



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

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## **Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination**

### **Concluding observations on the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Uzbekistan**

#### **Addendum**

### **Information received from Uzbekistan on the follow-up to the concluding observations\***

[Date received: 20 May 2015]

### **Information from the National Centre for Human Rights of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the implementation of paragraphs 12, 14 and 20 of the concluding observations and recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination following consideration of the combined eighth and ninth periodic reports of Uzbekistan**

#### **Information on paragraph 12 of the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations**

1. At the Millennium Summit in 2000, 189 countries, as Member States of the United Nations, undertook the obligation to achieve the eight Millennium Development Goals formulated in the Millennium Declaration. The Declaration resolved by 2015 to reduce maternal mortality by three quarters and under-five mortality by two-thirds of their current rates and to improve maternal health.
2. The Uzbek Government has thus implemented a number of large-scale State programmes to improve women's health, to ensure the birth and upbringing of a healthy generation and to promote better awareness of health in families.
3. One of the main objectives of Presidential Decision No. 2221 of 1 August 2014 on the State programme for further improvement of the reproductive health of the population and protection of the health of mothers, children and adolescents (2014–2018), which is currently being implemented, is to ensure broad and equal access to quality medical services in order to promote the reproductive health of the population and protect the health of mothers, children and adolescents at all levels of the health-care system.

\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.



4. Until 1990, the main method for preventing unwanted pregnancies in Uzbekistan was through abortion. Each year, over 6 per cent of women of child-bearing age terminated unwanted pregnancies. Whereas in 1991, only 13 per cent of women of child-bearing age regularly used one form of contraception or another, by 2006, according to a multiple indicator cluster survey (MICS), contraception was already being used by 64.8 per cent of women and in 2013, by about 60 per cent (according to data from the Ministry of Health). Of the women using contraception, only 9.2 per cent used voluntary surgical contraception.

5. The availability of a wide range of contraceptives and the public's better awareness of methods for preventing unwanted pregnancy has meant that abortions have ceased to be a means for regulating the birth rate. Induced abortions are legal in the country and can be carried out in medical facilities during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. In recent years, the abortion rate has decreased from 39.9 to 5.0 per thousand women.

6. In 2013–2014, sociological research was carried out by the Institute for Social Research, with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), in the city of Tashkent, Tashkent Province and the provinces of Namangan, Navoiy and Surxondaryo. A survey indicated that 71.1 per cent of women used contraception. There was no significant difference between urban and rural areas in terms of awareness and practical use of the different forms of contraception. For example, the proportion of women using intra-uterine devices (IUDs) stood at 49 and 45 per cent in cities and rural areas respectively; for condoms, 19 and 30 per cent; for the lactational amenorrhea method, 21 and 25 per cent; for the pill, 10 and 19 per cent; for voluntary surgical contraception, 6 per cent in both rural and urban areas; and for hormonal injections, 3 and 6 per cent, respectively.

7. Between 2005 and 2014, to facilitate access to the latest means of contraception and guarantee an uninterrupted supply, the Ministry of Health, with technical support from UNFPA, created and introduced a sophisticated system for managing contraceptive supplies and logistics.

8. Nowadays, the public is familiar with the different methods for preventing pregnancy: IUDs, oral and injection-based hormonal contraceptives and voluntary surgical contraception as a conscious choice taken by both spouses.

9. Voluntary surgical contraception is used when a woman's state of health presents specific medical indications that make pregnancy or the use of other contraceptive methods absolutely contraindicated. It is used to protect the woman's life. The medical indications include numerous prior surgical interventions during labour (such as caesarean sections), serious high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, heart defects, cirrhosis, blood disorders, thromboembolic complications, a history of epilepsy and other illnesses causing risks of complications during pregnancy and labour.

10. In addition, voluntary surgical contraception is not available to women who have only one or two children in their families when their partners or spouses do not give their consent or if there are doubts regarding the reversibility of the operation. Voluntary surgical contraception is thus contingent on the woman and her spouse being fully informed, with individualized attention being paid to the specific case of each patient, taking into account the person's needs and preferences for undergoing the operation. Voluntary surgical contraception helps to improve the woman's quality of life.

11. The Ministry of Health is systematically working on further developing preventive health care, improving mother and child reproductive health, especially in rural areas, and consistently implementing the "Healthy mother – healthy child" policy objective. Since 2009, a week of health promotion for women of child-bearing age,

children and adolescent girls has been organized every month in all the country's regions with the participation of doctors at rural health centres and leading specialists from the national specialized medical centres, university hospitals and institutions in the city of Tashkent.

