



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

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

**Sixth periodic report submitted by Kazakhstan under
article 18 of the Convention, due in 2023****

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** The annex to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



Introduction

The sixth periodic report of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women has been prepared in accordance with the guidelines for the submission of initial and periodic reports under the Convention.

The sixth periodic report of the Republic of Kazakhstan on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women was drafted by a governmental working group established by the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, comprising representatives of government bodies and members of the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the Office of the President of Kazakhstan.

The report is based on analytical material submitted by government bodies and the commissions on women's affairs and family and demographic policy of the *akims* (administrative heads) of provinces, major cities and the capital, taking into account the concluding observations on the fifth report of Kazakhstan of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (hereinafter referred to as "the Committee's concluding observations").

The report contains information on the main developments and progress made by Kazakhstan in ensuring the economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights of women on an equal basis with men during the 2020–2023 reporting period with a view to implementing the Convention. The report is focused on the implementation of the Committee's concluding observations on the fifth periodic report.

Kazakhstan is striving to achieve gender equality in accordance with the international indicators used to measure progress and compare results in the States Members of the United Nations. In the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report 2021/2022, Kazakhstan was included in the first group of countries in the Gender Development Index, that is countries with a very high level of equality between men and women according to the Human Development Index.

Kazakhstan moved up six places in the Sustainable Development Goals Index for 2021, to fifty-ninth place, up from sixty-fifth in 2020.

In the Global Gender Gap Index, Kazakhstan was ranked 62nd out of 146 countries in 2023, up three places from 2022, when it was ranked 65th out of 146 (it was ranked 80th out of 156 countries in 2021 and 72nd out of 153 countries in 2020).¹ Kazakhstan currently has a gender parity score of 72.1 per cent, an improvement of 0.2 percentage points since 2022. Kazakhstan has practically eliminated the gender gap in education, with full parity achieved in enrolment in primary, secondary and higher education. For the "healthy life expectancy" indicator, Kazakhstan has maintained its first-place position each year and is ranked among a large group of leading countries.

In the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Social Institutions and Gender Index 2023, Kazakhstan was classified as a country in which the level of discrimination is low (Social Institutions and Gender Index score of 22 per cent).

At the high-level political forum on sustainable development in July 2022 in New York, Kazakhstan presented its second voluntary national review report on

¹ https://economy.kz/ru/Novosti_instituta/id=5766.

progress towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including a report on Goal 5, on gender equality and women's empowerment.

For the period 2022–2024, Kazakhstan is serving as a member of the Human Rights Council, which prioritizes gender equality and women's empowerment.

Since 2023, the Ministry of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan has been the designated body for cooperation on gender policy with OECD. A gender policy coordination office has been established within the Ministry's Committee on Youth and the Family.

Part I. General information

1. Country and population in 2020–2023 (basic gender characteristics)

At the beginning of 2023, the population of Kazakhstan was 19.8 million, including 10.1 million women (51.2 per cent) and 9.6 million men (48.8 per cent). There were 6.7 million children under 18 years of age, including 3.3 million girls (48.6 per cent) and 3.5 million boys (51.4 per cent).

The results of the 2021 census showed marked demographic changes in the country. During the intercensal period (2009–2021), the birth rate increased, mortality declined, life expectancy rose, and the migration balance was positive. As a result, the population increased by more than 3 million.

Labour and employment

In 2022, the labour force in Kazakhstan amounted to 9.4 million people. A total of 9 million people were employed in various sectors of the economy, 8.1 per cent more than in 2011.

Among the working population, 76.3 per cent were wage earners and 23.7 per cent were self-employed. Over the same period, the number of unemployed people decreased to 458,300. The unemployment rate was 4.9 per cent in 2022, compared with 5.4 per cent in 2011.

In 2022, the number of women in the working population was 4.3 million (47.9 per cent), of whom 3.3 million (77.9 per cent) were wage earners and 1 million were self-employed (22.1 per cent).

Women are employed primarily in economic sectors such as healthcare and social services (accounting for 72.5 per cent of all people employed in the sector), education (73.0 per cent), hotels and restaurants (64.9 per cent), finance and insurance (59.8 per cent), wholesale and retail trade and repair of motor vehicles and motorcycles (56.4 per cent), arts, entertainment and leisure (54.4 per cent) and agriculture (40.9 per cent). Men traditionally work in construction (78.5 per cent), transport and storage (77.7 per cent) and industry (70.0 per cent).

In rural areas, 3.5 million people were employed in 2022, of whom 1.6 million (45.2 per cent) were women.

Women at the decision-making level

In the highest representative body, the Parliament, there are currently 29 women deputies, or 19.6 per cent of the total. In local representative bodies (*maslikhats*) in Kazakhstan, women account for 21.02 per cent of the total number of deputies (786 out of 3,415).

A woman serves as the Deputy Prime Minister of Kazakhstan, one of the government leaders. In the 19 ministries, women serve as the ministers of health,

labour and social protection and of culture and information, seven women are deputy ministers and three women are chiefs of staff. In the 14 government bodies under the direct supervision of the President of Kazakhstan, nine women hold senior positions. The Head of the National Centre for Human Rights and the Chair of the Constitutional Court of Kazakhstan are women.

As at 1 January 2023, 55.4 per cent of female civil servants were women (46,546 out of 83,963), with women accounting for 8.1 per cent of political civil servants (59 out of 726), 9.8 per cent of administrative employees in the “A” corps (9 out of 92) and 55.9 per cent of administrative employees in the “B” corps (46,478 out of 83,145). Women accounted for 39.2 per cent of managers (9,261 out of 23,649).

In the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan, 30 (48.4 per cent) of the judges are women. In the provincial courts, 205 (45.7 per cent) of the 449 judges are women. In the district courts, 1,019 (54.7 per cent) of the judges are women.

In the procuratorial system, there are 1,104 female prosecutors (22 per cent of current operational staff), 79 of whom hold senior positions.

Employment statistics for 2022 show that the threshold of 30 per cent representation of women in managerial positions in the corporate sector has been exceeded, reaching 43.4 per cent.

Education

A framework for the development of preschool, secondary, technical and vocational education for the period 2023–2029 and a national Comfortable Schools project have been adopted. In the 2022/23 school year, there were 7,723 general education schools in the country, of which 6,925, or 89.6 per cent, were State schools, with more than 3.71 million pupils. A network of specialized schools (114) has been established offering instruction in natural sciences and mathematics in English. Girls account for 50.1 per cent of secondary school graduates.

A framework for the development of higher education and science in Kazakhstan for the period 2023–2029 has been approved. Higher education can be obtained in 119 institutions of higher and/or postgraduate education (59 State, 60 private and 2 foreign-affiliated) with more than 626,000 students. The Nazarbayev University in Astana is a modern and rapidly evolving world-class university that was founded on the principle of integrating education, science and innovation. The Astana Information Technology University is the leading centre of excellence for digital transformation in Central Asia. The university was established with the aim of developing highly qualified specialists in the digital economy through the use of interdisciplinary technologies.

Healthcare

On the basis of analysis of problems in the healthcare system, including those arising from the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the Healthy Nation national project for the provision of high-quality and accessible healthcare to every citizen for the period 2021–2025 (Resolution No. 725 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 12 October 2021) is being implemented to improve the health of the population. In addition, the Government has adopted a framework for healthcare development up to 2026 (Resolution No. 945 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 24 November 2022) and a pilot national project for the modernization of rural healthcare (Resolution No. 962 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 30 November 2022), with the aims of strengthening healthcare infrastructure, providing mobile medical assistance to people living in remote rural villages, building new medical and obstetrics centres and outpatient clinics equipped with modern equipment that meets

minimum standards, expanding remote medical services, ensuring the provision of medicines, improving public health and disease control, enhancing the quality and availability of specialized medical care, motivating and providing well-trained staff, promoting scientific development and increasing funding for the industry.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic had an impact on reproductive healthcare. Following the onset of the pandemic, more than 80 per cent of women did not seek reproductive health services (such as maternal health and family planning), with 5.9 per cent of them experiencing difficulties in obtaining access to maternal health services, 5.4 per cent to family planning services and 3.8 per cent to psychological support.

The pandemic also led to increased maternal mortality. While in 2016 the maternal mortality rate was 12.7 per 100,000 live births, in 2019 it had reached 13.7. In 2020, there was a sharp increase to 36.5 per 100,000 live births. At the end of 2022, there were 17.0 cases per 100,000 live births.

Problems in obtaining access to maternal health services were experienced by 11.1 per cent of women living in urban areas and 7.6 per cent of women living in rural areas.

With the aim of providing care for pregnant women and mothers with newborns, a situational obstetrics centre was established to carry out daily monitoring of pregnant women in serious and critical conditions. A clinical protocol for the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 in pregnant women and methodological recommendations on the provision of medical care to pregnant women and children during the COVID-19 pandemic were also developed.

Under the Healthy Nation national project, the following results were achieved in 2022: overall mortality declined by 29 per cent; maternal mortality decreased by a factor of 2.6; infant mortality fell by 5.6 per cent; mortality from diseases of the circulatory system decreased by 33 per cent, from respiratory diseases by 17 per cent, from tuberculosis by 12 per cent and from malignancies by 8 per cent; and mortality from respiratory diseases fell by 39 per cent and from tuberculosis by 18 per cent. Such results indicate that the healthcare system is improving. The infant mortality rate was 7.9 per 1,000 live births, down from 8.7, a decrease of 8.4 per cent.

Crime and violence against women

Statistics

According to the data of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the Office of the Procurator-General of Kazakhstan, 942 criminal offences in the family and domestic sphere were registered in the country in 2022 (1,072 were registered in 2020 and 1,047 in 2021).

A total of 25,173 administrative offences in the family and domestic sphere were registered in the country in 2022 (25,720 were registered in 2020 and 28,008 in 2021).

By order of the Head of State, liability for domestic violence was increased in 2023. Corresponding amendments were made to the Criminal Code and the Code of Administrative Offences of Kazakhstan.

The number of inspectors working to protect women from violence stood at 253, double the 2020 figure.

Following the introduction of a programme to train female investigators in the investigation of violent crimes of a sexual nature against women and minors, 280 female investigators have been included in the country's crime scene investigation teams.

With the aim of preventing psychological trauma among minors, a pilot project for the provision of comprehensive care to victims of sexual violence through specialized (crisis) centres in the country was launched in 2022, drawing on the experience of the Republic of Korea.

2. Legislative and institutional protection of human rights in Kazakhstan

Strategic measures are being systematically implemented in Kazakhstan, in accordance with the timelines established in two government plans: the plan of priority measures in the field of human rights; and the plan for further measures in the field of human rights and the rule of law.

A significant milestone in 2023 has been the entry into force of three constitutional laws: the Act on the Commissioner for Human Rights; the Act on the Office of the Procurator; and the Act on the Constitutional Court. Those Acts set out new ways for citizens to restore violated rights and prevent such violations.

A comprehensive institution of administrative justice was established with the entry into force of the Code of Administrative Procedure on 1 July 2021. Since that date, 52 per cent of court decisions have been taken in favour of citizens and companies both in trials and during pretrial proceedings.

The Commissioner for Human Rights (Ombudsperson) was entrusted with specific powers, some of which were brand new. Thus, the Ombudsperson was granted the authority to submit to the Constitutional Court proposals for the review of the constitutionality of laws and regulations affecting human rights and freedoms. The Ombudsperson was exempted from giving evidence. Interfering with or obstructing the lawful work of the Commissioner was made an offence.

Another important innovation was the establishment of representatives of the Commissioner in every province, which will contribute to enhancing the legal protection of citizens of the provinces. A corresponding Presidential Decree was adopted on 30 June 2022.

These innovations meet the requirements of the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles), approved by the General Assembly in its resolution [48/134](#) of 20 December 1993.

The National Centre for Human Rights provides information, analysis and institutional and legal support for the work of the Commissioner for Human Rights.

Each year, the national budget includes a specific budget programme for the resources needed to support the work of the Commissioner for Human Rights, the Commissioner's representatives and the Office of the Commissioner.

On 8 June 2022, the death penalty was removed from the Constitution. On 2 January 2021, Kazakhstan adopted an Act on the ratification of the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty.

In addition, in 2023, Kazakhstan signed the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure.

On 7 June 2023, Kazakhstan adopted the Act on the ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, by which mechanisms were established for the Convention's implementation and for receiving and considering individual communications from persons with disabilities.

4. Protection of human rights on the basis of international norms

Judges undertake to explain the provisions of the Convention to the parties in court proceedings. One result of the gender policy awareness training carried out among judges has been the use of references to the provisions of international treaties, including the Convention, in court decisions. Whereas previously such references were made primarily in civil cases, now reference to the Convention is also made in decisions on administrative cases.

In 2022 and the first seven months of 2023, the courts applied the Convention as follows:

Civil cases: in 2022, 33 cases were closed, with judgments rendered in all of them; and in the first seven months of 2023, 44 cases were closed, with judgments rendered in all of them;

Criminal cases: the Convention was not applied;

Administrative cases: in 2022, 152 cases were closed, with administrative penalties imposed in 98 of them; and in the first seven months of 2023, 98 cases were closed, with administrative penalties imposed in 34 of them.

5. Human rights information and publicity

Since January 2011, a Legal Information Centre has been in operation, receiving communications and complaints from the public concerning enforcement proceedings and recording and resolving complaints about the action or inaction of bailiffs.

Members of the public can obtain legal advice by calling: the 119 hotline; the 1414 call centre; and 8 (7172) 58-00-58.

Members of the public can also obtain written advice on legal matters through the following services: WhatsApp online messenger (+77086935631); the virtual consultant widget of the *Әділет* database of laws and regulations of Kazakhstan at <https://adilet.zan.kz/rus>; the 119Kenesbot Telegram bot at <https://t.me/VirtAdiletBot>; and the form for requesting legal advice at <https://advices.adilet.zan.kz/add.html>.

In addition, the Centre offers quarterly online courses on current legal topics, providing relevant information that can be studied and obtained free of charge at any convenient time. Webinars are conducted and available for free on the YouTube channel of the State Institute of Law and Legal Information of the Ministry of Justice of Kazakhstan <https://www.youtube.com/user/rkaokz>.

To provide legal information to the public, the Centre also prepares and publishes materials on legal topics for the Bulletin of the Ministry of Justice of Kazakhstan journal and the “Street law” section of the departmental website of the Ministry of Justice of Kazakhstan.

Legal information is also widely available on social media.

Thus, paragraph 14 (b) of the Committee’s concluding observations is being fulfilled.

Part II. Information on the implementation of articles 1 to 16 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

Article 1. Definition of discrimination against women

The Act dated 8 December 2009 on State guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women sets out a definition of the term “gender-based discrimination”. The State guarantees women the right and opportunity to seek judicial protection under the provisions of the Convention. Discrimination, including on the basis of gender, is criminalized (art. 145 of the Criminal Code). No one may be discriminated against, including on the basis of gender, during criminal, administrative and civil proceedings. Thus, paragraph 12 (c) of the Committee’s concluding observations is being fulfilled.

According to section 1, article 4, of the Constitution of Kazakhstan, the law in force in Kazakhstan consists of the norms of the Constitution and corresponding laws, other laws and regulations, the international treaty and other obligations of Kazakhstan, and the regulatory decisions of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court.

By the Act dated 10 March 2017 amending and supplementing the Constitution of Kazakhstan, amendments were introduced to the Constitution.

