

**United Nations**

**International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights**

*Human Rights Committee*

*One hundred thirty-ninth session*

*June 29 - July 24, 2020*

**COMMENTS BY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON COMPLIANCE WITH THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

**Introduction**

*The position of the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as the Commissioner) was introduced by the 1993 Constitution of Russia. At the federal level, the activities of the Commissioner are regulated by the Federal Constitutional Law of February 26, 1997 No. 1-FKZ “On the Commissioner for Human Rights in the Russian Federation”.
 The status of the Commissioner for Human Rights is determined by Law No. 1-FKZ. According to Part 1 of Article 1 of the aforementioned Federal Constitutional Law, the position of the Commissioner is established in accordance with the Constitution of the Russian Federation (Article 103, paragraph “e”) in order to ensure guarantees of state protection of the rights and freedoms of citizens, their observance and respect by state bodies, local authorities and officials . The activities of the Commissioner for Human Rights extend throughout Russia. Thus, the Commissioner has the broadest powers in the promotion and protection of human and civil rights in the Russian Federation.*

**1. Information on paragraph 8, subparagraph “a” of the concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee on the seventh periodic report of the Russian Federation (CCPR / C / RUS / СО / 7)**

Within the framework of his authority and in accordance with the recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee as set out in the HRC concluding observations on the seventh periodic report of the Russian Federation (CCPR / C / RUS / СО / 7), **the Commissioner conducted awareness-raising campaigns to promote respect for human rights and tolerance to diversity.** Thus, in 2019 alone, 17 large-scale human rights education projects were implemented.
 Subject work was carried out on the legal education of socially vulnerable categories of the population - **persons with disabilities; seniors; representatives of indigenous peoples; children in difficult life situations; women who have experienced domestic violence; victims of political repression.** Under the auspices of the Commissioner, **10 events were held within the framework of the «Festival “Integration” for people with disabilities» project -** human rights master classes, trainings, lectures, film screenings, free legal advice.An annual practice-oriented training course was held as part of the internship of Russian-speaking representatives of indigenous minorities in the UN system.
 In 2014-2019 annual events were held as part of the All-Russian socially-oriented project **“Legal Marathon for Retirees”**.
 In 2017-2019 The annual **All-Russian unified lessons on human rights** were held, each of which was attended by more than 5 million Russian schoolchildren and students.
 **The All-Russian contest "Innovative technologies in legal education on the rights and freedoms of citizens, forms and methods of their protection"** was held.
 On Teacher’s Day, **at the initiative of the Commissioner, the All-Russian Human Rights Video Lesson Competition was first held.** During the reporting period, educational events were organized for students of **the master program “international protection of human rights”, implemented with the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights**, in which 102 students underwent internships.
 Such a form of legal education for schoolchildren as the interactive educational project **“School of Human Rights Defenders: Learn and Act”** has successfully established itself.
 In October 2019, with the participation of scientific and pedagogical expert communities, international bodies (OHCHR, the Council of Europe Program Office in Russia), **a round table on the effectiveness of teaching human rights in educational organizations** was held, and a thematic book exhibition was organized.
 There is a **satellite website** for legal education on the Internet, which contains up-to-date information on changes in legislation, various memos, reference materials, and information about educational work at the regional level.
 The informational and awareness-raising **project “Human Rights Map of Russia”** was kept up to date.
 On a regular basis, **thematic materials and memos on legal issues began to be posted on the social network Instagram.**

**2. Information on paragraph 11, subparagraphs “a” and “b”, as well as on paragraph 12 of the concluding observations of the Human Rights Committee on the seventh periodic report of the Russian Federation (CCPR / C / RUS / СО / 7)**

Based on the recommendations of the UN Human Rights Committee, the Commissioner during the reporting period carried out work aimed at implementing a strategy to combat patriarchal views and stereotypes regarding the roles and responsibilities of women and men in the family and society as a whole, including campaigns to draw the attention of the population to the need to ensure opportunities for women to exercise their  rights.
 In 2015-2019 the Commissioner **repeatedly met with representatives of non-governmental organizations involved in the protection of women's rights**. Based on the results of these meetings and recognizing the importance of protecting women and other vulnerable groups from discrimination, **a special focus group on gender issues has been created** within the Department of International Relations of the Office of the Commissioner. The focus group's tasks include monitoring the implementation of Russia's international obligations in relation to the relevant groups, collecting and analyzing information on the results of work with appeals of citizens falling into these categories, as well as cooperation with non-governmental organizations involved in gender issues.
 On the initiative of the Commissioner, **a joint project “International standards and mechanisms for human rights for employees of the federal and regional offices of human rights Commissioners in the Russian Federation”** in which the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) acted as a partner, was included in the list of cooperation programs between Russia and the Council of Europe for 2015-2016.
 This project was primarily aimed at **familiarizing the regional Commissioners with the system of bodies of the Council of Europe and the UN, mechanisms for handling individual complaints, including those aimed at eliminating all forms of discrimination against women**, as well as Russia's international obligations in the field of protecting human rights in in general and women's rights in particular. Such seminars were held in the federal districts of Russia, attracting the participation of newly elected regional human rights Commissioners.
 As part of the implementation of practical actions to protect the rights of women, as well as combating violence, in January 2019, an action plan for the implementation of the National Strategy for Women for 2017-2022 was launched. The Commissioner along with the Council of Europe and the Ministry of Labor of Russia acted as one of the partners. The project aims to develop skills and knowledge in two areas of the National Strategy of the Russian Federation for Women: **1) prevention of women's social disadvantage and violence against women; and 2) expansion of women's participation in public and political life.** As part of this joint project, in 2019 a number of significant events took place: a regional seminar on the topic of violence against women (Astrakhan) with the participation of representatives of regional authorities, regional human rights Commissioners and non-governmental organizations; Media Training on covering violence against women. A group of international and Russian experts of the Council of Europe conducted a study on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence, including in situations of social distress, in the Russian Federation.
 The studies set the following three goals: 1) analysis of the most important problems that the Russian Federation faces in the process of preventing and combating violence against women, and which could serve as a roadmap for developing appropriate measures in the future; 2) a synthesis of promising practices of the member states of the Council of Europe, formed as an answer to similar problems; and 3) proposed recommendations.
 In order to monitor and provide practical assistance in May 2020, the Commissioner visited a crisis center for women who found themselves in difficult situations due to conflicts in the family or as a result of other situations.
 In the future, with the accumulation of experience and the results of the analysis of the special focus group on gender issues, as well as complaints of discrimination and violence against women, the Commissioner intends to further improve his work together with the state bodies of the Russian Federation, non-governmental organizations and international governmental organizations on the protection of women's rights.