



# Convention on the Rights of the Child

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## Committee on the Rights of the Child

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### Consideration of reports of States parties

## Replies of Uzbekistan to the list of issues in relation to its fifth periodic report<sup>\*</sup>, <sup>\*\*</sup>

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

\*\* The annexes to the present report may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



## Part I

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 2 (a) of the list of issues (CRC/C/UZB/Q/5)**

1. The legal framework of Uzbekistan made it possible to secure children's rights in the period before and after the pandemic. In March 2020, a crisis mitigation fund of 10 trillion sum was established. Benefits for temporary incapacity to work equal to 100 per cent of average wages were introduced for parents and persons in loco parentis who were quarantined and those caring for the children of such persons, where the children are under 14 years of age. Employers were banned from dismissing workers who are the parents or guardians of a child under 14 years of age who had the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) or had been quarantined.
2. Pursuant to a presidential decree of 3 April 2020, benefits for families with children, childcare benefits and financial assistance were introduced, and the list of basic food and hygiene products for persons in need of nursing care was expanded. In accordance with a presidential decree of 18 May 2020, the number of recipients of benefits and financial assistance for families with children under 14 years of age and of benefits for caring for children under 2 years of age was increased by 10 per cent.
3. In July 2020, mobile COVID-19 prevention teams were set up at clinics, and rapid testing and enzyme-linked immunosorbent assay methods were introduced. A disease control and public health service was created, and the Kindness and Support Fund was established to provide financial assistance to families in need with low incomes or many children.
4. Children with COVID-19 receive medical assistance, including medicines and laboratory tests, free of charge. Several medical facilities were converted for the hospitalization of children with COVID-19, and separate children's beds were made available in adequate numbers.
5. Interim recommendations on the treatment of patients with COVID-19 and on the management of pregnancy and childbirth in association with COVID-19 and care for newborns whose mothers have COVID-19 were developed.
6. When the lockdown was in place and schools were closed, 96 per cent of children continued their education, and remote and hybrid teaching methods were used to support learning.

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 2 (b) of the list of issues**

7. Uzbekistan is a party to 11 international human rights treaties. Efforts are being made to ensure that national law is consistent with international human rights standards, including those relating to children's rights. Following incorporation, the rules of international law become part of domestic law with binding force.
8. Judges are guided by national law, in which the Convention on the Rights of the Child is fully reflected. In implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, provision has been made for the adoption by the plenum of the Supreme Court of a decision on the application by the courts of the principles and rules of international law and the international treaties to which Uzbekistan is a party.
9. A draft set of measures on improving the juvenile justice system and ensuring that the principles of the best interests of the child are applied as effectively as possible in practice has been drawn up, as has a set of measures on ensuring effective parliamentary and public oversight of the implementation of legislation in this area.
10. In 2020, a series of workshops on the application of United Nations human rights treaties in court decisions in the context of administrative, criminal and civil proceedings took place in Tashkent, Xiva, Nukus, Urganch, Samarkand and Djizak. The workshops were organized by the Supreme Court, the United Nations Development Programme, the United States Agency for International Development, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Project Coordinator and the National Centre for Human Rights.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 2 (c) of the list of issues**

11. In Uzbekistan, systemic measures are being taken to strengthen the organizational and legal mechanisms for ensuring respect for and protection of children's rights. The texts adopted include:

- Policy outline on strengthening the institution of the family (29 June 2018)
- National Human Rights Strategy (22 June 2020)
- Programme of comprehensive measures to strengthen the protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of children
- Plan of measures to further improve the system in place to secure children's rights (9 August 2021)
- Road map on the introduction of an overhauled system of care for orphaned children and children deprived of parental care

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 2 (d) of the list of issues**

12. In August 2021, the National Commission on Children's Rights and its local subdivisions in the regions were established; they are chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister and the Children's Ombudsman. The Commission coordinates the activities of government agencies and organizations working on children's rights issues and monitors and evaluates the measures adopted to protect children's rights. Each year, the Commission and its subdivisions submit information on their activities to the Senate, the Jokargy Kenes (parliament) of the Republic of Karakalpakstan and the councils of peoples' deputies (*kengash*).

13. A parliamentary commission on compliance with the international human rights obligations of Uzbekistan has been established to ensure that the recommendations of international organizations are implemented and that international human rights standards are incorporated into national law.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 2 (e) of the list of issues**

14. In April 2019, the post of Deputy Commissioner for Human Rights of the Oliy Majlis (Ombudsman) – Commissioner for Children's Rights – and a children's rights unit were established under the parliamentary Ombudsman. The main tasks and activities of the Commissioner for Children's Rights were set out in a presidential decision of 29 May 2020.

15. In August 2021, as part of efforts to further improve the system in place to safeguard children's rights, the post of Deputy Ombudsman was abolished, and the Commissioner for Children's Rights of the Oliy Majlis was established as an independent institution of its own. The Children's Ombudsman is elected by the houses of the parliament on the proposal of the President, for a five-year term.

16. The bill on the Children's Ombudsman was drawn up with the participation of 40 government organizations and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). On 20 January 2021, with the support of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), a round table was held in Uzbekistan to discuss the bill with the participation of Renate Winter, Vice-Chair of the Committee on the Rights of the Child; Bruce Adamson, Children and Young People's Commissioner Scotland and Chair of the European Network of Ombudspersons for Children; and the commissioners for children's rights of the Russian Federation, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Tajikistan.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 2 (f) of the list of issues**

17. The laws adopted in recent years to strengthen the mechanisms for monitoring corruption at all levels and in all sectors include the Anti-Corruption Act, the Parliamentary Oversight Act, the Public Oversight Act, the Dissemination of and Access to Legal Information Act, the Administrative Procedures Act, the Public Procurement Act and the Act on the Protection of Victims, Witnesses and Other Participants in Criminal Proceedings.

18. In 2019, as part of measures to radically improve personnel policy and the civil service system, the Civil Service Development Agency was established under the Office of the President of Uzbekistan. The Agency is responsible for the implementation of a unified State policy in the area of personnel management and human resource development across government agencies and organizations. A programme of priority measures to radically improve personnel policy and the civil service system in Uzbekistan has been adopted.

19. Since 1 September 2021, government agencies and organizations have recruited through an open online competition. On 1 October 2021, internal corruption monitoring units began operating in all government agencies and organizations.

20. A mechanism has been introduced to ensure that the directors of personnel departments, management departments, departments for economic and financial affairs, bodies with oversight functions and government agencies and organizations are regularly rotated, as have other mechanisms to prevent abuse.

21. On 1 January 2022, a system of mandatory declaration of income and property was introduced for public servants; the directors and deputy directors of organizations that are more than 50 per cent publicly owned and government enterprises and institutions; and their spouses and minor children. Public servants are banned from opening or holding accounts, keeping cash or owning immovable or other property outside Uzbekistan.

22. The Anti-Corruption Agency was established under the Office of the President pursuant to the Presidential Decree of 29 June 2020 on additional measures to improve the anti-corruption system in Uzbekistan. The Agency is responsible for formulating and implementing government policy on preventing and combating corruption and reports to the President and the houses of the parliament.

23. The National Interdepartmental Anti-Corruption Commission and its regional interdepartmental commissions have become the National Anti-Corruption Council and its regional councils.

24. Committees on combating corruption and on judicial and legal issues have been established under the two houses of the Oliy Majlis.

25. In accordance with a presidential decree of 6 July 2021, a public electronic register of persons found guilty of corruption offences is being set up, the results of public procurement exercises are to be published each year, and a rating system is to be introduced to evaluate the effectiveness of the anti-corruption activities of all government agencies and organizations. Since 1 August 2021, the results of procurement exercises have been made publicly available.

26. A State programme on combating corruption, which sets out 44 measures to be implemented, has been approved for the period 2021–2022. Bills on the declaration by public servants of their income and assets and on the settlement of conflicts of interests have been drafted, as has a bill amending the Criminal Code to set out a specific list of corruption offences, strengthen the penalties for such offences, establish liability for illicit enrichment uncovered during the income and assets declaration process and limit the application of criminal penalty mitigation provisions in respect of persons who have committed such offences. A regulatory text has been drafted with a view to granting the Anti-Corruption Agency the powers to suspend the validity of contracts, orders and other documents and to apply to the courts to have such documents declared invalid if any conflict of interest comes to light.

