations and trade unions from various sectors of the economy, including ferrous and non-ferrous metallurgy, the Russian Railways, river and sea transport, the chemical industry, light industry, the glass industry, the agro-industrial complex and the oil and gas industry. The Order enters into force on 1 January 2021.

128. In connection with the Committee's observation regarding the adoption of comprehensive legislation to combat discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace, it should be noted that in the Russian Federation liability for sexual assault is governed by the Criminal Code (art. 132, "Sexual assault"). Perpetrators are held criminally liable irrespective of where the offence was committed, in other words, whether it was committed in the workplace, in a public place, in the home, etc.

129. With regard to the Committee's observation on the need to adopt measures to close the gender wage gap, it should be noted that, under article 22 of the Labour Code, employers are obliged to ensure that employees receive equal pay for work of equal value. At the same time, wages take into account qualifications, the complexity of the work, and the quantity and quality of the work performed. An employee's wages are established under an employment contract in accordance with the employer's wage systems. Wage systems should ensure that the wages paid to employees vary in line with the complexity and quality of the work done and with the effectiveness of their work, as judged against specified criteria and indicators. The employee's sex does not affect the amount of pay received.

130. According to data from the Federal State Statistics Service, the ratio of women's wages to men's wages in the Russian Federation as a whole was 71.7 per cent in October 2017, compared with 72.6 per cent in October 2015 and 74.2 per cent in October 2013. The wage gap between women and men is explained by the higher proportion of women in the sectors of the economy in which pay is lower.

Article 12

Paragraphs 35 and 36 of the concluding observations

131. Women's health care is an important area of the Government's work. Annual check-ups and preventive examinations are provided for adults and children, the

working population and older persons. Health centres are in operation and measures to prevent non-communicable diseases are in place.

132. A three-level system of perinatal care has been established to improve the availability and quality of medical care for women and children. A total of 32 perinatal centres in 30 constituent entities of the Russian Federation have been brought into operation; they provide medical care for newborns and for women during pregnancy, childbirth and the postnatal period.

133. In 2018, in order to prevent non-communicable diseases in women and reduce the risk of the development of such diseases, guidelines on cervical cancer prevention, breast cancer prevention, case management of patients with senile asthenia, the protection of women from exposure to tobacco smoke, the prevention and treatment of tobacco use and tobacco dependency in women, and measures to encourage abstinence from alcohol were produced for use by primary health-care physicians in preventive counselling for women of reproductive age. An algorithm for diagnosing senile asthenia syndrome in women has been developed and implemented.

134. The National Health-care Project was launched in 2019 to reduce overall mortality and infant mortality, eliminate the staff shortage in primary health-care facilities, ensure that all citizens are given preventive medical examinations at least once a year, optimize public access to primary health-care facilities and simplify the procedure for making appointments with physicians.

135. The improvement of women's and girls' health is facilitated by the federal projects "Enhancing Public Health" and "Sport Is a Way of Life", which form part of the National Demography Project and provide for the establishment of a preventive environment that minimizes the negative impact of risk factors on health; monitoring of the nutritional status of various population groups; and the active involvement of civil society and employers through corporate programmes in encouraging the public to lead a healthy lifestyle and take part in physical activity and sport. The projects will help increase healthy life expectancy and boost the number of citizens who lead healthy lifestyles and the number regularly engaging in physical activity and sport.

136. In order to reduce the number of abortions in the Russian Federation, a system of licensing of abortion services has been introduced at women's clinics in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation; a new form containing information on the possible consequences has been approved for a woman to indicate her informed voluntary consent to an abortion; provision has been made for pre-abortion ultrasound examinations in order to view images of the fetus and its heartbeat and/or for fetal heartbeat auscultation; medical and social care units have been set up, and also centres for the provision of medical and social support to pregnant women in difficulty, the main aim of which is to provide social and psychological care for women facing unplanned pregnancies, in order to give them a positive alternative to abortion; counselling is provided for women who are planning to have an abortion; pre-abortion counselling for women, provided by medical psychologists (psychologists and social work specialists), is now covered by compulsory medical insurance (explanations were included in information letters on the establishment of and economic justification for local programmes of State guarantees of free medical care for 2017 and 2018); and an additional vocational training programme (career development programme) on pre-abortion counselling has been developed for medical psychologists, psychologists and social work specialists (2016).

137. Under the programme of State guarantees, medical care for the prevention of abortion is provided free of charge. The purchase of contraceptives is financed under local programmes of State guarantees of free medical care for the relevant year. According to data from the Ministry of Health, 22.9 per cent of women of fertile age

were using highly effective contraceptive methods (intrauterine devices and hormonal contraceptives).

