



**International Convention on
the Elimination of All Forms
of Racial Discrimination**

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

**Combined twelfth and thirteenth periodic reports
submitted by Tajikistan under article 9 of the
Convention, due in 2020***

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I. Introduction

1. The present report, submitted under article 9 (1) of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, has been drawn up in accordance with the guidelines for the preparation of reports to be submitted by States parties to the Convention, adopted by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination at its seventy-first session (CERD/C/2007/1), and covers the period 2017–2020.
2. The periodic report includes replies to the issues raised in the Committee's concluding observations (CERD/C/TJK/CO/9-11) of 19 September 2017. The report was prepared to reflect the progress made on the national action plan to implement the recommendations adopted by the Committee at its 2576th meeting (21 August 2017) for the period 2018–2020, which was approved by the Chair of the Government Commission on International Human Rights Obligations on 23 February 2018. Updates on the status of implementation of the recommendations have been prepared every six months and disseminated to State authorities and civil society.
3. The authorities have enlisted the help of representatives of civil society in implementing the Committee's concluding observations.
4. The updates were prepared by the secretariat of the Commission on the basis of information provided by the country's ministries and departments. The secretariat held frequent consultations with civil society during the preparation of the report. A draft of the document was circulated to representatives of civil society, and recommendations were received from the State authorities and civil society institutions concerned. These recommendations were taken into account in the preparation of the final version of the document. The draft report was also widely discussed with representatives of State authorities, the Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsman), representatives of civil society and international organizations and independent experts. The working group wishes to thank the civil society organizations for their cooperation in drawing up this report.

II. Information on the implementation of the Convention

Data collection

Paragraph 6 of the concluding observations

5. Since 2000, Tajikistan has conducted a population census on a regular basis every 10 years, in accordance with the resolutions of the United Nations Economic and Social Council and recommendations of the Conference of European Statisticians. Such an approach has been taken for the next round of the 2020 population and housing census, which will be conducted from 1 to 15 October 2020, pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 1356 of 30 September 2019. Like other member countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, Tajikistan collects complete information on the ethnic composition of the population and on the peoples living in the country during the population census. Comparative indicators on the population growth rates of different ethnic groups are calculated only for the period between censuses.
6. Tajikistan is a multi-ethnic country inhabited by more than 100 different ethnic groups and peoples according to the most recent population and housing census, conducted in 2010. The main ethnic groups are as follows: Tajik (84.3 per cent of the total population), Uzbek (12.2 per cent), Kyrgyz (0.8 per cent), Russian (0.5 per cent), Turkmen (0.2 per cent), Tatar (0.1 per cent) and other ethnic groups and peoples (1.9 per cent).

Definition and criminalization of racial discrimination

Paragraph 8 of the concluding observations

7. Under the Constitution, all ethnic groups and peoples living in the country have the right to use their mother tongue freely. All persons are equal before the law and the courts.

The State guarantees the rights and freedoms of every person, regardless of ethnicity, race, sex, language, religion, political beliefs, education or social or property status. Propaganda and agitation that incite social, racial, ethnic, religious or linguistic enmity and hatred are prohibited. Racial and religious hatred in Tajikistan are punishable offences under criminal law. Thus, the country has a firm policy of non-discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, language, ethnicity and religion.

8. On 16 April 2018, an interdepartmental working group composed of seven persons was established, which, together with representatives of civil society and international organizations, meets on a regular basis. The definition of racial discrimination and specific legislation to deal with such discrimination are matters that are currently under consideration by this working group.

Absence of court cases on racial discrimination

Paragraph 10 of the concluding observations

9. Upon the completion of the second phase (2015–2018) of the Human Rights Education Programme for 2013–2020, a draft plan of action for the third phase (2019–2020) was developed and approved by a decision of the Interdepartmental Coordination Council at its meeting on 28 March 2019. This programme has now entered its third phase. At the same time, the second phase was analysed and evaluated by an independent expert. The results of the evaluation of the second phase were considered at the above-mentioned meeting of the Council and a decision was taken accordingly.

