



Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

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Summary record of the 691st meeting

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Tuesday, 5 March 2024, at 10 a.m.

Chair: Ms. Fefoame

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The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by parties to the Convention under article 35

(continued)

Initial report of Kazakhstan (continued) (CRPD/C/KAZ/1; CRPD/C/KAZ/Q/1; CRPD/C/KAZ/RQ/1)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Kazakhstan joined the meeting.*

Articles 11–20

2. **Ms. Dondovdorj** (Country Task Force) said that she would like to know whether the State party had a comprehensive policy in place to combat exploitation and violence specifically affecting women with disabilities and, if not, whether it intended to draft such a policy. It would be helpful to learn how many of the shelters set up for victims of domestic violence had been made fully accessible for persons with disabilities.

3. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that members of the delegation would begin by responding to questions put to them at the previous meeting (CRPD/C/SR.690) before moving on to address the questions asked by Ms. Dondovdorj.

4. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that persons with disabilities had access to justice on an equal basis with other citizens. The principle of non-discrimination was enshrined in the Constitution and other relevant laws. Persons with disabilities were exempted from the payment of court fees when filing lawsuits; in 2023, the exemptions granted by the State had amounted to 10 billion tenge. All individuals seeking access to justice were required to be assisted by a lawyer, and persons with category I and II disabilities had the right to receive State-funded professional legal assistance except in the event that the dispute concerned business activities.

5. Efforts to ensure that court buildings were accessible to persons with disabilities had begun in 2015 and remained ongoing. A total of 314 buildings had been equipped with ramps. Some had been fitted with special signage, barrier-free common spaces, tactile and sound navigation systems, and textured and painted surfaces. Adapted parking spaces and toilet facilities were available at certain courts. Courts were able to provide information in Braille, and their staff were trained in assisting persons with disabilities.

6. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that compulsory hospitalization was permitted subject to a court decision and tended to be used for individuals who had mental illnesses or were addicted to drugs or alcohol. In addition, an individual experiencing an episode of psychosis could be hospitalized without a court decision or the individual's consent. Such individuals must be examined by a team of psychiatrists within 48 hours of admission in order for treatment to begin. That team was required to provide written notification of the hospitalization to the relevant procurator and to inform the individual's relatives. Within 72 hours of admission, an application for the individual's compulsory hospitalization must be submitted to the courts. A mental health centre in Astana had been visited by the national mechanism for the prevention of torture, which, in 2023, had received no reports of forced hospitalization.

7. Provisions were in place to protect individuals against torture. Regarding the issue of refoulement, Kazakhstan was party to both the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and strictly abided by its obligations under those instruments. The Government ensured that refugees had access to asylum application procedures and sought to protect their safety. It had refused to extradite an individual who was at risk of torture and also offered political asylum.

8. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the Government recognized that the Domestic Violence Prevention Act failed to provide specifically for the protection of women with disabilities. The Act would be amended by Parliament in order to incorporate criminal and administrative provisions aimed at tackling violence against persons with disabilities.

9. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the standard for the provision of special social services to victims of domestic violence established that individuals who had been identified as victims of such violence were entitled to receive shelter in crisis centres. There were currently 50 crisis centres for victims of domestic violence, all of which were fully accessible for persons with disabilities. Over the past five years, the centres had provided shelter to 36 women with disabilities.

10. **Ms. Dondovdorj** said that she wished to know what measures the State party had taken to prevent women with disabilities from being subjected to forced sterilization or abortion and sexual abuse, in line with the recommendations (CEDAW/C/KAZ/CO/5) made to it in 2019 by the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.

11. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that women had the right to make their own choices regarding contraception and whether to have a child. Women were able to seek an abortion up to the twelfth week of pregnancy; the decision to undergo the procedure was the prerogative of the woman concerned. Abortion beyond the twelfth week was permitted under certain circumstances, such as in cases of rape.