138. As a result of the work that has been carried out, the Russian Federation has seen a steady decline in the number of abortions. According to data from the Federal State Statistics Service, the number of abortions fell from 930,000 in 2014 to 779,000 in 2017. The abortion rate per 1,000 women of fertile age fell from 25.9 in 2014 to 22.3 in 2017. According to data from the Ministry of Health, the number of therapeutic abortions performed at the woman's request as a proportion of the overall number of pregnancy terminations has fallen by 42.5 per cent in recent years (from 511,799 in 2014 to 294,456 in 2018).

139. Health care in rural areas is being improved. There are 33,800 paramedic and obstetric units; 2,000 paramedic units; 5,500 outpatient clinics, including clinics with physicians; 1,400 general medical centres (units); 7,900 village first-aid points; and 1,600 district hospitals. In order to ensure the availability of primary health care, including in rural areas, 1,016 mobile medical teams equipped with vehicles containing medical equipment, 48 mobile outpatient clinics, 107 mobile dental offices, 108 mobile paramedic and obstetric units, 98 mobile mammography units, 867 mobile photofluorography units and 30 mobile clinical diagnostic laboratories are in operation in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

140. In order to improve access to medicines for citizens living in rural areas, medical staff of stand-alone units of medical facilities located in rural settlements where there are no pharmacies have been granted the right to retail medicines once the medical facilities concerned have obtained a licence for pharmaceutical work.

141. In connection with the Committee's observation, in paragraph 35, regarding the development of a programme of substitution therapy for women drug users, it should be noted that the stated aim of "substitution methods" for opioid dependence is to reduce harm from drug use, such as overdose deaths, crime and the spread of HIV infection, rather than to treat drug addiction itself. The aim of "harm reduction" is to reduce the potential effects of illicit drug use, rather than to eliminate their cause, that is, drug addiction. The resolution adopted by the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs reads as follows: "The Conference, recalling the provisions of article 38 of the Convention concerning the treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts,... [d]eclares that one of the most effective methods of treatment for addiction is treatment in a hospital institution having a drug free atmosphere;... [and] [u]rges Parties having a serious drug addiction problem, and the economic means to do so, to provide such facilities." In that connection, persons suffering from drug addiction in the Russian Federation are provided with treatment in a drug-free atmosphere. The methods used involve complete withdrawal from narcotic drugs with the use of opioid receptor antagonists. The effectiveness, including pharmacoeconomic effectiveness, of this method has been attested in joint studies by scientists from the United States of America and the Russian Federation.

142. Currently, 808,000 citizens of the Russian Federation are HIV-positive, and the number of patients is increasing by 85,000 per year. The proportion of patients who became infected with HIV through heterosexual contact is 60 per cent. According to data from the Federal Service for the Oversight of Consumer Protection and Welfare, in 2017 men accounted for the majority (62.9 per cent) of those infected with HIV, while women accounted for 37.6 per cent. The highest rate of HIV infection is in the 30–44 age group.

143. In the Russian Federation, 75 per cent of cases of HIV infection are detected at an early stage. A Federal Register of Persons Infected with HIV has been established. It makes it possible to keep a record of persons who are HIV-positive, while ensuring

a high degree of data confidentiality. Within the framework of current laws, measures are being taken to increase the number of people receiving medical examinations for HIV infection, improve access to medical care and the effectiveness of HIV diagnosis and treatment, and further reduce the risk of mother-to-child transmission of HIV infection. In 2017, an action plan was approved for the implementation of the State strategy to prevent the spread of HIV infection in the Russian Federation for the period up to 2020 and beyond (see annex, table 3).

144. Under the action plan, measures are being taken in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation to provide more effective social support for pregnant women infected with HIV and children born to HIV-infected mothers, and also for adoptive parents and guardians of children infected with HIV. In addition, publicity campaigns are under way to inform citizens about HIV infection and to encourage them to take a test. Particular attention is being paid to youth projects with the active support of the Ministry of Science and Higher Education and the Ministry of Digital Development, Communications and Mass Media.

145. The federal executive authorities, all the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the Federation of Independent Trade Unions of Russia and the Russian Union of Industrialists and Entrepreneurs are involved in the implementation of the action plan.

146. As part of the implementation of the action plan, in 2017 the National Association of Specialists in HIV Prevention, Diagnosis and Treatment revised its clinical recommendations (treatment protocols) for HIV infection in adults, HIV infection in children and prevention of perinatal transmission of HIV, which provide for the use of the modern HIV treatment and prevention regimens recommended by WHO.