One of the new amendments sets out the mechanism for the application of international treaties (the procedure and conditions for the application in the territory of Kazakhstan of the international treaties to which Kazakhstan is a party are determined by domestic law).

The Act dated 30 May 2005 on the international treaties to which Kazakhstan is a party governs the conclusion, application, amendment and termination of the international treaties to which Kazakhstan is a party.

In accordance with section 1, article 20, of that Act, every existing international treaty to which Kazakhstan is a party must be applied by Kazakhstan in good faith.

In accordance with the Legal Instruments Act, international treaties ratified by Kazakhstan take precedence over domestic law and are directly applicable except when an international treaty specifies that its application requires the enactment of a law.

The precedence of the international treaties ratified by Kazakhstan is ensured by the following procedural codes: section 3, article 2, of the Code of Civil Procedure; section 3, article 2, of the Code of Criminal Procedure; section 4, article 1, of the Code of Administrative Offences; section 3, article 2, of the Code of Administrative Procedure; section 3, article 1, of the Penal Correction Code; and section 2, article 1 of the Budget Code.

For the enforcement of the Convention, the Supreme Court has a regulatory decision dated 10 July 2008 on the application of the provisions of the international treaties to which Kazakhstan is a party, which clarifies for the courts that the misapplication by a court of the provisions of the international treaties to which Kazakhstan is a party may be grounds to repeal or amend a court decision (para. 10).

A framework for the legal policy of Kazakhstan up to 2030 was adopted in October 2021.

Under this framework, priority is given to the protection of the fundamental rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of individuals and organizations, which are to be effectively safeguarded in all areas of public and State life. Furthermore, a

significant part of the national legislation will continue to be shaped by the country's international legal obligations.

Thus, paragraph 10 of the Committee's concluding observations is being fulfilled, and the provisions of the Convention take precedence over the laws of Kazakhstan.

In the first six months of 2023, 925 appeals, or 32.7 per cent of the total number of appeals, were sent to the Commissioner for Human Rights by women. Eight appeals, or 0.28 per cent of the total number of appeals, were received regarding gender-based discrimination.

Complaints sent by women relate mainly to violations of their rights under labour, housing, social, and marriage and family law and are often aggravated by such factors as having many children, being in a difficult financial situation and lacking both financial resources for legal assistance and knowledge of how to protect their rights.

When considering appeals, the national human rights institution sends related queries and recommendations to government bodies.

Article 2. Obligation to eliminate discrimination

Article 2 (a) As noted in the information on article 1, the principle of the equality of men and women is enshrined in the Constitution and the laws of Kazakhstan. Women have the same right as men to participate in all spheres of life and thus fulfil their rights and obligations.

With regard to the four recommendations of the Committee, the framework for family and gender policy in Kazakhstan up to the year 2030 and the plan for its implementation were updated in 2022 (Presidential Decree No. 853 dated 1 April 2022).

Emphasis was placed on ensuring maximum support for women's economic and political positions in society, increasing the proportion of women in the leadership of government bodies and the quasi-public sector to 30 per cent, preventing violence against women and children, promoting gender training, and supporting motherhood and childhood.

The framework reflects both the achievements made by the country and the challenges faced in this area. Long-term and short-term gender policy indicators are set forth in the framework and the action plan for its implementation. Section 6 of the framework contains nine specific target indicators and expected results.

In accordance with paragraphs 70, 71 and 72 of the State planning system in Kazakhstan, approved by the Government of Kazakhstan in its Resolution No. 790 dated 29 November 2017, the competent government planning body conducts annual monitoring of the implementation of development plans. An annual report on the implementation of the framework for family and gender policy is published on the government body's website.

In addition, the implementation of the framework is reviewed at meetings of the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of Kazakhstan, in which representatives of non-governmental organizations participate.

Article 2 (b) The laws of Kazakhstan prohibit gender-based discrimination in all areas of public life. Women and men have equal rights and obligations.

The commission of a criminal offence against a woman known by the perpetrator to be pregnant is an aggravating circumstance in respect of liability and punishment (art. 54, para. 1 (7), of the Criminal Code).

Article 2 (c) Kazakhstan has taken legislative measures to establish an effective complaints mechanism, including for cases of gender-based discrimination.

Citizens may apply to the courts to defend their violated or disputed rights and freedoms and to file complaints with national human rights institutions, procurator's offices and other bodies.

According to data of the Committee on Legal Statistics and Special Accounts of the Office of the Procurator-General of Kazakhstan, in the period 2020–2023, the courts received 513,499 claims and reports from women (72,952 were received in the first six months of 2023; 154,967 in 2022; 150,682 in 2021; and 134,898 in 2020).

The website of the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan has a page entitled “Legal assistance for women”, which contains legal information on the protection of women against discrimination and explanations of laws and court decisions.

Information on the protection of women's rights is also provided on the website of the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of Kazakhstan.

All citizens have the right to appeal to the Commissioner for Human Rights if their rights or freedoms are violated.

Pursuant to article 19 of the Constitutional Act, the Commissioner for Human Rights in Kazakhstan has representatives in the provinces, major cities and the capital and appoints and dismisses them in accordance with the laws of Kazakhstan on civil service.

The resources allocated to the Office of the Ombudsperson steadily increased in the period from 2018 to 2022. The Office's budget was more than 80 million tenge, or 0.0009 per cent of the total State budget, in 2018; more than 110 million tenge, or 0.0010 per cent, in 2018; about 160 million tenge, or 0.0013 per cent, in 2020; more than 170 million tenge, or 0.0012 per cent, in 2021; and more than 500 million tenge, or 0.0028 per cent, in 2022.

Owing to the opening of representative offices of the National Centre for Human Rights in provincial centres and the cities of Almaty, Astana and Shymkent, the number of staff of the Centre was increased from 14 to 105, and more than 1 billion tenge, or 0.0049 per cent of the total State budget, was allocated to the Centre in 2023.

Women make up 36 per cent of the staff of the Office of the Ombudsperson working on investigations and complaints.

The Office of the Ombudsperson considered 1,201 appeals in 2020, 1,855 in 2021 and 3,948 in 2022 and has considered 2,822 since the beginning of 2023.

Analysis of statistical data shows that the number of appeals has increased, which is attributable to the increased awareness of the institution since it was granted constitutional status and since local representatives of the Commissioner for Human Rights were established.

By Order No. 3 of the Commissioner for Human Rights dated 20 January 2023, rules on the consideration of complaints were approved, setting out the procedure for the consideration of complaints by the Commissioner for Human Rights and the staff of the Office of the Commissioner.

In June 2023, with the support of UNDP, experts from the Asia-Pacific Forum visited Kazakhstan to conduct a preliminary assessment mission. The resulting

recommendations will guide the identification of future areas of focus and the accreditation of the Office of the Commissioner for Human Rights.

Thus, paragraphs 20 (a) and (b) of the Committee's concluding observations, regarding the functioning and organization of the work of the Ombudsperson, have been fulfilled.

Article 2 (d) The Code of Administrative Procedure of Kazakhstan, which governs matters related to the implementation of administrative procedures, was adopted on 29 June 2020. According to the Code, everyone has the right, in accordance with the procedure established by the Code, to apply to an administrative body, an official or a court to defend violated or disputed rights, freedoms or legitimate interests. The right to apply to an administrative body, an official or a court may not be waived (art. 9 of the Code).

In compliance with the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Procurator-General of Kazakhstan, the Minister of Justice of Kazakhstan and the First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan adopted, on 1 February 2022, a joint order on certain issues related to the consideration of requests and views of human rights treaty bodies whose competence has been recognized by Kazakhstan.

The procedure for the consideration by government bodies of requests and views of human rights treaty bodies whose competence has been recognized by Kazakhstan and the status and composition of the interdepartmental working group for the consideration of such requests and views were approved by the order.

With regard to paragraph 14 (c) of the Committee's concluding observations, updated information from Kazakhstan on the implementation of the Committee's views on communication No. 45/2012, as requested by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights on 12 July 2023, will be sent by 12 September 2023.

Article 2 (e) Human rights and freedoms are recognized and guaranteed in Kazakhstan in accordance with the Constitution. All individuals have the right to recognition as persons before the law and the right to defend their rights and freedoms by all means in keeping with the law, including self-defence. All individuals have the right to judicial protection of their rights and freedoms (arts. 12 and 13 of the Constitution).

In accordance with the Code of Administrative Procedure, central and local authorities take steps to restore the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of individuals in accordance with the laws of Kazakhstan in the event of their violation (art. 57).

When rights and legitimate interests are violated, all individuals have the right to defend their rights. This norm is enshrined in the laws of Kazakhstan in all areas.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 38 (d) of the Committee's concluding observations, amendments have been introduced to the Labour Code of Kazakhstan to remove the list of prohibited occupations for women.

Corresponding amendments have been made pursuant to the Act dated 12 October 2021 amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan on social protection for certain categories of citizens.

Article 2 (f) With regard to paragraph 14 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations, training was provided for court officials on the following topics: "Judicial protection of human rights: the international obligations of Kazakhstan"; "International institutions and mechanisms for the protection of human rights in the

investigation of crimes related to trafficking in persons”; “Nine treaty bodies, their functions and powers: activities with handouts”; and “Issues relevant to the consideration of cases involving criminal offences related to organized crime and trafficking in persons” (15 lectures attended by about 450 people were held in 2022 and two workshops attended by about 60 people were held in the first quarter of 2023).

In addition, in 2022, together with the Kazakhstan office of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), a project was launched to assist Kazakhstan in the implementation of the framework for family and gender policy with a view to supporting gender equality, the empowerment of all women and girls in Kazakhstan and the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Under the project, activities are carried out with the aim of strengthening national laws related to gender policy and promoting active and effective participation in processes to fulfil the international obligations of Kazakhstan and active participation in global, regional and subregional processes to promote gender equality and women’s empowerment.

The Government has been taking measures to eliminate harassment in the workplace. In 2023, a policy for protection against harassment was piloted in the Ministry of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan and its subordinate bodies. The policy is aimed at fostering a zero-tolerance approach to harassment among all employees of the Ministry and at creating and maintaining an environment in which harassment is not tolerated through measures to prevent, respond to and avert harassment.

Article 2 (g) The criminal laws contain no provisions that discriminate against women.

Article 3. Development and advancement of women

The objectives of the State gender policy are to achieve parity of rights, benefits, obligations and opportunities for men and women in all spheres of society, and to eliminate all forms and manifestations of gender-based discrimination.

The Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of Kazakhstan publishes an annual statistical compendium entitled “Women and men in Kazakhstan”, and its official website has a section entitled “Gender statistics”. Work is under way to expand the range of gender indicators in the State statistical system. A project on measuring gender in trade statistics was launched jointly with the Statistical Division of the Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development in September 2022.

Thus, paragraphs 30 (d) and (e) of the Committee’s concluding observations are being fulfilled.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Kazakhstan generates the data for the digital family card, a platform for personalized State support for Kazakh families, which was launched at the beginning of the current year, with the primary aim of ensuring equal access for Kazakhs to State support. The platform is used to assess the social well-being of families and individuals on a daily basis.

The digital family card was established as a tool for determining the medium- and long-term tasks and priorities of State social policy. Since 1 January 2023, more than 541,000 people have been informed that they are entitled to pensions, benefits or targeted social assistance. To date, 195,000 of them have been assigned State benefits, which are already being disbursed.

Kazakhstan is committed to building a constructive, transparent dialogue between the State and society.

There are 23,335 non-governmental organizations operating in the country, more than 500 of which are working on family and gender policy issues and making an important contribution to women's empowerment. A national network of schools for women's leadership is in place, bringing together nearly 70 non-governmental organizations. Clubs for women politicians are up and running in all 17 provinces.

At the initiative of the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the "State that Listens" policy framework is being implemented with a view to ensuring effective communication between the State and the people and to increasing the involvement of citizens in governance.

On 27 August 2020, the President approved by decree a framework for civil society development, which sets out measures to promote the development of civil society and its institutions, and the involvement of citizens in discussions and decisions on the main problems facing the State and society, taking into account ongoing sociopolitical processes, economic competition, diverse perspectives and the various forms and methods of civic engagement.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 18 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations, each year a list is compiled of ongoing themes for State social services procurement contracts and grant funding to support the implementation of the State family and gender policy. Local competitive bidding is held for family and gender policy projects of non-governmental organizations aimed at providing professional assistance to families (e.g., through resources support and crisis centres), strengthening the institution of marriage and the family, and promoting gender equality.

In 2022, 101 social projects amounting to 293.7 million tenge to support the State family and gender policy were implemented by local authorities under State social services procurement contracts. Total funding for projects related to family and gender policy increased by 68.4 per cent (174.4 million tenge were allocated for 135 projects in 2021).

Active participants in the women's movement have begun to receive training under the Tomiris informational and educational programme. The programme is aimed at enhancing the managerial capacities and political activities of women and girls. More than 50 trainers were trained in 2022. This work has continued in 2023.

A project entitled "Gender-specific needs and requirements map: the impact of ethnicity, region and class" was developed in 2022. Under the project, sociological and analytical research on family and gender policy has been conducted.

A joint project on promoting the Sustainable Development Goals and fulfilling commitments to advance equality in Kazakhstan has been implemented in cooperation with UN-Women. Under the project, in 2022 the capacities of 42 members of public councils and non-governmental organizations and activists (95 per cent women and 5 per cent men) from 13 provinces of Kazakhstan were built in conducting gender analysis and adopting other gender budgeting tools.

A pilot project has been implemented to test approaches to introducing gender budgeting in the social protection, healthcare and education sectors in order to assess the gender dimension, gender responsiveness and gender-specific impact of government programmes.

The Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan has provided ongoing training for civil servants on gender equality issues, including gender-responsive budgeting. In the past three years, more than 1,200 civil servants have been trained (407 in 2020, 437 in 2021 and 427 in 2022).

In December 2021, an action plan for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013), 2242 (2015) and 2467 (2019), concerning the equal and full participation of women in preventing and resolving conflicts, the attainment of peace and security, the prevention of violence against women, awareness-raising and the strengthening of cooperation with civil society on conflict prevention and the protection of women, was approved for the period 2022–2025 (Resolution No. 935 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 24 December 2021).

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 18 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations, the following work is being done. Paragraph 5 of the plan for further measures in the field of human rights and the rule of law, approved by Resolution No. 258 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 28 April 2022, provides for amendments to laws governing the activities of public associations to deregulate the procedures for their establishment and the organization of their work. The plan was adopted pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 597 dated 9 June 2021 on further measures of Kazakhstan in the field of human rights, in particular the right to freedom of association. At a meeting on 29 July 2022, the Interdepartmental Commission on Draft Legislation adopted a draft framework for the draft law amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan on public associations (meeting record No. 592 of the Interdepartmental Commission dated 2 August 2022). Under the draft law, the minimum number of citizens required to establish a public association will be lowered from 10 to 3. On 29 June 2023, the draft law was submitted to the Majilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan.

Article 4. Acceleration of the achievement of equality between men and women

Article 4, paragraph 1 Temporary special measures aimed at accelerating equality between men and women have been adopted pursuant to the updated framework for family and gender policy. By 2030, it is expected that the gender gap in the average wages of women and men will be 21.0 per cent, the ratio of women to men who own tangible assets (such as property, housing, vehicles and businesses) will increase by 10 per cent, women will occupy 30 per cent of decision-making positions in executive, representative and judicial bodies and the State, quasi-State and corporate sectors, and women will occupy 10.0 per cent of roles related to peace and security.