27. Over the past three years, the efforts made to combat corruption have resulted in 3,441 criminal cases and the prosecution of a total of 4,969 officials. Of these officials, 97 were employed by subdivisions of ministries, departments and organizations at the national level, 351 at the provincial level and 4,521 at the district or city level. Over the period 2018–2020, reparation was provided in the amount of 2,626,528,000,000 sum, equivalent to 90 per cent of total losses.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 3 (a) of the list of issues**

28. The national system for monitoring and evaluating respect for children's rights is overseen by the Children's Rights Commissioner, who has the power to request statistics, analysis and other information and materials from government agencies and organizations; to report violations of children's rights legislation to government agencies; and to petition the law enforcement agencies for the institution of proceedings against persons whose actions are found to have violated children's rights and freedoms. A public council for the protection of children's rights has been established under the Children's Ombudsman.

29. The Children's Ombudsman has the right to regular and unimpeded access to institutions, services and facilities responsible for the care and protection of children, including educational, medical and detention facilities and penal institutions.

30. Between March 2020 and May 2021, the Ombudsman carried out approximately 100 visits to children's institutions and studied their conditions in order to evaluate compliance with international children's rights standards.

31. Visits were made to children's colony No. 24, Mehribonlik homes, Muruvvat homes for children with disabilities, the children's units of neuropsychiatric hospitals and neuropsychiatric clinics, children's homes, social and legal assistance centres for minors, the Special College of Light Industry for Girls in Qo'qon, the reform schools in Chinoz and Baxt, SOS Children's Villages, the Ūrtasaroy quarantine area, remand centre No. 1, women's colony No. 21 and an open prison.

32. With the assistance of UNICEF, the National Centre for Human Rights carried out exercises to monitor, inter alia, the implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the compliance of legislation relating to children's property rights with international standards and the efforts made to strengthen the participation of children's NGOs in the implementation of international children's rights instruments. In response, a number of laws and regulations were adopted to enhance the legal status of children and strengthen the safeguards in place to protect them.

33. The public monitoring of children's rights is carried out by NGOs. For example, the Institute for Democracy and Human Rights carried out an exercise to monitor the situation with regard to children's rights to education: the study covered preschool, primary, secondary and higher education, and legal and financial shortcomings were identified, as were shortcomings relating to human and other resources. The Institute issued recommendations regarding the problems that had been identified and the development of social partnerships in this area, including the participation of NGOs and parents in the management of educational organizations through the establishment of parent, public oversight and student councils.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 3 (b) of the list of issues**

34. Uzbekistan is implementing a comprehensive plan to improve the country's position on international rankings and indices in the policy and legal sphere.

35. The Official Statistics Act was adopted as part of efforts to strengthen the legal framework for the collection and analysis of statistical data. The data-collection system is being developed, and organizational and legal measures are being taken to compile and analyse disaggregated data on children in accordance with international standards.

36. In implementation of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, data on the implementation of children's rights to education, including the rights of the Lyuli/Roma ethnic group, have been collected, and statistical forms for reporting the ethnicity of persons in contact with the criminal justice system have been introduced.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 3 (c) of the list of issues**

37. Considerable efforts are being made to enhance the role of NGOs in Uzbekistan. In accordance with a policy framework adopted to develop civil society over the period 2021–

2025, government support is to be provided for the creation of NGOs working on the problems faced by children, young people, women and older persons; the participation of NGOs in public oversight, governance and social project implementation is to be enhanced; and further efforts are to be made to ensure that government agencies operate in a highly open and transparent manner.

38. To involve civil society in the process of planning, monitoring and evaluating laws, a procedure has been introduced to provide for the mandatory public discussion of draft laws and regulations. It has been established that bills affecting the rights and legitimate interests of NGOs are to be agreed with the National Association of Non-Governmental Non-Profit Organizations.

39. Through a dedicated portal set up in 2018, “Mening fikrim” (“My Opinion”, <https://petition.gov.uz/ru>), citizens can submit collective communications to the parliament, the Government and local councils of peoples’ deputies. These mechanisms ensure citizen participation in the administration of society and the State.

40. Over the past four years, more than 1,270 NGO projects have received support, with 117 billion sum allocated from the State budget.

41. To support the development of civil society institutions, the procedure for creating NGOs has been simplified, the official registration fee has been reduced, the procedure for having NGO events authorized by the registration authority has been replaced with an event notification procedure, and measures have been taken to ensure that NGOs have unrestricted use of funds provided by foreign States and international and foreign organizations.

42. The institution of permanent NGO representative was established under the lower house of the parliament. In eight regions, NGO hubs furnished with modern equipment have been set up with public funding. Cash flows to NGOs increased twelvefold between 2016 and 2020.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 4 (a) of the list of issues**

43. To strengthen safeguards of children’s rights, a presidential decision of 24 April 2019 granted children deprived of parental care, for the full duration of the time they live in a Mehribonlik home or with a tutor or guardian, the right to retain a housing unit at their place of residence until they reach the age of 18 years and granted children over 14 years of age the right to file claims on their own initiative for the recovery of support payments from their mother or father. Plaintiffs are exempt from paying the official fee and other charges when they apply to the courts in connection with the protection of children’s rights.

44. To further strengthen safeguards of children’s rights, the Code of Criminal Procedure was amended pursuant to the Act of 6 December 2019 to strengthen the safeguards in place to protect children’s rights in criminal proceedings (arts. 61, 121, 181, 196, 442, 552, 553 and 559), prohibit waiver of counsel in cases against minors (art. 52) and establish that a close relative of a minor may be recognized as a legal representative (art. 60). The Children’s Rights Safeguards Act was supplemented with provisions on the protection of children from torture and violence, sexual harassment, and exploitation and abuse in all their forms (art. 10).

45. Pursuant to a law of 10 March 2020, a provision on the bodies and officials authorized to make decisions when settling issues affecting a child’s interests was added to the Family Code (art. 10); a provision safeguarding a child’s right to apply to an agency of tutorship or guardianship or other government agency, on his or her own initiative, for the protection of his or her rights and lawful interests in the event of an abuse of parental rights was added to the Children’s Rights Safeguards Act (art. 11); a provision stating that the views of the child are to be considered regardless of his or her age and that decisions are to be made on the basis of his or her best interests was added to the same Act (art. 15); and a provision setting out the procedure for considering communications from minors to government agencies and organizations was added to the Communications from Legal Entities and Individuals Act (art. 24<sup>1</sup>).

46. In 2021, the legal framework governing the adoption procedure was improved through the introduction of amendments to the Family Code (art. 152) and the Tutorship and

Guardianship Act (art. 22) concerning persons who may not adopt minors because they have committed serious or especially serious offences or have illnesses that preclude adoption.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 4 (b) of the list of issues**

47. In Uzbekistan, steps have been taken to ensure that all children, including those under the age of 10 years, have the right to be heard in judicial and administrative proceedings affecting them, especially in civil proceedings and alternative care proceedings.

48. Efforts are being made to improve the system for providing legal assistance free of charge and introduce the principle of the best interests of the child into judicial practice and legislation.

49. In accordance with the Presidential Decision of 22 April 2019 on additional measures to further strengthen safeguards of children's rights, the safeguards in place to ensure that government agencies consider all communications from minors and the right of children to express their views when issues affecting their interests are being settled and in any judicial or administrative proceedings have been strengthened. In such cases, the authorities or individuals responsible for taking decisions to settle issues affecting the interests of children should give due consideration to the views of the children themselves, irrespective of their age, and should take decisions on the basis of the children's best interests. These provisions are set out in the Family Code, the Code of Civil Procedure, the Children's Rights Safeguards Act and the Communications from Legal Entities and Individuals Act.

50. Between 2018 and the first quarter of 2021, the civil courts considered 489 cases concerning family disputes in which the views of a minor were heard (128 in 2018, 126 in 2019, 152 in 2020 and 83 in the first quarter of 2021). Of these 489 civil cases, 287 concerned family care arrangements (maintenance), 22 concerned child visitation, 1 concerned consent to obtain a biometric passport, 14 concerned the determination of the place of residence of a child whose parents do not live together, 150 concerned adoption, 1 concerned adoption annulment, 11 concerned deprivation of parental rights and 3 concerned restoration of parental rights.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 4 (c) of the list of issues**

51. Youth policy is geared towards creating an environment that supports young people socially and protects and fulfils their personal, political, economic, social and cultural rights, freedoms and legitimate interests.

52. In 2018, the Government adopted the "Yoshlar – kelajagimiz" State programme, and the "Yoshlar – kelajagimiz" foundation was established. Under the programme, 1.7565 trillion sum was allocated to support 8,380 business projects, and 41,777 jobs were created. More than 3,300 young people were allocated starter homes, and over 150 billion sum was paid out to cover mortgage down payments. In addition, employment was found for 134,521 young people in ministries, departments and economic management bodies.