147. In order to increase the availability of modern and effective antiretroviral drugs, the Ministry of Health has introduced effective mechanisms for reducing the prices of such drugs. Since 1 January 2017, the Ministry of Health has been carrying out centralized procurement of medicines for persons infected with HIV, including those who also have hepatitis B or C. Antiretroviral therapy coverage stands at 55.6 per cent of patients.

148. In order to implement individual measures under the State Programme for Health-care Development, the constituent entities of the Russian Federation have been provided with budget subsidies for the purchase of diagnostic equipment to identify persons infected with HIV, including those who also have hepatitis B or C, and monitor their treatment; and for campaigns to raise public awareness regarding the prevention of HIV infection and associated diseases, including with the involvement of socially oriented non-profit organizations.

149. On the basis of a compilation of best regional practices, guidelines have been developed for the implementation of measures to prevent HIV infection and associated diseases among key population groups, and also to support the activities of socially oriented non-profit organizations providing HIV prevention services.

150. The Federal Register of Persons Infected with HIV and the Federal Register of Tuberculosis Patients have been in existence since 1 January 2017. The public authorities in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation maintain regional segments of the Federal Registers. Data are submitted for the former Register through a protected data transmission network by all medical facilities in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and by institutions of the Federal Penal Service and the Federal Medical and Biological Agency that provide medical assistance to people with HIV infection. At the federal level, the Register is depersonalized.

151. A comprehensive programme has been approved with a view to improving institutional control over infection prevention and the prevention of intrahospital HIV transmission and occupational HIV infection in penal institutions, together with an action plan (“road map”) to improve staffing and the training of relevant specialists in the provision of medical care to persons infected with HIV in penal institutions. The proportion of HIV-infected persons in prisons who are on highly active antiretroviral therapy has increased significantly, to 39.9 per cent, or 25,500 people. The provision of medication to HIV-infected persons held in penal institutions is funded from the federal budget. There is no shortage of medication for the provision of highly active antiretroviral therapy in penal institutions.

152. There are immunological laboratories in 52 medical units of the Federal Penal Service, which serve 61 local offices of the Federal Penal Service; 37 laboratories carry out the full cycle of immunological research, from screening for HIV, viral hepatitis, and concomitant and opportunistic infections to assessment of the effectiveness of the therapy provided.

153. The Ministry of Health has an Internet portal on the prevention of HIV and hepatitis B and C (www.o-spide.ru). A number of activities have been carried out, including the creation and distribution of programmes, stories, articles, commercials and a documentary film on the subject, the broadcast of special programmes on federal and regional television channels, websites and radio, and the issuance of materials in leading print publications.

154. A national “Stop HIV/AIDS” campaign is held to mark World Remembrance Day for AIDS Victims. The campaign activities take various forms: lectures, health lessons, round tables, quizzes, talks, debates, conferences, seminars, film screenings, exhibitions of literature on the topic, video screenings, the campaigns “Stop AIDS together”, “Red ribbon”, “Know how to say no!” and “A lot depends on you!”, flash mobs on the themes “We’re stronger than AIDS”, “Knowledge to live”, “Stop AIDS” and “Youth energy for health!”, adventure games on the theme of prevention, sporting events, and meetings with health workers. Many events also include the distribution of booklets, brochures, leaflets and posters. About 15 million people – students, representatives of young workers and student bodies, and student activists – participate in the campaign.

155. As part of the national campaign, a national open lesson is held. It is a day of shared action to inform children and young people about HIV/AIDS, with a focus on knowledge, responsibility and health, and is addressed to senior students of general education institutions and supported by a broadcast on the Internet. A key event in the national campaign is the open student forum “Stop AIDS together!”. Information on HIV prevention in education institutions is published on the website of the Centre for the Protection of the Rights and Interests of Children, a federal State-funded scientific institution (<http://fcprc.ru/projects/hiv>), and also on the website of the Federal Agency for Youth Affairs (<https://fadm.gov.ru/>). From 17 June to 5 November 2019, the Ministry of Health is conducting a national campaign of free anonymous rapid testing for HIV infection in order to inform citizens about the problems of HIV/AIDS, reduce the stigmatization of HIV-positive citizens and encourage people to take an HIV test.

156. In all the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, regional priority action plans for 2018 and 2019 to combat the spread of HIV infection have been developed and approved, taking into account the specific nature of the epidemiological situation with regard to HIV infection and an analysis of the implementation of similar plans in 2016 and 2017. The regional plans provide for performance targets for each activity. A system for monitoring the implementation of the plans of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation has been developed and rolled out.