In addition, in 2020, amendments to the Elections Act and the Political Parties Act were adopted, according to which at least 30 per cent of candidates on party lists must be women and young people. An Act stipulating that 30 per cent of parliamentary seats must be reserved for persons with disabilities, women and young people was signed on 7 February 2022 and entered into force on 19 February 2022. The Act is aimed at guaranteeing the presence of women, young people and persons with disabilities in representative bodies, ensuring that their views are taken into account and facilitating their active participation in government work.

The representation of women in the governing bodies of State-owned companies is gradually being increased to 30 per cent. To this end, the model code of corporate governance in State-controlled joint stock companies was reapproved, according to which women should constitute at least 30 per cent of the total number of members of collegiate executive bodies and boards of directors of companies (organizations).

The introduction to this report contains detailed statistics on women's participation in representative, legislative and executive bodies and in decision-making.

The Ministry of Culture and Information of Kazakhstan, together with interested government bodies and organizations, has begun to develop rules on monitoring the implementation of the temporary special measures and assessing their impact.

Thus, paragraphs 22 (b) and (c) of the Committee's concluding observations are being fulfilled.

Efforts to prevent discrimination against women who may experience intersecting forms of discrimination, such as migrant women and Indigenous women, are continuously monitored.

To protect the domestic labour market, each year the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection establishes and allocates a quota for the recruitment of foreign professionals to the country. There are no gender-based restrictions on the recruitment of foreign workers. There have been no cases of discrimination against women migrants.

To ensure equal rights and opportunities for women in work, including those employed in the energy and oil and gas industries, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection is implementing a number of systematic measures.

Thus, in 2022, active efforts were made under provincial employment plans to involve women in productive employment. As a result, 536,000 women were placed in jobs, constituting 55 per cent of all job placements. As at 31 July 2023, this indicator stood at about 293,100, or 56 per cent.

In addition, a large proportion of young women are being recruited to State-subsidized jobs. About 30,000 young women obtained their first jobs in 2022, and 2,700 women have been employed through the First Job project since the beginning of the current year.

Another highly important measure of State support is training that leads to employment or the launch of one's own business. In 2022, nearly 80,000 women took courses on the basics of entrepreneurship. At the end of the training, about 13,000 women received grants. Of those women, 58 per cent purchased technological equipment and tools for the production of goods and services, and 31 per cent took up livestock breeding.

Since the beginning of 2023, more than 60,800 women have enrolled in the Bastau Business training programme, through which more than 3,300 women have received grants.

In addition, first launched in 2022, the Silver Age project for people of pre-retirement age has led to the employment of more than 1,100 women.

In 2023, the minimum age for female project participants was lowered from 58 to 50. Employers make job offers, but participants have the right to choose a job themselves, on the basis of their qualifications.

Article 4, paragraph 2 Under article 4 of the Act on State guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women, measures aimed at protecting mothers, children and fathers, protecting women during pregnancy and childbirth, improving men's life expectancy and protecting women in criminal, criminal procedural and penal correction laws are not considered to constitute gender-based discrimination.

By order of the Head of State, from 1 January 2023, the childcare allowance was extended to cover children up to the age of 1.5 years, and the planned increase in the retirement age for women was postponed for five years, from 2023 to 2028, with the retirement age fixed at 61 years.

Article 5. Gender roles and stereotypes

Article 5 (a) Each year, a national media plan is adopted, under which information and awareness-raising work is carried out with the aim of eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and promoting the gender policy.

As at July 2023, 1,105 pieces of content had been produced since the beginning of the year (compared with 1,293 in 2022), including 64 programmes broadcast on national television channels, 88 articles published in national print media, 58 programmes broadcast on provincial television channels, 151 articles published in provincial print media, and 744 posts on the Internet. Television channels broadcast programmes for women, such as *Әйел әлемі*, *Өмір көркем*, *Tansholpan*, *Oyan* and *Ainalaiyn*.

Of the 918 journalists currently working in the State media, 536, or 58.3 per cent, are women.

Police officers have carried out more than 14,000 outreach activities on legal topics, including the protection of women from violence (482 television appearances, 881 articles in print media and 13,187 posts on police department websites). In 2022, they carried out 13,000 such activities.

In addition, police officers delivered more than 52,000 lectures, workshops and training sessions on these topics at educational institutions (compared with 27,000 in 2022) .

Each year, national activities are organized as part of the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-based Violence campaign. Kazakhstan has thus demonstrated its commitment to eliminating all forms of gender-based violence both globally and nationally.

Victims can now contact law enforcement agencies by any means convenient to them, including by calling a free 24-hour police phone number and using the dedicated “102” mobile application.

In the first seven months of 2023, 523 crimes committed in the context of family and domestic relations were registered, marking an increase of 1.9 per cent from the same period in 2022, when 513 such crimes were registered. In the whole of 2022, 935 such crimes were registered, marking an 8.5 per cent decrease from 2021, when 1,022 were registered.

In the first seven months of 2023, more than 55,000 restraining orders were issued against “family aggressors” (compared with 54,000 in the first seven months of 2022 and 84,000 in the whole of 2022). At the request of the police, the courts established 9,229 special requirements regarding the conduct of offenders (compared with 8,215 in the first seven months of 2022 and 12,357 in the whole of 2022).

The number of restraining orders issued against women’s spouses in situations of domestic violence were as follows:

506 in 2022: the perpetrators of domestic violence were prohibited from residing in a private home or from seeking out or pursuing victims against their will;

226 in the first seven months of 2023: the perpetrators of domestic violence were prohibited from residing in a private home or from seeking out or pursuing victims against their will.

Domestic violence cases have been considered in the courts of Kazakhstan as follows:

Civil cases: in 2022, 790 cases were closed, with judgments rendered in 435 of them; and in the first seven months of 2023, 417 cases were closed, with judgments rendered in 273 of them;

Criminal cases: in 2022, 273 cases were closed, with convictions reached in 257 of them; and in the first seven months of 2023, 148 cases were closed, with convictions reached in 135 of them;

Administrative cases: in 2022, 24,607 cases were closed, with administrative penalties imposed in 13,365 of them; and in the first seven months of 2023, 18,122 cases were closed, with administrative penalties imposed in 9,351 of them.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 26 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations, the Criminal Code provides for liability for criminal offences against the person, against the family and minors, against public health and morals, against constitutional and other human and civil rights and freedoms, with penalties determined on the basis of proportionality to the gravity of the act committed.

In addition, the Act amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan concerning human rights in criminal proceedings, the enforcement of sentences and the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment entered into force on 19 May 2023. Under the Act, liability was increased for offences in the family and domestic sphere, namely, for the infliction of serious or moderate harm to health in domestic settings when "committed against a person who is materially or otherwise dependent on the perpetrator". Such circumstances give rise to criminal liability under articles 106 (Intentional infliction of serious harm to health) and 107 (Intentional infliction of moderate harm) of the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan.

Furthermore, Kazakhstan joined two action coalitions at the Generation Equality Forum, namely, the Action Coalition on Gender-Based Violence and the Action Coalition on Economic Justice and Rights, under which a number of national commitments have been made and met. Information on the commitments fulfilled by Kazakhstan was analysed by experts from the Forum's secretariat and included in the global report of the Forum, which was presented during the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly in New York in September 2022.

With regard to paragraph 26 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations, the Criminal Code establishes liability for rape (art. 120 (Rape)) as sexual intercourse carried out by using or threatening to use violence against the victim or other persons or by taking advantage of a victim in a helpless state.

The main target of rape is the sexual freedom or sexual integrity of the victim.

A woman's unwillingness to engage in sexual intimacy can be evidenced by her clear and definite expression of refusal and her active resistance.

In accordance with Regulatory Decision No. 4 of the Supreme Court of Kazakhstan dated 11 May 2007 on certain issues related to the definition of rape-related offences and other violent acts of a sexual nature, the moral character, social status, behaviour of the victim or previous relations between the perpetrator and the victim are irrelevant to the definition of rape and other violent acts of a sexual nature.

Violence should be understood as actions aimed at overcoming the victim's resistance, for example, by striking or strangling the victim, restraining the victim's hands or legs or tearing off the victim's clothes.

In addition, in the absence of violence, criminal liability for coercion to engage in sexual intercourse, sodomy, lesbian acts or other sexual acts is established in article 123 (Coercion to engage in sexual intercourse, sodomy, lesbian acts or other sexual acts) of the Criminal Code.

Pursuant to paragraphs 26 (d) and (f) of the Committee's concluding observations, penalties for violent crimes have been increased.

Thus, under the Act dated 30 December 2020 amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan on the implementation of certain provisions of the message of the Head of State to the people of Kazakhstan of 1 September 2020 entitled "Kazakhstan in the new reality: time for action", penalties were increased for crimes against the sexual integrity of minors, namely, the acts covered by articles 120 (Rape), 121 (Violent sexual acts), 122, (Sexual intercourse or other sexual acts with a person under 16 years of age), 123, (Coercion to engage in sexual intercourse, sodomy, lesbian acts or other sexual acts), 124 (Corruption of minors), 134 (Recruitment of a minor for prostitution), 144, (Recruitment of a minor for the production of erotic content) and 312 (Production and circulation of materials or products with pornographic images of minors or the recruitment of minors to participate in visual entertainment of a pornographic nature) of the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan. The above-mentioned crimes are classified as particularly serious crimes, and there can be no reconciliation between the parties.

With regard to paragraphs 26 (g) and (h) of the Committee's concluding observations, by order of the Head of State, specialized investigators for sexual offences against women and minors have been assigned to all police departments since 2021. In accordance with the order, only female investigators are tasked with investigating crimes of this nature. A total of 361 female investigators have been assigned, and they handle 100 per cent of criminal cases involving sexual offences against women and children. There is no shortage of women investigators.

A pilot project for the provision of comprehensive assistance to victims of sexual violence through specialized centres in Kazakhstan has been under way since 10 April 2022.

Memorandums on investigations have been concluded with 52 centres in all provinces of the country, at which 149 investigations involving women have been conducted, including 117 involving minors.

In accordance with the Social Code, domestic violence is considered a form of ill-treatment and constitutes grounds for the provision of special social services.

To support the implementation of the provisions of the Code, standards for the provision of special social services to victims of domestic violence in the field of social protection have been approved (Order No. 263 of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Kazakhstan dated 29 June 2023).

Under the standards, temporary shelter organizations provide, depending on need, eight different special social services, namely, social, medical, psychological, educational, employment, cultural, economic and legal services.

According to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection of Kazakhstan, 46 crisis centres providing special social services to victims of domestic violence were operating in the country as at July 2023, comprising 15 in the public sector and 31 under State social services procurement contracts.

Between 2017 and 2022, more than 14,000 victims of domestic violence, including children who were admitted with their parents, received special social services. Since 2022, these crisis centres have been fully funded from local budgets.

A total of 1,156,593,000 tenge has been allocated for their maintenance. In 2022, 4,766 people came to the centres for help.

In addition, guidelines for working with troubled families have been developed, and police officers are being trained at higher education institutions run by government agencies.

To date, Kazakhstan has conducted two national surveys on violence against women and girls, in 2015 and 2022. The final report on the 2015 survey was presented to the general public in 2017 and was published openly on the website of the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms of Kazakhstan. The results of the 2022 survey are being processed, and the final report will be presented by the end of 2023.

Pursuant to paragraph 26 (i) of the Committee's concluding observations, by Act No.361-VI dated 7 July 2020 amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan on health, the title of article 319 of the Criminal Code was changed from "Illegal performance of an abortion" to "Illegal termination of pregnancy".

Article 151 (Surgical sterilization) of Code No. 360-VI of Kazakhstan dated 7 July 2020 on public health and the healthcare system, stipulates that surgical sterilization as a method of preventing unwanted pregnancy may be performed on patients of at least 35 years of age or with at least two children, or on medical grounds and with the consent of an adult, irrespective of age or number of children. Surgical sterilization is performed only with the informed consent of the patient and by healthcare providers licensed to perform the procedure, who are required to inform the patient in advance that the procedure is irreversible.

During the reporting period, no criminal cases were initiated under article 319 (Illegal performance of an abortion) of the Criminal Code.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 26 (j) of the Committee's concluding observations, in accordance with paragraph 4 of the Social Code, the national preventive mechanism monitors the special social services provided at crisis centres.

In addition, in accordance with paragraph 11 of Order No. 261 of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Labour and Social Protection dated 29 June 2023 approving the rules on funding and monitoring the provision of special social services in the field of social protection, entities providing special social services funded exclusively through local budgets are subject to monitoring.

As at the end of 2022, local branches of the relevant committee of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection had carried out routine monitoring of 419 special social service providers, including 2 crisis centres.

In addition, all local social services are now fully covered by video surveillance.

Article 5 (b) The objectives of the State family policy are to support, strengthen and protect families, to create the necessary conditions to support the physical, intellectual, spiritual and moral development of families and their members, and to protect motherhood, fatherhood and childhood. The Day of the Family was established in Kazakhstan to support the achievement of the national objectives of preserving cultural heritage, traditions and spirituality, educating the younger generation and strengthening the status of the family,

In 2023, the list of holidays in Kazakhstan was expanded to include Mothers' Day (second Sunday in May) and Fathers' Day (third Sunday in June) by Resolution No. 426 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 31 May 2023.

Each year, more than 100 social projects in the area of family policy are implemented by non-governmental organizations under State social services procurement contracts and with grant funding.

In the provinces, there are family backyard clubs and family social clubs that promote social partnerships among families and organize training. The family backyard clubs provide educational and psychological services, run recreational activities and have set up groups for children and adolescents.

Public associations of fathers supporting the moral and patriotic upbringing of children have been established within the education system.

Within the Kazakhstan Institute for Social Development, a centre for the study of the institution of the family has been established, at which annual research on family and gender policy is conducted.

According to the research,² 89.6 per cent of respondents believe that women can be leaders in most fields of work, and 87.3 per cent believe that both the man and the woman in a family should work. These results also reflect the progress towards gender equality in Kazakhstan.

The majority of Kazakhs attach great importance to the family and try to spend as much time as possible with their children. Indeed, 50.3 per cent of parents are with their children all the time and 32.7 per cent try to spend time together every day. The majority of children (88.3 per cent) discuss their interests with their parents, and most children (85.2 per cent) enjoy spending time with their family.

The core values that Kazakh families seek to instil in their children are diligence (33.8 per cent), self-respect (31.8 per cent), honesty (31.7 per cent), respect for elders (25.3 per cent) and respect for others (16.6 per cent).³ With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 24 (d) of the Committee's concluding observations, activities to support and develop conscious fatherhood were set out in the action plan for the implementation of the framework for family and gender policy up to the year 2030.

Measures are being taken to strengthen family values and enhance the positive role of fathers in the family. Resource centres and social services have been established to support families.

In addition, activities are being carried out in schools as part of curricula and during classes to support the upbringing and development of children and to promote positive portrayals of women as active participants in social, economic and political life. A proposal to introduce lessons on safety in schools from 2023 is being considered.

The model curriculum for secondary school classes on Kazakh literature includes the study of works depicting the lives and daily experiences of Kazakh girls and women. In classes on the history of Kazakhstan and world history, students learn about women who played a significant role in shaping historical events at various points in time. The authors of these works also explore themes related to the freedom of Kazakh girls. In accordance with the approved framework for the development of higher education and science in Kazakhstan in the period 2023–2029, inclusive education will be provided in higher education institutions, with a focus on the provision of the necessary resources and support for students on the basis of their

² Kazakhstan Institute for Social Development, "Family and demographic policy", sociological research paper, 2021.