53. The State fully supports the participation of young people in public and social affairs. The Volunteering Act of 2 December 2019 provides for the participation of young people in efforts to support persons on low incomes, unemployed persons, persons with many children, persons who are homeless or live in street situations, and persons who live alone, are older or have disabilities. The young people of Uzbekistan played an active role in the preparation of a draft international convention on the rights of youth, which was drawn up on the basis of an initiative put forward by the President at the seventy-second session of the General Assembly.

54. In 2017, the post of deputy chair of the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Karakalpakstan for youth affairs was established, and the post of deputy regional chief administrator (*hokim*) for youth affairs was established in the provinces, the city of Tashkent, districts and cities. In 2018, the post of vice-president for youth affairs was established at higher education institutions. In 2020, the post of deputy chair of the assembly of citizens, consultant on youth affairs and youth rights adviser was established within citizens' self-governance bodies.

55. Pursuant to a presidential decree of 30 June 2020, a programme of additional measures for the further development of youth policy was approved, and the Agency for Youth Affairs and the Institute for the Study of Youth Problems and the Training of High-Potential Staff reporting to the Agency were established. Pursuant to a presidential decision of 3 December 2020, measures were taken to improve the system for selecting talented young people to attend academic lycées attached to higher education institutions and ensure that students have the knowledge required to play an active role in the ongoing reforms.

56. The Committee on Youth, Culture and Sports was established under the Senate, the upper house of the Oliy Majlis, and the Commission for Youth Affairs was established under the Legislative Chamber, the lower house. Youth parliaments with 250 members have been set up under the houses of the Oliy Majlis.

57. In Uzbekistan, 30 June has been declared Youth Day. The official “Mard o’g’lon” awards and “Kelajak bunyodkori” medal were introduced to encourage ambitious young people to achieve success in diverse fields.

58. Nine young people were elected to serve as deputies in the Legislative Chamber of the Oliy Majlis (6 per cent of the total number of deputies), and young people make up 10 per cent of deputies in local councils of peoples’ deputies. The Youth Academy was established under the Ministry of Innovative Development.

59. The year 2021 was declared the Year of Youth Support and Health Promotion, a presidential grant was awarded to 200 young people who scored the best marks in the examinations for entry to higher education institutions, educational loans – to be repaid after graduation – were granted to families with two or more children studying at higher education institutions on a fee-paying basis, and the government grant for girls in need who are admitted to a higher education institution was increased by 25 per cent.

60. Pursuant to a presidential decree of 13 July 2021, children from low-income families have their tuition fees paid in full for the 2021/22 academic year; young people marrying for the first time receive a housing loan of up to 33 million sum; housing subsidies are available for 2,000 young families; and young professionals working in government agencies who have completed a bachelor’s or master’s degree or hold an advanced degree receive additional pay.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 5 (a) of the list of issues**

61. The Act on the Protection of Children from Information Harmful to Their Health does not restrict the right of children to freedom of expression and access to information. The Government approved regulations on the criteria and procedure for determining age ratings and assessing content; on the procedure for the accreditation of content assessors by the specially authorized government agency for the protection of children from information harmful to their health; and on requirements relating to administrative and organizational measures and hardware, software and technological tools for protecting children from information harmful to their health.

62. The Information and Mass Communications Agency is responsible for assessing content and determining age ratings.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 5 (b) of the list of issues**

63. Fibre-optic broadband Internet is gradually being installed at general education schools in implementation of a programme of measures for the further development of the education system over the period 2018–2020, which was approved by presidential decision on 5 September 2018.

64. So far, Uztelecom has installed high-speed fibre-optic Internet at 9,285 schools (93 per cent of schools, compared with 30 per cent in 2019 and 71 per cent in 2020). Of these, 8,773 schools (88 per cent of schools) have been equipped with end devices (FTTx and 6P0F1) for Internet access. With local budget funding, 8,773 general education schools (88 per cent) are on a special Internet plan for educational institutions. In 2021, all schools in Uzbekistan had a high-speed Internet connection. Currently, 5,300 schools have local network infrastructure.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 6 (a) of the list of issues**

65. To provide support for women and children who are victims of harassment and violence, the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support set up a telephone helpline (1146), the “Girls’ Voice” channel was launched on social networks, and various Telegram channels (@Yosh\_oila\_toshkentsh, @Yosh\_oila\_samarkand, @Yosh\_oila\_toshkentsh, @Yosh\_oila\_toshvil, @samyoshlar and <https://t.me/seningTashab>) were created to enable experts to explain the provisions of the Act on Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence.

66. In 2020, the Regulation on the procedure for granting protection orders, ensuring respect for rights and monitoring women and children who are victims of harassment and violence was approved. In 2020, the internal affairs agencies registered 8,773 administrative offences in connection with domestic abuse (compared with 16,692 in the first eight months of 2018 and 12,237 in the first eight months of 2019) and 571 criminal cases involving serious or especially serious offences against women or children (compared with 473 in the first eight months of 2018 and 292 in the first eight months of 2019).

67. Women and children who are victims of domestic violence may be accommodated at centres for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence and the prevention of suicides, where they are provided with food, medicines and hygiene products. Victims of violence receive psychological, legal and medical assistance, anonymously if required, and are given information about organizations that can provide additional assistance. There is a 24-hour hotline.

68. Within the system for the prevention of offending of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, a women’s unit has been established to identify women in difficult situations. In the first eight months of 2020, protection orders were issued for the benefit of 4,780 women, including 44 minors and 1,222 women aged 18–30 years. Of those protection orders, 2,421 were for physical abuse, 25 for sexual abuse, 1,946 for mental abuse, 57 for economic abuse and 398 for harassment. Over the same period, the prevention service of the internal affairs agencies referred 213 women and girls in difficult circumstances to centres for the rehabilitation and reintegration of victims of violence and the prevention of suicides.

69. In 2018, the courts heard 1,784 criminal cases concerning gender-based violence, against a total of 2,053 defendants. Of these criminal cases, 1,377 yielded guilty verdicts, against a total of 1,586 persons.

<i>Category of case</i>	<i>Number of criminal cases heard</i>	<i>Number of persons convicted under the criminal law</i>	<i>Number of persons recognized as victims</i>
Domestic violence	539	613	629
Sexual violence	278	321	348
Discrimination and abuse in the workplace	8	9	10
Other forms of violence and discrimination	552	643	643
<b>Total</b>	<b>1 377</b>	<b>1 586</b>	

Of the 1,586 persons convicted of gender-based violence under the criminal law, 56 were parents of the victim, 70 were close relatives of the victim’s spouse, 307 were spouses of the victim, 171 were other relatives of the victim and 982 were other persons.

	<i>Number of persons convicted under the criminal law</i>	<i>Number of victims</i>
<b>Total, of which:</b>	<b>1 586</b>	<b>2 105</b>
Men	1 258	
Women	328	

	<i>Number of persons convicted under the criminal law</i>	<i>Number of victims</i>
By age category:		
Under 18 years	27	169
18–30 years	646	751
31–60 years	863	1 081
Over 60 years	50	104
By ethnicity:		
Uzbek	1 411	1 880
Kyrgyz	7	4
Kazakh	23	25
Tajik	33	24
Turkmen	7	7
Tatar	10	15
Russian	54	91
Other	41	59

Material or moral damages were awarded to 172 victims and other forms of redress to 145 victims. In addition, 12 of those convicted were made to undergo treatment for alcoholism or drug addiction.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 6 (b) of the list of issues**

70. With the adoption of the Strategy for Action in the period 2017–2021, systemic measures were taken to combat torture. To this end, 3 laws, 5 presidential decrees and orders, 8 government decisions and 14 other regulatory texts were adopted.

71. To implement the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, amendments were introduced to the Criminal Code, the Code of Criminal Procedure and the Penalties Enforcement Code. In addition, the Internal Affairs Agencies Act, the Pretrial Detention during Criminal Proceedings Act and the State Security Service of the President of Uzbekistan Act were adopted.

72. In accordance with the Children’s Rights Safeguards Act, the main aims of government policy on the protection of children’s rights include securing the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of children, protecting their lives and health, prohibiting discrimination against them and defending their honour and dignity. In accordance with a law of 6 December 2019, the State takes steps to prevent all forms of exploitation and violence against children and identifies and eliminates the causes and conditions that give rise to such exploitation and violence.

73. The programme of comprehensive measures to strengthen the protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of children, which was approved by the houses of the Oliy Majlis and the Cabinet of Ministers on 10 September 2021, provides for measures to prevent domestic violence and combat such violence against children (para. 8), the creation of a helpline for children in difficult circumstances (para. 9) and a procedure for monitoring the processing of communications addressed to the competent government agencies and their officials by children (para. 33).