157. Guidelines for the development of a standard inter-agency programme on HIV prevention in key population groups have been approved; they are intended to assist specialists in developing inter-agency programmes in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

158. Standards have been approved for adult primary health care for HIV-related illness, examinations for the purposes of diagnosis and treatment preparation, preferred first- and second-line antiretroviral therapy, alternative first- and second-line antiretroviral therapy, special cases of first-line antiretroviral therapy, preferred second-line antiretroviral therapy, and third-line antiretroviral therapy.

Article 13

159. Information on the system of State benefits established at the federal level for citizens with children is provided in the eighth periodic report (paras. 205–208) and in the combined sixth and seventh reports (para. 13).

160. Additional support measures for families with children were introduced on 1 January 2018. Families whose income per person is less than 1.5 times the minimum subsistence level for the working population are provided with a monthly cash payment for their first child in the amount of the minimum subsistence level for a child until that child reaches the age of 1.5 years, and a monthly cash payment from the maternity (family) fund for the second child, in the amount of the minimum subsistence level for a child, until that child reaches the age of 1.5 years. Starting from 2020, these payments will be provided to families whose income per person is less than two times the minimum subsistence level for the working population until the child reaches the age of 3 years.

161. The programme of payments from the maternity (family) fund on the birth of the second child or subsequent children (453,000 roubles) has been extended until 2021.

162. As of 1 January 2018, a subsidized interest rate of 6 per cent has been established on mortgage (housing) loans for borrowers whose second child or subsequent children are born between 1 January 2018 and 31 December 2022 and who take out a loan or refinance an existing loan for the purchase of housing on the primary market.

163. Within their powers, the authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation may provide additional social support and social assistance for certain categories of the population, including large, single-parent or poor families, with a view to promoting equal opportunities for the raising of children.

164. Citizens who are officially recognized as being poor and in need of housing are provided with housing from State or municipal housing stock under a social rent agreement. Local authorities are responsible for recognizing citizens as poor, taking account of income per family member and the value of property owned by family members and subject to taxation.

165. Poor families, individuals who are poor and living alone, and other categories of citizens who, for reasons beyond their control, have an average per capita income below the minimum subsistence level established in the constituent entity concerned are provided with State social assistance in the form of cash payments – social benefits, subsidies and other payments – and also in the form of in-kind assistance, such as fuel, food and clothing. Poor families and individuals who are poor and living alone and who want to take active steps to overcome their difficult situation and find a permanent independent source of income are provided with State assistance on the basis of a social contract. The average lump-sum cash payment to families with

children under a social contract across all the constituent entities of the Russian Federation is about 40,000 roubles.

166. In 2018, amendments were made to Russian law on the awarding and payment of pensions, under which the general age of eligibility for an old-age pension and a social security pension was raised. The changes will be phased in over a period of 10 years. By 2028, the retirement age will have been raised by five years, to 60 for women and 65 for men.

167. Women who have given birth to and raised five or more children to the age of 8 years retain the right to an early old-age pension. They will continue to retire at 50. At the same time, new categories of women who are entitled to claim a pension before they reach the standard retirement age have been established by law: women who have given birth to three children and raised them to the age of 8 years will retire at 57, and women who have given birth to four children and raised them to the age of 8 years will retire at 56.

168. Citizens of pre-retirement age continue to receive benefits and social support that were previously provided upon reaching retirement age, including free medicines and transportation, discounts on the payment of capital repairs and other housing and utilities services, and property and land tax benefits.

169. In 2019, annual medical check-ups and additional employment guarantees were introduced for citizens of pre-retirement age. Administrative and criminal liability is established for employers who dismiss persons of pre-retirement age or who refuse to hire such persons on grounds of age. Employers are also obliged to provide employees of pre-retirement age with two days of paid leave each year for free medical check-ups.

170. In the Russian Federation, the number of persons over working age is growing; among them, women are in the majority. In the 80-and-over age group, the number of women is three times higher than the number of men. As at the beginning of 2018, there were 584 care homes in the Russian Federation for the elderly, persons with disabilities and war and labour veterans; they were home to over 79,000 people. More than 1.1 million people receive social services at home. The availability and quality of social services remains a problem.