³ National report entitled "Kazakhstan families – 2022".

socioeconomic status, gender and, in the case of foreign students, language of instruction.

Throughout the academic year, higher education institutions organize round tables and workshops on topics such as “Family values”, “Gender policy” and “No to domestic violence”, as well as preventive discussions, involving representatives of law enforcement agencies, community health centres and non-governmental organizations, on identifying cases of domestic violence.

Thus, paragraphs 24 (a), (b) and (d) of the Committee’s concluding observations are being fulfilled.

Article 6. Exploitation of women

In Kazakhstan, efforts to combat trafficking in persons are carried out:

Within the interdepartmental commission on combating the unlawful transfer abroad, entry or trafficking in persons;

Under the Government’s action plan to prevent, suppress and combat crimes related to trafficking in persons for the period 2021–2023.

Trafficking in persons, including trafficking in women and girls, is criminalized. Criminal liability is established for offences under article 128 (Trafficking in persons), article 116 (Coercion to remove or unlawful removal of human organs or tissue), article 125, part 3, paragraph 2 (Abduction for the purpose of exploitation), article 126, part 3, paragraph 2 (Unlawful deprivation of liberty for the purpose of exploitation), article 134 (Recruitment of a minor for prostitution), article 135 (Trafficking in minors), article 308 (Recruitment for prostitution) and article 309 (Establishing or maintaining premises for prostitution or procurement) of the Criminal Code.

A draft law on combating trafficking in persons in Kazakhstan has been developed and submitted to the Parliament of Kazakhstan for consideration. The law governs public relations in combating trafficking in persons and the implementation of the State policy of Kazakhstan in this area. The main objectives of the law are to protect the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of victims of trafficking in persons, including women and children, to assist victims of trafficking in persons and to ensure their safety and privacy.

The Victims’ Compensation Fund Act was adopted to provide redress to victims, including victims of trafficking in persons. The Act stipulates the forms, amounts and procedures for payments to those entitled to State-guaranteed compensation.

Any person who has been a victim of trafficking in persons, regardless of gender, is entitled to be released from administrative liability if such person is accused of an administrative offence and is recognized, under the laws of Kazakhstan, to have been a victim in a criminal case involving a crime related to trafficking in persons.

To detect trafficking in persons, including trafficking in minors, investigative and preventive measures are continually carried out under the Stop Trafficking initiative, as part of which farms, construction sites and wintering areas are inspected.

By the end of the first six months of 2023, internal affairs bodies had instituted 110 criminal proceedings for crimes related to trafficking in persons under the Criminal Code (5 under article 126, part 3, paragraph 2 (Unlawful deprivation of liberty for the purpose of exploitation); 8 under article 128 (Trafficking in persons); 7 under article 134 (Recruitment of a minor for prostitution); 16 under article 135 (Trafficking in minors), for the purpose of adoption; 7 under article 308 (Recruitment for prostitution); and 67 under article 309 (Establishing or maintaining premises for

prostitution or procurement)). A total of 54 victims of trafficking in persons (4 men, 34 women and 16 children), all of whom were Kazakh nationals, were identified; 34 of them had been trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation and 4 for forced labour, and 16 of them were newborns and young children. The 34 women victims of trafficking, all trafficked for sexual exploitation, represented 63 per cent of the total number of identified victims of trafficking in persons; they were all Kazakh nationals and were between 16 and 50 years of age. A total of 12 individuals have been convicted of these types of crimes, and the necessary legal proceedings are being carried out in the remaining criminal cases.

The number of detected victims of trafficking in persons per 100,000 population was 1.7 per cent in 2020, 1 per cent in 2021 and 0.9 per cent in 2022.

Administrative liability for knowingly providing premises for prostitution or procurement (art. 450 of the Code of Administrative Offences) was applied in 163 cases in 2020, 162 cases in 2021, 230 cases in 2022 and 172 cases in the first six months of 2023.

Together with the International Organization for Migration, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Kazakhstan organized and held, in Astana on 11 May 2023, a forum on combating trafficking in persons in Kazakhstan, at which the draft law on combating trafficking in persons was presented, and international standards and good practices of foreign countries in this area were discussed.

To inform the public about the work on the draft law, the process was widely covered in the media and on social media networks, where more than 4,000 pieces of content were published.

In addition, the Law Enforcement Academy under the Office of the Procurator-General of Kazakhstan has developed a two-day training course on supervising and supporting State prosecution of criminal cases involving crimes related to trafficking in persons.

In 2022, issues related to the supervision of cases of trafficking in persons were discussed during the provincial training courses on the topics “Tools for identifying victims of trafficking in persons and the specifics of investigating criminal cases related to trafficking in persons” and “Combating trafficking in persons along migration routes”.

In 2022, the Law Enforcement Academy, in collaboration with partners, organized eight cluster round tables on the topic “Collaboration between civil society organizations and State institutions in combating trafficking in persons”, in which representatives of the procuratorial system participated.

Thus, paragraphs 28 (a), (b), (d), (e) and (f) of the Committee’s concluding observations are being fulfilled.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 28 (c) of the Committee’s concluding observations, standards for the provision of special social services to victims of trafficking in persons have been followed since 2016. Under the standards, there are no age restrictions, and women and girls can obtain special social services through crisis centres.

In addition, the standards provide for a number of medical contraindications for people staying at organizations providing special social services.

For admission to a shelter, victims can apply to the organization themselves or be referred by, for example, labour departments or internal affairs bodies.

Victims of trafficking in persons are identified using the criteria for ascertaining whether abuse resulting in social exclusion and social deprivation has taken place.

From 2016, when the standards came into effect, to 2021, more than 460 million tenge were allocated for the social reintegration of over 800 people.

In 2022, 101 million tenge were allocated for the provision of special social services to 168 victims of trafficking in persons.

The implementation of the standards has made it possible to provide timely, urgent assistance to victims of trafficking in persons and to reintegrate them and return them to society.

In 2019, Kazakhstan launched Operation Zhusan, aimed at protecting women and children who had been radicalized. The resources of the Akniet awareness-raising and rehabilitation centre, a public foundation, have been leveraged for concerted efforts to engage with radicalized women. Various support and assistance measures are being taken, training activities are conducted to enable them to adjust quickly to a peaceful environment, and employment assistance, grants for starting a business and other kinds of social support are provided.

Of the repatriated women, 46 per cent are currently employed, 24 per cent have completed higher education and 24 per cent have completed specialized secondary education. The vast majority of the women remain traditional housewives, raising young children.

Thanks to the joint efforts of government bodies and religious leaders, to date 97 per cent of the repatriated women (182 out of 188) have abandoned their radical views.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 28 (g) of the Committee's concluding observations, active efforts are being made under provincial employment plans to involve women in productive employment.

As part of efforts to promote employment in Kazakhstan, a national entrepreneurship development project for the period 2021–2025 is being implemented. The project provides for measures to promote entrepreneurial initiative (providing grants of up to 400 monthly notional units to socially vulnerable groups, giving loans of up to 5 million tenge to young entrepreneurs for business development and running the Bastau Business online training course on the basics of entrepreneurship), job subsidies (through youth internships, the first job programme and the intergenerational contract project) and short-term vocational training (on-the-job training at the employer's workplace and training at the request of employers at training institutions).

Certain categories of employed persons, unemployed persons and persons without professional qualifications, including women, can participate in the national entrepreneurship development project.

Beginning in 2023, grants of up to 400 monthly notional units for business development have been provided to socially vulnerable groups, which include recipients of targeted social assistance, recipients of the allowance for large families and (or) their spouse, recipients of survivors' benefits, migrants, persons with *kandas* (compatriot) status, persons with disabilities who are medically fit to work, and people raising a child (children) with disabilities and (or) their spouse.

Also beginning in 2023, microloans have been provided at 2.5 per cent per annum to promote entrepreneurial initiative among young people.

Article 7. Political and public life

Article 7 (a) According to data from the Central Election Commission, women participated actively, on equal terms with men, in the elections for the Majilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan in 2023.

Women accounted for 33 of the 132 candidates registered for the elections for the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan in January 2023; 209 of the 895 candidates registered for the elections for the Majilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan in March 2023; and 3,599 of the 13,293 candidates registered for the elections for *maslikhats*.

Women represented 18 (32.14 per cent) of the 56 candidates who stood for election to the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan; 134 (25.14 per cent) of the 533 candidates for the Majilis of the Parliament of Kazakhstan; and 2,304 (29.8 per cent) of the 7,731 candidates for *maslikhats* of Kazakhstan.

Of the 98 elected deputies of the Parliament of Kazakhstan, 18 (18.37 per cent) are women; and of the 3,415 elected members of *maslikhats*, 786 (21.02 per cent) are women.

In the elections for the Majilis and *maslikhats* of Kazakhstan, 6,160,572 (51.2 per cent) of the 12,032,550 voters were women.

Women make up about 30 per cent of the members of political parties. The Amanat party, the People's Party of Kazakhstan and the Ak Zhol party each put forward 27–28 per cent women candidates. The Respublica party had the highest proportion of women candidates, at 32 per cent.

Following the elections, women accounted for 8 (20 per cent) of the 40 deputies from the Amanat party and 9 per cent of its representatives of single-member districts. Of the eight deputies from the Auyl party, one (12.5 per cent) was a woman. Of the five deputies from the People's Party of Kazakhstan, two (40 per cent) were women. Of the eight deputies from the Ak Zhol party, one (12.5 per cent) was a woman. Of the four deputies from the Nationwide Social Democratic Party, one (25 per cent) was a woman. The most gender-balanced party was Respublica; of its six deputies, three (50 per cent) were women.

Article 7 (b) With regard to paragraph 30 (c) of the Committee's concluding observations, the Academy of Public Administration under the President of Kazakhstan provides annual training and upskilling courses on women's leadership for civil servants, with contributions from foreign experts, with a view to enhancing the leadership potential and political activities of women. In 2022, workshops were held on the topics "Career and family: how to maintain balance" and "Women's leadership: balancing career and family". As a result of the workshops, more than 450 trainees enhanced their leadership capacities and gained practical skills.

The National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy under the President of Kazakhstan work at the national level and the commissions on women's affairs and family and demographic policy under the *akims* of provinces, major cities and the capital work at the local level to develop and implement State policy on gender equality and the empowerment of women.

As noted in the information on article 5, with the broad involvement of government bodies and the general public, a national media plan is being implemented with the aim of raising public awareness of women's equal, free and democratic participation in all spheres of life (paragraph 30 (f) of the Committee's concluding observations).

Article 7 (c) Women currently account for 32.3 per cent of the heads of trade unions and non-governmental organizations countrywide, 33.0 per cent of those in

urban areas and 28.1 per cent of those in rural areas. Women's non-governmental organizations tackle numerous problems; they promote tolerance, contribute to solving inter-ethnic conflicts, open rehabilitation centres and support single mothers.

Women are also represented in the National Congress, whose main purpose is to develop ideas and steps to further promote social cohesion. Of the 117 members of the National Congress, 26 (22.2 per cent) are women.

The 256 public councils have 1,070 women members, accounting for 27 per cent of all council members, with 934 of them serving in the provinces, accounting for 23 per cent, and 136 at the central level, accounting for 3.4 per cent.

The Atameken National Chamber of Entrepreneurs of Kazakhstan has established a council of businesswomen. Provincial councils of businesswomen have been established within provincial chambers of entrepreneurs, and similar councils have been formed in the districts. The main objective behind the establishment of the council is to encourage greater participation of women from the provinces in business.

Article 8. International representation and participation

With regard to paragraph 32 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations, Kazakhstan adopted, in 2021, a plan for the implementation of Security Council resolutions [1325 \(2000\)](#), [1820 \(2008\)](#), [1888 \(2009\)](#), [1889 \(2009\)](#), [1960 \(2010\)](#), [2106 \(2013\)](#), [2122 \(2013\)](#), [2242 \(2015\)](#) and [2467 \(2019\)](#).

Work is under way to train women military advisers through certified United Nations courses at the Peacekeeping Training Centre.

In 2022, a series of training courses were conducted for women military officers and women from other law enforcement agencies and peacekeeping units on leadership, and for the pool of journalists liaising with the Ministry of Defence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Office of the Procurator-General and the press services of those bodies (more than 200 people) on Security Council resolution [1325 \(2000\)](#).

Courses were provided for military gender advisers, with the participation of representatives of the armed forces, the Ministry of Emergency Situations, the National Guard and the security agencies of the Central Asian region (Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan); on gender perspectives in United Nations peacekeeping operations, with the participation of military officers of the armed forces and representatives of the UN-Women offices in Astana and New York; and for military advisers on gender and human security from Central Asian countries.

Under the approved United Nations strategy, there are plans to increase the number of women military officers serving in peacekeeping operations by the year 2028, so that 15 per cent of contingent troops and 25 per cent of United Nations military observers are women.

In 2018, a Kazakh military contingent was deployed with the Indian battalion Indbat to serve in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (at the beginning of 2023, the contingent comprised four people). Six Kazakh military observers, including women military officers, are serving in the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara.

In Central Asia, with the support of the Government of Kazakhstan, the Spotlight Initiative was launched as a regional alliance for the countries of Central Asia to share experiences and develop proposals and ideas for identifying and eliminating the causes of gender-based violence.

While serving as Chair of the Dialogue of Women of Central Asia in 2023, Kazakhstan hosted, in June of that year, a forum on the theme “The role of women in the development of innovations and technologies”, during which delegations from the countries of the region exchanged experiences and best practices in strengthening women’s leadership in the field of innovation and technology.

Women have and enjoy without discrimination the rights to represent their Governments at the international level and to contribute to the work of international organizations. Currently, 3 of the 68 Ambassadors Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan are women (in France, Finland and Morocco); and one of the six permanent representatives of Kazakhstan to international organizations is a woman (the Permanent Representative of Kazakhstan to the World Trade Organization in Geneva). In addition, of the 466 employees of the headquarters of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, 169 (36.3 per cent) are women, of whom 28 (16.6 per cent) hold senior positions.

With regard to paragraph 32 (b) of the Committee’s concluding observations, the non-profit joint stock company Kazakhstan Agency for International Development is, according to Resolution No. 861 of the Government of Kazakhstan dated 15 December 2020 on the establishment of the Agency, responsible for handling official development assistance.

According to preliminary estimates for 2023, 8.5 per cent (3,018,000 tenge) of the total budget for the Agency’s project activities (35,505,000 tenge) was allocated to technical assistance projects funded by official development assistance.

Article 9. Nationality

Article 9, paragraph 1 According to the Citizenship Act, neither the marriage of a Kazakh national to a foreign national nor the dissolution of such a marriage entails any change in nationality.

With regard to paragraph 34 (b) of the Committee’s concluding observations, the Citizenship Act establishes grounds for the denial of acquisition or restoration of Kazakh nationality (art. 17), with no requirements of economic self-sufficiency or property ownership.

Paragraph 34 (c) of the Committee’s concluding observations is addressed in the Citizenship Act. In accordance with article 20-1 thereof, deprivation of Kazakh nationality is permitted only by court decision for the commission of terrorist crimes or of crimes under the relevant articles of the Special Section of the Criminal Code of Kazakhstan, which cause serious harm to the vital interests of Kazakhstan.

Article 9, paragraph 2 Paragraph 34 (a) of the Committee’s concluding observations is addressed in the Code on marriage. Under article 46 thereof, children must be registered immediately after birth and have the right from birth to a name, the right to acquire nationality and, as far as possible, the right to know and be cared for by their parents.

