



Convention on the Rights of the Child

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Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 44 of the Convention

Fourth and fifth periodic reports of States parties due in 2011

Russian Federation*, **

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Consolidated fourth and fifth periodic report of the Russian Federation on the implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child

I. Introduction

1. The third periodic report on the implementation by the Russian Federation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC/C/RUS/3) was considered on 28 September 2005 at the fortieth session of the Committee on the Rights of the Child.
2. The present report was prepared pursuant to article 44, paragraph 1 (b), of the Convention and in accordance with the general guidelines regarding the form and content of periodic reports to be submitted by States parties (document CRC/C/58), taking into account the concluding observations adopted by the Committee on 30 September 2005 (document CRC/C/RUS/CO/3), on the basis of material supplied by the federal and regional authorities, official statistics and information from voluntary associations active in dealing with children's problems. It covers the period from 2003 to 2009.
3. The introduction contains general information on the population of the country and the main trends of changes in the situation of children during the period 2003–2009. The main part consists of nine sections and includes information on measures adopted by the Russian Federation in implementation of the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in accordance with the international obligations it has assumed, and on progress achieved and difficulties encountered.
4. In line with the provisions of paragraph 8 of the general guidelines, information provided in the Russian Federation's third periodic report is not repeated in the present report, but references are made to paragraphs of the third periodic report where necessary.
5. The annexes contain a list of laws and other regulatory instruments adopted in implementation of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child since submission of the third periodic report, as well as statistical data on the subject.

II. General information concerning the Russian Federation

6. At the beginning of 2003, the population of the Russian Federation stood at 145.0 million persons. At the beginning of 2010, it totalled 141.9 million persons, a decline of 3.05 million persons (2.1 per cent) compared to 2003.
7. As of the beginning of 2010, there were 26 million children in the Russian Federation under 18 years of age, 83.3 per cent of the figure for 2003, or a decline of 5.2 million persons, due primarily to a decrease in the number of children between 10 and 17 years of age. The number of children between 5 and 9 grew by 4,700 (+ 0.1 per cent), and the age group 0–4 increased by 1.5 million to 22.9 per cent and stood at 8.0 million persons in 2009.
8. In 2009, 1,761,700 children were born, 284,400 or 19.3 per cent more than in 2003 (1,477,300). The crude birth rate rose to 12.4 per 1,000 persons in 2009, from 10.2 in 2003. This positive development was the result of an active demographic policy carried out against a background of an improved socioeconomic situation in the country and a sex-age structure of the population that has had a favourable impact on the birth rate. Changes in the sex-age structure have had a beneficial effect on the birth rate. According to the 2002 population census, women of reproductive age (15–49 years) made up 27.5 per cent of the

total population, and the figure stood at 27.7 per cent at the beginning of 2006, before declining to 26.5 per cent at the beginning of 2010. The proportion of women of active reproductive age (20–29 years) rose more rapidly than the proportion of women aged 15 to 50, from 7.6 per cent of the total population in 2002 to 8.6 per cent in 2010. In 2009 the fertility rate stood at 1.537, as against 1.319 in 2003, but it is considerably below the population replacement level (2.10–2.15).

9. In 2009 1,292,400 abortions were performed, or 30.7 per cent fewer than in 2003 (1,864,700). Since 2007 the number of births has exceeded the number of abortions. In 2009 there were 74 abortions per 100 births, compared to 129 abortions per 100 births in 2003.

10. In 2010 the number of registered marriages totalled 1,199,400, or 0.6 per cent more than in 2003 (1,191,800). In 2009, the marriage rate stood at 8.5 per 1,000, or 11.8 per cent higher than in 2003 (7.6 per cent).

11. In 2009 the figures for divorce declined by 12.4 per cent, to 699,400, as against 798,800 in 2003. The divorce rate in 2009 fell by 10.1 per cent, to 4.9 per 1,000, compared to 5.5 per 1,000 in 2003. In 2009 there were 583 divorces per 1,000 marriages (732 in 2003). The number of dissolved marriages in 2009 in which the former spouses had children below the age of 18 fell by 14.2 per cent compared to 2003.

12. The proportion of children born to women out of wedlock fell to 26.1 per cent in 2009, as against 29.7 per cent in 2003.

13. Over the period 2003–2009, infant mortality fell by 34.7 per cent and stood at 8.1 per 1,000 live births in 2009, compared to 12.4 per 1,000 in 2003. The decline in infant mortality is continuing. The transition to the international criteria for the registration of births recommended by WHO is being actively prepared. To that end, a number of measures are being taken to introduce modern medical technologies for the treatment and care of children with very low body weight, to increase the number of intensive care units for newborns, to fit obstetric facilities with modern equipment and to establish a network of perinatal centres.

14. The maternal mortality rate fell from 31.9 per 100,000 live births in 2003 to 22.0 per 100,000 in 2009. It stood at 30.0 per 100,000 (44.5 per 100,000 in 2003) for the rural population and 18.7 per 100,000 (27 per 100,000 in 2003) for the urban population.

15. The socioeconomic situation of families with children depends on factors such as family income, employment possibilities for the parents, housing and the state of health and educational level of women and children. In 2009, 18.5 million persons had income below the subsistence level, or 13.2 per cent of the total population (29.3 million persons or 20.3 per cent in 2003). Income shortfalls are particularly severe for many families whose children are between one and a half and three years of age, when mothers are on unpaid maternal leave and it is difficult for them to return to a paid employment for a variety of reasons.

16. In 2009 the income of the most well off 10 per cent of the population was 16.7 times greater than that of the least well off 10 per cent (in 2003: 14.5 times greater). In recent years, income and property distribution has remained virtually unchanged. In 2009 the most well off 20 per cent of the population had 47.8 per cent of all income, and the least well off 20 per cent had 5.1 per cent, as against 46.2 per cent and 5.5 per cent in 2003. The main poverty factors continue to be the low wages of workers, above all in the public sector, and the low level of social benefits and other social payments.

17. A rise in purchasing power has been observed since 2003. In 2009 average income was 3.3 times greater than the subsistence level, compared to 2.4 times greater in 2003.

III. General measures of implementation

Articles 4, 42 and 44, paragraph 6

18. Information on national legislation adopted before 2003 to ensure compliance with the Convention is contained in paragraphs 17–20, 22 and 23 of the third periodic report. During the reporting period, work continued on improving national legislation to ensure the rights and legitimate interests of children and to strengthen their protection against factors that adversely affect their development. Federal Act No. 124 of 24 July 1998 on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights has an article (Measures to promote the physical, intellectual, psychological, mental and moral development of children) pursuant to which the constituent entities of the Russian Federation are authorized to introduce measures in legislation which prohibit the presence of persons under 18 years of age in places exclusively devoted to the production of sex articles, beer, other alcoholic beverages or alcohol-based products, or in other places where such presence may be harmful to a child's physical, mental or moral development, as well as to establish administrative liability for non-compliance (Federal Act No. 71 of 22 April 2009). The Act also introduces provisions to protect children from the negative influence of printed material or other products which propagate violence and cruelty, pornography, drug abuse or antisocial behaviour or cause harm to children's health or moral or mental development (Federal Act No. 118 of 3 June 2009).

19. The Criminal Code has been amended to establish greater criminal liability and to increase the duration of sanctions for offences committed against the life, health and sexual inviolability of minors. Special emphasis is placed on acts committed against a pregnant woman, a child or a person who is in a helpless state or is materially or otherwise dependent on the perpetrator. In particular, provision is made for heavier penalties for offences committed against minors, homicide, intentionally causing grievous or moderate bodily harm, rape, violent acts of a sexual nature with a person under the age of 16, indecent assault, failure to fulfil child-rearing responsibilities, unlawful production, sale or transport of narcotics or psychotropic substances or their analogues, enticement to use narcotics or psychotropic substances, and the production and circulation of materials or objects containing pornographic images of minors, and amendments have been introduced in accordance with which a court may deprive a person from holding a particular position or engaging in a particular activity for up to 20 years as an additional punishment in cases expressly set out in the relevant articles of the Special Section of the Criminal Code (Federal Act No. 215 of 27 July 2009).

20. In the Committee's concluding observations on the third periodic report (CRC/C/RUS/CO/3), it was recommended that the Russian Federation should strengthen measures to prevent and combat sexual exploitation and abuse of children and ensure that they are legally protected from involvement in prostitution and pornography. In this connection, the Criminal Code has been amended to improve criminal law guarantees for the protection of the life, health, sexual inviolability and morals of children. The maximum duration of the additional punishment of deprivation of the right to hold a particular office or engage in a particular activity has been increased from 3 to 20 years (art. 47); persons convicted of offences involving the sexual inviolability of a minor are subject to conditional early release only after serving at least three quarters of the sentence (art. 79), as against one third of the sentence in the past; harsher criminal sanctions have been established for homicide or intentionally causing grievous or moderate bodily harm to an underage child or to a person known by the perpetrator to be in a helpless state (arts. 105, 111 and 112); the question of whether or not the perpetrator is aware of the age of the child victim has been removed from the constituent elements of a number of offences, including rape and violent

acts of a sexual nature, the enticement of a minor to use narcotics or psychotropic substances, and the production and circulation of child pornography (arts. 131, 132, 230 and 242); heavier penalties have been introduced for the commission of a number of offences against minors or underage children, including rape (art. 131), violent acts of a sexual nature (art. 132), failure to fulfil child-rearing responsibilities (art. 156), unlawful production, sale or transport of narcotics or psychotropic substances or their analogues (art. 228), enticement to use narcotics or psychotropic substances (art. 230) and the production and circulation of materials or objects containing pornographic images of minors (art. 242); heavier sanctions have been established which punish the commission of non-violent sexual offences (arts. 134 and 135); much heavier penalties have been introduced for consensual sexual intercourse, sodomy, lesbian acts and indecent assault involving a child under 12 years of age; and heavier criminal sanctions have been established for the production and circulation of materials or objects containing pornographic images of minors which generate large profits (art. 242, para. 1).

21. Amendments have been made to article 155 of the Family Code, pursuant to which the constituent entities of the Russian Federation are authorized to introduce legislation governing the amount of, and regulations for payments for the care of children in foster families (Federal Act No. 71 of 3 June 2006).

22. The Federal Act No. 48 of 24 April 2008 on Tutorship and Guardianship regulates relations arising from the establishment, exercise and annulment of tutorship or guardianship of persons with no or limited legal capacity and defines the rights, obligations and responsibilities of tutors and guardians, which is being extended to organizations in which such persons are placed under supervision, including organizations active with orphans and children deprived of parental care.

23. Federal Act No. 143 of 15 November 1997 on Civil Status Records has been amended in order to address the question of the registration of the birth of children abandoned by their mothers at medical facilities (Federal Act No. 169 of 17 July 2009); this has improved the legal protection of these children by ensuring the provision of the relevant benefits and social guarantees in the course of their placement in a family.

24. Federal Act No. 159 of 21 December 1996 on Additional Guarantees of Social Protection for Orphans and Children deprived of Parental Care has been amended to introduce additional guarantees to ensure the right to receive vocational training not only for orphans and children deprived of parental care up to the age of 23, but also for persons in this category who are older than 23 years of age so as to enable them to complete such training. Such persons receive full State support (free food, clothing, shoes and linen, dormitory accommodation and medical care or full compensation for medical expenses) until the completion of training (Federal Act No. 315 of 17 December 2009).

25. In accordance with a bill to amend the Labour Code¹ and article 22.1 of the Federal Act on the Registration of Legal Entities and Private Businessmen, which was submitted for consideration to the State Duma (the lower house of the Federal Assembly), persons who have or had a criminal record or who are or were subject to criminal prosecution for crimes committed against the life, health, freedom, honour, dignity, or sexual inviolability or sexual freedom of the individual, the family, minors, public health or morals or State security may not be employed or registered as entrepreneurs for the upbringing, education or development of minors, the organization of their leisure or health activities, health or medical care, social protection or social security, or sports, cultural or artistic activities in which minors participate.

¹ Act No. 387, adopted on 23 December 2010.

26. A bill to amend the Criminal Code which would impose heavier penalties on crimes of a sexual nature committed against minors² has been submitted to the State Duma. It would establish punishment for crimes of a sexual nature committed not only against persons known to be minors but against any minor. It would also define offences committed by a parent or other person legally responsible for a child's upbringing (a teacher or a staff member of instructional, educational, health-care or other facilities entrusted with the supervision of minors), and it would punish the acquisition and possession of materials or objects containing pornographic images of minors not intended for distribution, public display or commercialization.

27. Consideration is being given to amendments to a number of legislative acts on the provision of housing for orphans and children deprived of parental care and the preparation of persons wishing to bring up such children, as well as on the prevention of social orphanhood, the effective organization of the work of the tutorship and guardianship authorities to ensure early detection of families and children in a crisis situation, the protection of the rights of children living in such families, preservation of the child's ties with the biological family, and foster care.

28. An agreement has been ratified between the Russian Federation and Italy on cooperation in the area of orphaned children, the first such bilateral international agreement in Russian practice (Federal Act No. 258 of 9 November 2009), in order to strengthen and protect the legal guarantees and rights of orphaned children at international level. Work is under way on similar agreements with the United Kingdom, Israel, Ireland, Cyprus, Spain, New Zealand, the United States and France.

29. In accordance with Federal Act No. 101 of 3 June 2009 on Ratification of the European Social Charter (revised) of 3 May 1996, the Russian Federation assumed obligations with regard to 19 of the 31 articles (67 of the 98 paragraphs) of the Charter, including article 16, which enshrines the right of the family to social, legal and economic protection, to be ensured by means of social benefits, fiscal arrangements and other appropriate means.

30. A set of documents has been prepared concerning the accession of the Russian Federation to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction, concluded in The Hague on 25 October 1980, the object of which is to secure the prompt return of children wrongfully removed to or retained in any Contracting State and to ensure that rights of custody and of access under the law of one Contracting State are effectively reflected in the other Contracting States.

31. A Government plan of action has been drafted to give effect to measures to ensure that the Russian Federation is prepared to implement the obligations of States parties to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography adopted by the General Assembly on 25 May 2000 and the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse adopted by the Council of Europe's Committee of Ministers on 12 July 2007, with the help of which it is planned to introduce further improvements to Russian legislation in accordance with the obligations under the Optional Protocol and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, to elaborate programmes for providing assistance to victims of offences and taking forceful action to prevent and minimize the risk of a repetition of offences of a sexual nature, and to produce awareness-raising measures to combat the sexual exploitation and sexual abuse of minors.