12. **Mr. Al-Azzeh** (Country Task Force) said he was concerned that the Code on Public Health and the Health-Care System effectively legalized torture by providing for the use of physical restraint and isolation in psychiatric hospitals in cases in which it had been determined that alternative measures would fail to prevent the patients concerned from endangering themselves or others. Such practices were contrary to the Convention and a number of other treaties; the fact that they were carried out by medical personnel did not mean that their use was acceptable. Accordingly, he wondered whether the State party would consider revising the Code and any similar provisions in national law.

13. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the Code on Public Health and the Health-Care System had been updated in 2020, resulting in the amendment of several articles. The new Code prohibited the use of medical treatments as a form of punishment and established that physical restraint and isolation could be used only for the duration considered necessary by medical personnel and in cases in which patients were deemed to pose a danger to themselves or others, usually because they were experiencing an episode of psychosis. Such measures were implemented under strict medical supervision, and their use was noted in patients' medical records. The use of straitjackets and straps or ties was not permitted. The Ministry of Health would continue to take steps to bring the provisions of the Code into line with the Convention.

14. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that she would welcome the delegation's comments on reports that 80 per cent of staff in special education institutions and 69 per cent of staff in institutions for children with serious psychoneurological disabilities had witnessed violence among the children in those establishments. It would be helpful to know what the Ministry of Internal Affairs had done to ensure that prisoners with disabilities were able to exercise all their rights, including to assistive devices and compensatory aids. In view of reports that rates of abortion and sexually transmitted diseases were much higher for women with disabilities than for the general population and that such women were often forced to undergo an abortion, she would like to know what steps the State party was taking to address those issues. The delegation might wish to describe any progress made in giving effect to the Views adopted by the Human Rights Committee concerning communication No. 2146/2012 (CCPR/C/119/D/2146/2012), which had been submitted by a Kazakh wheelchair user who had reportedly been subjected to torture and ill-treatment while in detention. What forms of restorative justice had been provided to the individual concerned?

15. **The Chair** said that she would welcome an update on what concrete steps had been taken to prevent, prohibit and prosecute all forms of corporal punishment, exploitation, violence and abuse in special schools and residential institutions for children with disabilities.

16. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that, under the Criminal Code, the commission of a crime against a person with a disability was considered an aggravating circumstance. The Supreme Court had issued a decree to clarify what was meant by the commission of a crime against an individual in a "helpless state", in which it was explained that the term referred to individuals whose psychological condition meant that they were unable to defend themselves. That decree was invoked when addressing crimes committed against persons

with disabilities. In 2023, 32 cases involving the commission of crimes against persons with disabilities had been brought to the courts. The provisions of the Administrative Code on domestic violence, including against persons with disabilities, had been strengthened. Tougher penalties had been introduced for individuals who committed offences against their dependants, and the number of individuals being held accountable for such acts had increased significantly between 2020 and 2022.

17. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the reproductive health of women was protected by the State. Women with disabilities had the right to make their own choices regarding their reproductive health, seek access to reproductive health and family-planning services, receive reliable information on their health, undergo modern fertility treatments and choose the number of children they had and when they did so. Kazakh law contained no provisions on forced contraception or forced abortion. While the Government had established a service for the diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases, it had no specific information on the number of persons with disabilities affected.

18. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said, with regard to efforts to address corporal punishment, exploitation, violence and abuse in special schools and residential institutions for children with disabilities, that the relevant standards had been updated in 2023. In addition, the Ministry of Internal Affairs had ordered closed-circuit television cameras to be installed in all centres accommodating children.

19. The new bill on domestic violence would enable the authorities to make unannounced visits to centres providing special social services to victims of such violence without having to obtain prior permission from the relevant procurator, as was currently required.

20. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that, on 17 March 2023, the Head of State had signed a law on human rights in correctional facilities and the prevention of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment. A new paragraph on such treatment had been incorporated into the Criminal Code, and tougher sanctions had been introduced. The range of persons who could be prosecuted under the relevant provision now included professionals such as workers in hospitals or social and educational centres.