Article 10. Education

Article 10 (a) Equal access to education is ensured for male and female students by law and is fully implemented in practice.

In Kazakhstan, there are 7,723 general education schools, of which 6,925, or 89.6 per cent, are State schools. A total of 3,712,960 students are enrolled in them, of whom 1,819,534, or 49 per cent, are girls (1,063,824 in urban areas and 755,710 in rural areas). There are 293,973 school-aged children from low-income families,

156,619 of whom live in rural areas; of these, 146,229 are girls, 77,716 of whom live in rural areas.

The total number of preschool children in the 2022/23 school year was 965,204, of whom 467,204, or 48.4 per cent, were girls; 567,537 of them (247,919 girls) were living in urban areas and 397,667 (192,285 girls) in rural areas. There were 7,518 children with disabilities, of whom 3,253 were girls.

The total number of students enrolled in technical and vocational education institutions is 502,911, of whom 239,149, or 47.5 per cent, are girls (223,070 in urban areas and 16,079 in rural areas).

Higher education is available in 119 higher education institutions. In the 2022/23 academic year, there were 578,237 bachelor's degree students, of whom 308,555, or 53.4 per cent, were women, 35,660 master's degree students, of whom 21,741 were women, and 6,156 doctoral students, of whom 3,878 were women.

There were 49,938 students specializing in information and communications technology, of whom 13,298, or 26.6 per cent, were women.

This indicates that there is no gender-based discrimination in admission to technical and vocational education and higher education institutions in the country.

Article 10 (b) In Kazakhstan, girls and boys, regardless of gender, are taught the same curriculum and use the same textbooks in all general education schools.

Pupils, regardless of gender, can use information resources, sports equipment, libraries and assembly halls free of charge.

The State general education standards and curricula afford everyone, without distinction as to gender, the opportunity to learn.

There are opportunities for access to advanced classes. For example, in 2023, of the 3 million children enrolled in advanced classes, more than 50 per cent were girls.

With regard to gender equality among schoolteachers, as in most countries, this profession is female-dominated in view of the specific nature of working with children. Thus, in 2023, the number of teaching staff in secondary education was 367,823, of whom 297,170, or 80 per cent, were women, and in technical and vocational education was 40,972, of whom 27,543, or 67.2 per cent, were women.

The total number of professors and lecturers at higher education institutions was 36,400, 46.1 per cent of whom held advanced academic degrees (10,400 doctoral candidates, 2,656 Doctors of Science and 3,732 Doctors of Philosophy).

Article 10 (c) With regard to the recommendations in paragraphs 36 (b) and (c) of the Committee's concluding observations, specific measures are being implemented.

In accordance with the approved framework for the development of higher education and science in Kazakhstan for the period 2023–2029, higher education institutions regularly carry out activities to support gender equality and women in higher education and science.

For example, the Kazakh National Women's Teacher Training University has been training generations of women teachers for the past 80 years. The University has a centre for women's leadership and entrepreneurship and a centre for mental health. At the University, there are 11 student clubs that help girls to realize their potential. In 2020–2022, female students at the University participated in more than 180 creative, sporting and intellectual events, winning 327 prizes.

At higher education institutions, workshops on women's health and women's psychology are organized in dormitories and faculties, and mentoring and advisory sessions are held in faculties on topics such as "Family values", "Raising children", "Women in science", "The status of women in society" and "Women in the twenty-first century".

Information regarding the development and integration into school curricula of content on gender equality, including women's rights and portrayals of outstanding women in public life, can be found in the section on article 5.

By Order No. 399 of the Minister of Education of Kazakhstan dated 16 September 2022, the curriculum of the Global Competencies course for pupils in the fifth to eleventh grades was approved. The course is aimed at equipping pupils with functional literacy, flexible competencies and high standards of behaviour.

In addition, as part of the road map for strengthening the protection of the rights of the child, combating domestic violence and tackling suicide among adolescents for the period 2020–2023, constant monitoring of the Internet is carried out to identify and respond promptly to materials and resources with unlawful content that is harmful to children (such as the dissemination of pornography and the promotion of gender-based violence against girls; propaganda for narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and their analogues and precursors; the promotion of suicide; and the sharing of information that is harmful to the health, moral and spiritual development of children).

Since 2019, a cybersurveillance information system has been in place to identify destructive materials on the Internet.

There are boards of trustees in 7,723 general education schools and all 116 educational institutions for orphans. They not only deal with general issues but also support the development of the schools, liaise with parents' associations and seek to prevent delinquency and family problems.

Article 10 (d) In the 2020/21 academic year, women accounted for 53.9 per cent of students in higher education institutions, totalling 336,729. They accounted for 54.4 per cent in 2021/22 and 54 per cent in 2022/23.

In 2022, 206,244 students applied for scholarships, of whom 116,292, or 56 per cent, were women.

Article 10 (e) To date, under the *Bolashak* programme, 12,396 people, including 6,478 women, have been educated at the best universities around the world.

Under the road map for the development of education in science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics in Kazakhstan for the period 2021–2025, more than 660 girls were selected from Kyzylorda and East Kazakhstan Provinces, and 860 students were trained on the code.org international platform and received international certificates.

Women have the same opportunities as men to become heads of educational institutions.

Thus, the total number of heads in the general secondary education system is 6,700, of whom 39,836, or 59.4 per cent, are women. The total number of heads in the technical and vocational education system is 704, of whom 309, or 44 per cent, are women. In the 119 higher education institutions, there are 25 women heads (rectors), or 21 per cent of the total number.

The Ministry of Education of Kazakhstan employs 164 staff members, of whom 116, or 70.7 per cent, are women. Of those 116 women, 32, or 27.5 per cent, hold senior positions.

Thus, paragraph 36 (e) of the Committee's concluding observations is being fulfilled.

With regard to paragraph 36 (d) of the Committee's concluding observations, one of the measures to promote youth employment is to provide young people with free vocational education and training in in-demand fields.

The plan is to increase the coverage of free vocational education and training in in-demand fields for young people to 100 per cent by 2025. For this purpose, 180,000 State-requisitioned places are provided for in the national budget (50,000 in 2023, 60,000 in 2024 and 70,000 in 2025).

Most educational grants are aimed at technical disciplines, such as information technology, construction, engineering and metallurgy.

To increase levels of graduate recruitment, targeted training is being organized at the request of enterprises with the guarantee of recruitment.

Under the "College-Student-Enterprise" tripartite agreement, enterprises undertake to organize practical training and internships for teachers on their premises and to recruit graduates. In the 2022/23 school year, 7,000 people were trained at the specific request of enterprises, and the aim is to train 10,000 people in the new school year.

The dual education system, together with the patronage of colleges by large enterprises, is another important tool for enhancing the competitiveness of college graduates in line with labour market demands. The period of practical training under the dual education system is included in the employment record of graduates, which increases their opportunities for further employment. Thus, over the past two years, more than 26,500, or 66 per cent, of college graduates who completed on-the-job training have been employed at enterprises.

In addition, to help graduates to find employment and learn about enterprises, employers are invited to participate in thematic events, at which they provide students with information about their fields of work, the recruitment requirements for graduates and the technological processes at their enterprises. Thus, as part of Employers' Day in colleges in 2022, 638 memorandums and 582 agreements on cooperation with employers were signed, and 668 thematic meetings, 458 round tables and 297 master classes and workshops were held. Orientation sessions for students were organized at 466 enterprises, and provincial employment centres held more than 200 job fairs.

Article 10 (f) Monitoring of attendance at educational institutions is carried out in accordance with Order No. 324 of the acting Minister for Education and Science dated 11 July 2017, approving the regulations on keeping records of preschool and school-age children until completion of their secondary education.

In addition, the national campaigns "Childhood without violence and cruelty", "Stop domestic violence" and "16 days of activism against violence against women and children" and others are organized each year.

As part of the "Childhood without cruelty and violence" information campaign, more than 17,000 events were held between 2021 and 2022, reaching 1.6 million students and 590,000 parents.

As part of the "Children and night work" campaign, more than 2,000 raids were carried out with the participation of more than 105,000 people, and 14,878 facilities were inspected.

Each year since 2011, a report on the situation of children in Kazakhstan has been prepared, in which general statistical data and information are presented on the

situation of children throughout the country in the areas of healthcare, education, the development and upbringing of children, children's safety, the protection of the rights of orphans, children without parental care and children with disabilities, nutrition and leisure activities for children and assistance for children in need, as well as on the issues of transport for children and the activities of boards of trustees.

The report also contains information on adolescent pregnancy and childbirth, and on gender equality in education and girls' right to education following childbirth.

Since 2022, the report has included a section on monitoring the child well-being index. Each chapter of the report sets out practical recommendations and innovative approaches to address the identified problems.

Thus, work is under way with regard to paragraph 36 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations.

Article 10 (g) According to statistical data, 7.5 million people (38.5 per cent of the total population), including 2.2 million women, currently engage in physical culture and sport on a regular basis. This marks an increase of 400,000 women compared with the previous reporting period. Currently, 66,332 people are employed in the field of physical culture and sport, of whom 12,334, or 18.5 per cent, are women. The number of women has increased by more than 300 compared with 2021.

At the summer Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro in 2020, Kazakhstan was represented by 104 athletes in 26 sports, including 46 women (45 per cent), 8 of whom won medals, in weightlifting, wrestling, judo, athletics and boxing.

At the Olympic Games in Tokyo in 2021, the national team of Kazakhstan comprised 97 athletes in 28 sports, including 33 women (34 per cent), 2 of whom won medals, in weightlifting and karate.

To give effect to the President's message of 1 September 2020 and involve children in sports and the arts, a State sports and creative quota was established in May 2021 with the aim of attracting children to sports and the arts. In 2021, to fulfil the State creative quota, local authorities allocated adequate funding to provide free coverage to 92,422 children and adolescents aged between 4 and 17 years.

In 2022, more than 400,000 children and adolescents aged between 4 and 17 years attended more than 13,000 sports clubs and creative groups free of charge. In 2023, adequate funding was allocated to cover more than 560,000 children and adolescents. As a result, more than 380,000 children have redeemed vouchers to date and are attending 10,325 sports clubs and creative groups free of charge.

According to data from the national education database, about 2.7 million children, including 1.3 million girls, attended sports clubs and creative groups in general education schools during the 2021/22 school year. During the 2022/23 school year, about 2.5 million children, including 1.2 million girls, attended sports clubs and creative groups in general education schools.

Article 10 (h) Families and schools work closely together on moral and sex education. The rights of minors to reproductive healthcare and to moral and sex education are ensured by more than 7,500 school psychologists, more than 3,000 social educators and 200,000 class teachers.

To promote proper family relationships and cultivate ethical standards and morals, the Ministry of Education organizes the national Family Hour campaign in educational institutions from 1 to 15 May each year in honour of the International Day of Families. With a view to realizing the rights of girls to education, healthcare and protection from discrimination, violence and early and forced marriage, a 10-day event dedicated to the International Day of the Girl Child is held every October. In

2022, more than 1,000 extracurricular activities were conducted, reaching more than 3 million pupils and parents.

In addition, the model curriculum ensures that pupils learn about reproductive health. For example, in eighth grade biology, the classes on human reproduction and individual development cover the topics “The importance of reproduction, and reproductive structures and functions”, “Fertilization”, “Development of the embryo” and “The stages of human life”. Educational courses on topics such as the harmful substances prevention programme, moral and sex education for schoolchildren and the protection of the reproductive health of girls and young women are offered.

Article 11. Employment

Article 11, paragraph 1 (a) According to the Labour Code of Kazakhstan, no one may be subjected to any form of discrimination, including on grounds of gender, in the exercise of labour rights (art. 6, para. 2).

Under article 90 of the Code of Administrative Offences of Kazakhstan, administrative liability is imposed for acts of discrimination in employment.

Article 11, paragraph 1 (b) By Order No. 464 of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection dated 10 December 2021, amendments were made to Order No. 944 of the Minister of Health and Social Development dated 8 December 2015, approving the list of occupations for which the use of labour by workers under 18 years of age is prohibited, the weight limits for loads carried and transported by workers under 18 years of age, the list of occupations for which the use of women’s labour is restricted, and the weight limits for loads lifted and moved manually by women, to remove the list of occupations for which the use of women’s labour is restricted.

With regard to the recommendation in paragraph 38 (b) of the Committee’s concluding observations, work has begun on the implementation of a policy for protection against harassment in Kazakh organizations, as noted in the information on article 2.

Article 11, paragraph 1 (c) In accordance with the Act on State guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women, women and men are guaranteed equal rights in labour relations, equal access to government services and gender equality in the areas of healthcare, education and culture.

An important initiative to strengthen the role of women in the socioeconomic development of the country has been the opening of centres for the development of women’s entrepreneurship in all provinces of the country at the initiative of the National Commission on Women’s Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy through the COVID-19 Solidarity Fund for Kazakhstan, a joint project of the Ministry of National Economy of Kazakhstan, the Asian Development Bank and UNDP. The first centres opened in November 2021. Counselling has been provided and needs assessments conducted for more than 8,705 women, 19 per cent of whom live in rural areas, and a total of 4,656 women have undergone training in relevant areas, such as agriculture and crowdfunding.

Since the beginning of 2023, the centres have been operating in 20 areas of the country under the *Мен Кәсіпкер* scheme of the national entrepreneurship development project for the period 2021–2025. They are funded from the national budget and run by the Atameken National Chamber of Entrepreneurs (as part of its non-financial support for entrepreneurship). A total of 40 managers and consultants and 27 mentors have been engaged to support small business development.

During the current year (as at June), the centres have been visited by 4,084 women, 86 of whom completed professional and business training; business reviews

were conducted at five enterprises headed by women; 160 women entrepreneurs participated in international projects; and seven exhibitions were held, in which 164 producers of goods from local raw materials participated under the One Village One Product programme.

Article 11, paragraph 1 (d) Equal pay for equal work for men and women is a fundamental tenet in the realization of human rights in Kazakhstan. That principle is enshrined in the Constitution of Kazakhstan.

The labour laws of Kazakhstan guarantee equal pay for equal work (i.e. for work of equal duration, intensity and complexity) and does not permit any discrimination in remuneration.

The amount of workers' monthly wages differs according to their qualifications, the complexity, quantity and quality of the work performed and the working conditions.

Thus, the recommendation in paragraph 38 (c) of the Committee's concluding observations is being fulfilled.

Article 11, paragraph 1 (e) On 1 July 2023, the Social Code of Kazakhstan entered into force, providing for a complete transformation of the social services system and increased accessibility of special social services.

In accordance with the Social Code, all individuals have equal opportunities to exercise their rights and freedoms in the sphere of social protection. No one may be subjected to discrimination of any kind on grounds of origin, social status, official position or material circumstances, gender, race, ethnicity, language, attitude to religion, beliefs, place of residence, age, health status, including disability, or any other circumstances (art. 4).

Article 11, paragraph 1 (f) According to paragraph 2 (18) of article 23 of the Labour Code of Kazakhstan, employers are obliged to warn workers about harmful and (or) dangerous working conditions and the possibility of occupational disease.

Employers are obliged to organize, at their own expense, periodic medical examinations and check-ups for workers employed for heavy physical labour or in harmful and (or) hazardous working conditions, in accordance with the procedure established by the laws of Kazakhstan.

Currently, three mechanisms for the employment of persons with disabilities are in place:

1. A job quota for persons with disabilities;
2. The national entrepreneurship development project (see section on article 2);
3. A subsidy to cover the costs incurred by employers in equipping special workstations.