² Adopted on first reading by the State Duma on 26 January 2011.

32. The Russian Federation has a unified system of benefits granted for the birth and upbringing of children, under which the State provides material support for motherhood, fatherhood and childhood in accordance with Federal Act No. 81 of 19 May 1995 on State Allowances for Citizens with Children. In 2006 additions were made to the Act specifying an increase in monthly allowances for child support and the right of unemployed citizens to receive such assistance, and a new form of assistance was introduced: the lump-sum payment for children placed in families. In 2008 two new types of assistance were created for families of military conscripts: a lump-sum payment for the pregnant wife of a military serviceman, and a monthly allowance for the child.

33. Federal Act No. 207 of 5 December 2006 on Amendments to a number of Legislative Acts with regard to State Support for Citizens with Children introduced as from 1 January 2007 the payment of compensation of part of parental fees for the care of children in State and municipal educational facilities with a basic preschool programme. Parents are not required to pay a fee for the care in these facilities of children with developmental difficulties or with tuberculosis. The principal novelty of this form of maternal support is that for the first time, support is not provided for the facility and its educational programme, but for the recipients of school services, namely the parents of preschool children. In 2009 Federal Education Act No. 3266-1 of 10 July 1992 was amended to extend the right of parents and legal guardians to receive compensation for part of parental fees to include parents whose children attend non-State educational establishments with a basic general preschool education programme (Federal Act No. 148 of 17 July 2009). In 2009 more than 4.2 million persons received such compensation, as against 3.8 million in 2007.

34. Pursuant to Federal Act No. 18 of 1 March 2008 on Amendments to a number of Legal Acts with a view to Raising Various Forms of Social Payments and Costs of Social Services, as from 1 April 2008 all forms of social assistance (except for maternity childcare allowances paid to women entitled to compulsory social insurance) have been indexed in accordance with the amount and period established under the Federal Budget Act for the relevant financial year and planning period on the basis of the expected inflation rate set under the Act.

35. In accordance with Federal Act No. 256 of 29 December 2006 on Additional Measures of State Support for Families with Children, in 2007 a completely new programme was launched on long-term family support, in the form of maternal (family) capital, for the birth or adoption of a second child and each child thereafter. When the child reaches the age of 3, at the request of the mother the payments can be used in full or in part to improve living conditions, provide for the education of the child or children or increase the mother's retirement pension. The maternal (family) capital is adjusted annually to allow for inflation; in the period 2007–2009 it increased by 25 per cent, from 250,000 roubles to 312,000 roubles.

36. In 2008 the Federal Act on Additional Measures of State Support for Families with Children was amended to give families the possibility of availing themselves of the right to use some or all of the maternal (family) capital to repay the principal and interest on credit or a loan, including a mortgage, regardless of the period which has elapsed since the birth or adoption of a second or third child (Federal Act No. 288 of 25 December 2008).

37. In accordance with the Tax Code, in 2009 the standard deduction for persons with children was increased from 600 to 1,000 roubles for each child and each month of the tax period (Federal Act 121 of 22 July 2008).

38. Federal Act No. 173 of 17 December 2001 on Retirement Pensions was amended to provide for the payment of a loss-of-breadwinner pension to children who have lost both parents. Two pension insurance components are set for this category of children, on the

basis of the notional pension capital of each of the parents (Federal Act No. 130 of 29 June 2009).

39. In 2009 Federal Act No. 115 of 25 July 2002 on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals and Federal Act No. 62 of 31 May 2002 on Citizenship of the Russian Federation were amended to include a list of categories of foreign nationals and stateless persons who may be granted a temporary residence permit regardless of the quota for the issuance of such a permit and to make it possible for foreign nationals and stateless persons aged 18 or older who have legal capacity and have children with no or limited legal capacity to acquire Russian citizenship in a simplified procedure without their needing to fulfil conditions concerning the duration of uninterrupted residence in the Russian Federation or the presence of a residence permit. These amendments aim to ensure the right of children to live and be raised in a family and to live with and be cared for and brought up by their parents. Provision is also made for the supervision, protection and administration of the property of children who are citizens of the Russian Federation and have lost parents who were also Russian citizens (Federal Act No. 127 of 28 June 2009).

40. The Family Code has been amended to increase penalties for late payment of child support (Federal Act No. 106 of 30 June 2008).

41. A number of measures have been carried out over the period 2007–2010 to promote preschool education in the Russian Federation, including initiatives to develop preschool education at federal, regional and local level, the aim being to ensure access to preschool education and improve its quality.

42. In line with the Committee's concluding observations, during the reporting period steps were taken to set up an office of the commissioner for children's rights. Pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 986 of 1 September 2009, the post of Presidential Commissioner for Children's Rights was established. In accordance with Federal Act No. 177 of 23 July 2010 on Amendments to articles 26 and 28 of the Federal Act on the Social Forum, the staff of the Social Forum is tasked with ensuring the activities of the Commissioner through the allocation of the necessary material and financial resources. At the time of the signing of the presidential decree, there was an Office of the Commissioner in 18 regions of the country. A year later, they were in 48 constituent entities. Steps are being taken to harmonize the organizational and legal structure of the regional offices in order to ensure that they are set up and operated in an identical manner.

43. The provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child are given tangible form in school curricula and in thematic plans for training and upgrading the qualifications of child specialists. In the context of the twentieth anniversary of the adoption of the Convention, the State Duma held parliamentary hearings, and conferences, seminars and other initiatives were conducted in the constituent entities to heighten awareness of the provisions of the Convention, analyse federal and regional legislation on the protection of children's rights and decide areas of future work. The mass media report on the activities of the federal and regional authorities, voluntary associations and organizations active in the protection of the rights of children, adolescents and young people. At the suggestion of the Commissioner for Children's Rights, general education establishments, and above all primary schools, have devoted a classroom hour to the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the Russian Federation.

44. The third periodic report and the Committee's concluding observations have been posted on the Internet. The outcome of the consideration of the third periodic report is also discussed in periodicals and specialized journals.

IV. Definition of the child (art. 1)

45. Provisions relating to the definition of the child in accordance with article 1 of the Convention are set out in paragraphs 71 and 73 of the second periodic report and paragraph 62 of the third periodic report.

46. During the reporting period, steps were taken to improve national legislation with a view to creating conditions for a healthy lifestyle for children and their normal development. The Education Act was amended to make general education compulsory for all children until the age of 18 (Federal Act No. 194 of 21 July 2007). A ban was introduced on the retail sale of beer and other alcoholic beverages to persons under the age of 18 (Federal Act No. 11 of 7 March 2005). Access by minors to gambling establishments is prohibited (Federal Act No. 244 of 29 December 2006).

47. The Federal Act on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights was amended to raise the age of minors from 16 to 18, which must be taken into account during the elaboration of legal acts regulating the dissemination of information not recommended for use by children (Federal Act No. 118 of 3 June 2009). Information on this question is contained in paragraph 18 of this report.

48. In accordance with paragraph 78 of the Committee's concluding observations (question of the legal protection of children aged 14 to 18 from sexual exploitation and sexual abuse), the Criminal Code was amended to raise the age of consent for minors who are victims of non-violent sexual intercourse, indecent assault, sodomy or acts of lesbianism from 14 to 16 (Federal Act No. 162 of 8 December 2003).

V. General principles

A. Non-discrimination (art. 2)

49. The provisions of this article are explained in detail in paragraphs 74–78, 80–82, 84 and 85 of the second periodic report, paragraphs 63–65 of the third periodic report and paragraph 18 of this report.

50. The Labour Code establishes a number of restrictive norms concerning minors, with a view to protecting their health and moral, physical and intellectual development. Minors are not permitted to work under harmful or dangerous working conditions or below ground, because it may have an adverse impact on their health. Nor may they work in gambling establishments, in cabarets or nightclubs, in the production, transport or sale of alcoholic beverages or tobacco products, narcotics or other toxic substances, because it may be harmful to their moral development. In view of their focus, these norms are not discriminatory.

B. Best interests of the child (art. 3)

51. The principle of the best interests of the child and the obligation to take into consideration the interests of the child in all initiatives involving children have been set out in the codified law of the Russian Federation, the Fundamentals of Health-Care Legislation, the Education Act, the Federal Act on Additional Guarantees of Social Protection for Orphans and Children deprived of Parental Care, the Federal Act on Social Protection for Persons with Disabilities, the Federal Refugees Act and the Federal Act on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights.

52. Information on material support for children's interests is provided in paragraphs 32–38 of this report.

53. During the reporting period, work continued on improving legislation, bearing in mind the principle of the best interests of the child. The Family Code was amended (2007 and 2008) to establish the responsibility of parents for creating the necessary conditions to enable children to receive secondary (full) general education and to ensure the right of parents to choose the educational establishment and the type of education, account being taken of the views of the children, as well as to introduce norms for monitoring the living conditions and upbringing of children in foster families in the manner prescribed by the Government.

54. Social services for children are provided at social services institutions for families and children (paragraph 183 of this report). In accordance with article 6 of the Federal Act on the Foundations of Social Services, social services, including for children, are provided on the basis of State standards, which establish fundamental requirements concerning the extent and quality of such services and the procedure and conditions for eligibility. State social services standards are set in accordance with the procedure laid down by the authorities of the constituent entities. The national standards fix the main kinds of social services for families and children, their quality, terms and definitions, classification of social service facilities, types of social services institutions available, monitoring of the quality of such services etc. Ensuring the presence of the right staff — qualified specialists trained in the use of modern technologies and techniques for working with families and children — is a prerequisite for making the activities of these social services institutions effective. In 2009, 131,300 persons, including 79,800 specialists, were employed in this area, providing social assistance to families, women and children (in 2008: 134,400 persons, including 79,600 specialists). In 2009 more than 13,000 specialists upgraded their qualifications.

C. The right to life, survival and development (art. 6)

55. Every year, the Russian Federation adopts a programme of State guarantees of free medical care for citizens (paragraph 79 of the third periodic report). Measures to give effect to State guarantees in the area of family, maternity and child support are carried out, in particular, under the compulsory health-care system. Every child permanently resident in the Russian Federation is entitled to medical insurance under the compulsory medical care system. As of 1 January 2010, 26.4 million children under 18 years of age whose parents were either citizens of the Russian Federation or foreign nationals permanently resident in the country had medical insurance under the compulsory medical insurance system. Medical insurance contributions for children under 18 years of age are paid by the regional government bodies empowered by the authorities of the constituent entities at the highest level.

56. On 1 January 2006, in accordance with the Priority National Health Project, the Maternity Certificate Programme was launched, which gives women the right to choose where to go for health-care services and aims to increase material incentives to encourage health-care facilities to provide better care for women during pregnancy, delivery and the postnatal period and for infants during the first year of life. The programme, which targets prenatal and maternity clinics, perinatal centres and paediatric polyclinics, has made it possible to improve the quality of regular medical check-ups for pregnant women at prenatal clinics, to increase the proportion of women who used the prenatal clinics in the first 12 weeks of pregnancy from 75.3 per cent in 2003 to 82.1 per cent in 2009, to provide pregnant women with medicine and to increase the proportion of normal deliveries from 32.2 per cent in 2003 to 37.5 per cent in 2009. Obstetric clinics have been fitted with

modern medical equipment, including for the care of premature babies. Thanks to the introduction of modern medical technologies in obstetrics clinics, there has been a steady decline in perinatal mortality, from 11.3 per 1,000 live births in 2003 to 7.8 in 2009. Over the past five years, improved care for children in the first year of life and their timely hospitalization has resulted in a 15.9 per cent decline in mortality in the 24 hours following admission.

57. In the framework of the implementation of the Priority National Health Project, in 2006 provision was made to add influenza to the national immunization programme, which already includes vaccinations for hepatitis B, diphtheria, whooping cough, measles, rubella, polio, tetanus, tuberculosis and mumps. A 100 per cent vaccination rate of children against viral hepatitis B and rubella was achieved, and flu shots were introduced in 2006. There has also been a gradual shift to the use of inactivated vaccine to immunize against polio. The programme of neonatal screening for cystic fibrosis, galactosemia, adrenogenital syndrome and congenital bradyacasia has been expanded.

58. In the context of the Priority National Health Project and the special federal "Children of Russia" programme, since 2006 more than 5,160,000 newborns have been examined for hereditary diseases, and more than 3,600 cases have been detected. All these children are being monitored and are receiving adequate treatment and rehabilitation. This has made it possible to reduce infant disability and infant mortality. Whereas in 2003, 109,221 children had a disability due to a congenital or hereditary disease, by 2009 the figure had fallen to 94,964, a decline of 13.1 per cent. Infant mortality in the first year of life due to congenital abnormalities fell from 30.2 per 10,000 live births in 2003 to 20.3 in 2009.

59. In line with paragraph 28 of the Committee's concluding observations, the annex contains data on cases of infanticide for the period 2003–2009. The number of such cases fell from 195 in 2003 to 123 in 2009, a decline of 36.9 per cent.

60. As from 1999, the procedure for the registration of the death of children is based on Ministry of Health Order No. 241 of 7 August 1998 on improvements in birth and death certificates in the context of the changeover to ICD-10. Ministry of Public Health and Social Development Order No. 782n of 26 December 2008 on the approval and regulations for issuance of birth and death certificates, which approved registration forms for birth certificates, death certificates and perinatal death certificates, was enacted to improve the record-keeping of such documents.

D. Respect for the views of the child (art. 12)

61. From birth, children have and are guaranteed human and civil rights and freedoms in accordance with the Constitution, universally recognized principles and norms of international law, the provisions of the Family Code and other legal acts. The Family Code guarantees children the right to express their views when decisions are taken by the family on all matters affecting them and to be heard in judicial proceedings. It also stipulates that, except for cases that are contrary to the interests of the child, the views of children 10 years of age or older must be taken into account with regard to changes of the child's given and family name, the restoration of parental rights, adoption or placement in foster care, and the registration of the adoptive parents as the child's parents in the civil register (see paragraphs 119, 120, 122 and 142 of the second periodic report and paragraphs 84–90 of the third periodic report).

VI. Civil rights and freedoms

A. Name and nationality (art. 7)

62. Questions concerning the recording in the Register of Births of the given name, patronymic and family name of the child and the acquisition of citizenship are regulated by the Family Code, the Federal Act on Civil Status Documents and the Federal Citizenship Act. The provisions of these legal instruments are in keeping with universally recognized principles of international law (see paragraphs 132–137 of the second periodic report and paragraphs 94–97 of the third periodic report).