12. The State has earmarked 8 billion sum for the purchase of multivitamins; every year, this helps keep some 400,000 pregnant women in rural areas healthy, thus strengthening maternal health, which also in turn reduces birth defects.

13. Reports of forced surgical sterilization and the violation of women's rights for the birth of a third and further children are unfounded. Numerous studies carried out in Uzbekistan by representatives of many international organizations, including the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and UNFPA, have repeatedly confirmed the transparency of the Government's policy with regard to the human right to reproductive health and a healthy family.

14. No cases of forced sterilization of Roma women or of female human rights advocates in Uzbekistan have been investigated, as no reports or complaints have been received by the law enforcement bodies, the Women's Committee of Uzbekistan or other women's rights organizations.

#### **Information on paragraph 14 of the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations**

15. From the first days of independence of the Republic of Uzbekistan, there has been a growing understanding that economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights can be realized only if equal opportunities to meet essential needs in terms of education, health care and employment, etc. are enjoyed by all.

16. For centuries, Uzbekistan has had various religious and ethnic groups living together in concert. Over the millennia, diverse religions and faiths have always coexisted in its territory. Members of 136 peoples and ethnic groups are currently living peacefully in Uzbekistan and are actively involved in the country's social and political life.

17. In the elections to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis held in December 2014, Karakalpaks, Russians, Tajiks, Kazakhs and Koreans were elected along with Uzbeks.

18. Figures from the Central Electoral Commission indicate that members of 10 ethnicities are represented in Uzbek State bodies, including:

- The Senate of the Oliy Majlis – 7 ethnicities;
- The Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis – 11 ethnicities;
- Local authorities – 9 ethnicities.

19. Representatives of Uzbekistan's peoples and ethnic groups are members of the political parties now active in the country. As at 1 January 2015, the Movement of Entrepreneurs and Businessmen – the Liberal Democratic Party of Uzbekistan had a total of 248,379 members, of whom 3.8 per cent were Tajik, 2.5 per cent were Russian, 2.9 per cent were Kazakh, 3 per cent were Karakalpak, 1 per cent were Tatar and 1.3 per cent were from other ethnic groups.

20. In the December 2014 election, Karakalpak, Korean, Russian, Tajik and Kazakh members of this party were elected to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis.

21. As at 1 January 2015, the "Milli Tiklanish" Democratic Party of Uzbekistan had over 184,000 members in its ranks, of whom 8,450 were members of other ethnic

groups. Some 50 people working in various roles at all levels of the party bodies were of Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Korean, Russian, Tajik, Tatar or Turkmen ethnicity.

22. To encourage ethnic minorities to take part in party activities and increase their political engagement, and to forge collaboration with different ethnic cultural centres, regional party offices in the Republic of Qoraqalpog'iston and the provinces of Navoiy, Samarqand and Tashkent, hold events on the topic of "My homeland: I praise you in my soul", with the participation of Azerbaijani, Jewish, Kazakh, Korean, Russian and Turkish ethnic cultural centres in the country's regions.

23. As at 1 January 2015, the People's Democratic Party of Uzbekistan had members of 51 ethnicities. The ethnic groups with the most (1,000 or more) members in this party were the Tajiks (15,886, or 3.8 per cent of the membership); the Karakalpaks (14,915, or 3.8 per cent); the Kazakhs (10,878, or 2.75 per cent); the Russians (5,523, or 1.1 per cent); the Tatars (2,592, or 0.65 per cent); the Turkmens (2,449, or 0.62 per cent); the Kyrgyz (1,658, or 0.42 per cent); and the Koreans (1,010, or .025 per cent).

24. Of the 40 presidents and vice-presidents of the party's councils in the Republic of Qoraqalpog'iston, the provinces and the city of Tashkent, 37 were Uzbek and 3 are Karakalpak. Of the 194 representatives of party district and city councils, 157 were Uzbek; 26 were Karakalpak; 7 were Russian; 2 were Kazakh; 1 were Tajik; and 1 was Bashkir.

25. As at 1 January 2015, the "Adolat" (Justice) Social Democratic Party of Uzbekistan had over 106,700 members in Uzbekistan, of whom 85,672 were Uzbeks (80.1 per cent); 4,738 were Russians (4.4 per cent); 4,737 were Tajiks (4.4 per cent); 3,427 were Kazakhs (3.2 per cent); 3,157 were Karakalpaks (2.9 per cent); 1,432 were Tatars (1.4 per cent); 794 were Kyrgyz (0.7 per cent); and 1,645 were representatives of other ethnicities (1.6 per cent).