21. **Sir Robert Martin** said that he wished to know whether the State party had adopted a strategy for the deinstitutionalization of persons with intellectual disabilities and those with psychosocial disabilities and, if so, what resources had been earmarked for its implementation.

22. **Ms. Dondovdorj** said she was concerned that the small-capacity homes being established in Kazakhstan functioned like small institutions. Accordingly, she wondered whether the State party intended to review the laws on those homes, in consultation with persons with disabilities, to ensure that they were compliant with the Convention.

23. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the new Social Code had entered into force on 1 July 2023. That Code provided for the upgrading of the special social services system; efforts to that effect would begin on 1 January 2025. The Government planned to allow private businesses to open small-capacity homes throughout the country as a first step towards deinstitutionalization. It would cooperate with non-governmental organizations as part of that process.

24. **Mr. Al-Azzeh** said that the State party should abolish and replace provisions that allowed violent methods of treatment in psychiatric hospitals, drawing on the expertise of persons with psychosocial disabilities themselves to that end. He wished to know whether the State party had a mechanism or took measures to support the exercise of legal capacity by persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities. Information on the provision of mobility aids and mobility training for persons with disabilities would be welcome.

25. **Mr. Schefer** (Coordinator, Country Task Force), noting that the State party's laws prohibited dual citizenship, said that applicants for Kazakh citizenship, including persons with disabilities, were required to renounce their previous nationality before a decision on their application was taken. They were thus placed in a situation of limbo, in which they risked becoming stateless. He wished to know whether Kazakhstan planned to accede to the

1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

26. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that statistics showed that the number of persons with intellectual impairments or autism spectrum disorder was increasing in Kazakhstan, as it was throughout the world. The Government was taking steps to provide assistance to such persons and their families, including through the social protection system. It had opened centres, equipped with new technologies, to provide free assistance to children with intellectual impairments or autism spectrum disorder. Of the eight such centres planned at the national level, five were already operational. Regional authorities would also open centres to provide free assistance to children with disabilities.

27. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said she believed that it would be possible to eliminate practices such as forced hospitalization and the use of restraint and to ensure that the rights of persons with psychosocial disabilities were monitored and protected. Parliament had begun to discuss the issue of legal capacity; that work was ongoing.

28. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that school-age children with intellectual disabilities were enrolled in special programmes tailored to their abilities, which were developed on the basis of model curricula. There were currently 21 centres, staffed by 560 trained teachers, that provided special programmes for 1,314 children. In 2023, the Ministry of Education and Science had conducted an analysis of the education and upbringing of children in those centres and had detected a number of issues, including the lack of methodological recommendations for the development of tailored programmes and the high turnover of teachers and other staff. To address those issues, the Ministry of Education and Science and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection planned to prepare the necessary methodological recommendations and were developing programmes to upgrade the qualifications of teachers. The Government also planned to review the workload of teachers in the social protection system.

29. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that, under article 10 of the Constitution, citizenship of Kazakhstan must be acquired and rescinded in accordance with the law and was identical and equal irrespective of the basis on which it was acquired. Under the Identity Documents Act, foreign nationals with permanent residence and stateless persons, including persons with disabilities, were entitled to obtain identity documents reflecting their status.

The meeting was suspended at 10.50 a.m. and resumed at 11.05 a.m.

Articles 21–33

30. **Ms. Thongkuay** (Country Task Force) said that she would be interested to know what mechanisms were in place to ensure that the authorities did not restrict the freedom of opinion and expression, particularly where it was exercised by activists with disabilities. She was also concerned about restrictions on the media and sanctions for participation in unauthorized peaceful assemblies. She wondered how the State party guaranteed the rights and the freedom of movement of persons with disabilities throughout Kazakhstan.

31. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the freedom of opinion and expression was enshrined in the Constitution. The only restrictions in that regard were those established by law to protect State secrets or ensure the confidentiality of personal, financial and health information; such provisions were in line with international standards. Any citizens, including persons with disabilities, could express their opinions if they so wished. The Government was introducing an online petitions system, which was due to become operational in April 2024.

32. The right of freedom of assembly of all citizens was regulated in accordance with international standards. All towns and cities had designated places – usually open spaces such as squares and parks – where people could assemble safely. In 2020, the Government had adopted a law on the procedure for organizing and holding peaceful assemblies. It was no longer necessary to secure authorization in order to hold an assembly; organizers were merely required to notify the authorities.

33. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that a specific provision regulated access by persons with disabilities to peaceful demonstrations. The Criminal Code set forth all

provisions on responsibility for criminal offences, the Constitution enshrined equality before the law and, under the Civil Code, nobody could be restricted in the exercise of their legal capacity other than in the cases provided for by law; the right of freedom of assembly of persons with disabilities was thus ensured.

34. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she wished to know whether article 405 of the Criminal Code still provided for the offence of participation in arbitrarily designated “extremist” organizations and, if so, how the State party protected the human rights and fundamental freedoms of activists with disabilities.

35. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that civil society organizations, religious associations and other organizations could be banned from carrying out their activities, usually pursuant to a court decision, if those activities were deemed to be a form of extremism. Participation in such activities was punishable by up to 6 years’ imprisonment.

36. **Mr. Schefer** said that about 10,000 protesters, reportedly including persons with disabilities, had been imprisoned during the events of January 2022. According to the Anti-Corruption Agency, 851 forensic investigations had been carried out into cases of torture reported in connection with the events, although many had not been sent for trial, while the national preventive mechanism had reported poor health and sanitary conditions in the prisons where protesters were held and discrimination against prisoners with disabilities. Considering that freedom of expression would be seriously curtailed if the consequences of its exercise were incarceration and torture, he wished to know whether any precautionary measures had been taken to prevent future crackdowns on free speech.

37. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that, in May 2023, the Committee against Torture had considered the fourth periodic report of Kazakhstan under the Convention against Torture ([CAT/C/KAZ/4](#)) and had been provided with detailed information on reforms to Kazakh torture prevention legislation. Only a single case of torture committed against a person with a disability had been reported; an investigation had been conducted, and the case had gone to court. Most cases of torture reported in connection with the events of January 2022 were currently before the courts; some individuals had been convicted. The Government had been transparent in its communications regarding the status of the proceedings.

38. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner and non-governmental organizations monitored the conditions of detention of persons deprived of their liberty in connection with the January 2022 events. Some complaints of harsh treatment had been lodged. A group of parliamentarians had conducted a visit to a place of detention that held persons involved in the January events. Almost all those who requested to visit the place of detention were authorized to do so.

39. **Ms. Thongkuay** said she understood that specialist sign language services were provided through the Social Services Portal, with the right to choose a sign language specialist in person. She would be grateful for information, disaggregated by gender, on the number of sign language interpreters available at the central, city and community levels. Information on the steps taken to improve the quality and availability of the Surdo-Online service would also be welcome.

40. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that sign language services were indeed available through the Social Services Portal; they were used by more than 8,000 persons with disabilities. Disaggregated information on the number of sign language interpreters would be provided to the Committee in writing. The Social Services Portal could be accessed from anywhere in Kazakhstan.

41. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she wished to know how the State party prevented the misuse of personal data in the event of their transfer to another country. She was concerned that the Act on Online Platforms and Online Advertising lacked measures to protect users’ personal data, including data on their health and any impairments, and she wondered what mechanisms had been put in place to prevent the misuse of data in that regard.

42. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that personal data protection was guaranteed by law. Data could only be sent across borders pursuant to a bilateral or international agreement. State bodies and private institutions, including banks and health-care facilities,

had cybersecurity measures in place to protect personal data. Moreover, the Government had cybersecurity services that worked for the personal data protection of all citizens. If the authorities identified a leak or misuse of data, they would investigate and address the matter through the appropriate procedures.

43. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that, according to the replies to the list of issues (CRPD/C/KAZ/RQ/1), no statistical records were kept on cases in which persons declared “incapable as a consequence of mental disease or intellectual disability” had been prohibited from entering into marriage. She wondered how the State party ensured that persons with disabilities could exercise self-determination in such cases. She also wished to know what measures had been taken to eliminate discrimination against persons with disabilities in all matters relating to marriage, family, parenthood and relationships.

44. She was concerned that women with disabilities – particularly women from minority groups, women living in remote areas and women living in institutions – lacked access to family planning and affordable adaptive support during pregnancy. In the light of information that only 0.5 per cent of women with disabilities of fertile age were exercising their right to independent motherhood, she asked what steps, such as consultations with women with disabilities and their representative organizations, were being taken to remedy the situation as a matter of priority.

45. Furthermore, she would be interested to know what measures were being taken to prohibit the involuntary sterilization of women with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and the practices of forced abortion and forced contraception. What steps had been taken to revise the Family and Gender Policy Framework for 2030, which failed to take account of multiple discrimination? Did the Government intend to take measures to provide information on sexual and reproductive health and to address the specific needs and requirements of women with disabilities, in particular deaf women, women with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities and women with hearing, vision or speech impairments?

46. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that Parliament was currently reviewing legislation governing the exercise of legal capacity by women with psychosocial disabilities and women with intellectual disabilities and their ability to make decisions about their own lives, including in the area of sexual and reproductive rights. Concerning the question raised about the low percentage of women registered as women with disabilities who had had children, the figure cited referred to a study conducted between 2015 and 2017. Although there had been unfortunate incidents of women with disabilities being pressured into terminating their pregnancies in the past, the situation had improved considerably since then. Women with disabilities who wished to have children were currently provided with the necessary support. There were no longer any reports of forced abortion among women with disabilities. Nevertheless, further measures were needed to ensure the full enjoyment of reproductive rights by women with disabilities.

47. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that citizens of Kazakhstan were entitled to receive or refuse medical assistance. The rules governing abortion were set out in article 150 of the Code on Public Health and the Health-Care System. Abortions were carried out only with the written informed consent of the woman concerned. Persons with disabilities had full access to various types of contraception, which could be obtained free of charge from the local authorities.

48. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the free and full consent of a man and a woman were required for entering into marriage. The minimum age for marriage was set at 18 years for women and men. Marriage between persons under the minimum age was permitted only with the written consent of their parents or guardians. Marriage was prohibited between persons of the same sex, close relatives, adoptive parents and adopted children, and persons at least one of whom was recognized as lacking legal capacity owing to mental illness. When a person wishing to marry was unable to appear at the civil registration office, the marriage could be registered at home or in a medical or other organization in the presence of the persons getting married.

49. **Mr. Schefer** said that further information on the criteria used to determine whether persons with intellectual disabilities and persons with psychosocial disabilities could marry would be useful.

50. **Mr. Al-Azzeh** said that he wished to know how the prohibition against marriage of persons with so-called mental diseases was applied in practice. Did the application of the prohibition entail a purely medical opinion and was there a classification system for such cases?

51. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that her delegation would provide information on the questions raised concerning the Marriage and Family Code in writing.

52. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she would like to know what measures had been taken to ensure access to inclusive, quality, free compulsory education for persons with disabilities, to enhance the accessibility of preschool, primary and secondary education facilities and to provide reasonable accommodation and services to meet the specific needs of students with disabilities. There was a need to introduce the principle of reasonable accommodation into the country's laws, policy frameworks and road maps concerning higher and inclusive education in particular.