63. A change in the citizenship of a child when the child's parents acquire or terminate their citizenship of the Russian Federation is regulated by the Federal Citizenship Act. The child acquires the citizenship of the Russian Federation if both parents or the child's sole parent acquires such citizenship. The child's citizenship of the Russian Federation is terminated when the citizenship of the Russian Federation of both parents or the child's sole parent is terminated, provided that the child does not become stateless. For adopted children who are citizens of the Russian Federation, the question of citizenship is regulated by the relevant international agreements. The agreement between the Russian Federation and Italy on cooperation in the area of adoption provides that the adopted child has the right to acquire the citizenship of the receiving State and to retain the citizenship of the State of origin.

64. Federal Act No. 121 of 18 July 2006 on Amendments to a number of Legislative Acts on the Improvement in the State Administration of Migration Policy amended the Federal Act on Civil Status Documents to establish that the registry office is not required to communicate the official registration of a change of name to the internal affairs authorities at the place of residence of the applicant, but instead to the regional bodies of the federal government authorities with a monitoring and supervisory function in the area of migration, at the place of residence of the applicant within seven days from the date of official registration of the change of name.

B. Preservation of identity (art. 8)

65. Information on this question is set out in paragraphs 90–99, 143–146, 152–156 and 184–187 of the second periodic report, paragraph 98 of the third periodic report and paragraphs 66 and 70 of this report.

C. Freedom of expression (art. 13)

66. In accordance with general civil legislation, children have the right to freedom of expression. They also have unhindered access to the media. In 2009 the Federal Act on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights was amended to raise from 16 to 18 the age of minors for whom federal and regional legislation establishes guidelines for the circulation of printed matter, audio and visual products and other material not recommended for use by children.

67. All general education establishments have access to the Internet. A number of projects are being carried out to introduce new-generation electronic educational resources. A single centralized repository is being set up – a collection of digital educational resources publicly accessible on the Internet, the most important section of which contains additional teaching material, including of a scientific and technical nature, fragments and recitals of musical works, biographies of composers, digital copies of masterpieces of Russian and

foreign art and of exhibits from museum holdings etc. Homes for orphans and children deprived of parental care also have access to the media, telephones and other means of communicating with their peers and family.

68. The Russian Federation is actively participating in the elaboration of a third optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child which would establish a communications procedure, i.e. a mechanism for the submission and consideration of individual and group complaints by children or their representatives in connection with violations of the provisions of the Convention.

D. Freedom of thought, conscience and religion (art. 14)

69. The provisions of this article are discussed in paragraphs 144–148 of the second periodic report and paragraph 100 of the third periodic report.

70. The Criminal Code was amended to broaden penalties for hindering the exercise of the right to freedom of conscience and religion, unlawful hindrance of the activities of religious organizations, the celebration of religious rites etc. Sanctions for persons who have committed an act in exercise of their official position include compulsory punitive work in addition to existing measures (fines, forfeiture of the right to hold a particular office or engage in a particular activity, detention or deprivation of freedom) (Federal Act No. 162 of 8 December 2003). Federal Act No. 125 of 26 September 1997 on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations has been amended to establish the right of citizens for whom the performance of military service runs counter to their convictions or faith to substitute an alternative civilian service, instead of granting a deferral for the performance of military service and an exemption from military training, as was done previously (Federal Act No. 104 of 6 July 2006).

71. Since 2009, a comprehensive basic course on religious cultures and secular ethics has been tested for general education establishments in 21 constituent entities. It covers the fundamentals of Russian Orthodox, Islamic, Buddhist and Jewish cultures as well as other important religious cultures and secular ethics. The course is secular in nature. A mechanism has been elaborated to enable pupils and their parents or legal guardians to choose one of the components of the course. Activities carried out by the educational authorities in conjunction with religious associations focus on the spiritual and moral education of pupils, joint social programmes and efforts to combat the activities of destructive religious cults.

72. As of the end of 2009, 23,494 religious associations and 66 confessions were registered as non-profit organizations with the Ministry of Justice and its regional offices, including 433 national and 22,176 regional bodies, 193 educational institutions and 434 monasteries.

E. Freedom of association and of peaceful assembly (art. 15)

73. The Constitution recognizes human rights and freedoms as the highest good. Citizens are guaranteed the right to freedom of association, and freedom is guaranteed for the activities of public organizations (associations) (see paragraphs 149–150 of the second periodic report and paragraphs 102–103 of the third periodic report).

74. Children's and young people's organizations receive support in accordance with Federal Act No. 98 of 25 June 1995 on State Support for Children's and Young People's Organizations. The scope of the Act does not extend to commercial and religious organizations of young people and children, young people's and student unions or young

people's or children's organizations administered or created by political parties, since their activities are regulated by other documents.

75. The right of peaceful assembly is guaranteed by article 21 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and extends to all citizens, irrespective of race, sex, ethnic background, religion or political views. In accordance with the Criminal Code, it is a criminally punishable act for an official unlawfully to hinder the holding of or participation in a meeting, rally or similar event or to force participation in such an event.

76. The Federal Act on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights establishes measures for the protection of children's rights in connection with activities involving their upbringing and education. The rights of children may not be infringed in the family or in institutions providing children's services (educational, special educational etc.). Pupils and students have the right to hold meetings and rallies outside school time on questions concerning the protection of their rights. Meetings and rallies must be conducted in a lawful manner, must not disrupt public order and must not interfere with the educational process.

77. The Russian Federation traditionally conducts large-scale initiatives for children, adolescents and young people (gatherings, festivals, academic competitions and sports events). In 2009 a national patriotic event, "I am a citizen of Russia", was held to foster civic-mindedness among adolescents and young people.

F. Protection of privacy (art. 16)

78. Legislation provides that no one may be subjected to interference with their privacy, family, home or correspondence nor to unlawful attacks on their honour or reputation (paragraphs 152–154 of the second periodic report and paragraph 105 of the third periodic report).

79. Pursuant to the Criminal Code, violations of privacy (spreading of information on a person's private life which are personal or family secrets without the person's consent), the confidentiality of correspondence, telephone conversations, the mail, telegraphic or other communications and the inviolability of the home are criminally punishable acts.

G. Access to information (art. 17)

80. The access of children to information is regulated by Act No. 1807-1 of 25 October 1991 on the Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation, Act No. 2124-1 of 27 October 1991 on the Mass Media and Federal Act No. 149 of 27 July 2006 on Information, the Information Technologies and the Protection of Information. In 2008 a strategy was launched for the development of an information society in the Russian Federation, a main objective of which is to preserve the culture of the multi-ethnic people of the Russian Federation, strengthen public awareness of moral and patriotic principles and promote a system of cultural and humanitarian enlightenment.

81. Federal Act No. 38 of 13 March 2006 on Advertising stipulates that advertisements for weapons and military goods, beer, other alcoholic beverages and alcohol-based products, tobacco, tobacco products and smoking accessories, and medical substances and services for abortions may not be circulated among minors, the aim being to protect them against an abuse of their trust. Advertisements for such products may not be placed in printed publications or audio or visual material for minors or posted at children's, educational, medical, therapeutic, recreational or military organizations, libraries, auditoriums, observatories and other cultural institutions or distributed at physical fitness

and sports events or within 100 meters of the buildings, structures or edifices which they occupy.

82. In 2009 the financial and economic crisis had an impact on the Russian print media market. In the first quarter of 2009, the number of copies of children's publications fell by 20–40 per cent, while prices rose 20 per cent on average. New publications of children's journals made it possible to maintain the market at the same level as before the crisis – 5 million copies per month. Every year, State subsidies are awarded on a basis of competitive bidding to carry out socially significant projects for children and young persons.

83. In 2007 the topic "Publicity for family values, a cult of the healthy family, love of children and the uncompromising fight against child neglect and vagrancy" was included in the list of projects for receiving State support. The official declaration in 2008 in Russia of the Year of the Family gave impetus to the elaboration of many new socially significant projects. A national competition is held for the best book for children and young persons, the aim being to involve young writers in the creation of works for children. An annual "Book of the Year" competition is held for writers. State support is provided for the creation of socially significant television and radio programmes, television films and Internet websites. Thanks to financial support from the federal budget, a number of programmes for children and adolescents have appeared in the constituent entities.

84. In the period 2003–2009 the number of public children's libraries fell from 4,500 to 4,100. There are about 60,000 school libraries nationwide. As part of the "Culture of Russia 2006–2011" federal programme, in 2009 a framework policy was elaborated for a project for the organization of a mobile system of services for localities without libraries, and the first set of mobile units with information and libraries services was established. Steps are being taken to computerize children's libraries and to teach how to use electronic catalogues and search for information on the Internet. Regional children's libraries have special training programmes and computer learning centres and clubs. Children's libraries conduct readings entitled the "Book week for children and young people", festivals, initiatives, book fairs, contests and other events. Special attention is given to encouraging children to read, to working with the family and to addressing problems of social and cultural adaptation and rehabilitation for children with disabilities.

85. Under the "Culture of Russia 2006–2011" federal programme, in 2009, 26 international, national, interregional and regional initiatives to support the creative work of children and young people received funding assistance.

86. Museums design and carry out programmes for various categories of children, including for children who are visually impaired, deaf or hearing impaired, or motor impaired and for wheelchair users.

87. Activities are conducted every year to promote the theatre, including for children and young people.

88. In 2009 State targets were set for cultural and artistic institutions under federal jurisdiction. The number of initiatives carried out for children and young people and the number of spectators are considered crucial indicators of the effectiveness of their work. These indicators are being introduced for all organizations active in the performing arts.

H. The right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 37 (a))

89. The Russian Federation has acceded to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment of 10 December 1984. It ratified the European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading

Treatment or Punishment on 28 March 1998 and acceded to Protocols No. 1 and No. 2 thereto.

90. The Constitution states that no one may be subjected to torture, violence or other cruel or degrading treatment or punishment. Russian criminal legislation guarantees security of person. Federal Act No. 162 of 8 December 2003 introduces an addition to article 117 of the Criminal Code strengthening the definition of the term “torture”. Federal Act No. 211 of 24 July 2007 on Amendments to a number of Legislative Acts in connection with Improvements in the State Administration in the area of Combating Extremism makes it a crime to commit torture on grounds of political, ideological, racial, ethnic or religious hatred or enmity, as well as hatred or enmity towards any social group, including minors.

91. The procuratorial authorities monitor respect for the rights of citizens, including in places of deprivation of liberty, children’s institutions and other establishments. They carry out checks on observance of the law at children’s homes and boarding schools, on the basis of which steps are taken to restore any children’s rights which have been infringed. The President’s Commissioner for Children’s Rights and the Commissioners for Children’s Rights in the constituent entities also conduct inspections in this area.

VII. Family environment and alternative care

A. Parental guidance (art. 5)

92. The right of parental guidance in keeping with the interests and developing capacities of the child is set out in the Family Code, the Education Act and the Act on the Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation. The right of parents to bring up their children takes precedence over that of all other individuals. The primary concern of the parents must be the protection of their children’s interests. By law, children must be raised in a manner that is free from neglectful, cruel, brutal or degrading treatment or abuse, as well as exploitation (see paragraphs 165–167 of the second periodic report).

93. According to data from the 2002 National Census,³ there were 21 million families in Russia with children under 18 years of age (50.4 per cent of all families); 67.7 per cent of families with children have one child, 26.9 per cent have two children and 5.4 per cent have three or more. In all, there are more than 1.1 million large families in Russia, of which 75 per cent are families with three children. In the reporting period, the number of registered marriages has been on the rise and the number of divorces has been declining (see paragraphs 10–12 of this report). In 2009, 1,302,300 children were born in registered marriages, or 283,500 more than in 2003. The positive trend of fathers recognizing their children born out of wedlock continues.

94. Establishments providing social services for families and children assist parents in raising their children. Their activities are focused on the promotion, preservation and restoration of children’s family and social ties, the protection of their psychological well-being, the free development of their individual abilities and inclinations, and the provision of family counselling services. At the end of 2009, 3,235 establishments of various kinds, including 519 family and child social assistance centres, rendered such services.

³ New data on the structure of the family will be received once the 2010 National Census has been completed.

B. Parental responsibilities (art. 18, paras. 1–2)

95. Under Russian legislation, parents are responsible for the upbringing and development of their children. They have equal rights and obligations vis-à-vis their children, and they must provide for their underage children and look after their health and physical, intellectual, psychological, spiritual and moral development (see paragraphs 171–172 of the second report and paragraph 125 of the third report). In accordance with article 5.35 of the Code of Administrative Offences, a warning may be issued or an administrative fine imposed on parents or other legal representatives of minors for non-fulfilment or improper fulfilment of their responsibility for providing for, bringing up, educating and protecting the rights and interests of minors. In 2009 the Criminal Code was amended to impose heavier penalties on parents or other legal representatives of minors for non-fulfilment or improper fulfilment of their responsibilities for the upbringing of a minor if the acts involve cruel treatment of a minor. The fine was raised from 40,000 to 100,000 roubles, the duration of compulsory labour was increased from 180 hours to 220 hours, and the duration of punitive work was raised from one year to two years (Federal Act No. 215 of 27 July 2009).

96. Pursuant to article 69 of the Family Code, a parent or parents may be deprived of parental rights for evasion of parental responsibilities, which includes wilful refusal to make maintenance payments, refusal to remove a child from a maternity clinic or ward or other medical centre, educational establishment, social protection institution or other similar facility, abuse of parental rights, cruel treatment (including physical or psychological violence) and offences against a child's sexual inviolability. A parent or parents may also be deprived of their parental rights if they are chronic alcoholics or drug addicts or if they have made a premeditated attack on the life or health of their children or spouse.

97. Article 69 of the Family Code also specifies that a court may, in the best interests of the child, order a child's removal from his or her parent or parents without depriving them of or restricting their parental authority. Such a measure is taken in cases in which it would be dangerous for a child to remain with the parents for reasons beyond their control (such as a psychological disorder or chronic illness, a concurrence of difficult circumstances etc.) and also if there are insufficient grounds for deprivation of parental rights. If the parent or parents do not alter their behaviour, the tutorship and guardianship authorities are required, on the expiry of a six-month period from the day of the issuance of a court order restricting the parents' rights, to initiate proceedings for the deprivation of these rights. In the interests of the child, they may initiate proceedings for deprivation of parental rights on the expiry of that period.