26. The International Cultural Centre of Uzbekistan plays a significant role in representing the interests of peoples and ethnic groups. The Centre participates in joint events with ministries and departments, the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Qoraqalpog'iston, the regional, municipal and district authorities and voluntary organizations in implementing a single State policy for relations between ethnic groups.

27. The Centre focuses on encouraging, coordinating and promoting public initiatives for a strengthening of the principles of inter-ethnic harmony, cultural development and an improvement of ethnic relations and on providing charitable assistance to different peoples and ethnic groups living in Uzbekistan.

28. The Centre represents the interests of cultural centres in government agencies and coordinates their activities with regard to the implementation of statutory tasks, reviving and promoting the distinctive traditions, customs and ceremonies of the country's different peoples and ethnic groups.

29. The Makhallas, unique self-governing bodies without parallel anywhere else in the world, are playing an increasingly important role in the system of civil society institutions.

30. The board of the Makhalla charitable foundation provides assistance and support for community outreach initiatives promoting tolerance among different ethnic groups in 9,940 citizens' assemblies.

31. The Makhalla foundation's actions help to stem the prejudice that leads to restrictions or violations of the rights of persons of non-Uzbek origin and to ethnic conflict, while also promoting understanding, tolerance and friendship between the country's different peoples and ethnic groups.

**Information on paragraph 20 of the Committee's concluding observations and recommendations**

32. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and its local representative offices are actively organizing a review of the social and legal protection of citizens irrespective of their ethnic and religious identity and of ways to prevent violations of the rights and legitimate interests of all persons living in Uzbekistan.

33. In March 2015, there were 124,839 foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in Uzbekistan: 29,150 were foreigners and 95,790 were stateless persons. In 2014, 860 of these were granted residence permits, of whom 434 were foreigners and 426 were stateless persons.

34. As required by Cabinet of Ministers Decision No. 41 of 16 February 2012 on the procedures for the permanent and temporary registration of foreign citizens and stateless persons in the city of Tashkent and Tashkent Province, in accordance with submitted declarations, 724 foreign nationals and stateless persons have been permanently registered and 2,174 foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in other regions have been temporarily registered in those places.

35. In 2014, in accordance with the Regulations on biometric travel documents of stateless persons in Uzbekistan approved by Presidential Decree No. 4262 of January 2011, 912 biometric travel documents were issued for the temporary or permanent departure of stateless persons from Uzbekistan.

36. In accordance with article 17 of the Uzbek Citizenship Act of 2 July 1992, the Ministry of Internal Affairs received 153 applications for citizenship from stateless persons. Of these, 127 were considered and forwarded to the Citizenship Commission, a body under the authority of the President of Uzbekistan.

37. Pursuant to article 15 of the Uzbek Citizenship Act, passports were issued to 2,846 children born in Uzbekistan to stateless persons.

38. The experiences of other countries when they have acceded to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness are currently being studied. Uzbekistan's accession to these international instruments will require the gradual introduction of certain measures, including, inter alia:

- Drafting national legislation regulating procedures for determining the status of stateless persons;
- Creating a specialized body authorized to take decisions on petitions requesting recognition of stateless person status;
- Formulating regulations and practices for addressing issues related to persons in Uzbekistan with unclear status;
- Improving institutional capacity to handle the problems faced by stateless persons, by training the administrators responsible for considering, for instance, requests for the granting of stateless person status.

## Annex

### Ethnicity of deputies elected to the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis in 2009 and 2014

<i>Ethnicity</i>	<i>2009</i>	<i>2014</i>
Uzbek	137	133
Karakalpak	7	7
Other nationalities	6	10
Including:		
Russian	3	4
Tajik	3	2
Kazakh	0	3
Korean	0	1

### Ethnicity of members of the Senate of the Oliy Majlis

<i>Region</i>	<i>Senators</i>	<i>Women</i>	<i>Ethnicity</i>			
			<i>Uzbek</i>	<i>Karakalpak</i>	<i>Kazakh</i>	<i>Korean</i>
Republic of Qoraqalpog'iston	6	2	3	3		
By province:						
Andijon	6	1	6			
Buxoro	6		6			
Jizzax	6	1	6			
Navoiy	6	1	5		1	
Namangan	6		6			
Samarqand	6	2	6			
Sirdaryo	6		6			
Surxondaryo	6	1	6			
Tashkent (province)	6	2	6			
Farg'ona	6	2	6			
Qashqadaryo	6	1	6			
Xorazm	6		6			
Tashkent (city)	6	1	5			1
By presidential decree	16	3	14	1	0	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>As a percentage</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>