53. She was concerned to note that the State Education and Science Development Programme for the period 2020–2025 did not cover out-of-school children and children at risk of dropout. She wondered what was being done to bring national learning platforms fully into line with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.0. She also wished to know what action was being taken to increase the availability of accessible textbooks, in the light of reports that only a small percentage of the textbooks provided to children with visual disabilities were in Braille or large print.

54. She wondered what measures were being taken to ensure that refugee and asylum-seeking children had access to education at all levels on an equal basis with Kazakh children and without discrimination. Lastly, she would appreciate more information on the efforts made to replace discriminatory terminology such as "limited opportunities" with more inclusive and positive formulations and to actively combat the stigma associated with disability in the legislation and social and other digital media.

55. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the principle of inclusive education was established in the Education Act, which guaranteed the rights of all children to receive an education, including children with the status of refugee or stateless person, taking into account their special educational needs and individual capabilities. Ensuring access to education had been identified as a top priority under the country's national development plan for the period up to 2025. The law on inclusive education adopted in June 2021 created the right framework for the education of children with special educational needs at all levels of education.

56. In 2022, the psychological, medical and educational counselling service had made the transition from a medical to a social approach to disability. The service assessed children's educational needs and helped them to determine their educational career paths. It made recommendations that took account of the views of parents. The post of teaching assistant had been introduced in general education schools in 2021 and would soon be introduced in preschools and technical colleges. More than 85 per cent of schools had put in place the conditions for inclusive education, whereas that indicator had stood at 30 per cent in 2015. More than 200,000 children with special educational needs were registered in the education system. Over the previous five years the network of educational establishments providing special psychological support for children with special educational needs had expanded and his Government would continue to make efforts in that area.

57. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she would be grateful to have further information in writing about the measures in place to improve and broaden the scope of rehabilitation services and replace the medical model for service provision with a social model, and about the extent to which the availability of services met the needs of the population. She wished to know what steps were being taken to ensure that the implementation of the National Plan to Ensure the Rights and Improve the Quality of Life of Persons with Disabilities was gender responsive in terms of health-care services. She would also like to have an account of the interdepartmental cooperation between medical and social services, including the consolidation of client databases and the creation of a legal framework to facilitate such cooperation. Further information on the medical and social assessments conducted to determine the severity of a disability and the rehabilitation services needed would also be

appreciated. In particular, she wondered how the State party ensured that the methodology used was in line with the Convention.

58. Lastly, she wished to know what measures were in place to facilitate independent access to housing for persons with disabilities and allow them freely to choose their dwelling.

59. **Mr. Al-Azzeh** said that he wished to know how informed consent for persons with disabilities in health facilities was guaranteed. Were consent forms available in accessible formats, such as Easy Read and Braille?

60. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that there was a standard consent form with a series of questions, including whether the patient understood the questions posed as well as the scope of the proposed medical services or intervention. The form was duly signed and dated. In addition, a doctor or nurse was on hand to help the patient complete the form, if necessary. Sign language interpreters were also available.

61. **Mr. Al-Azzeh** asked whether it was the responsibility of the person undergoing treatment to seek help in order to understand the medical procedure.

62. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that patients gave their written consent to hospitalization and interventions such as magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) examinations, for example. The patient was given explanations of the procedures involved and possible complications.

63. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that there were more than 55,000 persons with category I or II disabilities and about 25,000 families with children with disabilities on the waiting list for housing. His Government had developed a policy framework for the development of housing and communal services, which provided for a number of housing schemes. For example, it had provided rental housing without the right to buy. Since 2019, more than 55,000 apartments had been rented from the public housing stock. Affordable mortgage loans had also been made available to persons with disabilities and families of children with disabilities at favourable interest rates.

64. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that 396 ramps, 93 lifting devices, 283 elevators and 93 accessible toilets had been installed in 460 educational buildings and work would continue to make educational institutions accessible and monitor compliance with established accessibility requirements. To date, 67 out of the 103 officially recognized universities in the country had fulfilled the requirements. In addition, quotas had been established for persons with disabilities to attend institutions of higher education free of charge. Currently, there were more than 2,500 students with disabilities in institutions of higher education, 1,800 of whom were receiving grants, and incentives had been introduced, providing for a 75 per cent increase in grants for persons with disabilities.

65. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she wished to know how the State party planned to repeal the provision of the Labour Code that prevented persons deemed to lack legal capacity from concluding employment contracts and abolish the list of prohibited careers for persons with psychosocial disabilities. Information on the mechanisms in place for monitoring the enforcement of employment discrimination laws to protect the labour rights of persons with disabilities would be welcome. She would also appreciate any statistical data on the number of public employees with disabilities, broken down by branch and level of government.

66. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that more than 34,000 persons with disabilities had been receiving support with finding work at the start of 2024 and that 11,000 had been placed in full employment. To promote the employment of persons with disabilities, the Government relied on three mechanisms: first, employment quotas of from 2 to 4 per cent of available jobs; second, grants paid to employers to compensate for the cost of purchasing and setting up equipment for persons with disabilities and to subsidize the salaries of persons with disabilities for their first three years of employment; and, third, placement of persons with disabilities in employment as part of national projects. A bill on inclusive employment was under discussion.

67. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that legislation on ensuring employment and training for persons with psychosocial disabilities was being introduced in Parliament, which was considering the related issues.

68. **Ms. Kim Mi Yeon**, reverting to article 19, said that she would like to know whether the State party planned to implement the Committee's guidelines on deinstitutionalization, including in emergencies. She wondered what policies or programmes the Government had in place to address the discrimination, isolation and forced segregation experienced by persons with disabilities residing in institutions, particularly women and girls, and to ensure that they could live independently and be included in the community. She would welcome further information on the care centres for persons with disabilities described in paragraphs 110 and 111 of the replies to the list of issues, which, in her view, could be considered institutions under guideline 15 of the Committee's guidelines on deinstitutionalization.

69. **Ms. Jacobs** said that she would like to hear what measures were in place to identify the barriers faced by students with diverse disabilities who were pursuing university or other forms of post-secondary education; what complaint mechanisms were available to students with disabilities who experienced such barriers; and what action had been taken to ensure that students were made aware of those mechanisms. Did improving the accessibility of post-secondary education form part of the State party's goal to be barrier-free by 2030?

70. **Ms. Gamio Ríos** said that she would respectfully like to call attention to the fact that private investment should be used for deinstitutionalization, not to create new institutions, no matter their size. She wondered whether the State party would consider carrying out more awareness-raising activities among teachers and children and parents without disabilities to reduce stigma and discrimination in schools. Lastly, she wished to know what measures the Government had taken to prevent health insurance companies from discriminating against persons with disabilities and to adapt medical information and disseminate it among persons with disabilities.

71. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that, in higher education institutions, the curricula, infrastructure and learning materials were being adapted to accommodate students with disabilities. Such students could also benefit from careers guidance and other support services.

72. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said, on the issue of private investment, that, while 200 of the 1,030 centres providing special social services in Kazakhstan were run by non-governmental organizations and private companies, they received funding from local budgets and through State social procurement.

73. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that efforts were being made, through television and radio, printed media and social networks, to reduce the stigmatization of persons with disabilities. As part of those efforts, persons with disabilities were appearing more regularly in government and regional media. In cooperation with international organizations, training was being provided to journalists working on disability-related issues.

74. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that around 57 different insurance products were available for persons with disabilities, including for travel abroad and participation in sport, some at reduced cost.

75. **Ms. Kayess** said that she would be grateful for information on measures taken to monitor and address the ongoing effects of the nuclear testing programme conducted between 1949 and 1989 on the health of affected individuals, including persons who had subsequently acquired a disability. Were any programmes in place to address the resulting health impacts, including in relation to sexual and reproductive health?