98. The State supports parents and legal representatives in the exercise of parental rights in accordance with the Labour Code (see paragraph 173 of the second periodic report), Federal Act No. 81 of 19 May 1995 on State Allowances for Citizens with Children (see paragraph 32 of this report), the Tax Code (paragraph 37 of this report), the Education Act (paragraph 32 of this report) and the Federal Act on Additional Measures of State Support for Families with Children (paragraphs 35–36 of this report).

99. In addition to measures of State support for families and children at federal level, in the constituent entities monthly allowances are paid for children, including those with single mothers, for children whose parents refuse to pay maintenance or are performing compulsory military service, for children in large families, for children with disabilities and for families in which the parents are disabled.

C. Separation from parents (art. 9)

100. Matters relating to separation from parents are regulated in codified legislation (see paragraphs 177–188 of the second periodic report and paragraphs 130–133 of the third periodic report).

101. Considerable attention is given to preventing and detecting family dysfunction, fostering responsible parenthood and encouraging basic family values, as well as designing and implementing measures to promote public health and assist families in difficult situations. Socially successful families leading a respectable way of life and raising children enjoy public support and encouragement. Steps are taken in line with the principle that children should not be placed in a residential institution if it is possible to provide other measures of support so that removal from the family can be avoided.

102. In 2009, 471,300 administrative reports were filed for non-compliance with child-rearing obligations, and 3,368 persons were convicted. Compared to 2003, the number of petitions approved for deprivation of parental rights rose by 19.5 per cent and totalled 63,100 cases (50,800 cases in 2003). The number of such cases has been declining since 2007. There is a growing tendency to impose more humane measures rather than deprivation of parental rights, thus ensuring that parents have a better chance of recovering their earlier status.

103. Problems which arise for juveniles often result in their running away from home or a State institution, putting them at risk of becoming participants in or victims of illegal acts. In 2009 more than 50,000 juveniles were sought by the authorities; more than 27,000 had run away from home.

104. In 2009 the number of children for whose protection the tutorship and guardianship authorities instituted proceedings or submitted an opinion to the court on questions concerning the participation of separated parents in the upbringing of their children rose by 6.3 per cent, and by 3.2 per cent on questions concerning the children's place of residence. The growth in the number of disputes associated with the upbringing of children, their place of residence and the possibility of the other parent having contact with them testifies to the crisis in family values.

105. Presidential Decree No. 404 of 26 March 2008 set up a fund for the support of children in difficult situations with a view to further improving assistance in that area. The aim of the fund is to promote measures to support families with children and children in difficult situations which focus on the prevention of family dysfunction, the placement of children in families and the development of a system of individual social support and services for families and children. Services to prepare surrogate parents or prospective surrogate parents were provided for 1,820 citizens. In 2009, 53 support services were in operation, assisting 12,960 families in raising some 20,000 children. Initiatives to prevent child neglect and juvenile delinquency, treat alcoholic parents and work with women at risk of rejecting their newborn child are an integral part of the fund's activities. In 2009 treatment for alcoholism was prescribed for 778 parents. As a result, 1,200 children could continue to be brought up in their own families. An information resource was set up so that parents and specialists providing legal, psychological and educational assistance to minors in the risk group could communicate.

D. Family reunification (art. 10)

106. The departure from and entry into the Russian Federation of Russian citizens, including minors, is regulated by Federal Act No. 114 of 15 August 1996 on the Procedure

for Departure from and Entry into the Russian Federation (see paragraphs 190–195 of the second periodic report).

107. The Russian Federation ratified an agreement on cooperation between the Member States of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) on questions concerning the return of minors to their country of permanent residence, signed in Chişinău on 7 October 2002 (Federal Act No. 81 of 9 June 2006). In pursuance of the agreement and the relevant legal instruments of the Russian Federation, in 2009 the social protection authorities of the constituent entities returned 125 minors to their permanent place of residence after establishing their identity.

E. Illicit transfer and non-return (art. 11)

108. The Russian Federation is examining the question of accession to the Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction. Accession will make it possible to create a legal mechanism for cooperation with other States on addressing contentious issues associated with the unlawful removal or detention of children and provide additional international guarantees for the rights of children and parents or legal representatives. A set of documents has been prepared concerning the Russian Federation's accession to the Convention (paragraph 30 of this report).

F. Recovery of maintenance for the child (art. 27, para. 4)

109. The question of maintaining the living standards of the child following the divorce of the parents is discussed in paragraphs 197–201 of the second periodic report.

110. The Criminal Code establishes penalties for the wilful refusal by a parent to pay maintenance awarded by a court for underage children or for children with disabilities over 18 years of age. The Family Code specifies that a person who departs for a permanent residence in another country and is required to make maintenance payments for a child may conclude an agreement on such payment with the person concerned. If an agreement cannot be reached, the question of the form and amount of maintenance may be decided in court.

G. Children deprived of a family environment (art. 20)

111. A legal basis has been created for the organization of guardianship activities (see paragraph 208 of the second periodic report, paragraph 148 of the third periodic report and paragraph 22 of this report).

112. In 2009 the following legal instruments were approved: regulations for the selection, registration and training of citizens wishing to become tutors or guardians of children or to take into their families children deprived of parental care to provide for their upbringing in other forms prescribed by family legislation; regulations governing the implementation of the mandate of the tutorship and guardianship authorities by educational bodies, medical organizations, social service establishments and other institutions; rules for concluding tutorship or guardianship agreements involving minors; rules for establishing a foster family and for oversight of the living conditions of children placed in a foster family; rules for the monitoring by the tutorship and guardianship authorities of the living conditions of foster children and the enjoyment by these children of their rights and legitimate interests and the protection of their property, as well as regulations governing the implementation by the tutorship and guardianship authorities of their rights and obligations; rules for conducting the personal affairs of such children; a record-keeping form for the tutorship and guardianship authorities to report on the protection and use of the child's property and

its administration; and rules whereby children in orphanages and children deprived of parental care are temporarily placed in the families of citizens permanently resident in the Russian Federation.

113. In 2009 there were 2,585 tutorship and guardianship bodies in operation in the Russian Federation – the local offices of the government bodies of the constituent entities or municipal bodies. The activities of the tutorship and guardianship authorities concerning children are monitored at federal level.

114. In 2007 the Russian Federation introduced a system of material incentives to promote the placement in foster families of children deprived of parental care. A lump-sum payment was introduced for such placement: in 2007 it stood at 8,000 roubles, and following annual adjustments for inflation, it totalled 9,989 roubles in 2009. In the constituent entities, monthly payments are made to provide for the care of children in foster families (not less than 4,000 roubles) and to remunerate the foster parents (not less than 2,500 roubles). In many constituent entities, additional support measures have been introduced for surrogate families, account being taken of the age of the children, their state of health, particularities of their development and behaviour, the duration of stay in the family, the number of children taken in and other circumstances.

115. New forms are developing for assisting families in difficult situations: fostering arrangements, the introduction of a neighbourhood service for an early detection of family dysfunction and other modern techniques for working with families and implementing programmes to help persons who have left a home institution to adapt.

116. The activities of the foster family, which is a form of bringing up children deprived of parental care that has been developing rapidly, are regulated by an agreement between the foster parents and the tutorship and guardianship authorities. From 2007 to 2009 the number of foster families rose from 22,200 to 40,500, and the number of children deprived of parental care who have been placed in such families grew from 38,600 to 68,000.

117. A system of services is being set up in the constituent entities to help with the placement in foster families of children deprived of parental care. Such services are provided by institutions for orphans and children deprived of parental care, by educational establishments for children requiring psychological, medical and social assistance and by other educational, health-care and administration entities. Service facilities to support surrogate families are being established; by the end of 2009 more than 1,000 had been opened.

118. Despite the positive results achieved, a number of problems remain which prevent full realization of the right of children to be brought up in a family. In 80 per cent of the cases detected, children are deprived of parental care for “social” reasons; as many as 60 per cent of children in this category are older than 7. The placement in foster families of adolescents and of children with special needs is problematic. There are still many children whose parents have been deprived of parental rights or whose parental rights have been restricted. In 2009, 63,000 citizens were deprived of their parental rights.

119. Other serious problems persist, such as rejection by the foster family of children and their return to the children’s home, and cases of abuse. In 2009, 105 persons were indicted for offences involving children in a foster family, including 24 cases for offences which led to the death or injury of a child.

120. More than 1,200 decisions were taken concerning the failure by adoptive parents, guardians or foster parents to provide for children in their care. In most cases non-compliance with obligations and child abuse are due to insufficient legal and educational preparation for dealing with the problems associated with raising these children.

121. Preparing potential surrogate parents is an important aspect of foster care. Innovative programmes on the upbringing and psychological support of children are being elaborated and introduced.

122. A new programme, “Aist” (Stork), which broadens public access to information on children subject to placement in families, is being launched for commercial use as part of activities to modernize the State database for children deprived of parental care.

123. Work has begun on an experiment for introducing the post of “family inspector”, who would work with families at risk and take timely action on parents who are alcoholics or drug addicts.

124. A mechanism is being developed for interaction with health-care institutions (women’s counselling, paediatric polyclinics and emergency wards), social protection bodies and institutions, commissions on children’s affairs and the protection of their rights, and educational establishments in order to help provide up-to-date information to the internal affairs authorities on problem families with underage children, violations of the rights and legitimate interests of children and adolescents, and child abuse.

H. Adoption (art. 21)

125. In the period 2003–2009 work continued on the operation of a State database for children deprived of parental care. At the end of 2009, there were 662,300 children in this category. In 2009, 73.2 per cent of children deprived of parental care were adopted by Russian nationals and 26.8 per cent by foreign nationals.

126. Pursuant to the Family Code, the adoption of children by foreign nationals is permitted solely in cases in which it is not possible to place these children in the care of families of Russian citizens or for them to be adopted by relatives regardless of citizenship and place of residence. On average, 95 per cent of all placements are in families of citizens of the Russian Federation permanently resident in Russia.

127. The Family Code prohibits the activities of adoption intermediaries. The activities of the tutorship and guardianship authorities and government bodies responsible for the identification and placement of children deprived of parental care, as well as of adoption agencies or organizations specially empowered by foreign States which are carried out on the basis of an international agreement or principle of reciprocity, are not deemed to be activities of adoption intermediaries. These agencies and organizations may not pursue commercial goals.

128. Regulations governing the adoption activities in the Russian Federation of agencies and organizations of other State bodies and foreign non-profit NGOs were introduced in 2006. A procedure has been established for authorizing the opening of offices of adoption agencies and organizations of other State bodies and organizations and for monitoring their activities. In 2008–2009, 52 inspections of the activities of these offices were conducted, and the documentation and staff of 15 offices which had applied for authorization to conduct adoption activities were examined; 6 applications were approved. In 2008 these inspections resulted in the termination of the activities of nine offices of foreign adoption organizations.

129. In accordance with paragraphs 42 and 43 of the Committee’s concluding observations, measures are being taken to regulate questions associated with international adoption. Work is under way to elaborate bilateral international agreements on cooperation in the area of adoption (see paragraph 27 of this report).

I. Periodic review of placement (art. 25)

130. Questions concerning the periodic review of placement and all other aspects of guardianship have been regulated since 2008 by the Federal Act on Tutorship and Guardianship (see paragraphs 111 and 112 of this report).

131. The tutor or guardian must submit an annual report to the tutorship and guardianship authorities on the protection and use of the child's property. The report must indicate the dates on which sums were received from the child's account and the dates on which these sums were spent for the child's needs.

132. The authorized administrations, the procuratorial authorities and the Commissioners for Children's Rights of the constituent entities monitor the situation of children and the conditions in which they are cared for in specialized institutions.

133. Monitoring by the government authorities of the constituent entities of implementation by the municipal and urban district authorities of their tutorship and guardianship mandate with regard to minors has been insufficient. This has resulted in violations of the property rights of foster children and failure to meet deadlines for the placement of children deprived of parental care.

J. Abuse and neglect (art. 19), including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration (art. 39)

134. The Family Code stipulates that children must be raised in a manner that is free from negligent, cruel, brutal or degrading treatment, abuse or exploitation. Cruel treatment of a child, physical or psychological violence, violations of a child's sexual integrity, failure to assist a sick child, putting a child in danger and a number of other actions are grounds for deprivation of parental rights. Where there is a direct threat to a child's life or health, provision is made for immediate removal of the child from parental custody by the guardianship authorities. Anyone in contact with children in daily life must report any child in a crisis situation to the guardianship authorities without delay; the receipt of such a report is the basis for conducting an inspection and taking concrete measures to protect and restore the violated rights of the child. Children may themselves request the guardianship authorities to protect their rights, and upon reaching the age of 14 years, they may submit such a request to the courts.

135. The Criminal Code establishes liability for non-fulfilment or improper fulfilment of the responsibility of parents and other persons entrusted with bringing up children where this is associated with cruel treatment or inducing a child to indulge in the systematic use of alcoholic beverages or narcotic drugs or to engage in prostitution, vagrancy or begging. Heavier penalties have been imposed for premeditated offences committed against a child's life, health or sexual inviolability, regardless of where the offence occurs or whether the offender and the victim are related. Penalties are imposed for: murder, in particular the murder of persons known to be in a helpless state; causing a person to commit suicide with the use of threats or cruel or systematic degrading treatment; intentionally causing harm to a person's health; beatings; or torture. It is also a crime to leave in danger to life or health persons unable to take measures for their own protection (because they are too young, too old, ill or helpless).

136. The Federal Act on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights establishes the legal and socioeconomic conditions for the exercise and protection of the rights and interests of children, including victims of violence.

137. The Federal Act on the Fundamentals of Social Services for the Public establishes the framework for the regulation of social services and the creation of a network of institutions to provide welfare, medical, psychological, legal and social services to assist the social adaptation and rehabilitation of persons in difficult situations. Social services for victims of violence are provided by social rehabilitation centres for juveniles, centres of social assistance for families and children, shelters for children and adolescents, rehabilitation centres for children and adolescents with special needs, centres for helping children deprived of parental care, educational and psychological support centres, hotline centres for emergency psychological assistance, offices working with families and children in social service centres, 22 crisis centres for women and 3 for men, 120 crisis offices for women, and 23 shelters for women and underage children that offer emergency assistance, including welfare, medical, legal and social adaptation and rehabilitation services and psychological support. Legal counselling and legal aid are provided for the formulation and preparation of documents for law enforcement agencies and the judicial authorities. The legal experts of crisis centres represent in court the interests of victims of domestic violence.