10. There were 2 four-day training sessions for 34 focal points at various ministries and departments. A one-day seminar was held for human rights trainers, who received the necessary certification from the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of Tajikistan in 2018. The trainers participated in a two-day training session for judicial trainees led by the Office with the agreement of the Supreme Court of Tajikistan. In 2019, the trainers provided human rights training at two-day seminars hosted by the Office for teachers of general education schools in the districts of Rasht, Tojikobod, Lakhsh, Hamadoni and Farkhor.

11. The working group of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights, headed by the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child, held meetings with local communities and received citizens in the districts of Rūshon, Shughnon, Rasht, Lyakhsh, Nohiyai Kūhistoni Mastchoh, Ghafurov, Balkhi and Dūstī. The staff of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights held meetings in 4 preschool and 13 general education institutions in order to raise public awareness, especially among children. In 2019, the Office led 47 outreach activities (in 2018, 63).

12. Branch and community liaison offices of the Commissioner's Office set up 265 (in 2018, 247) visiting legal clinics, in which more than 8,500 citizens took part. In 2019, 11 human rights information materials were published.

Participation in public and political life

Paragraph 12 of the concluding observations

13. Currently, there is an appropriate legal framework in Tajikistan to ensure that citizens enjoy equal rights, irrespective of sex, race, ethnic background, language, origin, material or official status, place of residence, attitude to religion, beliefs, or membership of voluntary associations or any other social group. Under article 17 of the Constitution, the State guarantees the rights and freedoms of every person regardless of ethnicity, race, sex, language, religion, political beliefs, education or social or property status. Under article 27 of the Constitution, Tajik citizens have an equal right to enter the civil service. This provision is also stipulated in article 2 of Civil Service Act. Under the Act, citizens have equal rights to enter the civil service, irrespective of ethnicity, race, sex, language, religion, political beliefs, education or social or property status. This provision is put into practice.

14. In accordance with the requirements of the State statistical reporting form No. 1-GS, “Composition of the civil service, by number and grade”, the Civil Service Agency prepares a quarterly statistical report for monitoring the number of civil servants, including the number of women and members of different ethnic groups. The monitoring results are sent to the relevant authorities for the necessary action.

15. As of 1 January 2020, the overall number of civil servant posts stood at 21,123, of which 2,606 were vacant and 18,517 encumbered. Women accounted for 4,407 of the total number of active civil servants, or 23.8 per cent. As of 1 January of each year, the figure stood at: 4,438, or 23.6 per cent, in 2019; 4,467, or 23.0 per cent, in 2018; 4,171, or 22.0 per cent, in 2017; 4,226, or 22.3 per cent, in 2016; and 4,374, or 23.5 per cent, in 2015. The ethnic groups represented in the civil service are as follows: Tajik (17,174, or 92.7 per cent); and Russian, Uzbek, Kyrgyz and other ethnic groups (1,343, or 7.2 per cent). The respective figures as at 1 January of the previous years are as follows: 17,402 (92.7 per cent) in 2019; 17,951 (92.6 per cent) in 2018; 17,526 (92.2 per cent) in 2017; 17,392 (92.0 per cent) in 2016; and 16,900 (92.9 per cent) in 2015; and 1,366 (7.2 per cent) in 2019; 1,431 (7.3 per cent) in 2018; 1,481 (7.8 per cent) in 2017; 1,510 (7.9 per cent) in 2016; and 1,685 (9.0 per cent) in 2015. The number of civil servants in decision-making positions stands at 5,646, or 30.4 per cent of the total. As at 1 January of each year, the figure stood at: 5,616, or 29.9 per cent, in 2019; 5,822, or 30.0 per cent, in 2018; 5,670, or 29.8 per cent, in 2017; 5,659, or 29.9 per cent, in 2016; and 5,548, or 29.8 per cent, in 2015. Of these, 5,389, or 93.5 per cent, belong to the Tajik ethnic group and 257, or 4.5 per cent, belong to the Russian, Uzbek, Kyrgyz or other ethnic groups. The respective figures as at 1 January of each year were as follows: 5,226 people (93.0 per cent) in 2019; 5,447 (93.5 per cent) in 2018; 5,326 (93.9 per cent) in 2017; 5,280 (93.3 per cent) in 2016; and 5,145 (92.7 per cent) in 2015; 227 (4.0 per cent) in 2019; 375 (6.4 per cent) in 2018; 344 (6.0 per cent) in 2017; 379 (6.7 per cent) in 2016; and 403 (7.2 per cent) in 2015.