In accordance with the Social Code, local authorities have supported the implementation of the State employment policy by establishing a job quota whereby 2 to 4 per cent of jobs are reserved for persons with disabilities, not taking into account jobs involving heavy physical labour or jobs performed in harmful or hazardous working conditions.

At the end of 2022, Kazakhstan was home to 711,800 persons with disabilities, including 420,000 of working age, of whom 128,500, or 30 per cent, including 52,600 women, were employed.

In addition, pregnant women, women raising children under 3 years of age and women caring for a sick family member are entitled to work part-time (art. 70, para. 3, of the Labour Code).

For workers, including those engaged in remote work, a flexible work schedule may be established to balance their social, domestic and other personal needs with the interests of production (art. 74, para. 1, of the Labour Code).

At the initiative of the worker or the employer, remote or hybrid work may be established by agreement of the parties (art. 138, para. 2, of the Labour Code of Kazakhstan).

Thus, the recommendations in paragraphs 38 (f), (g) and (h) of the Committee's concluding observations are being fulfilled.

Article 11, paragraph 2 (a) The labour laws of Kazakhstan set out safeguards governing the recruitment of pregnant women and women with children and prohibit their dismissal, and provide for additional unpaid leave for mothers with children under 3 years of age (art. 25 of the Labour Code).

Under article 100, paragraph 3, of the Labour Code, workers taking unpaid leave to care for a child under 3 years of age retain their jobs (positions).

Article 11, paragraph 2 (b) Individuals (families) with children are entitled to social protection in the form of: social benefits in the event of loss of income due to pregnancy and childbirth or the adoption of a newborn child (children); a lump-sum State childbirth allowance; a monthly State child allowance for children under 1.5 years of age; social benefits in the event of loss of income associated with caring for a child under 1.5 years of age; and subsidies provided from the budget and other funds to cover additionally determined mandatory pension contributions for recipients of social benefits for loss of income associated with caring for a child under 1.5 years of age (art. 71, para. 1, of the Social Code).

Article 11, paragraph 2 (c) The Labour Code of Kazakhstan provides for flexible working arrangements, which enable workers to successfully balance their work responsibilities with their personal and family needs and responsibilities and more women with children to participate in the labour force (see art. 11, para. 1 (f) above).

Work under flexible working arrangements does not entail any kind of limitation on the length of leave, the calculation of the length of service or other labour rights for workers.

Furthermore, the introduction of any kind of flexible working arrangements is subject to the agreement of the parties, taking into account the interests of both the employer and the employee.

Article 11, paragraph 2 (d) Under article 44 of the Labour Code, an employer must, on the basis of a medical assessment, transfer a pregnant woman to a different job at which she is not exposed to harmful and (or) hazardous working conditions, and pay her wages based on the work performed, but not lower than the average wage for her previous job.

Article 11, paragraph 3 All relevant amendments and additions to the laws of Kazakhstan have been adopted and are regularly reviewed and discussed with representatives of non-governmental organizations, expert communities and the public (see above).

Article 12. Equal access to healthcare

Article 12, paragraph 1 The Code of Kazakhstan on public health and the healthcare system (hereinafter referred to as “the Health Code”) provides for the rights of Kazakh citizens to protect their reproductive rights, to free reproductive choice and to have access to reproductive healthcare and family planning services (art. 76).

Every province has family planning offices, which provide patients with information about modern contraceptive methods and with counselling and training on contraceptive methods, how to use them and the acceptable modern contraceptive methods for women of different age groups.

Access to safe and effective contraceptive methods is ensured in Kazakhstan, and their regulation helps to prevent unwanted pregnancy. According to the laws of Kazakhstan, sterilization of girls and women is prohibited.

In Kazakhstan, 40 per cent of the population has access to contraceptives, and work is being done to raise public awareness and ensure the availability of contraceptive methods.

To improve the health of adolescents and young people, screenings are performed for the early detection of diseases (for 8 medical conditions in urban areas and 12 in rural areas, including kidney, gastrointestinal tract and respiratory diseases) and behavioural risk factors.

Preventive check-ups for children aged between 0 and 18 years are performed as part of the guaranteed package of free healthcare.

By the end of 2022, more than 3.1 million children in the country had undergone preventive check-ups, accounting for 97 per cent of the total number of children to be examined (compared with 3.6 million children, or 97 per cent, in 2020); new health conditions were identified in 8.4 per cent of the children (269,644 children), of whom 37.6 per cent (101,386 children) were placed under ongoing observation after recovery.

In addition, the Ministry of Health, in cooperation with local authorities, has been implementing the World Health Organization (WHO) health-promoting schools initiative, aimed at preventing overweight and obesity and promoting healthy lifestyles among schoolchildren.

A strategy for implementing the initiative has been developed for each school, with the participation and support of school administrators, school staff, pupils and parents.

At the end of the first six months of 2023, there were 1,472 health-promoting schools, accounting for 19.5 per cent of the total number of schools. Efforts are being made to increase the number of schools implementing the initiative.

According to article 78 of the Health Code, children aged 16 years and over have the right to give informed, voluntary consent – or to withhold consent – to preventive, diagnostic, therapeutic and rehabilitative care involving medical intervention, with the exception of termination of pregnancy.

The regulations for termination of pregnancy are governed by Order No. KR DSM-122/2020 of the Minister of Health of Kazakhstan dated 9 October 2020, approving the regulations for termination of pregnancy and the list of medical and social indications, as well as contraindications, for terminating pregnancy.

In Kazakhstan, 157 youth health centres are working to increase awareness and the accessibility of high-quality medical and psychosocial assistance for adolescents

and young people. The number of young people seeking assistance has been increasing each year. In conjunction with the country office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), efforts are being made to gradually bring the practices of the youth health centres into line with international standards for the provision of youth reproductive health services.

In 2022, more than 700,000 adolescents and young people received medical and psychosocial assistance for reproductive and mental health.

Over the past five years, the number of births by adolescents has decreased by 14 per cent, from 3,778 to 2,699, and the adolescent abortion rate has halved, from 5.8 to 2.7 per 1,000 adolescents.

Awareness-raising on the prevention of unwanted pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections among adolescents and on contraception is carried out by health workers on an ongoing basis.

More than 25,000 awareness-raising activities were conducted across Kazakhstan in 2022, including training workshops, youth events, round tables, conferences and open days, covering a total of 250,000 adolescents and young people.

A total of 22,557 campaigns were organized in the media, including 21,541 television programmes and video and audio clips broadcast on local channels, on light emitting diode (LED) monitors, on public transport, in public places, in primary healthcare organizations and in the education system; 44 outdoor advertisements; 68 publications in the print media; and 855 posts on primary healthcare websites and on social media.

A total of 137,516 information and communications materials were distributed, comprising 42,800 infographic booklets, 3,635 posters, 48,676 leaflets, 35,224 brochures, 775 exhibitions, booths, health noticeboards and health bulletins and 6,406 other materials.

Social projects have been implemented together with non-governmental organizations and international organizations (WHO, the United Nations Children's Fund, UNFPA and the Kazakhstan Association for Sexual and Reproductive Health).

The HIV prevention, treatment and diagnosis policy has been adapted for all key populations (namely, people who inject drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men, and transgender people) and is funded from the State budget.

In accordance with Order No. KR DSM-137/2020 of the Minister of Health dated 19 October 2020, approving the rules for HIV prevention measures, key populations (sex workers, prisoners and other groups) and people living with HIV are provided with condoms free of charge to prevent them from contracting sexually transmitted infections and as a means of contraception.

A total of 10,446,022 condoms were distributed in 2020, 7,316,562 in 2021 and 6,782,290 in 2022.

A comprehensive package of services that includes the 12 types of assistance recommended by WHO (including counselling, testing, antiretroviral therapy, tuberculosis treatment, needle exchange, condom distribution, informational and educational materials, and post-exposure and pre-exposure prophylaxis) has been introduced for people who inject drugs, sex workers, men who have sex with men, and transgender people. A substitution maintenance therapy (methadone treatment) programme is being piloted in the provinces.

Biobehavioural surveys are being conducted among people who inject drugs, sex workers and men who have sex with men to monitor the spread of HIV. Over the past five years, HIV prevalence among people who inject drugs has remained at

8.3–8.5 per cent. HIV prevalence among sex workers decreased from 1.9 to 1.3 per cent. The prevalence among men who have sex with men increased from 3.2 to 6.9 per cent.

Comprehensive preventive and medical social services are provided in accordance with the recommendations of WHO and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS at 132 confidential counselling centres and 29 user-friendly clinics.

With a view to further expanding the preventive services on offer, a road map for HIV prevention measures in Kazakhstan for the period 2023–2026 was approved in 2023. The road map includes measures to improve laws related to HIV, with a focus on key populations. It provides for professional development programmes for doctors of all specializations, including those working in prisons, and for the development of a strategy to counter stigma and discrimination by communities and others.

Medical assistance is provided to convicted women in accordance with the laws of Kazakhstan related to healthcare (article 117 of the Penal Correction Code of Kazakhstan governs the provision of healthcare in prisons).

There are six women's prisons in Kazakhstan holding 1,788 inmates. Incarcerated individuals are provided with a certain amount of guaranteed free health services, in cooperation with local healthcare departments, namely, outpatient clinics, medical centres and provincial centres for preventing and combating AIDS.

To assist victims of extreme violence, there are 20 mental health centres across all the provinces, 74 primary mental health centres within urban outpatient clinics and 219 district mental health offices.

In line with the Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Istanbul Protocol), in order to effectively investigate and document cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment in accordance with the Act dated 29 June 1998 on the accession of Kazakhstan to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and with article 7 (4) of the Health Code of Kazakhstan, the Ministry of Health of Kazakhstan introduced, on 1 July 2022, amendments and additions to Order No. KR DSM-175/2020 of the Minister of Health of Kazakhstan dated 30 October 2020, approving the forms for record-keeping in healthcare, relating to the documentation of symptoms of cruel treatment for early detection and recording. Medical assistance for victims is provided in trauma centres, with patients referred to medical institutions for further inpatient care.

With the aim of improving the availability and quality of cancer care, a working group has developed a draft comprehensive plan to fight cancer in Kazakhstan for the period 2023–2027.

To prevent cervical cancer, the most common form of cancer among young women, a vaccination against human papillomavirus will be gradually introduced from 2024, to be preceded by an awareness-raising campaign.

Article 12, paragraph 2 In accordance with the message of the Head of State to the people of Kazakhstan of 1 September 2020 entitled “Kazakhstan in the new reality: time for action”, to improve the family and demographic situation, the *Аңсаған сәби* programme has been implemented since 2021, under which the quota for in vitro fertilization (IVF) cycles was increased sevenfold. In 2021, 7,000 women underwent IVF (100 per cent of the quota), resulting in 3,400 pregnancies and the birth of 2,900 babies. In 2022, 7,000 women underwent IVF.

More than 400,000 deliveries are performed each year, with 1,100 deliveries per day. About 80,000 caesarean section operations are performed each year, with about 210 operations per day.

In accordance with the standards for obstetrics and gynaecology (approved by Order No. KR DSM-92 of the Minister of Health of Kazakhstan dated 26 August 2021) regarding the set-up of obstetrics and gynaecology departments, medical organizations of all forms of ownership that provide outpatient care should have an obstetrics and gynaecology department, located no higher than the second floor, with a separate corridor with a room equipped with a hydraulic chair for the examination of women with disabilities.

All women with disabilities are protected from forced abortion, forced contraception and forced sterilization against their will or without their informed consent.

The State enables women with disabilities to give birth independently by providing qualified medical professionals with expertise in managing pregnancies in women with extragenital conditions.

Each specific case of pregnancy in women with disabilities is handled on an individual basis. Depending on the severity and stage of the condition or the degree of disability, some women are allowed to become pregnant and give birth. A multidisciplinary team is responsible for managing pregnancies and childbirth among such women.

Kazakhstan has developed a network of family planning and reproductive health centres, which specialize in maintaining and restoring the reproductive functions of men and women, and which operate within clinics for women, hospitals and perinatal centres or independently.

Given the above, the recommendations in paragraphs 40 (a), (b), (c), (d) and (e) of the Committee's concluding observations are being fulfilled.

Article 13. Social and economic benefits

Article 13 (a) A national framework of support for families with children is in place, comprising a system of State benefits and payments aimed at boosting the birth rate, facilitating the upbringing of children in the family, raising the profile and standing of large families and mothers with many children, and supporting families raising a child with a disability, including:

- A lump-sum childbirth allowance provided from the national budget, regardless of the mother's employment status;
- A monthly State childcare allowance for non-working mothers of children under 1.5 years of age;
- A monthly State allowance allocated and paid to a mother or father, adoptive parent or guardian (custodian) raising a child with a disability until the child reaches adulthood. Under the Social Code, the monthly State allowance for mothers with a large number of children who have been awarded the *Алтын алқа* gold pendant or the *Күміс алқа* silver pendant or who had previously received the title of Heroine Mother or the Glorious Motherhood (Classes I and II) award, payable regardless of income, has been increased to 1.61 monthly notional units effective 1 July 2023. The Social Code has introduced a new concept of "awardee mothers". Thus, the amount of the allowance for awardee mothers will be differentiated as follows: the amount of the allowance for mothers who have received the *Алтын алқа* gold pendant, the Glorious Motherhood (Classes I and II) award or the title of Heroine Mother, that is

mothers who have given birth to and raised seven or more children, will be increased to 7.4 monthly notional units. This differentiation came into effect on 1 July 2023;

- A monthly State allowance for large families with four or more minor children;
- Maternity pay, the amount of which depends on the mother’s average monthly income for the previous 12 months;
- A childcare allowance for children under 1.5 years of age in the amount of 40 per cent of the average monthly income for the previous two years for working women;
- Subsidies to cover mandatory pension contributions for working women while on leave to care for children under 1.5 years of age, contributing to an increase in their pension savings and ensuring an adequate level of pension coverage.

Support measures for families and women with children cover all Kazakh citizens, persons with *kandas* status and also foreigners, whose right to receive benefits, regardless of their category or status, is provided for in the relevant international treaty ratified by Kazakhstan.

As at 1 January 2023, 501,200 large families had received 346.8 billion tenge in benefits in total.

State targeted social assistance is provided to families with per capita incomes below the poverty line (70 per cent of the subsistence level) established in the provinces, major cities and the capital.

In addition, from 1 January 2020, a guaranteed benefits package was introduced, providing free school meals, discounted travel on urban public transport and school uniforms and supplies for children from low-income families aged between 1 and 18 years, and food parcels and household goods for preschool children.

The current tax laws of Kazakhstan do not provide for deductions for expenses associated with caring for children and other family members or for the separate taxation of spouses.

Furthermore, in accordance with the amendments introduced by Act No. 382-VI of Kazakhstan dated 10 December 2020 to article 33 of the Act of Kazakhstan on the enactment of the Tax Code, the suspension of section 8, “Individual income tax”, of the Tax Code was extended until 1 January 2025; therefore, the tax deduction for large families will come into effect from 1 January 2025.

This tax deduction provides 23 monthly notional units per month for one of the parents of a large family and 12 monthly notional units per month for each parent of a large family; however, the total tax deduction for both parents may not exceed 282 monthly notional units for the entire calendar year.

The tax deduction for a large family is also applied if an individual has four or more minor children as at 1 January of the calendar year in which the deduction is claimed, as confirmed by copies of the children’s birth certificates.