138. The Federal Act on Fundamentals of the System for the Prevention of Child Neglect and Juvenile Delinquency sets as one of its basic goals the social and educational rehabilitation of minors in a dangerous social situation, and it regulates the duties of government bodies responsible for identifying the children concerned.

139. Mobile emergency units are a new way of providing assistance at regional level to victims of violence. Public awareness initiatives provide information on how to obtain help, the existence of hotlines etc.

140. In 2009 a juvenile district medical identity card was introduced to collect information on children in difficult family situations (children in risk groups, children with disabilities and children deprived of parental care). For the first time, problem families are registered, and information on them is forwarded to the district juvenile affairs commissions.

141. In 2008 medical criteria were approved for determining the degree of harm caused to a person's health, including as a result of domestic violence.

142. The support fund for children in difficult situations provides financial assistance for carrying out programmes on various aspects of the problems which troubled children face.

143. An interdepartmental commission on matters concerning the Council of Europe confirmed the President's Commissioner for Children's Rights as Russia's national coordinator for the protection of children's rights and the elimination of all forms of violence against children in the framework of the programme "Building a Europe for and with Children".

VIII. Basic health and welfare

A. Children with disabilities (art. 23)

144. The Constitution, the Fundamentals of Health-Care Legislation, the Labour Code, the Act on Psychiatric Care and Guarantees for the Rights of Citizens Receiving such Care, the Education Act, the Federal Act on Social Protection for Persons with Disabilities, the Federal Act on Social Services for the Elderly and Persons with Disabilities, the Federal Act on State Social Assistance, the Presidential Decree on additional measures of State support for persons with disabilities and a number of regulatory measures taken by the Government and specifying the procedure for providing social support to families with

children make provision for mentally and physically impaired children, including children with disabilities (see paragraphs 78–79 of the second periodic report).

145. State policy on children with disabilities aims to ensure that they have the same opportunities as other children to enjoy economic, social, cultural, personal and political rights.

146. Starting in 2003, persons over the age of 18 were classified as “disabled since childhood” if the disability arose during the first 18 years of life. In 2009 new criteria were introduced for a classification as “disabled child” which, unlike for adults, define a child’s disability as a limitation of vital functions in any category and specify one of three degrees of severity which give rise to a need for social protection. In 2009 work began on an Outline for the improvement of the State system for medical examinations and the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, which calls for a transition to fundamentally new classifications and criteria for conducting medical examinations, account being taken of the provisions of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health.⁴

147. The State guarantees that children with disabilities are entitled to the technical equipment and services listed in the inventory of rehabilitation measures. In 2005 regulations were approved for providing disabled persons with rehabilitation equipment and services from the federal budget as well as the list of such equipment and services. In 2007 the duration of use of rehabilitation equipment, prosthetic appliances and orthopaedic products until their replacement was set. On 1 October 2008, new regulations entered into force on providing disabled persons with technical rehabilitation equipment, in accordance with which for the first time disabled children were placed in a separate category of disability. In 2008 a separate form of individual programme for the rehabilitation of disabled children was approved.

148. Disabled children are entitled to a disability pension, monthly monetary payments and a range of social services, including medicines and medical products, special diet, vouchers for treatment in sanatoriums, and free suburban rail transport and international round-trip transport to the place of treatment. They are also entitled to a second voucher for sanatorium treatment and round-trip transport to the place of treatment for the person accompanying them. In December 2009 the average social pension for disabled children exceeded the subsistence level of a retiree in the constituent entities. Over the period 2007–2009, the social pension for disabled children rose 1.6-fold.

149. Unemployed able-bodied persons who are caring for disabled children receive a monthly compensation payment of 1,200 roubles. One of the parents of disabled children is entitled to four additional days of leave per month.

150. During the reporting period, problems of disabled persons (including children) of an interdepartmental nature were addressed in the framework of a special programme for social support for disabled persons 2000–2005. The further development and improvement of services designed to prevent childhood disability, including prenatal, neonatal and obstetric services, in the framework of the Priority National Health Project and the special

⁴ The Outline for the improvement of the State system for medical examinations and the rehabilitation of persons with disabilities was completed in 2010, account having been taken of the provisions of the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health, which the Government of the Russian Federation has accepted. A Government Instruction of the Russian Federation has recommended that the government authorities at federal level and at the level of the constituent entities take the Outline into account when drafting and implementing laws and regulations, programmes (including the State “Non-Handicapping Environment” programme 2010–2015) and other initiatives in the area of social protection for persons with disabilities.

Children of Russia programme have made it possible to reduce the level of disability in children.

151. In 2009 there were 518,900 children with disabilities in the Russian Federation under 18 years of age, or 105,400 fewer than in 2003. The child disability rate stood at 190.6 per 10,000 (195.8 in 2007). The largest number of children with disabilities are in the age group 10 to 14: 32 per cent. The main illnesses that lead to a disability are congenital anomalies (23 per cent), psychological and behavioural disorders (20 per cent) and illnesses of the nervous system (18 per cent). These three disabilities are also observed in the group of persons who renew their disabled status.

152. In 2009 there were 148 boarding schools accommodating 22,300 children (as against 152 for 28,900 children in 2003) and 1,272 boarding schools accommodating 142,400 children with special needs, including 219 orphanages for 20,500 children with disabilities (as against 217 for 25,400 children with disabilities in 2003).

153. In the constituent entities there are 283 rehabilitation establishments for children with disabilities and 631 rehabilitation units at social service institutions for families and children and children's boarding schools. In 2009 social service institutions for families and children provided assistance to more than 332,000 families with children with special needs.

154. In accordance with the Committee's concluding observations, measures are being taken to create an educational environment that ensures access to quality education for children with special needs and disabilities. Priority areas include the identification of insufficiencies in children's development and the organization of corrective work with them at an early stage, which makes it possible to prepare them for schooling at a general education establishment. Psychological, medical and educational consultation boards play an important role in ensuring a timely detection and subsequent instruction, education, social adaptation and integration of children with various developmental abnormalities. Currently there are 1,400 psychological, medical and educational consultation boards in operation at regional and local level.

155. The wide-ranging network of educational facilities for children with special needs includes specially equipped preschools and schools. In 2009 there were 1,400 special kindergartens for such children, and 7,500 integrated kindergartens had special groups for them. At the beginning of the 2009/10 school year 207,400 children with various developmental deficiencies were enrolled in 1,800 special educational facilities (schools and boarding schools). A total of 141,300 children with disabilities attended regular classes in general education establishments, and 130,800 children were enrolled in special classes. More than 400,000 children with slight speech defects or writing disorders received correctional assistance at 3,700 speech-therapy units and 7,200 speech-therapy offices. Steps are being taken to establish a barrier-free environment in general education establishments for children with disabilities. Distance learning for children with disabilities is being developed, and home learning centres are being set up for such children in all the regions.

156. Conditions are being created at vocational schools to teach children with special needs. One focus is on setting up special groups for children with disabilities in which they receive vocational training in accordance with their capacity and abilities in a teaching environment suited to their state of health.

157. Training lessons are given at general education establishments, and sports events for children with physical, hearing and other impairments are being developed. Some 22,500 children with disabilities participate in sports at 164 preschools with an adapted physical education programme.

158. Conditions are being created with the help of cultural institutions to promote the creative abilities of children with disabilities and teach them cultural values. Summer holidays and health improvement activities are organized for these children, including in summer theme camps for children with special needs.

B. Health and health services (art. 24)

159. The implementation since 2006 of the Priority National Health Project, progressive measures to improve access to and the quality of free medical assistance for women during pregnancy and delivery and for newborn children through the development of perinatal technologies, and improvements in material, technical and professional services for mother and child have led to a higher birth rate and a steady decline in maternal and infant mortality (see paragraphs 8, 13 and 14 of this report).

160. The state of women's health gives cause for concern. Oncological illnesses of the reproductive system are on the rise. In 2009, female infertility increased to 524.9 per 100,000 women aged 18 or older.

161. By 2009, overall morbidity of children under 18 years of age had risen by 20.4 per cent compared to 2003; this is attributed to early detection of illnesses through the improved material and technical basis of paediatric medical establishments, the introduction of modern diagnostic equipment and advanced training of medical personnel. Every year 40 per cent of children are born ill or become ill in the neonatal period, and the incidence of respiratory disorders has more than doubled over the past seven years. The introduction of new standards for medical check-ups for children under 1 year of age and the involvement of highly specialized physicians in the examination of children have contributed to the early detection of congenital abnormalities and hereditary diseases, making it possible to provide timely specialized and highly technical medical care. Close attention is being given to the 12 per cent increase among children under 1 year of age of injuries and the growing impact of other external factors.

162. The negative trend in the health of adolescents (15–17 years of age) continues. Over the past five years, a sharp increase in the morbidity rate has been noted for virtually every class of illness. The morbidity rate for tumours has increased by 51.3 per cent, for illnesses of the nervous system by 38.2 per cent, for illnesses of the muscular and skeletal apparatus by 36.7 per cent, for illnesses of the respiratory tract by 34.8 per cent and for injury, poisoning and other external causes by 32.2 per cent. More than 50 per cent of adolescents have illnesses which may limit their ability to have children in the future.

163. According to data from a nationwide examination of children in 2002, 33.89 per cent were healthy, and the number of children with chronic pathologies and disabilities doubled. In 2009, data from annual examinations of 13.58 million children in general education establishments revealed that only 20.8 per cent were in health group 1, while 20.7 per cent were chronically ill, including with disabling diseases.

164. As part of the Priority National Health Project, in 2007 a more thorough examination was introduced for orphans and children in difficult situations who had been placed in health-care, educational or social protection facilities. Between 2007 and 2009, 798,600 children in these categories were examined. The 2009 examination of orphans and children in difficult situations showed that 4.1 per cent were basically healthy, 33.5 per cent were at risk of developing a chronic pathology or functional disorder, 42.2 per cent had a chronic illness and 20.2 per cent had manifestations of a disability. Based on the findings, preventive, therapeutic and rehabilitation measures were taken for all children in need.

165. One of the biggest problems continues to be illnesses of children that have social causes. For the adolescent generation, drug-related illnesses head the list of dangerous

diseases. For the period 2002–2009 the proportion of drug abusers among adolescents fell from 17.8 to 10.2 per 100,000, a 42.7 per cent decline. Substance abuse among adolescents dropped by 36.7 per cent, from 12.8 to 8.1 per 100,000.

166. Over the past five years, the incidence of psychotic disorders related to the use of alcohol and the alcohol dependence syndrome among children up to the age of 14 fell by 33.0 per cent, and by 35.6 per cent among children aged 15 to 17.

167. Over the same period, the incidence of tuberculosis among children up to the age of 14 declined gradually (by 10 per cent) and grew by 2 per cent among children aged 15 to 17.

168. A positive trend has been noted in indicators for perinatal transmission of the HIV-infection, thanks to measures taken in the framework of the Priority National Health Project, the HIV-infection subprogramme, the federal programme for preventing and combating socially significant diseases 2007–2011 and regional programmes to address vertical transmission of the HIV-infection. To prevent mother-to-child transmission, in 2009 antiretrovirals were administered to 8,032 out of 10,005 pregnant women with HIV who carried their children to term (80.3 per cent of the total), to 8,916 women during childbirth (89 per cent) and to 9,189 newborns (92 per cent). In all, 8,356 (83.5 per cent) mothers and children received a complete three-stage course of antiretrovirals. In the period 2003–2009 the number of children under 18 years of age who were diagnosed with HIV fell by 54.2 per cent. HIV-infected mothers gave birth to more than 60,000 children; 18,000 children are under medical observation to ascertain their HIV status. All told, more than 3,500 children have been infected with HIV through perinatal transmission.

169. The volume of specialized medical treatment provided to children in institutions at all levels of jurisdiction has been growing from year to year (in 2009: 43,695 children). New types of specialized medical treatment requiring expensive materials are being introduced in the fields of oncology (prosthetics for children), oral surgery (distractors) and otorhinolaryngology (cochlea implantation).

170. Modern perinatal centres are being built at district, regional and republic level which will improve access and provide quality medical care for pregnant women, women in labour, new mothers and newborns. In 2009 two perinatal centres began operations in Irkutsk and Kaliningrad provinces, and the rate of infant mortality subsequently fell from 7.1 per 1,000 live births in 2009 to 4.5 in 2010. In constituent entities in which perinatal centres are operating, the rate of infant mortality is 4.9 per cent lower than the national average and 9.4 per cent lower than in constituent entities without provincial perinatal centres.

171. More than 70 per cent of obstetric and paediatric establishments need to be renovated and fitted with modern medical equipment. There are problems with staffing and with training of medical personnel. Between 2002 and 2006, the number of paediatricians declined. With the start of the Priority National Health Project in 2006, the situation began to improve. Today the Russian Federation has nearly 58,000 paediatricians and 5,700 neonatologists. Figures for these specialists rose to 21.6 per 10,000 children.

172. The provision of medicines for the public, including women and children, is ensured pursuant to Federal Act No. 178 of 17 July 1999 on State Social Assistance, in the framework of a centralized purchase of medication for patients with illnesses requiring expensive therapy, special federal programmes, the Priority National Health Project and the programme of State guarantees for the provision of free medical care for citizens of the Russian Federation. Persons with haemophilia, cystic fibrosis, pituitary dwarfism, gaucher disease, malignant growths of lymphoid, haematogenic and related tissue or multiple sclerosis or who have had organ or tissue transplants have been treated with medicine paid for from the federal budget since 2008. Costly medicine is provided to citizens, including

pregnant women and children up to 3 years of age, irrespective of whether or not they are entitled to assistance under the Federal Act on State Social Assistance.

173. Social assistance for the protection of families, mothers and children is ensured *inter alia* through compulsory medical insurance. As of the end of 2009, 26.4 million children were covered under the compulsory health insurance scheme, or 18.6 per cent of all citizens with such insurance. Medical insurance contributions for children under 18 years of age are paid by regional government bodies mandated by the authorities of the constituent entities at the highest level.