16. The Civil Service Act was amended on 2 January 2020. Under article 13 (6) of the Act, as amended, there may be no discrimination of any kind with respect to a citizen’s admission to the civil service on the grounds of ethnic background, race, sex, language, religion or social, official or property status.

17. In order to recruit women to the civil service, the Civil Service Agency drafted a presidential decree (No. 869) to amend Presidential Decree No. 647 of 10 March 2016, which was signed on 19 April 2017. In accordance with this decree, the regulations governing the procedure for holding competitive examinations to fill vacant administrative posts in the civil service grant women benefits and three extra credits on their first appointment to the civil service. As a result of the implementation of this standard, 94 women were recruited to the civil service in 2019.

18. As at 1 January 2020 (for 2019), the number of women appointed to civil service vacancies on a competitive basis stood at 616, or 23.6 per cent of all such appointees. In 2019, 19 women were recommended for appointment to senior-level posts based on the outcome of a performance review of civil servants. At the last parliamentary elections held in 2015, 7 women became members of the Majlis-i Milli, the upper chamber of the Majlis-i Oli, and 12 members of the Majlis-i Namoyandagon, the lower chamber. There are 542 women elected to provincial, city and district representative government bodies (Majlis of People’s Deputies). Of the 427 judges, 81 are women, 13 of whom serve as court presidents. Of the total number of women civil servants, 1,047 hold decision-making positions, a woman serves as the Chief of the Executive Office of the President of Tajikistan, 5 are heads of ministry and department and 24 are deputy heads, 4 are district chairs, 62 are deputy chairs of provinces, cities and districts and 45 are chairs and 81 deputy chairs of local self-governing bodies of villages and settlements.

19. The Civil Service Agency for Gender Affairs has approved and is carrying out action plans to implement the following: Act on State Guarantees of Equal Rights for Men and Women and Equal Opportunities in the Exercise of Such Rights of 1 March 2005; government decisions No. 269 of 29 May 2010 approving the National Strategy to Promote the Role of Women for the period 2011–2020, No. 548 of 29 August 2015 on the Plan of Action for the National Strategy to Promote the Role of Women for the period 2015–2020 and No. 158 of 1 April 2017 on the State programme for the education, selection and

placement of capable women and girls in leadership positions for the period 2017–2022; and the National Plan of Action for the Implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women on the combined fourth and fifth periodic reports of Tajikistan, approved by the First Deputy Prime Minister of Tajikistan on 23 July 2014. Other State authorities in Tajikistan are also guided by these laws and regulations.

20. The Government adopted the State programme for the education, selection and placement of capable women and girls in leadership positions covering the period 2017–2022 on 1 April 2017. The focus of the programme is on fulfilling the international obligations undertaken by Tajikistan to overcome gender inequality, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the Sustainable Development Goals, and on achieving other gender-related goals and targets. This programme seeks to implement State policy to secure rights and opportunities for capable women and girls with regard to education, selection and placement in leadership positions in the country and access to the civil service, ensure equal rights for men and women when it comes to promotion and appointment to leadership positions and train students to become young professionals.