171. With a view to improving the situation of older citizens, including women, the first steps were taken in 2019 under the National Demography Project to establish a system of long-term care for persons with disabilities and older persons who cannot take care of themselves. The system of long-term care will help to change the actual mechanism for social service delivery by taking an individual approach and covering disease prevention and instruction for relatives in how to provide the right care. The main aim of the system is to provide people in need of care with well-balanced social services and health care both at home and in hospital, and to support their families and teach them how to help their loved ones on their own.

Article 14

Paragraphs 37 and 38 of the concluding observations

172. There are 37.6 million people, or 25.6 per cent of the population of the Russian Federation, living in rural areas; 19.2 million of them are women, of whom 9.2 million are of working age and 6.6 million are over working age. Life expectancy in rural areas is lower than in cities. Infant mortality has decreased significantly in recent years but remains higher than in cities. One serious problem is rural exodus. Women head almost one third of farms, occupy 30 per cent of positions in local government and make up the majority of employees in education, health care and social services.

173. The problems of rural areas are addressed under the 2013–2020 State Programme of Agricultural Development and Regulation of Markets for Agricultural Products, Raw Materials and Foodstuffs. Under the Programme, grants are provided in the regions of the Russian Federation for local citizens' initiatives for the creation and development of recreational areas, sports grounds and children's playgrounds; the preservation and restoration of natural landscapes and historical and cultural monuments; and support for national cultural traditions, cottage industries and handicrafts. The amount of each grant is no more than 2 million roubles.

174. On access to health care in rural areas, see paragraphs 139 and 140 of the present report.

175. In order to ensure access to justice for rural women, a number of investigation departments have introduced visits to remote localities by heads of department, together with the commissioner for human rights of the relevant region, in order to provide rural residents, including women, with legal assistance and support and, where necessary, to take urgent steps to provide redress for violations of their rights and legitimate interests.

176. Local communities play an active role in the development of rural areas; women's councils have been established by the Women's Union of Russia, a public organization, in almost all rural settlements. Since 2016, the Women's Union of Russia has been implementing a programme entitled "Women for Rural Revival". The women's councils are trying to draw the attention of national and local authorities and the public to the situation of women in rural areas and to determine the best ways of solving the most pressing problems: employment and unemployment in rural areas, the creation of jobs within reach of people's homes and smallholdings, and access to medical services, schools, preschools and transport services. The women's councils work together with employment centres and advise and train women on the basics of entrepreneurship and running a small business. They pay considerable attention to preserving social infrastructure in rural areas. They also provide support and assistance with social and domestic issues in families, child-rearing and the employment of women in manufacturing and social enterprises, and provide help with the running of family businesses. One important area of the work of women's councils is the provision of support to young families in rural areas and the development of farms run by young people.

Paragraphs 39 and 40 of the concluding observations

177. The rights of the numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation, including women from numerically small indigenous peoples, to prioritize traditional resource use and trades, to preserve their traditional way of life and practices, and to deal with legal matters in those territories in accordance with the customs of numerically small indigenous peoples are governed by Federal Act No. 49-FZ of 7 May 2001 on territories of traditional resource use by the numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation. With regard to improving the law, a draft federal act to amend the Federal Act on territories of traditional resource use by the numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East of the Russian Federation has been drawn up and was submitted to the Government in 2018. The draft act provides for a procedure for the establishment of territories of traditional resource use by the numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Far East, including federal territories.

178. The Commissioner for Human Rights of the Russian Federation and the commissioners for human rights in the constituent entities of the Russian Federation work to ensure access to effective remedies for any violations of the rights of

numerically small indigenous peoples. The commissioner for human rights in a constituent entity of the Russian Federation may be assigned the functions of commissioner for the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples in the constituent entity. Positions of commissioner for the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples have been established in Sakha Republic, Yakutia, and in Kamchatka and Krasnoyarsk Territories.

Paragraphs 41 and 42 of the concluding observations

179. Under labour law, discrimination on any grounds or circumstances unrelated to the person's professional competencies is prohibited. Under article 3 of the Labour Code, no one may have their labour rights or freedoms restricted, or enjoy any advantages, on the basis of sex, race, colour, ethnicity, language, origin, financial, family or social status, official capacity, age, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs, membership or non-membership of voluntary associations or any social groups, or considerations unrelated to the person's professional competencies. This non-exhaustive list of grounds protected by law implies that discrimination is prohibited not only on the listed grounds but also on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Russian law does not contain discriminatory provisions in respect of representatives of sexual minorities.