174. An important precondition for preserving and improving public health is the development of a healthy lifestyle from a very early age. Since 2009, 502 health centres have been opened with the help of regional and local health-care institutions. Everyone can go to a health centre for consultations, undergo an initial diagnosis of risk factors and receive counselling on healthy lifestyles. The health centres have offices for children's health which assist with the treatment of children and the early detection of illnesses.⁵

175. An important component of efforts to promote healthy lifestyles is the prevention of the abuse of psychoactive substances (narcotic drugs, alcohol and tobacco) and the spread of the HIV-infection in schools. Under a special federal programme conducted between 2005 and 2009 on measures to prevent the abuse of narcotic drugs and their unlawful sale, 39 centres for the psychological and educational rehabilitation and reform of juveniles have been equipped, and more than 60 guidance manuals have been elaborated and posted on electronic information resources for students, teachers and parents.

176. In accordance with Russian legislation, health improvement questions are included in the State educational standards and model general education curricula for the following courses: biology, fundamentals of health and safety, and physical education. More than 2 million children are enrolled at 3,000 establishments with a focus on sports.

177. In 2009, in the context of measures under a special federal programme for the period 2006–2012 to improve road safety, courses were held in 2009 to upgrade the qualifications of teaching staff, and a national competition of teams of young traffic inspectors was organized in which, taking the regional level into account, 80 per cent of students participated. Thanks to the measures taken, over the past six years the number of children killed in road accidents has declined steadily, by 16.9 per cent between 2008 and 2009 and by 40 per cent between 2004 and 2009.

178. The Committee's concluding observations refer to the low incidence of breastfeeding. Over the past decade, breastfeeding levels have remained steady, at about 40 per cent. A policy is being conducted to promote and support breastfeeding in conformity with international standards: a legal framework has been elaborated for supporting breastfeeding, work is under way on the adoption of rules for the marketing of breast-milk substitutes, a federal theoretical and practical centre for the preservation, support and promotion of breastfeeding has been set up, steps are being taken to improve the indicators of official statistics in keeping with WHO requirements, and a Child-Friendly Hospital initiative has been launched. The practice of obstetric establishments working to promote the initiative has had a positive impact on indicators of maternal and infant health: the number of cases of suppurative and septic illnesses among mothers and children has declined, there have not been any outbreaks of infections of the digestive tract among newborns in hospitals, and the number of cases of conjugated jaundice among newborns has declined. According to data from paediatric polyclinics, the average duration of breastfeeding is between 7.0 and 10.8 months.

⁵ Children's health centres will be established starting in 2010 (more than 200 health centres).

C. Social security and childcare services and facilities (art. 26 and art. 18, para. 3)

179. Basic norms guarantee social security for children and families with children (see paragraphs 272, 273, 275, 277 and 278 of the second periodic report and paragraphs 96–99, 148 and 149 of this report).

180. Social security for families with children includes old-age pensions, pensions based on medical criteria (disability) and pensions for loss of breadwinner; allowances for temporary incapacity to work, maternity and unemployment; compensation payments to persons caring for children with disabilities and for other categories of persons during leave until the child reaches the age of 3, and partial compensation for parental payments for a child in a preschool establishment with a general education curriculum; benefits in the form of partial payment of medicine and communal services, and payment of part of the cost of a voucher for sending children to a sanatorium or a camp; provision of free prosthetic and orthopaedic devices, means of transport and medicine and housing from the housing fund for certain categories of persons; and social services for families with children.

181. Women who have had five or more children and have raised them to the age of 8, women with children disabled from birth who have raised them to the age of 8 and women who have had two or more children and have paid insurance contributions for the required length of time in regions of the Far North and similar areas have the right to take early retirement at the age of 50 if they have the necessary insurance contribution record. The period of leave to care for each child until the age of one and a half, but generally not longer than the age of three, is included in the insurance contribution record alongside work and is taken into account for the formation of the pension capital which serves as the basis for calculating the insurance component of the retirement pension.

182. The pension for loss of breadwinner is one type of State support for children. The size of the loss-of-breadwinner pension takes into account the duration of employment of the deceased breadwinner and the sum of the insurance contributions to the Pension Fund. The pension of children of a deceased single mother is calculated on the basis of twice her notional pension capital (see paragraph 38 of this report).

183. In 2009, 3,235 institutions provided social services for families and children (as against 3,080 at the beginning of 2003), including 793 social rehabilitation centres for juveniles, 519 social assistance centres for families and children, 350 shelters for children and adolescents, 283 rehabilitation centres for children and adolescents with special needs, 15 centres for children deprived of parental care, 16 educational and psychological support centres, 3 telephone hotline centres for psychological assistance, 330 offices working with families and children in social service centres, 778 offices working with families and children in integrated social service centres and 127 other facilities. Establishments providing social services for families and children have 1,564 in-house departments and 1,003 day-care centres, 1,690 family education groups, 631 offices for the rehabilitation of children with special needs, 1,173 offices for the prevention of child neglect and 433 telephone hotlines. In 2009, 4,390,700 families and 6,465,700 children were beneficiaries of social services, and social service establishments for families and children provided various forms of social services more than 192 million times. Notwithstanding the slight decline in 2009 in the number of educational and psychological support centres, the number of social and psychological services rendered grew by 15 per cent.

184. The constituent entities are responsible for providing social services to families and children, families with disabled children and children in difficult situations. They have

established the legal framework regulating the procedure and conditions for the provision of social services and have elaborated and approved State standards for social services.⁶

185. In accordance with the Housing Code, citizens with low incomes are entitled to subsidies to pay for housing and communal services. In 2009, 4,275,000 families received such subsidies, as against 4,086,000 in 2008. In all, 8.3 per cent of families received subsidies, as against 7.9 per cent in 2008. The average subsidy in 2009 stood at 809 roubles, compared to 361 roubles in 2003.

186. In 2007 a system of social contracts (social adaptation agreements) was gradually introduced as a way of providing targeted social assistance to disadvantaged families. The social contract is based on the idea that a number of obligations arise for recipients in exchange for social assistance from the State. A programme of action for the parties to the contract, which is designed to help disadvantaged families escape poverty, is elaborated by social workers, account being taken of the category of the applicant (for families and children, the obligation of the parents to find employment and the obligation of the children to go to school and receive an education). Measures under the social adaptation programme include the active search for employment through the intermediary of a State job centre, employment services (occupational training and career guidance), support for self-employment initiatives and individual household plots, voluntary treatment for alcohol or drug addiction, renovation of housing and household buildings, and preparations for the autumn and winter heating period.

187. State assistance to improve the living conditions of young families has been provided since 2002 in the framework of a subprogramme on housing for young families under the federal housing programme for the period 2002–2010. Young families in need of better living conditions are entitled to social benefits to obtain housing, including for the payment of the initial instalment on a mortgage credit or loan and the principal. When a child is born, participants in the programme are entitled to social benefits, paid for from the budget of the constituent entities or the municipal budget, amounting to at least 5 per cent of the estimated value of the housing. Eligible participants are young families in need of better living conditions in which the spouses are no older than 35 years of age or families consisting of one parent no older than 35 and one or more children. Several constituent entities have their own programmes to help young families and families with children improve their living conditions.

188. In 2009 there were 45,300 preschool establishments in the Russian Federation (as against 47,800 in 2003). In that same year, 58.4 per cent of children between the ages of 1 and 6 were in a preschool in one form or another. Access to preschool education — more specifically, the impossibility of ensuring preschools available for all disadvantaged children — is a major problem. In 2009, 1.9 million children were listed as needing a place in a preschool establishment with a basic general education curriculum. The problem is being addressed through new types of preschools: classes of short duration in preschools and general education establishments, supplementary education institutions, family-type preschool groups etc.

⁶ In 2011 a federal bill was elaborated on the foundations of social services, which will define the categories of persons and families entitled to such services, including social services in the home, and the types and forms of social services provided to families with children and to children in difficult situations.

D. Standard of living (art. 27, paras. 1–3)

189. Presidential Decree No. 1351 of 9 October 2007 approved an Outline for demographic policy for the period until 2025 which would strengthen social support for families with children. In 2008 a Government Order approved a plan of action for the implementation of the Outline over the period 2008–2010 and provided for concrete measures to increase the birth rate, assist families with children and protect children's legitimate rights and interests.

190. The Federal Act on State Benefits for Citizens with Children established allowances for pregnancy and childbirth, a lump-sum payment for women who register at medical establishments in the early stages of pregnancy, a lump-sum payment for the birth of a child, a monthly childcare allowance, a monthly child benefit, a lump-sum payment when a child is placed in a family, a lump-sum payment for the pregnant wife of a person performing compulsory military service and a monthly allowance for the child of a person performing compulsory military service.

191. Families with children account for 54.6 per cent of all households with income below the subsistence level. (Families with children make up 34.6 per cent of all households.) Families with children account for an even higher proportion of the poorest households (with disposable income less than half the subsistence level), namely 65.9 per cent. According to a survey of household budgets, in 2009 the average monthly disposable income of families with children 16 years of age or younger stood at 10,667 roubles, 16 per cent less than for households overall (12,419 roubles). As the number of children increases, the financial situation of families worsens. Thus, in 2009 the average monthly disposable income of households with one child stood at 11,314 roubles, as against 4,176 roubles, or 2.7-fold less, for households with four or more children. Average monthly disposable income totalled 3,894 roubles for low-income families with one child, 3,679 roubles for families with two children and 3,152 roubles for families with three or more children. The figure is even lower for very poor households (2,103, 2,073 and 1,899 roubles, respectively). The deficit in monthly disposable income (the sum of financial resources needed to bring income up to the subsistence level) in low-income households with children under 16 years of age ranged from 1,428 roubles per household member for families with one child to 1,853 roubles for families with three or more children, or between 28 and 36 per cent of the subsistence level. Information on the income of the population, including families with children, is provided in paragraphs 15–17 of this report; measures to assist families with children are set out in paragraphs 32–38, 98–99 and 114.

192. Existing legislation has strengthened the mandate of the government authorities of the constituent entities for providing social assistance to low-income families and needy persons living alone. These authorities provide social assistance to needy persons from the budgets of the constituent entities in accordance with the laws and regulations and the regional programmes of the constituent entities. Pursuant to the Federal Act on State Social Assistance, this assistance takes the form of allowances, supplementary pension benefits, subsidies, social services and essential items (see paragraphs 185–186 of this report).

193. Parents and guardians who are taxpayers are entitled to a tax deduction for expenses associated with a child's upbringing. Expenses actually incurred over the year for daytime education of children until the age of 24 and for foster children until the age of 18 are deductible, with a cap of 50,000 roubles per child. Taxpayers may also deduct all expenses incurred for the treatment of their children in a Government-approved medical establishment, including medicine prescribed by a physician, and contributions for voluntary health insurance agreements.

194. Pursuant to the Federal Act on Compulsory Social Insurance against Industrial Accidents and Occupational Illnesses, minors up to the age of 18 years and students over 18

years of age (until the completion of their full-time studies, but not beyond the age of 23) are entitled to receive lump-sum and monthly insurance payments in the event of the death of an insured person.

195. With a view to protecting the constitutional rights of citizens with children, the pension legislation of the Russian Federation makes provision for a number of guarantees and benefits stemming from obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child (see paragraph 181 of this report).

196. In the constituent entities, a legal framework has been established that regulates the conditions and procedure for additional measures of social support for families and children, to be paid for from the budget of the constituent entities. Targeted assistance for low-income families in the constituent entities is also provided in the framework of regional projects and programmes (see paragraph 186 of this report).

IX. Education, leisure and cultural activities

A. Education, including vocational training (art. 28)

197. In 2005 a federal programme was adopted for the development of education over the period 2006–2010, in the context of which a Priority National Education Project, an Outline for the modernization of Russian education and priority areas for the development of the Russian educational system until 2010 were elaborated.

198. National legislation makes basic general education compulsory; in 2009, 99.8 per cent of children were covered⁷ (93.6 per cent in 2003). Starting on 1 September 2007, general education became compulsory up to the age of 18, as against 15 earlier. Total figures for pupils in State and municipal general education establishments in the constituent entities (not including evening (shift) schools) dropped by almost 4.0 million over the period 2003–2009. In 2009 the number of general education establishments fell by 12,800, to 50,900; this decline is associated with the decrease in absolute terms in the number of children and adolescents and the growing demand on the part of pupils and their parents for quality education, which is really possible to obtain in modern establishments with a qualified teaching staff. In this connection, models for the networking of educational establishments have become widespread. The creation of a network of educational establishments is primarily a matter for the municipalities.

199. Special attention is being given to ensuring quality general education under the current presidential initiative “Our new school”. To that end, a nationwide system is being established for evaluating the quality of general education so as to ensure identical standards for school leavers, objective assessments of pupils’ achievements, continuity between various levels of general education and the possibility of using the results of the evaluation for taking administrative decisions.

200. In the period 2007–2009 comprehensive projects were carried out to modernize regional school systems, in the context of which a network of general education establishments is being set up in the constituent entities. In 31 regions, mechanisms for the development of Russian general education establishments have emerged and are being tested which pay teachers a good salary, thus enhancing the prestige of the profession.

⁷ Pupils in classes 1–11(12) of general education establishments and pupils (students) who have completed the secondary (full) general education curricula in educational establishments for primary and secondary vocational training, as a percentage of all children between 7 and 17 years of age.

More than 70 per cent of pupils are in schools with modern facilities; 8,800 basic general education schools in rural areas now have modern equipment.

201. Changes were made to the educational system in the course of the reporting period. In 2007 legislation introduced a new structure of State educational standards. The new generation of Russian standards makes mastery of the basic curriculum a requirement and for the first time establishes terms and conditions for access to education. In 2009 a standardized State examination was introduced, which is held with the use of modern technologies and ensures an objective independent evaluation of the standards of school leavers. General education establishments have modern teaching equipment and provide warm cafeteria meals, school bus service and rapid Internet access, and a radical reform of the system for evaluating textbooks is under way. Projects to modernize the educational system are also being carried out at regional level.

202. The rights and educational interests of national and ethnic groups in the Russian Federation are protected and supported. According to the 2002 national population census, 239 languages are spoken in the Russian Federation. Today 28 languages of indigenous peoples of Russia are used as languages of learning in general education establishments. Only the developed languages of the major ethnic groups have really been able to take full advantage of new possibilities. In other cases, the renewal of native languages takes place only as a classroom subject: this is the current situation with 43 native languages, for which there are usually classes from years one to nine. All told, today the languages of 82 ethnic groups are used in the Russian school system.