21. The topic of prevention of all forms of racial discrimination is included in the human rights curricula and teaching materials of the international relations faculty of the Institute of Public Administration attached to the Office of the President. The list of training courses, curricula and training modules for retraining and advanced training of civil servants includes topics related to the study of national and international legal instruments on the elimination of racial discrimination. The content of the modules entitled “Legal foundations of the civil service in Tajikistan” and “The role of the Constitution in the establishment of a sovereign, democratic, legal, secular and unitary State”, which are part of the training courses for all civil servants covered by the courses, includes subjects and issues on all forms of racial discrimination.

Situation of the Roma/Jughi community

Paragraph 14 of the concluding observations

22. In 2018, the Ministry of Health and Social Protection began the process of creating a central social protection register. One of the aims of this register is to collect information on the socioeconomic status of vulnerable groups. Currently, one of the components of the register is the collection of data on various socioeconomic aspects of poor families. This database contains information on 102,000 low-income citizens (families). Data collection on citizens with disabilities and their families began in late 2019. At the same time, the Ministry stands ready to cooperate with the competent State authorities in the population census-taking process to collect information on the economic and social situation of certain segments of the population.

23. According to statistics, for 2010, Tajikistan counted 2,300 members of the Roma minority community (Jughi). However, according to preliminary data, the number of Roma (Jughi) living in Tajikistan currently stands at over 12,000. In some districts of Sughd Province (Panjakent) and Khatlon Province (Vose and Balkhi), and in the towns of Vahdat and Hisor, members of the Roma ethnic minority community (Jughi) live apart from other residents of the area in accordance with their traditions and customs. It should be noted that the majority of children of the Roma community (Jughi) are enrolled in school and normally stay in school until year 9. The Employment Promotion Act was adopted to regulate social relations related to employment and the legal, socioeconomic and organizational aspects of State policy, including State guarantees of the constitutional rights of citizens to work and to social protection against unemployment in a market economy. Within the framework of the Act, medium-term State programmes to promote employment are being adopted and implemented; the activities under the programmes cover the rights and freedoms of all citizens, irrespective of nationality, race, sex, language, religion, political opinion, education, social status or property.

24. It should be noted that, at present, there is no separate statistical report on ethnic minorities regarding the services provided by labour and employment agencies.

Situation of refugees and asylum seekers

Paragraph 16 of the concluding observations

25. The interdepartmental working group has drafted a bill to amend the Code of Administrative Offences, article 499 (3) of which prohibits the use of deportation from Tajikistan as a punishment. The bill is currently under negotiation.

Situation of stateless persons

Paragraph 18 of the concluding observations

26. The Amnesty Act was adopted on 18 December 2019 in connection with the regularization of the legal status of foreign nationals and stateless persons unlawfully residing in Tajikistan. Efforts to implement the law are currently under way.

27. A working group was set up to protect the rights of stateless persons and to consider granting amnesty to certain groups of stateless persons and foreign nationals unlawfully present in Tajikistan.

28. Since June 2018, a three-year project to protect children affected by migration in Southeast, South and Central Asia, with the cooperation of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and support of the European Union, has been implemented in 16 cities and districts in the country. The project's activities are aimed at protecting the rights of children affected by migration, improving the living conditions of vulnerable adolescents and young people through legal and psychosocial services and identifying and eradicating statelessness. It should be noted that the main regional partners in implementation of this project are the country office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Tajikistan, the Terre des hommes office in Tajikistan, Chashma and Pravo i protsvetanie (Law and Well-being). These organizations, together with the relevant local authorities, provide support to migrant children and children left without guardianship or separated from their parents, help children who have returned home from the Russian Federation and Kazakhstan to regain their citizenship and offer legal assistance in obtaining a birth certificate. In order to effectively implement this project in the cities of Kūlob and Levakant, a plan of joint activities between the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment and the Terre des Hommes office in Tajikistan was approved on 16 September 2019.

29. During the last six months, the project provided services in the target villages and towns of Kūlob and Levakant, under which 24 children (15 boys and 9 girls) received birth certificates and 11 children (5 boys and 6 girls) passports and 52 women from migrant families attended short-term vocational training courses.