74. In 2019, the Ombudsman’s powers to protect the rights of persons held on remand were expanded, and a national mechanism for the prevention of torture was established, based on the “Ombudsman-Plus” model, with broad civil society involvement.

75. The Children’s Ombudsman, the Presidential Commissioner for the Protection of the Rights and Lawful Interests of Business Entities and the National Centre for Human Rights are also authorized to monitor places of deprivation of liberty.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 6 (c) of the list of issues**

76. The Communications from Legal Entities and Individuals Act, as amended by a law of 10 March 2020, provides for the right of minors to submit communications, on their own initiative, to government agencies, organizations and their officials on matters relating to the observance of their rights, freedoms and legitimate interests. A communication from a minor may not be shelved without consideration on the basis that he or she had not reached the age of full legal capacity.

77. The National Centre for the Rehabilitation and Reintegration of Victims of Violence and the Prevention of Suicides operates a helpline to provide emergency psychological, psychotherapeutic and legal assistance, counselling and information to victims of violence.

78. A single procedure has been introduced at the Ministry of Internal Affairs for the registration of all communications from citizens, including complaints and petitions concerning the use of prohibited methods of investigation and the treatment of remand prisoners or those detained in penal institutions.

79. Dedicated posts have been established at penal institutions for inspectors who handle communications from individuals and legal entities. The directors of places of detention receive communications from convicted and remand prisoners and their relatives on a daily basis. Measures are taken to ensure that these communications are dealt with in a timely and thorough manner.

80. In 2017, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Department of Corrections opened online help desks, and the directors personally monitor any communications received. Every penal institution is equipped with boxes for sending applications to the procurator's office, the parliamentary Ombudsman and the Children's Ombudsman.

81. Whenever a complaint is received regarding the use of physical force, ill-treatment or the infringement of the rights or legitimate interests of persons held in places of deprivation of liberty, an internal investigation is conducted, and the results are transmitted to the procuratorial authorities for action.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 6 (d) of the list of issues**

82. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has set up a helpline (1102) with a view to providing a timely response to reports of torture.

83. As part of a programme of measures of 10 September 2020 on strengthening the protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of children, the Children's Ombudsman, the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, the Ministry of Education, the Agency for Youth Affairs and other bodies are implementing a joint project to provide emergency assistance to children, and a helpline is in operation.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 7 (a) of the list of issues**

84. A technical working group was established from among representatives of the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance, UNICEF, SOS Children's Villages and the National Centre for the Social Adaptation of Children in order to formulate the basic principles and aims of deinstitutionalization.

85. As part of the project, a national strategy for the deinstitutionalization of children over the period 2022–2036 is being drawn up. It sets out a shift away from a system of care reliant on large residential institutions towards a range of integrated services at the family and community levels.

86. Uzbekistan has 16 children's homes and 4 children's communities, where 1,870 children are being brought up. Only 18 per cent of these children are orphans. The number of specialized reform schools has fallen. The institutions in Qo'qon and Samarkand and a children's home in the Kitob District of Kashkadarya Province have closed.

87. In the past two years, 447 children in care have been returned to their families. In the first quarter of 2021 alone, 80 children were returned from Mehribonlik homes. Since 2018,

the number of children placed in children's homes has fallen from 496 to 232 (to 47 per cent of the original figure).

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 7 (b) of the list of issues**

88. In Uzbekistan, a national mechanism for the protection of the rights of children deprived of care has been established within the National Commission on Children's Rights and regional commissions; child protection units have been established within the education and health secretariat of the Cabinet of Ministers; secretariats and units for the protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of children have been established within administrations (*hokimiyat*) at all levels; and the institution of Children's Ombudsman has been established. These bodies promote family care for children, monitor the care provided for children taken in by foster families and implement programmes in the area of tutorship and guardianship.

89. A common electronic information system, "Protecting Children", was introduced in August 2021 to identify and keep records on neglected children. A bill on the social protection of children deprived of parental care and orphaned children is being drafted. Among other measures, the list of academic disciplines in the area of tutorship or guardianship is to be expanded, restrictions are to be introduced on the creation of new institutions for orphaned children, and government care institutions are to be deinstitutionalized.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 7 (c) of the list of issues**

90. On 30 September 2021, the Government adopted a decision on measures to select alternative care arrangements for orphaned children and children deprived of parental care, strengthen the institution of the family and improve the system in place to prevent child abandonment. The National Vocational Guidance and Educational Psychology Assessment Centre for Students carries out structured work with children from institutions.

91. As part of efforts to gradually convert children's homes into children's communities and other alternative forms of social institution, the children's home in Zarafshon, Navoi Province, became the Tomdi children's community. Four new family-type children's homes for 38 orphaned children and children deprived of parental care were opened in Khorezm Province. Mehribonlik homes No. 10 in Samarkand and No. 5 in the Kitob District of Kashkadarya Province are no longer operational.

92. In Tashkent and Fergana Provinces, practical work is under way to create family children's homes. Training courses have been organized for 232 persons wishing to be trained as foster parents, and certificates have been awarded to 121 persons.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 8 (a) of the list of issues**

93. The Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities was adopted in October 2020. The Interdepartmental Council for the Affairs of Persons with Disabilities was formed from among representatives of government agencies and civil society institutions.

94. On 7 June 2019, Uzbekistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. A draft national plan of action on the implementation of the Convention in Uzbekistan has been drawn up.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 8 (b) of the list of issues**

95. The following table shows the number of persons with disabilities, including children, living in Uzbekistan.

	2020	2019	2018
<b>Total</b>	<b>758 253</b>	<b>740 707</b>	<b>709 844</b>
Children with disabilities, of which:			
Boys	115 406	10 973	101 316
	64 790	62 177	56 737

	2020	2019	2018
Girls	50 616	47 506	44 579

96. The following table shows the number of children studying who have disabilities.

	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
Children with disabilities, of which:			
Boys	21 707	21 708	21 010
Girls	13 257	13 329	12 809
	8 450	8 379	8 201

97. The Government is taking measures to reduce the number of children with disabilities in specialized institutions and to provide them with alternative care through family placements with relatives and arrangements of other kinds. Families raising children with disabilities receive financial assistance, advice and other forms of support.

98. Between 2018 and 2020, the number of children in the alternative care system fell. The number in Mehribonlik homes fell by 626 (by 607 in general-type homes and by 19 in special-type homes).

#### Number of children with disabilities in the alternative care system

<i>Residential homes</i>	2018	2019	2020
Muruvvat homes	1 788	1 894	1 931
Mehribonlik homes, of which:	2 281	2 141	1 655
General-type homes	2 176	2 036	1 569
Special-type homes	105	105	86
SOS Children's Villages	249	293	290
Children's communities	292	369	289

#### Follow-up information relating to paragraph 8 (c) of the list of issues

99. The State guarantees the development of inclusive education and the creation of the necessary conditions in which persons with disabilities can access education, vocational training and retraining, and skills development.

100. Persons with disabilities have access to special learning aids, publications and sign language interpretation services either free of charge or at reduced rates. The number of children with disabilities who graduated from vocational colleges was 803 in 2018, 788 in 2019 and 59 in 2020, and the number studying at higher education institutions was 76 (30 women and 46 men) in 2018, 59 (24 women and 35 men) in 2019 and 59 (13 women and 46 men) in 2020.

101. A framework for the development of inclusive education over the period 2020–2025 has been adopted, and objectives have been set to improve the quality of educational services for children with disabilities. In the 2021/22 school year, an inclusive education system was introduced, primary-level basic remedial classes for children with special needs were launched in the regions, and an inclusive education laboratory was set up at the National Vocational Guidance and Educational Psychology Assessment Centre for Students. Further steps, including training and retraining for teaching staff, are also being taken to roll out the inclusive education system for persons with disabilities.

102. Where required on health grounds, and with the consent of their parents or other legal representatives, children with disabilities may be taught at home, at public expense.

103. Each year, teams of 8–10 highly specialized health professionals carry out in-depth preventive medical examinations for children with disabilities throughout the country. Children with reduced mobility are examined at home.

104. In 2020, 10,630,800 children under the age of 18 years underwent preventive medical examinations, and 5,630,553 cases of illness, including 33,645 relating to mental development, were detected. Among the 5,347,949 girls under the age of 18 years, 2,867,045 cases of illness, including 15,192 relating to mental illness, were detected. Among the 2,776,938 children under the age of 18 years who live in rural areas, 1,511,625 cases of illness, including 6,050 relating to mental illness, were detected.