203. As of the end of 2009 there were 2,700 basic vocational training schools, or 1,100 fewer than in 2003. The number of pupils enrolled in schools with basic vocational training curricula fell over the period 2003–2009 by 614,000, to 1,035,000 at the end of 2009. In 2008 basic vocational training schools began work on creating marketing services, whose functions include monitoring of current needs and forecasting future requirements for qualified workers and experts on the labour market. Every year specialized job fairs are held in all the constituent entities to help school leavers find employment.

204. In 2009, 2,900 schools offered secondary vocational training, or 57 more than in 2003. The number of pupils fell by 470,000 over the period 2003–2009, to 2,142,100.

205. During the reporting period, the number of schools offering higher vocational training rose from 1,044 in 2003 to 1,114 in 2009; most of them are State or municipal establishments. The number of students also rose, from 6,455,700 in 2003 to 7,418,800 in 2009.

206. The proportion of rural pupils who enter higher education institutions is now in line with the size of the rural population. The number of first-year students from rural communities and district towns (population up to 100,000) in higher education institutions and secondary specialized schools has grown by 10 per cent on average nationwide.

207. In the period 2003–2009, the number of non-State secondary vocational schools grew by more than 50 per cent, and higher vocational education institutions by 15 per cent. The number of students in non-State secondary vocational schools fell from 110,000 to 90,000. Nearly 83 per cent of students prefer State and municipal higher vocational training establishments.

B. Aims of education (art. 29)

208. The aims and main tasks of education, which are set by the Education Act, the National Education Policy, the Outline for the modernization of education for the period until 2010, the federal programme for the development of education over the period 2006–

2010 and model regulations for educational establishments, are directed at developing and building the character of citizens of the Russian Federation. The Government has approved a draft federal education development programme for 2011–2015.

209. The Russian Federation's educational programmes are in keeping with the principle of an evolving education, the goal of which is the development of the child. This goal is reflected in the federal State standards for basic general education adopted in 2009, which are designed to promote the personality of the child. The new approach to educational standards lays the foundation for the legislative and regulatory framework needed to create conditions for protecting and improving schoolchildren's health and encouraging healthy and safe lifestyles, a subject on which there is a component in the new curriculum for basic general education. The "Schools that promote health" movement is rapidly gaining ground throughout the country. Federal criteria for educational establishments with regard to the protection of schoolchildren's health, including the prevention of the use of psychoactive substances, have been elaborated and approved.

210. A system is being designed for attracting and teaching talented children and young people in order to help satisfy the demand for higher education. The aim of the ongoing "Gifted Children" federal programme is to create favourable conditions for developing the capabilities of talented children. A total of 563 competitions have been conducted since 2006, and 21,400 prizes have been awarded to support talented young people. Seven specialized education centres have been opened for gifted children, and 574 leading educational institutions working with gifted children have received material and technical support. Legal documents regulating national competitions have been amended in order to ensure maximum participation by schoolchildren through the compulsory organization in schools of competitions in which common approaches to the compilation of questions and the marking of answers are used (see paragraph 253 of the third periodic report). Gifted and talented children are identified as early as primary school. A psychological assessment is carried out of young intellectually advanced children, and at levels II and III, a questionnaire is used to identify pupils' potential orientation and interests. Gifted children are tutored. In most regions, special courses for gifted children in general education establishments are prevalent. For older pupils, courses are most commonly in social studies and the humanities, physics and mathematics, chemistry, biology and philosophy.

211. A State programme for the period 2006–2010 is under way to teach patriotism. Regional programmes on the subject have been elaborated and adopted in 79 constituent entities. Regional interdepartmental councils and centres for teaching young people civics and patriotism have been set up in 49 constituent entities.

C. Leisure, recreation and cultural activities (art. 31)

212. Some 18,600 establishments provide supplementary education for children in the Russian Federation. The existing network covers 12 million children and adolescents between 5 and 18 years of age, or more than 65 per cent of the total. Schools for education in the arts play an important role in this area. In the period 2003–2009, their numbers declined from 5,800 to 5,400.

213. Library services for children are discussed in paragraph 84 of this report.

214. The union of theatrical performers of Russia has been carrying out a comprehensive programme since 2008 aimed at promoting theatre for children and young people. The most important projects under the programme involve the staging of plays for children and young people, the holding of competitions for plays written for children and young people and the organizing of festivals and seminars for children on the theatre.

215. A number of traditional events directed at supporting projects for children and young people are held annually in the framework of the “Culture of Russia” (2006–2011) federal programme. The most important projects include the “Bolshaya Peremena” (The Big Change) international theatre festival for children (Moscow), the “Kovcheg” (Ark) travelling puppet festival, the “Raduga” (Rainbow) international theatre festival, the “Arlekin” (Harlequin) festival of theatrical art for children, the Kukart international festival (Saint Petersburg) and the “Kingfestival” (Veliky Novgorod).

216. Special programmes for children are held by Russian philharmonic orchestras. For example, every year the Moscow Philharmonic holds 1,000 concerts with lectures on music in general education establishments, secondary schools and orphanages.

217. There are 52,900 municipal club-type cultural institutions, of which 46,500 are in rural areas. Some 2.5 million large-scale special events, thematic initiatives and celebrations for children are held annually and are attended by 280 million visitors. The activities of the 200,000 children’s associations and circles operating within these clubs attract 3 million children and adolescents. Work to improve the activities of clubs and cultural centres in rural areas focuses on strengthening their material and technical basis, staffing them with trained personnel and providing free services that ensure access to cultural events for children and adolescents from low-income families.

218. Films for children and adolescents have been produced with State support. Cinema matinees, film clubs, games and quizzes before film screenings, classes on courage and peace, and films on ecology, history and aesthetics have been organized.

219. Government Order No. 1101 of 7 August 2009 approved a strategy for the development of physical culture and sport until 2020 which established measures for modernizing the physical education system in general education institutions and set targets for the promotion of physical culture and sport.

220. In 2008 the State educational standards were amended to include team games and sports. An interdepartmental commission was set up to improve physical culture in general education institutions. Approval was given for guidelines on the use of sports facilities as inter-school centres for holding classes in physical education and extracurricular sport, as well as for a number of measures to promote sport for children and young people in their school and community.

221. Sports competitions are held in various disciplines. In 2009 these included the ninth international games of children from the Hero Cities of Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, the ninth international youth festival of combat sports and 196 national physical education events, including 153 for schoolchildren and students. All told, 8.9 million schoolchildren and students took part in competitions.

222. There are currently more than 7,000 supplementary education establishments for physical culture and sports, with 6 million children. There are 3,502 sports schools for children and adolescents, 1,293 schools for prospective Olympic participants and 326 physical fitness clubs for young people; in all, 3.3 million children are enrolled. A total of 5,200 local clubs have been created, at which 613,000 children and adolescents engage in physical exercise and sports.

223. A number of programmes are being carried out in the constituent entities to promote popular sports, physical fitness and health, including at school and in the community. In accordance with the federal programme for the development of physical culture and sport for the period 2006–2015, sports facilities are being built at schools and in the community, and special initiatives are held to promote healthy lifestyles.

224. Family tourism is of great social importance and plays a growing role in the development of the individual. According to data from social studies, in most cases (81.7 per cent), children go on holiday with their parents.

225. Holidays for children are organized once a year at more than 50,000 establishments. According to the results of a 2009 summer health improvement campaign, a perceptible positive effect was noted on the health of 80.7 per cent of children. Day camps set up with the help of general education schools, supplementary education establishments and community social service facilities and clubs are a popular form of recreation for children. In 2009 more than 46,600 such camps were organized. Special attention is given to making leisure and health activities available for children in difficult situations. In 2009, in a context of social and economic instability, measures were taken to organize targeted, differentiated support for families with a view to ensuring accessible leisure and health activities for all children. Federal Act No. 326 of 17 December 2009 on Amendments to articles 5 and 12 of the Federal Act on Basic Guarantees of Children's Rights and article 26.3 and 26.11 of the Federal Act on General Principles for the Organization of the Legislative (Representative) and Government Bodies of the Constituent Entities modified the mechanism for the organization of leisure activities for children, and starting in 2010, the government bodies of the constituent entities and the local authorities were entrusted with providing for leisure and health activities for children.

X. Special protection measures

A. Children in situations of emergency

1. Refugee children (art. 22)

226. The procedure for obtaining refugee status is set out in the Federal Refugees Act, which provides that recognition as a refugee of a child who is under 18 years of age and has arrived unaccompanied by parents or guardians is decided bearing in mind the interests of the child and after obtaining information on the child's parents or guardians. If granted refugee status, the child is issued a refugee identity document. The residence and conditions of the child's further presence in the Russian Federation are determined with the participation of the tutorship and guardianship authorities, bearing in mind the interests of the child (placement in a residential institution, a foster family etc.). In accordance with the provisions of the Family Code, establishments and persons who become aware of children deprived of parental care are required to inform the tutorship and guardianship authorities without delay of the whereabouts of these children.

227. In line with the Committee's concluding observations, children from refugee families are recognized by law as being in a difficult situation and are entitled to measures of social support. Refugee children deprived of parental care are entitled to the same protection as all other children, regardless of why they have been temporarily or permanently deprived of their family environment.

228. The number of foreign nationals granted refugee status and registered with the migration authorities has been on the rise. As of 1 January 2010, 779 refugees, including 206 children, or 26.4 per cent of the total, were registered with the regional offices of the Federal Migration Service. In 2009, 52.4 per cent of refugee children were of school age (between 6 and 15 years old), 13.1 per cent were 16 or 17 years old, and 34.5 per cent were 5 years old or younger. In 2009, 223 foreign nationals were granted refugee status.

229. In accordance with the Federal Refugee Act, the children of persons granted refugee status and of persons granted temporary asylum are entitled to free education in general

education establishments on an equal footing with children who are citizens of the Russian Federation, and their parents are entitled to receive assistance with the placement of their children in State and municipal preschool establishments. Thus, the obligations assumed by the Russian Federation with regard to refugee children go beyond those set out under article 22 of the 1951 United Nations Convention.

230. Mastery of the Russian language is of crucial importance for the integration of foreign nationals into Russian society. General education establishments organize small Russian-language study groups which prepare such children for attending regular classes. In addition to Russian, they also learn about Russian traditions and culture. Considerable attention is given to inculcating a spirit of inter-ethnic tolerance and friendship.

231. Two centres set up and operating in Moscow province and in Krasnodar Territory provide health care and medical and psychological rehabilitation for the children of refugees and displaced persons. Medical care for children from refugee families and families of displaced persons is made available by the regional health-care institutions at their place of residence. Medical assistance, including treatment, check-ups and vaccinations, is provided under local compulsory medical insurance programmes.

232. A problem persists with regard to children who leave their country of origin, including the countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), without authorization and have arrived in the Russian Federation. In cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the Russian Federation is preparing a programme for the return of refugees, including unaccompanied children, to their country of origin in the context of the stabilization of the domestic political situation in the principal countries of origin of the refugees. Government authorities and non-governmental organizations are also working with UNHCR to reunite unaccompanied children in the Russian Federation with their parents or relatives in other countries. In 2009, 125 children who had left CIS countries without authorization and had come to the Russian Federation were returned to their country of origin. Russian NGOs and international organizations, such as the Russian Red Cross and the representation of UNHCR in the Russian Federation, actively assist refugee children (see also paragraph 108 of this report).

2. Children in armed conflicts (art. 38)

233. On 26 June 2008 the Russian Federation ratified the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, as recommended in section C, paragraph 87, of the Committee's concluding observations. In that connection, the Russian Federation made the following declaration: "[...] in accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation, citizens under the age of 18 may not be recruited for military service in the armed forces of the Russian Federation and a military service contract may not be concluded with them[.] In accordance with the legislation of the Russian Federation, citizens who have reached the age of 16 are entitled to admission to professional military educational institutions. Upon enrolment in these institutions they shall acquire the status of members of the military performing compulsory military service. The legislation of the Russian Federation guarantees that such citizens shall conclude military service contracts on reaching the age of 18, but not before they have completed the first year of education in these educational institutions."

234. The Russian Federation submitted its initial report on implementation of the Protocol to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in October 2010.

B. Children in conflict with the law

1. The administration of juvenile justice (art. 40)

235. In accordance with procedural legislation, juveniles are guaranteed the presumption of innocence, the right to be informed of the charges, the right to remain silent, the right to counsel, the right to the presence of a parent or legal representative, the right to confront and cross-examine witnesses, the right to appeal to a higher authority and the right to confidentiality at all stages of proceedings. Pursuant to the Criminal Code, first-time offenders under the age of 16 convicted of a minor or moderately serious offence, as well as other juvenile first-time offenders convicted of a minor offence, may not be sentenced to deprivation of liberty. In 2009, 94,700 offences committed by juveniles or with their involvement were registered, or one third less than in 2003 (145,400 offences). Between 2003 and 2009, the number of particularly serious offences fell from 7.3 per cent to 3.3 per cent, and the number of serious offences from 50.5 per cent to 28.0 per cent. In 2009, 56,400 juveniles between 14 and 17 years of age were convicted, or 58.2 per cent of the number of persons convicted in this category in 2003.

236. In the period 2003–2009, work continued on improving criminal and criminal procedural legislation for juveniles. Rigorous imprisonment was replaced by restriction of liberty, which is imposed on juveniles as a principal punishment for a term of 2 months to 2 years. In 2004, regulations were introduced which reduce, by one half, the minimum sentence imposed under the Criminal Code on juveniles who commit serious or particularly serious offences. A juvenile offender may be released from a special closed reform school not only if the punishment is no longer necessary, but also if the juvenile contracts an illness which stands in the way of further detention. Federal Act No. 162 of 8 December 2003 on Amendments and Additions to the Criminal Code restricts the possibility of imposing a punishment of deprivation of liberty on juveniles. In 2009, 80 per cent of juveniles convicted by the courts were sentenced to punishments not involving deprivation of liberty, as against 72 per cent in 2003.

237. Criminal legislation makes provision for five forms of punishment for juveniles which do not entail deprivation of liberty: fines, loss of the right to engage in a particular activity, compulsory labour, correctional labour and restriction of liberty, and it also establishes the possibility of imposing a suspended sentence of deprivation of liberty with probation and deferral of the serving of sentence. The most widespread sentence imposed on juvenile offenders is compulsory labour (community service). In 2009 the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate registered 6,023 juveniles sentenced to compulsory labour (18.6 per cent of all juveniles registered by the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate). Punitive work is imposed on juveniles to a lesser degree; in 2009 this measure concerned 1,100 juvenile offenders (1.47 per cent of juveniles registered). It is even less common for a deferral of serving of sentence to be imposed on juveniles; the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate registered 18 such cases in 2009 (0.06 per cent of juveniles registered). The largest category of juvenile offenders registered by the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate consists of persons on a suspended sentence. In 2009, 28,900 juveniles were given suspended sentences (79.9 per cent of juveniles registered), and 64 per cent of inmates of juvenile correctional facilities were granted conditional early release from places of deprivation of liberty.