Combating human trafficking

Paragraph 20 of the concluding observations

30. In 2019, 42 cases of human trafficking were registered and procedural steps were taken to prosecute them. The cases involved offences covered under the Criminal Code, as follows: 3 crimes involving abduction (art. 130); 16 trafficking in persons (art. 1301); 13 trafficking in minors (art. 167); and 9 illegal migration (art. 3552).

31. In 2019, the internal affairs agencies, with the assistance of representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and with the support of the International Organization for Migration country office in Tajikistan, brought back three Tajik citizens who had been victims of human trafficking to the country, including two from Dubai, United Arab Emirates, and one from Saudi Arabia.

32. In 2019, the Migration Service held 1,903 meetings in its branches in the provinces, cities, districts, communities, mahallas, international airports and railway stations, in which discussions were held with migrant workers about the issue of trafficking in persons. In addition, the State counselling and pre-departure training centres for migrant workers in the cities of Dushanbe, Khorugh, Khujand and Bokhtar carried out awareness-raising efforts among migrant workers and distributed more than 57,990 information materials to migrant workers and members of their families. Furthermore, in 2019, the migration office of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment of Tajikistan in the Russian Federation held 260 meetings with Tajik migrant workers and touched on issues concerning trafficking in persons in the course of its awareness-raising activities.

Discriminatory law against non-citizens

Paragraph 22 of the concluding observations

33. With regard to the analysis of legislation to identify obstacles to marriage between citizens and foreign nationals, it should be noted that, under article 17 of the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons Act, foreign nationals and stateless persons may marry or divorce citizens of Tajikistan and other States in accordance with national law and the international agreements to which Tajikistan is a party. Foreign nationals and stateless persons in Tajikistan enjoy the same rights and obligations in family relations as Tajik citizens, unless otherwise provided by law. The provisions of article 17 make clear that the State gives foreign nationals and stateless persons the right to marry in Tajikistan. In accordance with article 12 of the Family Code and article 35 of the State Civil Registration Act, if one of the parties to a marriage is a foreign national or stateless person, supporting documentation on his or her residence in Tajikistan for at least the past year and the marriage contract must be presented without fail.

Mandate of the Ombudsman

Paragraph 24 of the concluding observations

34. An action plan for the Ombudsman's Office has been developed and approved with a view to bringing its activities into line with the Paris Principles. A working group has been established to implement these activities. The working group includes the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commissioner for the Rights of the Child, representatives of the Executive Office of the President, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

35. The group has studied the laws governing human rights institutions of other countries and countries whose national human rights institutions have been accredited with category A status. It has also prepared an analytical document entitled "Proposals for amendments to the legislation of Tajikistan in accordance with the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation of national human rights institutions".

36. The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights has been provided with a staff of 17 civil servants pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 673 of 29 June 2009 with a view to ensuring that the Office can carry out its work and fulfil its mandate. By 2019, this number had increased to 25 civil servants (not including support staff). Among the specialists on staff are: 20 lawyers, 2 political scientists, 1 economist and 2 language specialists, with 1 person under 30, 14 up to 45 years of age, 6 up to 55 and 4 over 55. The Office also employs 14 support staff members. There is a separate budget line every year to fund the Commissioner's work. The funding for the activities of the Office of the Commissioner increases each year. In 2018, 1,601,135 somoni were allocated from the State budget to the Office, an increase of 264,722 somoni compared with 2017. In 2019, 1,514,795 somoni was allocated to the main Office of the Ombudsman, and a total of 86,540 somoni was earmarked from the local budgets for the Ombudsman's branch offices in Kūhistoni Badakhshon Autonomous Province, Sughd Province and Khatlon Province.

37. In 2019, 1,751,953 somoni were allocated from the State budget to the Office, an increase of 150,818 somoni compared with 2018. Amendments have been introduced to national laws to bring them into conformity with the Paris Principles. The amendments concern the expansion of the Commissioner's mandate and coordinating role. The post of Commissioner for Children's Rights was also set up, who serves as the deputy to the Commissioner for Human Rights.