Thus, in fulfilment of paragraph 42 (a) of the Committee’s concluding observations, all women have access to social protection programmes.

Article 13 (b) In Kazakhstan, there are no legal restrictions on obtaining loans and there is no need to obtain approval from family members. Loans are granted regardless of gender.

Thus, 48 per cent of the banks’ loan portfolio is loans to women (4.63 million loans amounting to 7.35 trillion tenge). Furthermore, women’s share of outstanding

arrears is less than that of men, amounting to 41.1 per cent. In total, there are 9.64 million loans amounting to 15.32 trillion tenge.

There are 447,000 mortgages amounting to 4.91 trillion tenge. The gender ratio for mortgages is similar to that of the overall portfolio.

Under the technical cooperation agreement between the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the Government of Kazakhstan of 24 April 2015, the Women in Business programme is being implemented. Under the programme, the Bank has provided more than \$100 million in funding, and 48 local consulting projects and 6 projects involving international experts have been implemented. The funding is intended for technical support to participating financial institutions and women-led enterprises.

To support women's economic empowerment, the Asian Development Bank has, since 2021, issued gender bonds amounting to 35.7 billion tenge, which are being used to fund the *Ұмай* women's mortgage of Otbasy Bank. Under the first two disbursements, 2,074 women received loans totalling 22.4 billion tenge. In the current year, another 15.6 billion tenge will be provided in funding under the *Ұмай* programme.

In 2023, for the first time, the microfinance organization OnlineKazFinance (Solva) joint stock company issued gender bonds amounting to 6.3 billion tenge. The proceeds of these bonds will be used as funding for women in small and medium-sized businesses.

Women's entrepreneurship initiatives are being actively supported through the national entrepreneurship development project for the period 2021–2025.

Furthermore, starting from 2023, microloans have been provided to young entrepreneurs on preferential terms for a period of up to five or seven years with an interest rate of no more than 2.5 per cent per annum. Microloans are provided to young people through the Agricultural Credit Corporation, and the maximum amount of a microloan is 5 million tenge.

With regard to paragraph 42 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations, the following measures have been taken.

In accordance with the laws of Kazakhstan on housing, a register is drawn up of Kazakh citizens who are eligible for municipal housing or private housing leased by the local authorities. The categories of citizens who are recorded in the register are set out in article 67, paragraph 1, of the Housing Act and include mothers with many children who have received the *Алтын алқа* gold pendant or the *Күміс алқа* silver pendant or who had previously received the title of Heroine Mother or the Glorious Motherhood (Classes I and II) award, and women from socially vulnerable groups who meet the conditions set out in the law.

Large families on the waiting list for municipal housing are provided rental housing on a first-come, first-served basis and also have access to the "2-10-20" and "5-10-20" preferential mortgage programmes.

In addition, local authorities provide housing certificates as social assistance or social support in the form of budget loans. In the current year, funds amounting to 102.7 billion tenge have been allocated for the purchase of 10,703 apartments.

Article 13 (c) Under article 12, paragraph 1, of the Culture Act, the State guarantees citizens the right to participate in cultural activities by ensuring the rights to participate in cultural life, to have access to cultural heritage and to receive education in culture and the arts.

In Kazakhstan, about 11,754 people are currently working in the cultural sector (in theatres, libraries, museums, music, cinema, archives and the book industry); more than 6,324 of them are women, of whom more than 754 hold managerial positions.

In the provinces, about 58,829 people are working in the cultural sector (in theatres, libraries, museums, music and cinema); more than 31,260 of them are women, of whom more than 2,545 hold managerial positions.

Thus, the recommendations in paragraphs 42 (c), (d) and (e) of the Committee's concluding observations are being fulfilled.

Article 14. Rural women

Article 14, paragraph 1 At the beginning of 2023, 7.6 million people, or 38.2 per cent of the total population of Kazakhstan, were living in rural areas. They included 3.7 million women (49.3 per cent) and 3.8 million men (50.7 per cent). In 2022, 3.5 million people were employed in rural areas, of whom 1.6 million, or 45.2 per cent, were women.

According to data of the Bureau of National Statistics of the Agency for Strategic Planning and Reforms, the number of registered agricultural goods producers in agribusiness in 2022 was 19,535, of whom 3,178, or 16.3 per cent, were women managers, and during the first six months of 2023 was 20,069, of whom 3,281, or 16.3 per cent, were women managers.

The number of agribusiness processing enterprises in 2022 was 4,042, of which 1,061, or 26.2 per cent, were managed by women, and during the first six months of 2023 was 4,147, of which 1,073, or 25.8 per cent, were managed by women.

The number of registered peasant holdings in 2022 was 248,602, of which 67,801, or 27.3 per cent, were managed by women, and during the first six months of 2023 was 268,103, of which 75,241, or 28.1 per cent, were managed by women.

Meanwhile, measures have been taken under employment and income generation programmes to promote women's active participation in agricultural production.

By order of the Head of State, implementation of the *Auyl Amanaty* project to increase the income of the rural population began this year.

This year, 100 billion tenge have been allocated for the project's implementation, which will allow for the issuance of about 17,000 preferential microloans to the population at an interest rate of 2.5 per cent and the creation of more than 18,000 jobs in rural areas.

Over a period of seven years, up to 1 trillion tenge will be allocated to the project, covering more than 1 million rural residents and engaging them in cooperative entrepreneurship through the creation of about 350,000 jobs.

In 2022, under the *Auyl Amanaty* project, microloans amounting to 246.5 million tenge were provided to 55 people, as follows: 40 men received a combined amount of 178.4 million tenge; and 15 women (27.3 per cent) – 68.1 million tenge.

In the current year, microloans amounting to 5.8 billion tenge were provided to 1,154 people, as follows: 721 men received a combined amount of 3.6 billion tenge; and 433 women (37.5 per cent) – 2.2 billion tenge.

With the aim of providing people and businesses with high-speed Internet access of at least 100 megabits per second, including in rural areas, the Accessible Internet national communications project for the period 2023–2027 is being implemented. The aim is to install fibre-optic cables in more than 3,000 villages, covering 1.2 million

people (475 villages in 2024, 795 villages in 2025, 954 villages in 2026 and 959 villages in 2027).

To tackle the issue of providing broadband Internet access to small remote rural villages (with fewer than 250 inhabitants) where there is no communications technology, a space communications system will be employed. Internet services will be provided to 504 villages through this project. A public access point is being considered to provide user access. In 2023, 176 villages out of 504 will be provided with communications services through this project.

At the end of 2022, 89.9 per cent of women aged between 6 and 74 years used computers (compared with 88.9 per cent in 2021 and 85.4 per cent in 2020) and 94.2 per cent of them used the Internet (compared with 92.6 per cent in 2021 and 88.0 per cent in 2020).

Thus, the recommendation in paragraph 44 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations has been partially fulfilled.

With the support of UN-Women, a project to support women's entrepreneurship centres and introduce the One Village One Product philosophy to Kazakhstan has been implemented.

Under this project, a strategy for enhancing women's entrepreneurship development centres has been drafted, national experts analysed the challenges and opportunities for the development of women's industries in Kazakhstan, a press training course was conducted for media representatives on the topic "How not to miss important things when covering gender policy", and 45 offline and online training courses were provided for women entrepreneurs, covering more than 1,200 women from 17 regions, who had applied to the centres in the provinces, and for project participants (leaders) and others.

Article 14, paragraph 2 (a) As at 1 January 2023, women headed more than 65,000, or more than 27 per cent, of peasant or farm holdings, while in 2011 their share had been 11 per cent.

Information on women's representation in decision-making can be found in part I, General information.

Article 14, paragraph 2 (b) Information regarding access to adequate medical care, including family planning information, counselling and services, can be found in the section on article 12.

Article 14, paragraph 2 (c) According to the laws on the principles of compulsory social insurance, in Kazakhstan the right to receive childcare benefits arises when social risks occur.

Thus, a person caring for a child under 1.5 years of age receives both social benefits from the State social security fund and the childcare allowance for children under 1.5 years of age from the national budget (for the childcare benefits from the State social security fund, the following conditions must also be met: the person must participate in the compulsory social security scheme and have lost income as a result of caring for a child under 1.5 years of age).

The laws make no distinction as to gender, and childcare can be provided by both a man (father) and a woman (mother).

Article 14, paragraph 2 (d) Equal access to education for male and female students is ensured by law and is being fully implemented in practice (see section on article 10).

Article 14, paragraph 2 (e) With the adoption of the Agricultural Cooperatives Act in 2015, the main barriers to the development of cooperatives were removed. Thus, cooperatives were transformed from non-profit into for-profit cooperatives, which could distribute profits among their members. The principles of democracy (one member, one vote) were preserved, and financial and tax incentives were introduced.

To promote cooperatives, under the investment subsidy provisions, priority is given to subsidizing machinery and equipment purchased for agricultural cooperatives, with the subsidy rate increased to cover up to 50 per cent of the cost through the local budget.

Under tax law, agricultural cooperatives are subject to a special tax regime with a 70 per cent exemption on all taxes.

In addition, as part of plans to scale up the *Auyl Amanaty* project to increase the income of the rural population through agricultural cooperation, agricultural cooperatives will be established in every rural area and will be involved in the production, processing, selling and storage of agricultural products and the supply of production equipment and logistical resources.

Under this project, a loan of 8,000 monthly notional units or 27.6 million tenge will be provided to agricultural cooperatives, which should enable them to purchase agricultural machinery and the necessary equipment and to open small shops for the processing of crop and livestock products.

In 2022–2023, 1,209 microloans amounting to more than 6 billion tenge were distributed under this project, with 448 microloans, or 37.2 per cent of the total number, granted to women for an amount of 2.3 billion tenge.

Article 14, paragraph 2 (f) In Kazakhstan, there are no restrictions on the participation of rural women in collectives.

Article 14, paragraph 2 (g) Agricultural lands are granted on a competitive basis. Thus, all citizens and legal entities are granted plots of agricultural land in accordance with the general principles set out in the Land Code of Kazakhstan.

Given that farming is now mechanized, agricultural workers no longer need to be physically strong. The use of scientific methods, and thus education, now plays a significant role in livestock and crop production. Women can therefore participate in agricultural work and take on leadership roles in farm holdings.

In 2022, the total number of adults owning land (proprietors and land users) in Kazakhstan was 436,337, comprising 345,546 men and 90,791 women, of whom 34,478 were living in urban areas and 56,313 in rural areas.

Article 14, paragraph 2 (h) By order of the Head of State, systematic efforts to implement the *Ауыл – Ел бекігі* project have been made since 2019.

The aim of the project is to improve the quality of life of rural residents by modernizing infrastructure and bringing it into line with new regional standards.

In 2023, 198.2 billion tenge were allocated for the implementation of the project, including 58.9 billion tenge for the modernization of 421 social facilities in rural villages.

The funds allocated for the modernization of social facilities will cover 114 education, 58 healthcare and 249 culture and sports projects.

This comprehensive approach to rural development will significantly improve the quality of life and well-being of rural residents by 2027.

Article 15. Equality before the law and civil law

Article 15, paragraph 1 Under the Constitution of Kazakhstan, all persons are equal before the law and the courts.

Under article 2, paragraph 1, of the Civil Code, “civil law is based on recognition of the equality of the subjects of such law, the inviolability of property, the freedom to conclude contracts, the inadmissibility of any kind of arbitrary interference in private affairs, the need for direct exercise of civil rights, redress for rights violations, and judicial protection of rights”.

Article 15, paragraph 2 Under article 13 of the Constitution, “everyone has the right to recognition as a person before the law and the right to defend his or her rights and freedoms by all means in keeping with the law, including self-defence. Everyone has the right to judicial protection of his or her rights and freedoms. Everyone has the right to qualified legal assistance. In circumstances specified by law, legal assistance is provided free of charge.”

In accordance with the Advocacy and Legal Assistance Act, State-guaranteed legal assistance is provided for a certain category of citizens free of charge (art. 18). Legal assistance is paid for by the State (in 2022, State-guaranteed legal assistance was provided to 169,760 individuals; in 2023, as at April, it had been provided to 48,398 individuals).

On 20 June 2022, the Act amending and supplementing certain legislative acts on the improvement of intellectual property laws and the provision of State-guaranteed legal assistance was adopted, significantly expanding the range of persons covered by the law.

These now include individuals seeking compensation for damage caused by the death of a breadwinner, by work-related harm to health or by a criminal offence; victims of sexual violence, trafficking in persons, acts of terrorism or torture seeking the safeguarding and protection of the rights and legitimate interests relating to their status or situation; veterans of the Great Patriotic War and persons of equivalent status entitled to similar privileges, as well as veterans of armed conflicts in other countries, conscripts, disabled persons in categories I and II, and old-age pensioners seeking assistance with issues not related to business activities; large families seeking assistance with issues not related to business activities; and persons (families) with low incomes.

On 28 March 2023, legal advisers were included in a single budget classification under programme 005, approved pursuant to the State Budget Act.

Resources from the State budget were allocated for the implementation of the programme, as follows: 1,669,454 tenge in 2021, 2,356,905,000 tenge in 2022 and 2,719,506,000 tenge in 2023.

There are currently 5,891 citizens carrying out advocacy work in Kazakhstan, of whom 2,278, or 39 per cent, are involved in the provision of State-guaranteed legal assistance.

The total number of legal advisers in Kazakhstan is 13,010, and efforts are also under way to involve them in the State-guaranteed legal assistance system.

As a result of the amendments made to the law, the number of citizens provided with State-guaranteed legal assistance has grown. For example, in 2021 State-guaranteed legal assistance was provided to 122,337 citizens, while in 2022 the total number was 169,495.

As at 2022, the breakdown of State-guaranteed legal assistance by type was as follows: 102,516 citizens were provided with assistance in criminal cases, 2,755 in civil cases and 5,262 in administrative cases.

The number of citizens who have received State-guaranteed legal assistance in the form of legal advice has also grown (16,786 in 2021, 53,051 in 2022 and 18,516 in 2023).

While in 2021 citizens receiving legal advice represented 12.6 per cent of the total number receiving State-guaranteed legal assistance, in 2022 the number receiving legal advice represented 32 per cent of the total, which is a threefold increase.

Article 15, paragraph 3 When making transactions or signing contracts, or in other civil law matters, everyone has signatory authority and the right to vote.

Everyone has the right to bring action in court to protect violated or disputed rights, freedoms or legitimate interests (art. 8, para. 1, of the Code of Civil Procedure).

The law does not place any restrictions on the right to bring court action based on sex, i.e. women have equal rights with men. The Code of Civil Procedure, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Code of Administrative Offences establish rules governing the legal status of parties to proceedings. There are no provisions under which the weight of evidence depends on whether it was provided by a person of one sex or the other.

Article 15, paragraph 4 With regard to paragraph 48 (a) of the Committee's concluding observations, the State provides women with disabilities with special social services in accordance with the procedure established in the Social Code, which entered into force on 1 July 2023.

Persons with disabilities, including women with disabilities, are provided with technical resources and rehabilitation services on the basis of their individual programme of habilitation and rehabilitation.

Concerning paragraph 48 (b) of the Committee's concluding observations, Kazakhstan is committed to ensuring human rights and fundamental freedoms in accordance with the international rules and principles set out in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

The Constitution of Kazakhstan expressly provides that "the exercise by citizens of human rights and freedoms shall not impinge on the rights and freedoms of other people or undermine the constitutional order or public morals".