76. **Mr. Morris** said that he would like to know what measures had been taken to provide reasonable accommodation for parliamentarians with disabilities, in particular with regard to the high volume of documentation they handled. He also wondered how parliamentarians with disabilities interacted with the general community of persons with disabilities to ensure that their views were represented.

77. **Mr. Kabue** said that he would welcome information on the human resources provided to the Commissioner for the Rights of Socially Vulnerable Groups to ensure that he was able to carry out his very broad functions with regard to the concerns of socially vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, effectively.

78. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that responses to the questions asked by Ms. Kayess would be submitted in writing.

79. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that all parliamentarians, including parliamentarians with disabilities, had a personal assistant employed by the State who provided support with documentation. Technologies such as screen readers were available for parliamentarians with visual impairments, and printed material could be converted into Braille where required. The working methods of Parliament were being reviewed to facilitate the work of parliamentarians with disabilities.

80. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that the national programme on the rehabilitation of individuals affected by nuclear radiation included compensation measures. Two specialized medical organizations carried out research into nuclear radiation exposure and provided rehabilitation services to affected individuals. Those services were funded by the State and had benefited over 200,000 individuals.

81. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that work was currently under way to ensure that the Commissioner for the Rights of Socially Vulnerable Groups received sufficient funding and resources.

82. **The Chair** said that she would like to know what measures were in place in the public and private sectors to protect persons with disabilities, particularly women with disabilities, against discrimination in employment and whether denial of reasonable accommodation was recognized as a form of discrimination. Did employees with disabilities have access to effective complaint mechanisms?

83. **Ms. Thongkuay** said that she wished to learn when the State party intended to revise the section of the Civil Code that provided for persons with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities to be declared legally incapable, which significantly restricted the exercise of their rights under article 29 of the Convention. What measures were in place to facilitate the participation of such persons in public and political life pending the revision of the Code?

84. **Mr. Al-Azzeh** said that he would like to know what plans the State party had to make full use of the Washington Group short set of questions on functioning in order to produce realistic and accurate numbers and disaggregated data on persons with disabilities. He would be grateful if the State party could explain how it involved persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the State's international cooperation programmes on disability rights and issues. Were persons with disabilities given the opportunity to take the lead in identifying national priorities regarding their rights?

85. **A representative of Kazakhstan** said that women, including women with disabilities, did not face discrimination when seeking employment. Over a five-year period, more than 6,000 inspections of private companies and public organizations had been carried out to ensure that their buildings and facilities were accessible to persons with disabilities, based on which over 4,500 recommendations had been issued.

86. The Government actively cooperated with international organizations, such as the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund and the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), on programmes that promoted the rights of persons with disabilities. Information on the grants provided by international organizations would be submitted in writing.

87. The recommendations of the Committee would be taken into account and reflected in the new inclusion policy framework to be developed over the course of 2024. Her Government would pursue its efforts to establish long-term partnerships with non-governmental organizations and international institutions, strengthen existing forums for dialogue within Kazakhstan and build open and transparent relations with United Nations special procedures. Parliamentarians had expressed their willingness to support the Government in drafting new bills and reviewing existing legislation to ensure that the rights of persons with disabilities were promoted and upheld.

88. **Mr. Schefer** said that the dialogue had been highly constructive and insightful. To achieve genuine social inclusion, it was necessary to overhaul every aspect of society and

fundamentally rethink traditional perceptions of persons with disabilities. While many measures remained to be taken by the State party to that end, he had no doubt that, by actively involving persons with disabilities and the organizations that represented them in that process, Kazakhstan would be capable of making substantial progress towards creating an inclusive society by the time of the next State party review.

89. **The Chair** said that she was grateful to the delegation for the insight provided into the situation of persons with disabilities in Kazakhstan. She wished to commend the State party for the efforts made thus far and to encourage the delegation to ensure that all the necessary measures to address the recommendations of the Committee were put in place.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.