38. On 22 May 2019, the Ombudsman met with the Deputy Chief of the National Institutions, Regional Mechanisms and Civil Society Section of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), Ms. Afarin Shahidzadeh. At the meeting, they discussed in detail issues involving multilateral cooperation between Tajikistan and OHCHR in the area of human rights.

39. They also held a constructive dialogue on issues concerning compliance by the Ombudsman's Office with the Paris Principles. The Ombudsman noted that work was being done to implement the recommendation to bring the Office into line with the Paris Principles, including the action plan on implementation of the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation and further refinements to the Commissioner for Human Rights Act.

40. Ms. Shahidzadeh paid another visit to Tajikistan from 23 September to 9 October 2019. During her visit, she met with the senior management and staff of the Office of the Commissioner and representatives of the ministries and departments concerned, civil society and international organizations in Tajikistan. She also conducted a needs assessment of the Office. Opportunities for technical assistance from OHCHR were discussed as a result of the visit with a view to building the capacity of the staff of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights of Tajikistan so that it may fulfil its mandate in accordance with international standards for national human rights institutions and to assisting Tajikistan in meeting the international obligations that it has assumed. The visit resulted in the preparation of an analysis and list of actions to be taken for the provision of technical assistance to the Commissioner's Office.

41. On Ms. Shahidzadeh's recommendation and with the assistance of the OHCHR office in Tajikistan, the main international standards for national human rights institutions have been translated into Tajik, including the Mérida Declaration on the Role of National Human Rights Institutions in Implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Belgrade principles on the relationship between national human rights institutions and parliaments and the Paris Principles.

42. To implement Ms. Shahidzadeh's recommendations, it was proposed to hold two three-day workshops on the preparation of alternative reports and the question of the human dimension in April 2020.

43. It should be noted that the Commissioner for Human Rights has established a working group consisting of representatives of the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Executive Office of the President, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to study the legislation of other countries whose national human rights institutions enjoy category A status.

44. Countries with national human rights institutions that have been accredited with category A status and that also bear similarities with Tajikistan in terms of their legal system, legislative framework and common historical heritage were chosen for the study. The following countries were selected: Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan, the Republic of Moldova, Ukraine and the Russian Federation. In some cases, the example of the Republic of Moldova was used because of its progressive legislation on the national human rights institution, even though its own institution has been accredited with category B status.

45. An analytical document entitled "Proposals for amendments to the legislation of Tajikistan in accordance with the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation of national human rights institutions" has also been prepared. The document includes recommendations of the Subcommittee on Accreditation, excerpts from the national legislation of Tajikistan and proposals for amendments to the current legislation. The purpose of this document is to analyse the best practices of the national human rights

institutions of foreign countries and to propose options for amending the country's national legislation on the Commissioner for Human Rights.

46. In 2018, this document was updated to include the changes that have taken place in law and practice concerning the Commissioner for Human Rights in Tajikistan.

47. Measures are currently being taken to draft amendments to the Commissioner for Human Rights Act.

Promotion of minority languages

Paragraph 26 of the concluding observations

48. To date, the inter-ethnic and interfaith situation in Tajikistan continues to be stable. An adequate legal framework has been created for ethnic minorities to take part in the political life of the country. National legislation guarantees that citizens enjoy the same rights and freedoms and equality before the law regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, language, attitude to religion, social origin, beliefs or social status. Everyone has the right to use his or her native language and to a free choice of language of communication, child-rearing, education and expression.