Kazakhstan therefore systematically implements its policy of protecting human rights and ensuring the personal safety of every citizen in Kazakh society in strict compliance with constitutional principles and safeguards.

With regard to paragraph 48 (c) of the Committee's concluding observations, there were 327 persons with refugee status in Kazakhstan as at 1 June 2024. The number of persons seeking asylum was 642.

The legal situation of asylum-seekers and refugees in Kazakhstan, irrespective of sex, is set forth in the Refugees Act.

Refugees have equal rights with Kazakh citizens to the guaranteed package of free healthcare (full package), including for illnesses that present a risk to others, in accordance with the list and quantity specified by the competent authority (art. 83 of the Code on Public Health and the Healthcare System).

The aforementioned persons are also entitled to receive medical care under the system of compulsory social health insurance and voluntary health insurance, on an equal footing with Kazakh citizens, upon payment of an insurance premium.

Stateless persons temporarily residing in Kazakhstan and asylum-seekers are provided with emergency and non-emergency medical care, paid for under voluntary health insurance or by charitable organizations or social protection agencies (adaptation centres).

Under the Refugees Act, asylum-seekers also have the right to freedom of labour or of enterprise (art. 8).

With regard to refugees' access to social security under paragraph 30 of the action for the implementation of the migration policy framework for the period 2023-2027, work is under way to amend the country's laws and regulations with a view to implementing the 1951 Convention.

Pursuant to Government Decision No. 183 of 9 March 2010, the rules for granting, extending, withdrawing and rescinding refugee status were adopted.

These rules were drafted in accordance with the Refugees Act and determine the procedure for granting, extending, withdrawing and rescinding refugee status, irrespective of the sex of the person requesting asylum.

In addition, by Order No. 118 of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection of 7 April 2022, the rules for the registration and consideration of requests for refugee status were approved.

Article 16. Marriage equality and family law

Article 16, paragraph 1 (a) The Marriage and Family Code (hereinafter referred to as "the Code on marriage") prohibits any form of restriction on the rights of citizens upon entry into marriage and in family relations on the grounds of origin, social position, occupation and property, race, ethnicity, language, religious view or any other circumstances.

There were 53,835 marriages registered in the first six months of 2023. There were 128,359 officially registered marriages in 2022; 140,256 in 2021; and 128,839 in 2020.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (b) In accordance with article 9 of the Code on marriage, marriage requires the free and full consent of the man and woman entering into the marriage, who must be of legal age for marriage.

Under article 2 of the Code on marriage, only marriages performed by the State bodies are recognized. A marriage concluded according to religious rites and ceremonies does not equate to a marriage registered with the registering authorities and does not give rise to the related legal consequences. The de facto cohabitation of a man and a woman, or of persons of the same sex, is not recognized as marriage. At the same time, the law does not prohibit women with disabilities from marrying or having custody of their children.

Under article 222 of the Code on marriage, if it is impossible or extremely difficult for both persons entering into a marriage to be present at the registering authority or foreign country office of Kazakhstan when submitting a marriage application (owing to such reasons as remote location, serious illness, mobility impairment or military service), a marriage application completed in the prescribed form and signed by both persons entering into the marriage may be submitted by one of them.

Article 10 of the Code on marriage sets the legal age of marriage for men and women at 18 years, which may be lowered by up to two years in the event of pregnancy of the spouse and the birth of the couple's child. The legal age of marriage may be lowered only with the consent of the persons entering into marriage. Marriage is permitted between persons under the legal age of marriage, or between a person of marriageable age and a person below the legal age of marriage, only with the written consent of the parents or guardians of the persons below the legal age of marriage.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (c) Under Article 30 of the Code on marriage, spouses enjoy equal rights and have equal responsibilities. Issues related to motherhood, fatherhood, the upbringing and education of children, place of residence, residence of the spouses and other aspects of family life are resolved jointly by the spouses.

The termination of a marriage does not interrupt or terminate the legal relationship between parents and children born or adopted in that marriage.

In accordance with article 16 of the Code on marriage, a marriage may be dissolved on the basis of a petition filed by one or both spouses, and also of a petition by the guardian of a spouse who has been recognized by the court to be incompetent. During pregnancy or the first year of a child's life, a marriage cannot be dissolved without the consent of the wife.

According to article 17 of the Code on marriage, a marriage may be dissolved in the registration bodies by mutual consent between spouses who have no minor children together, and in the absence of material or other claims against each other.

When a marriage is dissolved in court, the spouses may submit for consideration an agreement regarding which of them will have custody of their minor children, the arrangements for the payment of child support and (or) support for a spouse who is unable to work, the amount of such support, the division of jointly owned property and the determination of access between the parent and the child. The court order states the names of the spouses after the dissolution of the marriage.

The number of petitions regarding matrimonial property disputes upon the dissolution of a marriage (by urban and rural area and sex):

Property division lawsuits:

In 2022, a total of 2,445 cases were closed, with judgments issued for 934 of them (714 or 76.4 per cent were satisfied), and 1,693 involved lawsuits brought by women.

In the first seven months of 2023, a total of 1,308 cases were closed, with judgments issued for 526 of them (411 or 78.1 per cent were satisfied), and 904 involved lawsuits brought by women.

The number of restraining orders issued against women's spouses in situations of domestic violence were as follows:

There were 506 restraining orders issued in 2022 (and 226 in the first seven months of 2023): the perpetrators of domestic violence were prohibited from residing in an individual dwelling or from seeking out or pursuing victims against their will.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (d) In accordance with article 68 of the Code on marriage, parents have equal rights and equal responsibilities in relation to their children (parental rights). Parental rights are terminated when children reach the age of 18 (legal majority) and also when minor children marry. According to article 70 of the Code on marriage, parents have a priority right to raise their child over all other persons. Parents have the right and obligation to raise their child and to care for his or her health. Parents raising a child are responsible for ensuring the necessary living conditions for the child's physical, mental, moral and spiritual development.

Under article 138 of the Code on marriage, it is the duty of parents to provide funds to fully support minor children. The way in which minor children are provided with this support is determined by the parents themselves. If parents do not voluntarily provide the funds to support their minor children, as well as adult children studying in general secondary, technical and vocational, post-secondary education and higher education on a full-time basis under the age of 21 years, these funds are recovered from them in court.

Under article 147 of the Code on marriage, spouses are obliged to support each other financially.

Parents are the legal representatives of their children and protect their rights and interests in relations with any individuals or legal entities, including in the courts, without requiring special authorization.

Under article 66 of the Code on marriage, a child is entitled to ownership of income earned by him or her, property received as a gift or inheritance, and any other property acquired with his or her funds. The law provides for equal inheritance rights for girls and boys, irrespective of gender, in respect of movable and immovable property.

There were 189,515 births registered in the first six months of 2023. There were 403,893 officially registered births in 2022; 446,491 in 2021; and 426,824 in 2020.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (e) The Health Code governs the rights of citizens and families in Kazakhstan to reproductive rights protection. Under article 79 of the Health Code, citizens of Kazakhstan are entitled to free reproductive choice and to decide freely on the number and timing of children born in or out of wedlock and the intervals between births necessary to preserve the health of the mother and the child.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (f) Pursuant to article 122 of the Code on marriage, only adults, irrespective of gender, may be guardians or custodians, with the exception of the persons specified in that article. Women have the same rights as men with regard to custody, guardianship and adoption.

A guardian or custodian may be appointed only with his or her consent. In appointing a guardian or custodian for a child, account is taken of the moral and other personal qualities of the guardian or custodian, his or her ability to perform the duties of a guardian or custodian, the relationship between the guardian or custodian and the child, the attitude of the members of the guardian's or custodian's family towards the child, and, if possible, the child's own wishes. If the person appointed as the guardian or custodian of a minor is married, the mandatory consent of his or her spouse is required. Guardians or custodians act in defence of the rights and interests of their wards in relations with any persons, including in court, without requiring special authorization.

The death of the husband does not result in a restriction of the parental rights of the children's mother. A woman's right to custody of her children is not lost in the event of marriage or divorce. Under the legislation in force, a woman's marital status does not affect her parental rights.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (g) Under article 30 of the Code on marriage, both spouses are free to choose their field of activity, occupation and faith. Issues related to motherhood, fatherhood, the upbringing and education of children, place of residence, residence of the spouses and other aspects of family life must be resolved jointly by the spouses.

In accordance with the Constitution of Kazakhstan, everyone has the right to freedom of labour and the free choice of occupation and profession. Forced labour is allowed only pursuant to a court judgment, in a state of emergency or under martial

law. Everyone has the right to working conditions that meet safety and hygiene requirements, to remuneration for labour without any discrimination, and to social protection against unemployment.

Article 31 of the Code on marriage provides that, when they marry, the spouses may choose one of their surnames, if they so wish, as the common surname, or each of the spouses may keep his or her premarital surname, or may append the surname of the spouse to his or her own surname. Surnames cannot be joined if one of the spouses has a double-barrelled surname.

Under paragraph 1 (1) of article 100 of the Labour Code, employers are required to grant unpaid leave to employees to care for a child up to 3 years of age: either to the child's mother or father, to be decided by the parents.

Article 16, paragraph 1 (h) In accordance with article 32 of the Code on marriage, the legal regime for marital property is the regime of common joint ownership, unless otherwise stipulated in the marriage contract. Property acquired by spouses during the marriage is under their common joint ownership.

Income earned by each of the spouses from work performed, entrepreneurial activity or intellectual activity, income from common property of the spouses and separate property of each of the spouses, and pensions, allowances, pension accumulations, except for lump-sum pension payments from a unified accumulative pension fund for the purpose of improving housing conditions and (or) paying for medical treatment, or other monetary payments received which are not specifically targeted (material assistance, amounts paid in compensation for loss of working ability as a result of injury or other damage to health, and so forth) are considered to be property acquired by the spouses during the marriage. Moveable and immoveable property, securities, shares, contributions, or shares in authorized capital deposited with credit institutions or other organizations, or any other property acquired by the spouses during the marriage, regardless of in whose name it was acquired or which of the spouses deposited the financial resources, are also considered to be common property of the spouses, including property acquired using lump-sum pension payments from a unified accumulative pension fund for the purpose of improving housing conditions.

The right to common property of the spouses also belongs to a spouse who, during the period of marriage, managed the household, cared for the children or for other valid reasons did not have an independent income.

The possession, use and disposal of joint marital property must be carried out by mutual consent of the spouses.

Article 16, paragraph 2 There is no provision in domestic legislation for the betrothal of children. To date no case involving the betrothal of a child has been recorded.

In addition, the Spiritual Administration of Muslims of Kazakhstan issues a certificate of marriage only after the submission of an official document from the civil registry office.

Clerics from the Spiritual Administration also carry out awareness-raising work among parishioners, on an ongoing basis, on family values and on the spiritual and moral education of young people.

Regarding paragraphs 46 (b) and (c) of the Committee's concluding observations: in cases of forced marriage and bride kidnapping, a person's liability is governed by article 125 of the Criminal Code (Abduction).

Establishing mechanisms to detect cases of child and/or forced marriages and bride kidnapping (in criminal proceedings) was discussed in inter-agency working groups and other dialogue platforms.

According to the statistical data for 2022, 10 cases against 21 persons were considered by the courts under article 125 of the Criminal Code (Abduction) (with 24 cases against 54 persons in 2021 and 15 cases against 30 persons in 2020), and convictions were handed down in 13 of those cases (in 15 cases in 2021, and in 11 cases in 2020).

There were 30 persons convicted in 2022 (34 persons in 2021 and 41 persons in 2020), 24 of whom were sentenced to imprisonment (26 persons were sentenced to imprisonment in 2021, with eight given suspended sentences; and 33 persons were sentenced to imprisonment in 2020, with three sentenced to restriction of liberty and five to suspended sentences) and the rest were exonerated.

The court takes all the measures provided for by law in conducting a comprehensive, complete and objective investigation of all the facts needed for the proper elucidation of the case.

Thus, under the Act dated 30 December 2020 amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan on the implementation of certain provisions of the message of the Head of State to the people of Kazakhstan of 1 September 2020 entitled “Kazakhstan in the new reality: time for action”, penalties were increased for crimes against the sexual integrity of minors, i.e. acts under article 122 (Sexual intercourse or other acts of a sexual nature with a person under 16 years of age).

Conclusion

Kazakhstan is taking specific measures to implement the Convention.

The framework for family and gender policy in Kazakhstan up to the year 2030 was updated in 2022. Long-term and short-term gender policy indicators are set forth in the framework and the action plan for its implementation.

A statistical compendium entitled “Women and men of Kazakhstan” is published annually.

The main legislative Act related to gender policy is the Act on State guarantees of equal rights and equal opportunities for men and women, adopted in 2009.

The following were also adopted: the Act amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan on the implementation of certain provisions of the message of the Head of State to the people of Kazakhstan of 1 September 2020 entitled “Kazakhstan in the new reality: time for action”, by which penalties were increased for crimes against the sexual integrity of minors (2020); amendments to the Labour Code of Kazakhstan, to remove the list of occupations for which the use of women’s labour is restricted (2021); amendments to the Elections Act, according to which political parties must draw up their lists of candidates taking into consideration the rule that at least 30 per cent of parliamentary seats must be reserved for persons with disabilities, women and young people (2022); the Act amending and supplementing certain legislative Acts of Kazakhstan concerning human rights in criminal proceedings, the enforcement of sentences and the prevention of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, by which liability was increased for offences in the family and domestic sphere (2023); the Social Code of Kazakhstan, which provides for a complete transformation of the social services system and increased accessibility of special social services (2023); and other legal Acts in the areas of healthcare, education and employment aimed at improving the lives of people, including women.

In addition, in 2023, the following constitutional laws entered into force: the Act on the Commissioner for Human Rights; the Act on the Office of the Procurator; and the Act on the Constitutional Court. These Acts set out new ways for citizens to restore violated rights and prevent such violations.

The strategy for the development of Kazakhstan up to 2050 is focused on preventing gender-based discrimination and ensuring gender equality and equal opportunities for women and men.

At the initiative of the President, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, the “State that Listens” policy framework is being implemented with a view to ensuring effective communication between the State and the people and to increasing the involvement of citizens in governance.

During the reporting period, the following were adopted and implemented: a framework for the development of preschool, secondary, technical and vocational education for the period 2023–2029; a framework for the development of higher education and science for the period 2023–2029; a framework for healthcare development up to 2026; a framework for the legal policy of Kazakhstan up to 2030; a civil society development framework; a migration policy framework for the period 2023–2027; a framework for the development of local governance in Kazakhstan up to 2025; the Comfortable Schools project; the Healthy Nation project for the provision of high-quality and accessible healthcare to every citizen for the period 2021–2025; the project for the modernization of rural healthcare; the entrepreneurship development project for the period 2021–2025; the Accessible Internet project for the period 2023–2027; and other national projects.

All national laws are directed at achieving de facto social equality between men and women.

The President of Kazakhstan and the Government are focused on strengthening and toughening penalties for violence against women and children and on preventing domestic violence.

The *Мерейлі отбасы* (model family) national competition is held annually with the aim of strengthening the institution of the family and increasing the responsibility of parents for the upbringing of children. In 2023, the list of holidays in Kazakhstan was expanded to include Mothers’ Day (second Sunday in May) and Fathers’ Day (third Sunday in June).

The measures taken have led to recognition from international organizations such as the United Nations, OECD and the World Bank of the progress made by Kazakhstan in combating discrimination against women. The Government of Kazakhstan will continue to take steps to implement the provisions of the Convention and to address the Committee’s concluding observations.