105. Since 1 June 2021, children have been provided with micronutrient powders, vitamin A and iodine supplements and special anthelmintic treatment free of charge.

106. A course on health issues, which covers the preservation of the health of children and adolescents, including sexual and reproductive health, has been added to the curriculum of general education schools. Children in grades 9–11 are taught about the basics of healthy relationships and harmonious marriages; the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases among adolescents; the benefits of waiting until adulthood to become a parent; basic rules concerning the health of minors; the negative effects of early sexual activity and the role of personal, family, school and community factors; issues of non-discrimination and protection from sexual harassment and sexual violence; and the consequences of using alcohol and other harmful or illegal substances.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 9 (a) of the list of issues**

107. The data for 2020 show that Uzbekistan has the necessary infrastructure and human resources to protect children's health: there are 11,350 children's physicians, including 5,244 paediatricians; approximately 28,400 beds for children in hospitals, or 27.9 per 10,000 population; 24.2 hospital beds per 10,000; 1,069 children's clinics; and approximately 6,200 beds in children's sanatoriums. Of the 28,411 children's hospital beds, 2,861 are in acute care, 3,333 in surgery, 106 in gynaecology, 665 in tuberculosis care, 5,068 in infectious disease care, 241 in ophthalmology and 633 in otolaryngology.

108. Steps are being taken to develop a modern system of primary health care, ensure the prevention and early detection of diseases, train skilled medical personnel and introduce new governance processes in this area. The number of emergency response stations has increased from 818 in 2016 to 1,666 today. The amount spent on medicines has increased from 500 sum per emergency response system call-out to 6,500 sum. Among children, the rate of mortality by injury has fallen from 19 per cent before 2016 to 12 per cent today.

109. Women's clinics, girls' health offices, emergency response stations and social pharmacies have been opened at 800 rural family health clinics. Cardiology services are provided throughout the country, with open-heart surgery performed in eight regions. A new national children's medical centre has been built to modern medical standards.

110. The resources allocated for haematology medicines have been increased: the 217.4 billion sum allocated for medicines and other necessary haematology and onco-haematology tools in 2021 is 78 times higher than the 2.8 billion allocated in 2016.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 9 (b) of the list of issues**

111. The process of organizing psychiatric care, including for children, ensuring the availability of services and protecting the rights of patients with psychiatric disorders is carried out in accordance with the Psychiatric Care Act of 12 May 2021.

112. The allocation of posts is as follows: 240 psychiatrists, 180 child psychiatrists and 49 adolescent psychiatrists. There are 450 inpatient beds for children and 200 for adolescents. Over 9,000 children and adolescents are treated each year. The neuropsychiatric offices of central medical associations and neuropsychiatric clinics provide outpatient care for children and adolescents.

113. Social and psychological support centres for children, which were established by presidential decision on 6 November 2020, protect the mental health of young people, ensure the early detection of students at risk of suicide, provide them with social and psychological support and services in the education system, and improve the psychological service in schools and the professional development of psychologists. In the 2021/22 academic year,

the higher education intake for psychology was increased by 30 per cent in order to strengthen the training of professionals in that field.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 9 (c) of the list of issues**

114. Courses on the foundations of the family and on family ethics and psychology have been introduced at schools – in grades 5–6 and grades 7–11, respectively – in accordance with the Presidential Decree of 2 February 2018 on measures to radically improve support for women and strengthen the institution of the family.

115. To prevent early marriages and early pregnancies, manuals on the provision of assistance to socially vulnerable minors and women and on the factors that contribute to the crises that girls may face have been developed, as have materials promoting healthy lifestyles and reproductive health.

116. Seven-week training courses have been organized as part of the “Strong Families” programme to prevent psychoactive substance abuse, risk-taking behaviour and other problems of adolescence, develop positive parenting skills and build strong families.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 10 of the list of issues**

117. The Act on the Protection of the Population and Territory from Natural and Artificial Emergencies (art. 18) and the Civil Protection Act (art. 16) provide for mandatory emergency preparedness training in general education schools, academic lycées, higher education institutions, enterprises, institutions and places of residence.

118. Pursuant to a Cabinet of Ministers decision of 9 September 2019, the provision of emergency preparedness and civil protection training for the public was enhanced, and a training programme for young people on everyday safety and civil protection was brought up to date with modern requirements.

119. In accordance with a Cabinet of Ministers decision of 12 April 2019 on measures to implement the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030 in Uzbekistan, emergency preparedness training was introduced at general education, specialized secondary and higher education institutions and mahalla assemblies of citizens.

120. The country has 17,297 preschools, which provide care for 1,652,841 children. In accordance with the “Ilk qadam” national curriculum, preschool children aged 3–7 years take classes each November on everyday safety basics and the rules of behaviour on the street and on transport.

121. Schools, lycées, colleges and technical schools, which have 6,168,198 students, provide integrated classes on everyday safety basics.

122. The subject “Everyday safety” (135 hours) is taught at 121 higher education institutions. Through these classes, students learn how to act and what rules to follow to ensure their personal safety in emergencies.

123. Efforts are being made to raise awareness of environmental issues in Uzbekistan. To help schoolchildren learn how to protect the environment, the subject “The world around us” is taught in grades 1–2, “Natural science” in grades 3–4, “Geography” and “Biology” in grades 5–11, “Chemistry” in grades 7–9 and “Tarbiyah” in grades 3–9.

124. The environmental NGOs involved in providing environmental education alongside the Government include Ekomaktab, Ecoforum, the Environmental Movement of Uzbekistan and its local branches and the following regional environmental NGOs: Zarafshan, the Yashil Tulkin Children’s Environmental Foundation (Samarkand), For a Clean Environment in Fergana (Fergana), the Union for the Protection of the Aral Sea and the Amu Darya (Nukus), KRASS (Urganch), Logos (Tashkent) and Rodnichok (Tashkent Province).

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 11 (a) of the list of issues**

125. The Preschool Education Act of 16 December 2019 set out the main aims of State policy on preschool education, including for children with special educational needs.

126. Pursuant to a presidential decision of 6 November 2020, a programme of comprehensive measures was approved to further improve the fields of education and science. The programme provides for an increase in the preschool enrolment rate to 65 per cent among children aged 3–7 years and 82 per cent among those aged 6 years, improvements in learning modalities, the development of the Online Preschool Programme in conjunction with UNICEF and the National Television and Radio Corporation, and the creation of an innovative early childhood development research laboratory.

127. Pursuant to a Cabinet of Ministers decision of 9 March 2020 on measures to further develop the system of compulsory one-year preparation for primary education, a system was introduced, beginning in the 2019/20 school year, to prepare children for the compulsory one-year preparation for primary education, which is provided free of charge, and measures were taken to enrol all children in preschool. With a view to achieving target 4.2 of the Sustainable Development Goals, there are plans to ensure that all children aged 6 years attend preschool by 2025.

128. Over the past three and a half years, preschool enrolment has more than doubled. In 2021, there were 1,699,566 children – 60.9 per cent of the preschool age cohort – in the preschool education system, compared with 708,247 in 2017.

129. An innovative early childhood development research laboratory has been set up, and measures have been taken to introduce healthy nutrition programmes at State preschools.

130. The country has 18,254 preschools (compared with 5,211 in 2017): there are 6,197 State preschools (compared with 4,961 in 2017) and 12,057 non-State preschools (compared with 250 in 2017), of which 753 are operated by private providers (compared with 250 in 2017), 10,244 by family-based providers (compared with 0 in 2017) and 1,025 by other non-State providers (compared with 0 in 2017).

131. There are plans to achieve a preschool enrolment rate of 68.3 per cent among children aged 3–7 years by the end of 2021 and of 80.8 per cent by 2030. More than 1,225 preschools have been constructed, operationalized or reconstructed as part of investment programmes over the period 2018–2020.

132. An alternative education model is being rolled out in the form of family preschools. In cooperation with UNICEF, a plan on the introduction of new alternative forms of preschool education has been drawn up. In accordance with the plan, a number of alternative forms of preschool education, including mixed-age groups and playgroups, are being piloted.

133. Various alternative preschool education models, including home visits, are to be piloted as part of the Promoting Early Childhood Development Project, which is being implemented jointly with the World Bank. Mobile preschools have begun to operate from converted buses in all regions of the country.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 11 (b) of the list of issues**

134. The Education Act enshrines the principle of non-discrimination in education; the principle of equal opportunities to education; the principle of a period of 11 years of compulsory education and a period of 1 year of compulsory preparation for general education for children aged 6–7 years; the principle of the universal accessibility of an education that meets State educational standards and educational requirements; and the principle that children's knowledge, gifts and talents are to be encouraged regardless of where they live.