49. An adequate number of educational organizations, classes and groups have been established to ensure that citizens enjoy the right to preschool, primary general and basic general education in their native language, and the right to study that native language, and appropriate support is provided for their operations. Tajikistan currently has general education institutions in which courses are taught in Tajik, Russian, English, Uzbek, Turkmen and Kyrgyz. The country's higher education institutions also provide education in Tajik, Russian and English. Textbooks and teaching aids for ethnic minorities are published on a regular basis. Currently, Tajikistan has 3,884 general education establishments, of which 3,166 use Tajik as the language of instruction and 581 more than one language (151 Tajik-Russian, 11 Tajik-Russian-Uzbek, 7 Tajik-Russian-English, 378 Tajik-Uzbek, 1 Tajik-Uzbek-Kyrgyz, 27 Tajik-Kyrgyz, 5 Tajik-Turkmen and 1 Tajik-English). There were 137 education establishments not using Tajik as a language of instruction (32 Russian, 1 Russian-English, 75 Uzbek, 26 Kyrgyz and 3 English). In the 2018/19 school year, heads of municipal and district education departments and divisions made a request for 557 teachers to be taken on to meet the needs of educational institutions in which Tajik was not the language of instruction. In the 2019/20 school year, in order to address the teaching staff shortage, 974 young teachers were sent to these institutions to fill the vacancies with a view to improving the level and quality of education in the schools.

50. In recent years, textbooks for teaching the Tajik language have been developed for students in years 2 to 11 in educational establishments where instruction was provided in a language other than Tajik (Russian, Uzbek, Kyrgyz and Turkmen).

51. Working groups have been established for the translation of materials into Russian, Uzbek and Kyrgyz. At present, 35 out of 92 textbook titles have been translated into Russian. They are currently being edited by teachers at the Russian-Tajik Slavonic University. The working groups continue to work on translating the remaining textbooks.

52. A list of 24 textbooks in Uzbek has been drawn up, 13 of which are being edited and updated by Education publishing house.

53. With a view to providing educational material for general education establishments with Kyrgyz as the language of instruction, working groups are developing and translating textbooks into Kyrgyz. Previously, such textbooks were supplied by Kyrgyzstan but were not fully adapted to State standards in Tajikistan. At present, there is a need to publish educational material that meets State standards. Currently, 11 textbooks have been submitted for publication on a competitive basis.

54. A number of works were completed in the process of developing and publishing national textbooks for the country's ethnic minorities during the reporting period:

- Between 2016 and 2019, the following textbooks for general education establishments teaching in Uzbek were published and distributed: 15,000 copies of

Alifbe for year 1; 11,000 copies of *Uzkeksky yazik* (Uzbek Language) for year 9, 15,000 copies of *Uzbek tili* (Uzbek Language) for year 11; and 11,000 copies of *Uzbekskaya literatura* (Uzbek Literature) for year 11.

- In 2018, with support and funding from the Embassy of Turkmenistan, four textbook titles for primary school students in general education establishments that teach Turkmen in Tajikistan were published, including a mathematics textbook for years 1 and 4 and *Ene dush* for years 3 and 4, in a print run of 2,000 copies (500 copies of each).

55. The staff of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights constantly monitors information on potential displays of racial discrimination. The Office has carried out an exercise to monitor the realization of the rights provided for in the Convention for the purpose of implementing the Committee's recommendations. The Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment and the Ministry of Culture were thus subject to a monitoring exercise. In the course of monitoring the activities of the Ministry of Labour, Migration and Employment and the Ministry of Culture, it became clear that, throughout their work, the ministries emphasize the importance of participation of ethnic minorities themselves in processes related to the further development of their communities. Members of the Uzbek, Kyrgyz and other ethnic communities hold positions of responsibility in the ministries. With a view to preventing the display of intolerance towards others because of their ethnic or racial background, representatives of the ministries make efforts at cultural and artistic events, meetings, conferences and seminars to raise awareness about the equality of human rights and freedoms, regardless of race, ethnicity, language or religion. As a result of the monitoring, recommendations were made to address existing shortcomings.