Article 15

Paragraphs 43 and 44 of the concluding observations

180. Pursuant to Government Order No. 2985-r of 28 December 2018, an action plan was approved for the implementation in 2019–2021 of the Ethnic Policy Strategy of the Russian Federation for the period up to 2025, which was approved pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 1666 of 19 December 2012. The action plan provides for measures aimed at, inter alia, the prevention and peaceful resolution of conflict situations in inter-ethnic and interfaith relations; the preservation, study and development of the languages of the peoples of the Russian Federation; the provision of support for numerically small indigenous peoples, including the creation of the conditions necessary for the preservation and protection of their native habitat and traditional way of life; the social and cultural adaptation of foreign nationals in the Russian Federation and their integration into Russian society; and the social and cultural adaptation of foreign nationals and stateless persons with a view to ensuring inter-ethnic and interfaith peace and harmony in the Russian Federation.

181. On 31 October 2018, pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 622, the Framework for the Migration Policy of the Russian Federation for the period 2019–2025 was approved; it establishes the purposes, principles, priorities and main focus areas of migration policy on the basis of an analysis of practice in the regulation of migration and a modern understanding of national and global migration issues. The purpose of migration policy is to create a migration situation that helps to address issues in the socioeconomic, spatial and demographic development of the country.

182. In 2018, amendments were made to certain acts of the President of the Russian Federation on the implementation of the State Programme to Assist the Voluntary Resettlement in the Russian Federation of Ethnic Russians Living Abroad to ensure that persons, including women, named in the certificate of a participant in the Programme retained the status of family members of the participant in the event of dissolution of marriage.

183. One way of ensuring equal rights for women in addressing issues connected with the exercise of civil rights, including through the courts, is to provide free legal aid in accordance with the Federal Act on free legal aid in the Russian Federation. In

the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, laws have been adopted on the provision of free legal aid, and the executive authorities that are authorized to provide citizens with free legal aid have been identified. In 72 regions of the Russian Federation, additional safeguards of the right to free legal aid have been established.

184. In 60 constituent entities of the Russian Federation, the public system of free legal aid is administered exclusively by lawyers and, in 8 constituent entities, exclusively by public law offices. In 16 constituent entities, free legal aid is administered jointly by lawyers and law offices. In the non-State system of free legal aid, such aid is provided by 10 non-governmental free legal aid centres. Public law offices and lawyers represent the interests of citizens entitled to free legal aid before the courts, State and municipal authorities, and other institutions. A number of constituent entities of the Russian Federation have adopted acts on the procedure for State support for socially oriented non-profit organizations, including those that provide free legal aid.

Article 16

185. In 2018, amendments relating to marital property were made to the Civil Code. The concept of “marriage contract” was introduced as an additional mechanism for addressing issues relating to marital property. In addition, a new provision was introduced, under which, in the event of the death of a spouse, the surviving spouse is entitled to half of the marital property, unless a different share was specified in the marriage contract, the spouses’ joint will, an inheritance contract or a court decision.

186. During the reporting period, family law has been improved. In 2015, a provision on the mandatory notarial form of an agreement on the division of marital property was added to the Family Code. The requirement to provide additional grounds for contesting an arrangement on the disposal of jointly acquired property entered into by one spouse without the knowledge or consent of the other spouse, and the time limit for doing so, have been abolished. An agreement on the division of marital property that is not certified by a notary is null and void. Prior to the adoption of the aforementioned changes, an agreement on the division of marital property could simply be drawn up without recourse to a notary.

187. The provisions relating to alimony obligations have been improved. Under amendments made in 2016, child support payments (alimony) are made through deductions from any type of salary, including additional allowances and bonuses, without restrictions. It does not matter whether the form of compensation is monetary or non-monetary, or whether the earnings involved are the main salary or total salary.

188. Under amendments made in 2017, employers are obliged to adjust alimony, which is levied in a fixed monetary amount, in proportion to any increase in the minimum subsistence level for the relevant sociodemographic group, which is determined in the relevant constituent entity of the Russian Federation according to the place of residence of the person receiving the alimony. If no regional minimum subsistence level is set in the relevant constituent entity, the amount of alimony should be adjusted in proportion to any increase in the minimum subsistence level for the relevant sociodemographic group in the Russian Federation as a whole.

189. In 2018, the Family Code was amended to reduce the fine for late payment of alimony from 0.5 per cent to 0.1 per cent of the amount of unpaid alimony for each day in arrears. The Code still contains a provision establishing the possibility of full exemption from payment of fines owed or a reduction in the amount of alimony arrears; however, this must be agreed by the parties and does not apply to the payment of alimony for minor children.