135. With a view to improving the quality of education, measures were taken to develop the fields of education and science pursuant to a presidential decree of 6 November 2020: an electronic report card programme was introduced at all educational institutions to digitize and ensure transparency in the evaluation of students' knowledge, and a procedure is being developed to ensure that the grades of school leavers are taken into account as part of the examinations for entry to higher education institutions.

136. Within the framework of a programme of comprehensive measures to further improve the fields of education and science, which was approved by presidential decision on 6 November 2020, new schools are being constructed, and drinking water, sewerage systems, catering facilities and sports halls are being provided for students in both urban and rural

areas. In addition, measures have been taken to ensure that students can undergo medical examinations and receive essential medical services.

137. In 2021, in accordance with the 2021 State Programme for the Year of Youth Support and Health Promotion, 22 preschools, 31 schools, 16 higher education institutions, 21 health facilities and 23 sports facilities were constructed. The number of non-State general education institutions increased sixfold, reaching 145. During the period 2017–2020, construction and repair work was carried out at 3,056 general education schools (1,918 more than during the period 2014–2016) at a cost of 6,346 trillion sum (5.3 trillion sum more than during the period 2014–2016). In addition, 134 new schools were constructed, and 1,543 schools were completely renovated. An additional 264,000 pupil places were created. Following the transition to an 11-year period of education, 383 vacant vocational colleges were converted into schools, creating a further 221,000 pupil places.

138. Pursuant to a presidential decision of 20 November 2020, additional measures were adopted to ensure healthy nutrition; a programme of measures to promote healthy lifestyles over the period 2020–2025 was approved and the associated indicators defined; and a list of food safety rules and standards for the period 2021–2023 was approved, as were other policy documents aimed at ensuring that students' needs are met regardless of whether they live in urban or rural areas.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 11 (c) of the list of issues**

139. During the pandemic, online classes were organized for schoolchildren as part of the "Online Maktab" project. In the 2019/20 school year, all teaching was remote – with lessons broadcast on television and the launch of the electronic report card – and all final school examinations were cancelled. In the 2020/21 school year, classes began on 14 September 2020 or, in private schools, on 2 September 2020. There was a blend of traditional and remote teaching, with classes broadcast on television. All schools are now teaching in the traditional format.

140. From 25 April to 6 May 2021, 4,803 students and principals from 84 general secondary education schools participated in a Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) pilot study to assess the reading, mathematical and scientific literacy of students aged 15–16 years.

141. In June 2021, the State Inspectorate for Education Quality Control signed an agreement with the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) on the participation of Uzbekistan in the 2023 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study, a digital mathematics and science assessment for students in grades 4 and 8.

142. Preparations are under way for participation in the 2024 Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study to assess schoolchildren's mathematical and scientific literacy.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 11 (d) of the list of issues**

143. A presidential decree of 6 November 2020 set out the main areas in which the education system is to be improved, including the introduction of highly effective international practices and the adoption of measures to ensure that educational institutions are included in reputable international rankings. A national training programme on the implementation of the literacy assessment system has been developed, and additional financial incentives have been established for the teachers of students who win international Olympiads. Since 1 January 2021, there has been a ranking of general education institutions and, since 1 June 2021, the grades of students from these institutions have been taken into account as part of the examinations for entry to higher education institutions.

144. One-time monetary prizes have been introduced for the winners of international science Olympiads and their teachers and the winners of national Olympiads and their teachers. When a student wins a subject-specific Olympiad, his or her teacher and the principal of the educational institution at which he or she studied receive bonuses equivalent to 200 per cent, 175 per cent or 150 per cent.

145. Four presidential schools and nine new-type creative schools have been established for talented young people. Five specialized schools and academic lycées attached to higher education institutions have been set up, including in the country's regions, with specialisms in physics, mathematics, computer science and the exact and natural sciences.

146. The procedures for obtaining a licence to open a private school have been simplified, and such schools have been granted the right to issue educational certificates and diplomas.

147. Higher and secondary vocational education is being raised to a qualitatively new level through the provision of training for highly skilled teaching professionals. A training programme has been developed, information and communications technologies are being enhanced, and start-up accelerators focused on topical problems are being set up at Youth Academy technology parks.

148. A programme of additional measures to improve the selection of talented young people and the activities of academic lycées has been adopted, and the practice of carrying out a critical analysis of education quality metrics, which includes a ranking of academic lycées, was introduced. One of the indicators used to rank academic lycées is the proportion of foreign and Uzbek teachers who have diplomas from the 1,000 top-ranking higher education institutions according to the Quacquarelli Symonds (QS) World University Rankings, the Times Higher Education World University Rankings and the Academic Ranking of World Universities.

149. As part of the 2021 State Programme for the Year of Youth Support and Health Promotion, additional measures were taken to expand access to postgraduate education. The number of young people sent abroad to enrol in master's and doctoral programmes at higher education institutions with funding from the El-Yurt Umidi Foundation has increased fivefold.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 12 of the list of issues**

150. The Regulation on the procedure for the return of the children of Uzbek nationals who are deprived of parental care abroad, which was approved by presidential decision on 7 February 2020, sets out the procedure for the return to Uzbekistan of the children of Uzbek nationals and permanent residents of Uzbekistan who are deprived of parental care abroad and their subsequent placement in children's homes (for children aged under 3 years of age) or social and legal assistance centres (for children aged over 3 years of age) or transfer to parents or persons in loco parentis.

151. As part of the "Mehr-1", "Mehr-2", "Mehr-3", "Mehr-4" and "Mehr-5" special operations, 531 persons (24 men, 121 women, 379 children and 7 foreign nationals) were returned from troubled regions such as Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan. In addition, 96 persons (23 men, 17 women and 56 children) were returned to Uzbekistan from Afghanistan over the period 2017–2022.

152. Nationals who have returned to Uzbekistan have been given access to medical and psychosocial assistance and educational and social programmes. Measures have been taken to ensure that those who are repatriated are able to adapt seamlessly to their new living situation and reintegrate. A plan of action on the adaptation and rehabilitation of children and families who have returned from areas of armed conflict has been approved.

153. Under the "Mehr-1" and "Mehr-2" (2019) projects, 156 women and children who had returned from Syria were placed with relatives and loved ones. The families were provided with 15 essential food items, clothing and a one-time allowance of 2 million sum per person. They received free medical care and medicines. Steps were taken to provide employment and housing. The children were enrolled in preschools, and new birth certificates and replacements of lost documents were officially issued.

154. The Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support and UNICEF implemented a joint project entitled "Support and reintegration of children returning from zones of armed conflict, children of migrants and children leaving specialized educational institutions/republican educational institutions (closed institutions) after COVID-19", as part of which 20 mahallas were analysed. The analysis covered the role of mahallas in delivering services to socially vulnerable families. Social and legal assistance was provided to 414 children who had left

specialized educational facilities, and a database was set up to monitor the situation of 546 children and their families who had been targeted as part of reintegration efforts.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 13 (a) of the list of issues**

155. Over the period 2019–2021, measures were taken to strengthen the safeguards in place to protect children’s rights in the justice system, render the criminal justice and punishment system more liberal and humane for minors and enhance their legal status in criminal, civil and administrative proceedings.

156. In 2019, the Code of Criminal Procedure was amended to prohibit waiver of counsel in cases involving minors (art. 52), to permit not only a minor’s parents but also another person whom he or she trusts to participate in the case (art. 62), to specify the rights and duties of the legal representative (art. 61), to set out the procedure for questioning a minor witness or victim in the presence of his or her legal representative, close relative or teacher (art. 121), to provide that a minor witness should be removed from the courtroom once he or she has been questioned (art. 442) and to improve the procedure for questioning minors as suspects or accused persons (art. 553).

157. The Children’s Rights Safeguards Act has been amended to provide for safeguards to protect the rights of children who are participants in criminal proceedings; to impose a ban on exerting any psychological or physical pressure on children, compelling them to give testimony or confess guilt and taking procedural steps against them during the pretrial or trial proceedings without the participation of their legal representatives; and to establish that counsel must be present at all stages of the pretrial and trial proceedings in cases involving offences committed by minors. Moreover, waiver of counsel by a child or his or her legal representatives is null and void.

158. Pursuant to a law of 10 March 2020, amendments were introduced to the Family Code (arts. 68 and 96), the Children’s Rights Safeguards Act (arts. 11 and 15), the Communications from Legal Entities and Individuals Act (art. 21) and the Civil Procedure Code (art. 42) to strengthen a child’s right to apply to State bodies, including the courts, for the protection of his or her rights and to set out the procedure for the consideration of such applications.