56. The development of the culture of ethnic minorities in Tajikistan is currently regulated by Tajik legislation. There are independent amateur performing arts ensembles representing the Russian, Kyrgyz, Turkmen, Korean and Azerbaijani peoples in cities and districts such as Dushanbe, Konibodom, Tursunzoda and Büston and Düsti, Lakhsh, Spitamen and Jabbor Rasulov. There are four theatre groups working in national languages, including the Russian Mayakovsky Theatre in Dushanbe and the Pushkin Theatre and the Puppet Theatre in Büston and the Uzbek Burkhonov Theatre in Spitamen district. One of the main instruments governing activities for the cultural development of all peoples in Tajikistan is the Culture Act, particularly articles 4 to 7, which define the cultural rights of Tajik citizens and the rights of ethnic minorities in Tajikistan:

- To enjoy the benefits of national and universal cultural achievements without restriction
- To engage in all types of creative activity in keeping with their interests
- To acquire intellectual property, to preserve the secrets of their skills and to freely dispose of their creative achievements and others, regardless of origin, race, ethnicity, sex, language, education, religion, social or property status or occupation

57. The members of any ethnic group living in Tajikistan have the right to preserve, develop and protect their cultural identity, to organize cultural enterprises and institutions and to form ethnic cultural centres and organizations. The following ethnic minority ensembles and artistic groups are currently operating in the country:

- Dilhiroj, an Uzbek art ensemble
- Dustlik, a Tatar-Bashkir artistic ensemble
- Beshqarsak, an Uzbek artistic ensemble
- Turkmeny, a Turkmen family artistic ensemble
- Umed, an Uzbek artistic ensemble
- Assor, an Uzbek ethnic ensemble

The Umed artistic ensemble and the Assor ethnic ensemble operate under the auspices of the appropriate cultural departments. The other groups are privately run.

58. The Culture Act provides for freedom of the press and other media in Tajikistan. Everyone has the right to obtain, receive and disseminate information, to express his or her beliefs and to disseminate them in printed and other media without restriction.

59. As at 31 December 2019, 376 newspapers were registered in the country, including 112 State and 264 private publications. There are also 245 magazines registered, 114 of which are State-owned and 131 private. Of the 11 news agencies, 1 is a State and 7 are non-State agencies.

60. Number of newspapers and magazines published in ethnic minority languages:

- 27 Russian titles
- 6 Uzbek titles
- 14 Tajik-Uzbek titles
- 83 Tajik-Russian titles
- 2 Russian-English titles
- 26 Tajik-Russian-English titles
- 14 Tajik-Russian-Uzbek titles
- 3 Tajik-Russian-English-Persian titles
- 2 Tajik-Russian-Kyrgyz titles

Magazines:

- 10 Russian titles
- 4 Uzbek titles
- 1 Tajik-Uzbek title
- 49 Tajik-Russian titles
- 37 Tajik-Russian-English titles
- 14 Tajik-Russian-Uzbek titles
- 1 Tajik-Russian-Arabic title
- 1 Tajik-Russian-Kyrgyz title

Combating prejudices

Paragraph 28 of the concluding observations

61. With a view to implementing the Committee's recommendations, a number of broadcasts and programmes have been aired on the country's public television and radio channels.

62. In order to implement the standards of the Convention with regard to respect for human rights in the media, including the official website of the Ombudsman, the national strategy on this issue is regularly featured. The official website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has a link in the "Human Rights Issues" section to the relevant section of the website of the Commissioner for Human Rights. The website of the Government Commission on International Human Rights Obligations has been launched, with the support of the OHCHR office in Tajikistan, where recommendations of United Nations agencies and the results of consideration of some issues in the area of observance of human rights have been posted. On the Ombudsman's initiative, the Committee's recommendations have been translated into the official language and widely disseminated in the media and among the public.

Dissemination

Paragraph 37 of the concluding observations

63. The Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights has posted the Convention, the country's national reports on the status of implementation of the Convention, the Committee's concluding observations, the national plan of action to implement the Committee's recommendations, national laws and other materials with a view to enhancing the advocacy work of the Office and raising the population's level of legal education. Specific steps have been taken to implement the Committee's concluding recommendations. Furthermore, the text of the Convention has been translated into Tajik, with the support of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe office in Tajikistan, and placed in the *Compilation of Major International and National Human Rights Instruments*.