190. As of 1 January 2019, amendments were incorporated into the Federal Act on insurance of the deposits of individuals in banks in the Russian Federation and certain other legislative acts of the Russian Federation. The procedure for the recovery and use of alimony for children without parental care is specified by law.

Paragraphs 45 and 46 of the concluding observations

191. The fundamental principle of family law in the Russian Federation is the voluntary nature of marriage between a man and a woman. There are no grounds for changing the basic principles of family law, as this would not be consistent with the values enshrined in the Constitution concerning the protection of morality, health, and the rights and legitimate interests of other family members and other citizens. The provisions of family law are aimed at protecting women, and children born out of wedlock, from discrimination.

192. If a child is born to parents who are not married, and if there is no joint statement by the parents or statement by the father, the identity of the father (paternity) is established by the courts at the request of one of the parents, the child's guardian (custodian) or the person on whom the child is dependent, or at the request of the child himself or herself upon reaching majority. The courts take into account any evidence that reliably confirms the identity of the father.

193. Whether or not the parents are married, all the rights and obligations enshrined in the Family Code apply to them, including the equality of rights and obligations of both parents in respect of their children. Thus, the recommendations contained in paragraph 46 of the concluding observations have already been implemented in existing Russian law.

194. Family law establishes that spouses have an obligation to support each other. Under article 89 of the Family Code, spouses are obliged to support each other financially. In the event of refusal to provide such support and in the absence of an agreement between the spouses on the payment of alimony, the following persons are entitled to claim alimony through the courts from a spouse who has the necessary means: a spouse who is in need and unable to work; a wife during pregnancy and within three years of a child being born to her and her spouse; or a spouse who is in need and is caring for a child with a disability of both spouses until the child reaches the age of 18 years, or for a child of both spouses who has had a group I disability since childhood.

195. Family law (Family Code, art. 90) provides for the right of a former spouse to receive alimony after dissolution of the marriage. The following persons are entitled to claim alimony through the courts from a former spouse who has the necessary means: a former wife during pregnancy and within three years of a child being born to her and her former spouse; a former spouse who is in need and is caring for a child with a disability of both spouses until the child reaches the age of 18 years, or for a child of both spouses who has had a group I disability since childhood; a former spouse who is in need and became unable to work before the dissolution of the marriage or within one year of the dissolution of the marriage; or a former spouse who is in need and who reached retirement age no more than five years after the dissolution of the marriage, if the spouses were married for a long time. The amount of alimony and the procedure for providing it to the former spouse after the dissolution of the marriage may be determined by agreement between the former spouses.

196. In the absence of an agreement between the spouses or former spouses on the payment of alimony, the amount of alimony collected from the spouse or former spouse is determined by the courts on the basis of the financial and marital status of the spouses or former spouses and other relevant interests of the parties and a fixed

monetary sum is paid monthly. Where a spouse is unable to work and in need of assistance, the courts may relieve the other spouse of the obligation to support him or her, or may limit the obligation to a specified period both during the marriage and after its dissolution, in the following cases: if the spouse in need of assistance is unable to work as a result of alcohol or drug abuse or as a result of a premeditated crime committed by him or her; if the spouses were married only for a short time; or in the event of improper conduct in the family by the spouse applying for alimony payments (Family Code, arts. 91 and 92).

197. Women who are entitled to payments from the maternity (family) fund may use the money to set up a contributory pension.

198. Women who have given birth to and raised three or more children to the age of 8 years are entitled to an early old-age pension (for more details, see paragraph 167 of the present report).

Data collection

Paragraphs 47 and 48 of the concluding observations

199. In the Russian Federation, information on the situation of women is collected on an ongoing basis.

200. Basic statistical information is available in the compilation entitled “Women and Men in the Russian Federation” produced by the Federal State Statistics Service. The compilation, published in 2018, contains data on the number of women and men and their age distribution, life expectancy, migration flows, level of education, the teaching of pupils and students in primary and secondary schools and higher vocational education institutions, morbidity, employment of women and men by type of economic activity and in the federal authorities, local government and the legislative, executive and judicial authorities of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation, wage levels and other information relating to the situation of women and men.

201. Full and reliable statistical information on the living conditions of different demographic and socioeconomic groups and strata of the population is obtained using a system of sample surveys on sociodemographic issues: income and participation in social programmes; the quality and availability of services in the areas of education, health care, social services and employment promotion; reproductive planning; health of the population; diet; daily time use; use of migrant labour; participation in continuing education; graduate employment; and a comprehensive survey of living conditions.

202. Information drawn from the results of the sample surveys is disaggregated by gender: by men and women of different age groups, category of labour market participation, level of education, etc.