159. A presidential decree of 9 August 2021 established national and regional commissions on children’s issues and approved a plan of measures to further improve the system in place to safeguard children’s rights.

160. Pursuant to a law of 7 December 2011, amendments concerning, inter alia, the age of criminal responsibility, the types of penalty that maybe imposed and the establishment of the offence of enticing a person aged 16–18 years to have sexual intercourse through the provision of incentives in cash or kind were introduced to the Criminal Code.

161. In 2021, the role of inspector-psychologist was established within district and city internal affairs bodies and general secondary education institutions, with 2,000 staff posts.

162. The staff development programme for judges and the training programme for rostered judges at the Higher School of Magistrates of the Supreme Judicial Council both cover working with minors.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 13 (b) of the list of issues**

163. Under the Administrative Liability Code, persons aged under 18 years may not be placed in administrative detention.

164. Over the period 2018–2020, the administrative courts considered 3,407 cases in which administrative proceedings had been brought against minors, who numbered 3,809 in total (1,312 cases against a total of 1,518 minors in 2018, 1,055 cases against a total of 1,148 minors in 2019 and 1,040 cases against a total of 1,143 minors in 2020). Administrative penalties were imposed on 2,095 minors, and the administrative proceedings against 1,714 minors were dropped.

165. Persons in police custody and remand prisoners are held in shared cells in accordance with the Pretrial Detention during Criminal Proceedings Act. Persons in police custody and remand prisoners are held in separate cells if so required because of their personalities or for

reasons of psychological compatibility. Persons in police custody and remand prisoners are held separately from each other and are placed in cells in accordance with the requirement that women be held separately from men and minors from adults. In exceptional cases, and with the agreement of the procurator, adults with a record of good behaviour may be held with minors.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 13 (c) of the list of issues**

166. A draft presidential decision on measures to further improve the system in place to safeguard children's rights has been drawn up. It provides for the development of alternative measures to detention, including restorative justice measures.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 13 (d) of the list of issues**

167. In accordance with a procuratorial decision or court ruling, a person who has been remanded in custody may be held in solitary confinement at a remand centre if he or she is accused of committing a serious or especially serious offence. This measure may not be applied in respect of minors, persons aged over 60 years, seriously ill persons and persons with psychiatric disorders certified by a physician in writing.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 14 of the list of issues**

168. The Government works to prevent and eradicate child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking in persons, including children, carries out extensive public-awareness activities and, at the international level, cooperates with the International Organization for Migration.

169. Pursuant to a presidential decree of 30 July 2019, the National Commission on Combating Trafficking in Persons and Forced Labour and its local subdivisions were established, a road map was approved for the period 2018–2020, and the post of National Rapporteur on Combating Trafficking in Persons was created, all with a view to coordinating activities to combat trafficking in persons. The National Rapporteur provides the President with information on trafficking, including trafficking in children.

170. A safe, orderly and legal labour migration system was approved by presidential decree on 15 September 2020 with the aim of preventing trafficking in persons and forced labour. A fund has been established to support and protect the rights and interests of Uzbek nationals working abroad, life and health insurance has been introduced for migrant workers, and mortgage loans are granted to members of their families.

171. Uzbekistan has adopted a set of measures on external labour migration, including the development of training programmes for migrant workers, the introduction of microloans to enable nationals on low incomes to travel abroad for work (up to 10 million sum for one year), the creation of an online platform to provide legal assistance to labour migrants, the introduction of a number of benefits for nationals returning to Uzbekistan and the creation of a helpline to receive communications regarding labour migration issues.

172. Measures have been taken to improve legislation on combating trafficking in children and women, protect the rights of victims of trafficking in persons and identify homeless and neglected children. A systemic approach is taken to preventing the causes and circumstances leading to pornography in which children or women are represented.

173. Pursuant to a law of 25 December 2020, amendments concerning the preparation, importation, distribution, advertising or exhibition of pornographic products were introduced to article 130 of the Criminal Code and article 189 of the Administrative Liability Code in implementation of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. It is both a criminal and an administrative offence to prepare, import, distribute, advertise or exhibit products that promote a cult of violence or cruelty (Criminal Code, art. 130<sup>1</sup>, and Administrative Liability Code, art. 189<sup>1</sup>).

174. On 18 August 2020, a new version of the Trafficking in Persons Act entered into force. The possibility of supplementing the Criminal Code with articles entitled "Trafficking in children", "Protection of the rights of victims of trafficking in persons, their relatives and

witnesses” and “Non-disclosure of confidential information about victims of trafficking in persons” is currently under consideration.

175. It has been made a criminal offence to entice a person aged 16–18 years to have sexual intercourse through the provision of incentives in cash or kind.

176. Citizens of Uzbekistan and stateless persons permanently resident in Uzbekistan are liable to prosecution under the Criminal Code for offences committed in the territory of another State if they have not already been sentenced by a court in the State in whose territory the offence was committed. No citizen of Uzbekistan may be extradited for an offence committed in the territory of a foreign State, unless otherwise provided by international treaties or agreements.

177. Foreign nationals and stateless persons not permanently resident in Uzbekistan are liable under the Criminal Code for crimes committed outside Uzbekistan only in the cases provided for in international treaties or agreements.

178. On 10 June 2021, the decision of the plenum of the Supreme Court of 25 May 2012 on certain issues of international cooperation in the area of civil and criminal proceedings was supplemented with a provision stating that the question of whether a person is subject to the jurisdiction of Uzbekistan is determined on the basis of the jurisdictional provisions of the international treaties to which Uzbekistan is a party in the area of the fight against crime and criminal proceedings.

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 15 of the list of issues**

179. Upon ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict on 12 December 2008, Uzbekistan declared that, under the Universal Military Duty and Military Service Act of 12 December 2002, nationals could be called to serve in the Armed Forces of Uzbekistan only after they had attained the age of 18 years.

180. It is a criminal offence to coerce a minor to participate in the activities of unlawful voluntary associations, including paramilitary associations and armed groups, or those of religious organizations, movements and sects.

181. There is no double criminality requirement under national law. The Criminal Code states that no one may be convicted of the same crime twice. Article 12 of the Criminal Code stipulates that nationals of Uzbekistan and stateless persons permanently residing in Uzbekistan who commit an offence in the territory of another State are liable under the Criminal Code of Uzbekistan if no penalty is imposed on them by a verdict of the courts of the State in which the crime was committed. The new version of the draft Criminal Code contains an article entitled “Application of the criminal law in respect of persons who have committed offences outside the borders of Uzbekistan”, which provides for extraterritorial jurisdiction.

## **Part II**

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 16 (a) of the list of issues**

182. In implementation of the Strategy for Action in Five Priority Areas in the period 2017–2021, around 300 laws and over 4,000 presidential decrees and decisions were adopted (see annex 1).

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 16 (b) of the list of issues**

183. Over the period 2019–2021, 20 organizations working to improve the situation of children were established (see annex 2).

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 16 (c) of the list of issues**

184. Over the period 2019–2021, 18 road maps, programmes and plans of action were adopted (see annex 3).

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 16 (d) of the list of issues**

185. Over the period 2019–2021, Uzbekistan ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, four International Labour Organization (ILO) Conventions, namely Conventions No. 144, No. 129, No. 81 and No. 187, and the Protocol to the ILO Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29), which was adopted in Geneva on 11 June 2014.

**Part III****Follow-up information relating to paragraph 17 of the list of issues**

186. The following table contains data relating to the State budget of Uzbekistan.

	2019	2020	2021 (forecast)
<b>Expenditure (excluding special purpose funds), Total</b>	<b>118 008.7</b>	<b>144 142.7</b>	<b>187 607</b>
Social expenditure	63 542.4	74 231.8	91 694.4
Social sphere and social security	59 416.7	63 176.7	75 241.2
Education	33 536.1	29 961.1	37 588.7
Health care	14 977.4	19 397.2	21 795.1
Culture and sports	2 417.3	2 340.7	2 601.3
Science	662.4	823.8	1 199.3
Social security	1 192.0	1 305.0	1 865.1
Benefits, financial assistance and compensation payments	4 740.3	8 190.9	10 191.7
Other	1 891.2	1 158.0	1 254.1
Subsidies provided to the Extrabudgetary Pension Fund of the Ministry of Finance	–	9 117.0	12 874.0
Credit lines extended to participating banks for co-financing residential construction programmes	4 125.7	1 938.2	2 325.1
Social expenditure as % of total public expenditure	53.8	51.5	48.9
Social expenditure as % of gross domestic product (GDP)	23.1	22.1	27.2
GDP	511 838.1	653 546.4	688 936.0

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 18 of the list of issues**

187. A single electronic database (“Bola himoyasi”) has been created to prevent minors from suffering neglect or living in street situations.

188. The list of minimum indicators and other information to be posted on the website stat.uz was approved by presidential decision on 22 April 2019. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Supreme Court were made responsible for compiling data on the number of interventions carried out to prevent offences among children, the number and classification of offences committed by children, the number of children remanded in custody as a preventive measure during pretrial proceedings, the number of children in respect of whom action was taken outside the judicial system, the number of children convicted and the details of the penalties imposed on children. In 2021, the Legal Statistics Centre was established under the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 18 (a) of the list of issues**

189. In 2019, 6,474 parents and persons in loco parentis were placed on an internal affairs agencies watch list for having a negative impact on children or subjecting them to ill-treatment (compared with 5,549 in 2020 and 5,232 in 2021).

190. In 2019, 148 children (89 boys and 59 girls) were sent to national reform schools for having committed various antisocial acts, compared with 113 children (24/89) in 2020 and 191 children (56/135) in 2021.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 18 (b) of the list of issues**

191. No data on drug, alcohol, and tobacco abuse among children are available.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues**

192. The number of neglected children and children in street situations placed in the social and legal assistance centres for minors of the internal affairs agencies was 7,644 in 2019, 4,956 in 2020 and 9,218 in 2021. Of these, 5,369 (3,518/6,342) are students of general education schools and 743 (181/621) of colleges and lycées.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 18 (d) of the list of issues**

193. The Ministry of Employment and Labour Relations neither collects nor compiles statistical data on children working in the formal and informal economies.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 18 (e) of the list of issues**

194. Vaccination is free of charge in Uzbekistan. Seven different vaccines are available: ZF-UZ-VAC (Uzbekistan and China), Sputnik V and Sputnik Light (Russian Federation), Pfizer and Moderna (United States of America), AstraZeneca (United Kingdom) and Sinovac (China). Uzbekistan also manufactures vaccines jointly with the People’s Republic of China and the Russian Federation.

195. To date, 18.6 million adults (86.7 per cent) have been vaccinated and 37.9 million vaccine doses used. In order to prevent the spread of COVID-19, and in accordance with the recommendations of the World Health Organization, children aged over 12 years have been able to receive the Pfizer vaccine since September 2021. The vaccination of children is voluntary.

196. The health system is operating as normal, and all medical institutions, including maternity and children’s institutions, are providing care in their respective domains. COVID-19 patients are treated only at specialized facilities. During the pandemic, a number of organized treatment facilities were converted to provide care for patients with COVID-19.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 19 (a) of the list of issues**

197. In Uzbekistan, 70,520 children live separately from their parents through tutorship, guardianship or adoption placements.

198. Information on tutorship, guardianship and foster care by region:

<i>Number of children in family-based care in 2019</i>				<i>Number of children placed in institutions in 2019</i>	<i>Number of children in family-based care in 2020</i>				<i>Number of children placed in institutions in 2020</i>	<i>Number of children in family-based care in 2021</i>				<i>Number of children placed in institutions in 2021</i>
<i>Tutorship</i>	<i>Guardianship</i>	<i>Foster care</i>	<i>Adoption.</i>		<i>Tutorship</i>	<i>Guardianship</i>	<i>Foster care</i>	<i>Adoption.</i>		<i>Tutorship</i>	<i>Guardianship</i>	<i>Foster care</i>	<i>Adoption.</i>	
18 632	10 038	588	30 256	379	23 753	14 459	901	32 315	284	25 376	15 145	1 108	33 835	384

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 19 (b) of the list of issues**

199. In Uzbekistan, 297 children were placed in institutions for between three months and three years.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 19 (c) of the list of issues**

200. There are 1,108 children in foster families.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 20 (a) of the list of issues**

201.

	<i>As at 1 January 2018</i>	<i>As at 1 January 2019</i>	<i>As at 1 January 2020</i>
<b>Total number of children aged under 16 years</b>	<b>10 134 274</b>	<b>10 442 831</b>	<b>10 694 173</b>
Number of children aged under 16 years with disabilities	101 475	109 610	116 707
Per 1,000 children	10.0	10.5	10.9
Of which:			
Boys	54 832 (54%)	59 163 (54%)	63 294 (54.2%)
Girls	46 643 (46%)	50 447 (46%)	53 413 (45.8%)
By age bracket:			
7–16 years	64.2% (65 197)	63% (69 105)	63%
Under 7 years	35.8% (36 278)	37% (40 505)	37%
By place of residence:			
Urban	45 235	48 180	48 590
Rural	56 240	61 430	68 117

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 20 (b) of the list of issues**

202. The following table shows the number of children with disabilities who are receiving education.

	<i>2020</i>	<i>2019</i>	<i>2018</i>
<b>Total</b>	<b>63% (73 463)</b>	<b>63% (69 105)</b>	<b>64.2 % (65 197)</b>
Place of study:			
General education institutions	57% (42 154)	55.6% (38 478)	57% (37 230)
Home	18% (13 166)	18.7% (12 929)	18% (11 684)
Specialized institutions	12% (8 899)	12% (8 381)	12% (7 844)
Considered unteachable	13% (9 251)	13.4% (9 317)	13% (8 439)

The Provinces of Samarkand and Surkhan-Darya had the highest enrolment figures (94 per cent), whereas those of Navoi and Bukhara had the lowest.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 20 (c) of the list of issues**

203. There are 13,008 children attending schools.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 20 (d) of the list of issues**

204. The number of children attending specialized schools was 5,255 in 2018, 5,383 in 2019 and 5,435 in 2020.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 20 (e) of the list of issues**

205. The number of children who do not attend school but are instead homeschooled was 12,676 in 2018, 13,868 in 2019 and 13,272 in 2020.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 21 (a) of the list of issues**

206. The number of minors placed on the watch list of the internal affairs agencies for having committed offences and other antisocial acts was 5,048 in 2019, 4,257 in 2020 and 3,896 in 2021.

207. In 2019, 739 offences were committed by minors or with their involvement, compared with 1,134 in 2020 and 1,752 in 2021. Of the minors who committed offences, 527 (818/1439) were students of general education schools and 167 (95/229) of colleges or lycées (771/1,205/1,834 boys and 47/71/156 girls). In addition, 9 committed offences under the influence of alcohol in 2019, 11 in 2020 and 9 in 2021.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 21 (b) and (d) of the list of issues**

208. There are 86 minors in remand units.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 21 (c) of the list of issues**

209. The following table contains data on minors registered with the probation service of the internal affairs agencies for having committed offences.

	2019	2020	2021
<b>Total, of which:</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>381</b>
Boys	160	180	360
Girls	12	10	21
By ethnicity:			
Uzbek	160	172	365
Russian	8	4	7
Kazakh	1	2	0
Other	3	12	9

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 21 (e) of the list of issues**

210. There are 55 minors in young offenders' institutions who committed offences including under the following articles of the Criminal Code.

Art. 118 (Rape)	13
Art. 97 (Murder)	9
Art. 104 (Intentional grievous bodily harm)	5
Art. 164 (Robbery)	3
Art. 267 (Vehicle theft)	2
Art. 169 (Theft)	1
Other offences under the Criminal Code	22

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 22 of the list of issues**

211. The Government approved the national sustainable development goals and targets for the period up to 2030, which ensure children's well-being. The State Statistics Committee monitors the Sustainable Development Goal indicators through a system of metrics integrated into all strategies and regional and sectoral programmes implemented in the country.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 23 of the list of issues**

212. In recent years, Uzbekistan has received visits from the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein (2017); the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or belief, Ahmed Shaheed (2017); the Special Rapporteur on the independence of judges and lawyers, Diego García-Sayán (2019); the Special Rapporteur on the promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms while countering terrorism, Fionnuala Ní Aoláin (2021); the ILO Director General, Guy Ryder (2018); the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations; the Director General of the International Organization for Migration, William Lacy Swing (2018); and the Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Michael Møller (2018).

213. Uzbekistan is a contributor to the international human rights agenda. For the first time, the country has been elected as a member of the Human Rights Council, for a three-year term (2021–2023). The representative of Uzbekistan was elected Vice-President of the Human Rights Council for 2022.

214. In October 2021, at the initiative of the President of Uzbekistan, the Human Rights Council adopted a resolution on the human rights implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on young people, and work is continuing on a draft international convention on the rights of youth.

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 24 of the list of issues**

215. The priority areas for the further implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in Uzbekistan are set out in the New Uzbekistan Development Strategy for the period 2022–2026, which provides for social objectives such as securing children's rights to education, providing quality medical services and ensuring participation in physical exercise and sports.

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