203. The 2017–2022 National Strategy for Women provides for the improvement of State statistics relating to the situation of women in the Russian Federation.

204. Since 2016, information, including separate data on women, has been processed and published on a quarterly basis in a statistical bulletin on the results of the sample survey of the labour force, using new indicators: the size of the potential labour force; the aggregate of the unemployment rate and the potential labour force; the number of persons engaged in the production of goods for their own use and the amount of time they work; the number of persons working as volunteers; and the number of persons performing unpaid work as part of vocational training.

205. In 2017, the sample survey of reproductive planning included questions to which the answers yielded information for calculating the proportion of women of reproductive age (15–49 years) whose family planning needs are met by modern methods (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 3.7.1) and the proportion of women aged 20–24 years who were married or in a union before the age of 15 and before the age of 18 (Sustainable Development Goal indicator 5.3.1). In 2018, the sample survey of behavioural factors affecting health included the following sets of questions: “III. Adult livelihoods” and “IV. Knowledge of HIV/AIDS”.

206. The 2018 comprehensive survey of living conditions included additional questions reflecting the situation of women in the political, economic, social and cultural spheres. The set of questions on participation in the activities of various trade unions, civic, voluntary or charitable organizations, social movements, initiatives and other independent associations was expanded. The section on work and working conditions included additional questions on the possibility of formalizing parental leave at the primary place of employment (safeguards for working women in relation to pregnancy and childbirth), and on the use of computer equipment at the primary place of employment and the need to acquire new or additional knowledge relating to computer equipment, information technology or computer programs for work purposes. The section on health and medical care included an additional question on health-related restrictions in everyday life. In the section on education and training, the set of questions relating to additional education was expanded, as was the list of courses, training programmes and areas of study. In the section on recreation and free time, the list of questions relating to tourist trips and excursions both in the Russian Federation and abroad was expanded. A question about opportunities for and frequency of communication with friends and relatives was added.

207. In 2019, the sample survey on income and participation in social programmes included questions on the recipients of monthly payments in connection with the birth or adoption of the first child, up to the age of 1.5 years; the recipients of monthly payments from the maternity fund in connection with the birth or adoption of a second child, up to the age of 1.5 years; and the possibility of formalizing parental leave at the primary place of employment (safeguards for working women in relation to pregnancy and childbirth).

208. Information on the sample surveys can be found on the Internet portal of the Federal State Statistics Service (www.gks.ru) in the section “Censuses and surveys – Federal statistical observations on sociodemographic issues”.

209. As of 2019, a sample survey on the health of the population is being conducted every year; the results will be used to develop a gender- and age-disaggregated indicator of healthy life expectancy. Beginning in 2020, there is a plan to conduct specialized sample surveys of various target demographic groups: women with children under the age of 3 years and women with children of preschool age.

210. A national set of Sustainable Development Goal indicators has been established and included in the Federal Statistics Plan, which was approved in 2017 by government order. It includes 90 Sustainable Development Goal indicators, including gender-disaggregated indicators: 1.1.1; 1.2.1; 1.a.2; 2.1.1; 2.2.1; 2.2.2; 3.1.1; 3.1.2; 3.2.1; 3.2.2; 3.3.1; 3.3.2; 3.4.1; 3.4.2; 3.6.1; 3.7.1; 3.7.2; 3.9.3; 3.a.1; 4.4.1; 5.4.1; 5.5.1; 5.5.2; 5.b.1; 8.3.1; 8.5.1; 8.5.2; 8.6.1; 8.7.1; 8.8.1; 8.10.2; 17.6.2; and 17.8.1.

Paragraph 49 of the concluding observations

211. It is unacceptable that the Committee’s concluding observations following the consideration of the eighth periodic report contain a reference to provisions that were not discussed during the consideration of that document. As for the actual amendment to article 20, paragraph 1, of the Convention, it has lost its relevance and no longer

needs to be ratified following the adoption of General Assembly resolution [68/268](#), entitled “Strengthening and enhancing the effective functioning of the human rights treaty body system”. Paragraphs 26 and 27 of the resolution contain a detailed description of the method to be used for the allocation of meeting time to the treaty bodies.

Paragraph 52 of the concluding observations

212. The text of the Committee’s concluding observations on the eighth periodic report has been posted on the official website of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, brought to the attention of the judges and staff of the Supreme Court and posted on the internal website of the Supreme Court in the “Departmental overview” section (“International law” folder), the website of the Women’s Union of Russia, and other information resource tools, including the search engine Yandex.