238. Preventive work focuses on having juvenile offenders removed from the register of the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate (deferral of serving of sentence in connection with the revocation of probation and expunging of the record of conviction). In 2009, 92.8 per cent of persons removed from the register were juveniles. The extension of the probation period and the imposition of additional obligations are crucial to preventive work involving juvenile offenders on a suspended sentence. According to the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate, in 2009 the probation period was extended for 25.8 per cent of juvenile

offenders registered, and additional obligations over and above those laid down under a court verdict were imposed on 27.2 per cent of juveniles. As a result of these measures, figures for recidivism among juvenile offenders have declined.

239. In line with the Committee's concluding observations on expediting work on reform of the system of juvenile justice, the Russian Federation is studying the possibility of introducing a juvenile justice system. Reference is made to the example of Rostov province, where some 20 courts provide for special protection measures when conducting criminal proceedings involving juveniles. Legislation makes provision for the participation at criminal hearings of juvenile offenders, their parents or legal representatives, lawyers, procurators and representatives of the special closed reform school and of the commission on children's affairs and the protection of their rights set up by the local authorities at the reform school.

2. Children deprived of their liberty, including any form of detention, imprisonment or placement in custodial settings (art. 37 (b)–(d))

240. If in the course of a preliminary criminal investigation of a minor or moderately serious offence it is ascertained that the child can be reformed through compulsory educational measures, such measures may be taken, which include a warning, placement under the supervision of parents, guardians or a specialized government body, an obligation to make good for the harm done, restrictions on leisure time and behavioural constraints.

241. Several compulsory educational measures may be imposed on a juvenile offender simultaneously. A juvenile offender who has committed a minor or moderately serious offence may be released from punishment by the court and placed in a special closed reform school operated by the Department of Education. Juvenile offenders may be held in reform school until the age of 18, but for no longer than three years. If a court finds that a juvenile offender no longer needs to be subject to this measure or has contracted an illness which stands in the way of detention and education at the reform school, the placement of that juvenile offender in the reform school is discontinued until the end of the period set by the court.

242. In 2009 there were 61 special closed reform schools in the Russian Federation and 36 special open reform schools for instructing and rehabilitating juveniles between 11 and 18 years of age who have committed socially dangerous acts but are not subject to criminal liability or release by a court. That same year, there were 3,300 juveniles in special closed reform schools, 1,600 (45 per cent) aged 11 to 14 and 1,800 (55 per cent) older than 14. There were 2,900 children and adolescents aged 8 to 18 in special open reform schools. The age of juveniles in open reform schools has declined: in 2009, 871 children, or 29 per cent, were between 8 and 14 years of age, and 2,063, or 70 per cent, were older than 14.

243. All juveniles in special closed reform schools receive primary general, basic general and secondary (full) general education, as well as initial vocational education and occupational training. In 2009 most juveniles in special closed reform schools (83 per cent) and school leavers of special open reform schools (75 per cent) took basic general education classes. Most school leavers of special closed reform schools receive an incomplete basic general education, which is due above all to the limited period of time spent at the school.

244. Penal enforcement legislation makes provision for detaining juveniles separately from adults sentenced to deprivation of liberty. Juveniles who have committed an offence serve their sentence in juvenile correctional facilities. A juvenile offender who has reached the age of 18 may continue to be kept in a juvenile correctional facility, but not beyond the age of 19, in order to reinforce the results of correction or to complete secondary (full) general education or vocational training.

245. In 2008 amendments were made to the Penal Enforcement Code which lowered the age of adulthood from 21 to 19 for convicts in juvenile correctional facilities in order to ensure that juveniles sentenced to deprivation of liberty are held separately from adults (Federal Act No. 261 of 22 December 2008).

246. Juvenile suspects and juveniles charged with an offence are also held separately from adults in remand centres. In exceptional cases, juveniles may, with the consent of the supervising procurator, be held together with adults with positive evaluation who are suspected of or charged for the first time with the commission of offences that are not serious. The number of juvenile suspects and juveniles charged with the commission of an offence who are held in remand centres or other facilities operating under the remand centre regime continues to decline. Conditions in remand centres have been improved. Cells are located in separate wings or on separate floors. Juveniles are placed in cells for no more than four to six persons, which are equipped with single-stage beds. The placement of juveniles takes into account their age, physical development, educational neglect and psychological characteristics. Juveniles have exercise yards with equipment for physical exercise and sports. They may use the exercise yard for at least two hours a day.

247. Pursuant to article 31 of Federal Act No. 103 of 15 July 1995 on the Detention of Persons Suspected of or Charged with the Commission of Offences, conditions are created for the self-education of juveniles. There are 133 educational and counselling centres in detention centres, at which 4,500 juveniles are taught by 700 teachers. In accordance with existing legislation, the detention centre administration are required to take measures to ensure the necessary conditions for self-education.

248. Today, there are 62 juvenile correctional facilities in 54 of the country's 83 constituent entities, 59 for the detention of male juvenile offenders and 3 for female juvenile offenders.

249. In juvenile correctional facilities, sentences are served under ordinary, eased, concessionary or strict conditions. All facilities have a health-care unit which provides medical treatment in keeping with the relevant standards in the area. Meals for juveniles have more calories than those for adults and include juice, candy, cookies, fruit and sausage. Fresh products may not be replaced by canned goods. Juvenile correctional facilities cooperate actively with religious bodies on questions of spiritual and moral instruction. The most productive cooperation is with the Russian Orthodox Church. Eighteen juvenile correctional facilities have temples, and others have prayer rooms.

250. Juvenile offenders are placed in juvenile correctional facilities located in the region of their place of residence or, if there are no such facilities, in a region as close as possible to their place of residence in order to ensure the possibility of maintaining good ties with their parents. In accordance with penal enforcement legislation, juvenile offenders are entitled to almost twice as many short visits as adult offenders. Juveniles with privileges are allowed unlimited meetings. Persons held in juvenile correctional facilities may receive an unlimited number of parcels, hand-delivered packages and packets. They are also permitted to make telephone calls, which are possible with a video link in a number of juvenile correctional facilities.

251. Juvenile offenders are provided with legal assistance while serving their sentence in a juvenile correctional facility. Upon being placed in a quarantine unit, they are informed of their rights and obligations and the principal provisions of penal enforcement legislation. Once they have been assigned to a unit, courses are organized on social and legal questions, with lectures, reports and individual interviews. In a final stage, juvenile offenders preparing to be released attend a special programme, with classes on their rights and the procedure for applying to the regional and local authorities for assistance in finding a job and living arrangements (housing).

252. In 2008 a post was created of assistant to the director of the juvenile correctional facility, responsible for compliance with human rights, who counsels offenders on their personal problems and gives legal advice. Persons appointed to this post are usually specialized in law. Officials of the law enforcement and judicial authorities (procurators and judges) as well as regional heads of the penal correction system and juvenile correctional facilities regularly hold legal consultations at juvenile correctional facilities at which personal matters can be discussed. The administration of the juvenile correctional facility cooperates with voluntary associations and higher education institutions on questions concerning legal assistance and makes use of the potential of volunteers.

253. Juvenile correctional units have stands with legal corners that supply information on the basic rights and obligations of convicts and the procedure for applying for parole, a pardon and assistance with material, domestic and medical needs.

254. Federal Act No. 76 of 10 July 2008 on Public Oversight of Respect for Human Rights in Detention Facilities and Assistance for Detainees came into force in 2008. Pursuant to an instruction of the Federal Penal Correction Service, regulations were approved governing visits to facilities of the correctional system by members of voluntary observer commissions, which are currently operating in 74 constituent entities. Members of these bodies counsel juvenile offenders on personal matters. All complaints made during a visit to a juvenile correctional facility are the subject of an official investigation, and measures are taken to address any shortcomings.

3. The sentencing of children, in particular the prohibition of capital punishment and life imprisonment (art. 37 (a))

255. A moratorium on capital punishment has been introduced for all convicted offenders. The Criminal Code also prohibits the sentencing of children to life imprisonment.

4. Physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of children in juvenile correctional facilities (art. 39)

256. Groups set up at juvenile correctional facilities to deal with the social protection and record of employment of convicted offenders work to create conditions for a successful resocialization of offenders after their release.

257. Sports competitions are conducted to encourage the involvement of juvenile offenders in physical fitness activities and sports. In 2009 more than 4,500 juvenile offenders took part in such events.

258. Conditions have been created at all juvenile correctional facilities to enable juveniles to have a general education. General education, basic vocational education and vocational training are provided in evening (shift) schools, vocational schools and training and production workshops. Classes are in line with curricula approved by the Ministry of Education and Science. Every year more than 95 per cent of juveniles complete an educational programme and pass the State certification. During their deprivation of liberty they are guaranteed the possibility of studying by correspondence course at secondary and higher vocational schools.

259. Juvenile offenders receive training in more than 25 trades at vocational schools and training and production workshops; this enables them to acquire a second and third speciality while serving their sentence.

260. Pursuant to rule 40 of the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, amendments were made to departmental regulations to exclude any reference in educational certificates to a juvenile's institutionalization.

261. The Penal Enforcement Inspectorate provides social assistance to persons serving sentences not involving isolation from society. In 2009 social work was conducted with 46,010 juveniles, or 77.0 per cent of all juveniles registered with the Penal Enforcement Inspectorate.

262. Social workers identify the most pressing problems of convicts, create conditions for their social protection, provide counselling on questions of pensions, material benefits and other aspects of social assistance, prepare convicts for their release, and help them recover and reinforce important social ties, resettle and find employment, and complete the documents needed for them to obtain a pension and other benefits. A project on schools to prepare convicts for release has been organized, and social assistance units have been set up. Legal experts, psychiatrists and social welfare officials are invited to hold lectures.

263. Preferential conditions for the serving of sentence with the possibility of living outside the institution, wearing civilian clothing and being given spending money play a special role in preparing convicts. Rehabilitation centres are cooperating with four juvenile correctional facilities on finding jobs for convicted offenders and helping them prepare for life after their release. In conjunction with the government authorities of the constituent entities, steps are being taken to open and operate such centres at every juvenile correctional facility.

264. The juvenile correctional facilities have produced guidebooks and manuals for convicts who are about to be released from a custodial facility which explain their rights and procedures for finding a job and contain recommendations for finding housing and dealing with other problems. Enquiries about possible living arrangements and registration at the prospective place of residence are addressed to the internal affairs authorities and the municipal housing authorities on behalf of all persons about to be released from a custodial facility. Those in need are provided with free transport to their place of residence, clothing and footwear appropriate to the time of year, and food.

265. Work on the social rehabilitation and adaptation of juvenile offenders serving custodial sentences starts six months prior to their release. The employment service organizes outreach consultations for juvenile offenders on questions of vocational guidance, employment assistance and occupational training and assists with social and psychological adaptation following release. Consultations take place in mobile employment units (of which there are currently 1,126), which provide full job placement services, including for juvenile offenders serving sentences in juvenile correctional facilities.

266. Social rehabilitation programmes for persons serving non-custodial sentences or who have been released from a custodial facility are conducted at local level in a number of regions. Under these programmes, in 2009, 2,400 juveniles were assisted in finding a job and 370 in restoring lost documents. Excursions were organized for 7,900 juveniles.

C. Children in situations of exploitation, including physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration (art. 39)

1. Economic exploitation of children, including child labour (art. 32)

267. Questions concerning child and adolescent labour are regulated by the Constitution, the Labour Code and the Criminal Code. The ban on forced labour covers all citizens, including children (see paragraph 436 of the second periodic report).

268. The Russian Federation is a party to the relevant ILO convention (see paragraph 338 of the third periodic report). In 2003 it ratified ILO Convention No. 182 concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour. In 2006 the Federal Act on State Regulation of Activities involving the Organization and

Pursuit of Gambling and on Amendments to a number of Legislative Acts entered into force, pursuant to which persons under 18 years of age may not work in gambling establishments.

269. In 2003 the Criminal Code was supplemented by article 127.2, which stipulates that it is a crime to make use of the slave labour of a person known to be a minor.

270. Employment contracts may be concluded with persons who have reached the age of 16. Pursuant to legislation on general education, persons who have received basic general education or have left an educational establishment in accordance with its regulations may conclude an employment contract if they have reached the age of 15. Cinemas, theatres, theatrical and concert organizations and circuses may conclude an employment contract with children who have not reached the age of 14 for participation in the creation and/or performance of productions not prejudicial to their health or moral development, subject to the consent of their legal representative and the tutorship and guardianship authorities. At the end of 2009, 103,000 adolescents between 15 and 17 years of age were working. The vast majority of working adolescents (83.0 per cent) have completed basic or secondary (full) general education.

271. Every year about 1.1 million persons aged 14 to 17 apply to the employment services for assistance in finding a job; more than 90.0 per cent are pupils and students looking for work during their free time. In 2009 temporary employment during their summer holidays or in their free time was found for 979,000 juveniles aged 14 to 18 (about 9 per cent of persons in that age category) with the help of State assistance. In accordance with article 133 of the Labour Code, the monthly wage for a person who works the full quota of working hours set for this period and fulfils the work norms may not be lower than the minimum wage fixed by federal legislation. During temporary employment, juveniles receive material assistance in the form of subsidies equivalent to the minimum unemployment benefit, namely 850 roubles, paid from the federal budget to the budgets of the constituent entities for the exercise of their employment assistance mandate. The duration of daily work has been increased from three and a half to four hours for pupils at general education establishments and primary and secondary vocational schools who are between 16 and 18 of age and combine work with study.

272. The sole condition for the temporary employment of adolescents is that the work must not cause harm to their health (a medical certificate specifying that the person is fit to work is mandatory), normal development or morals and must not interfere with schooling. The employment of adolescents between 14 and 16 is permitted solely with the written consent of one of the parents or legal representatives (guardians) and the tutorship and guardianship authorities.

273. In 2009 more than 1,900 inspections were conducted to monitor employer compliance with labour legislation and other legal provisions containing norms of labour law regarding the employment of persons below the age of 18; about 4,800 violations were brought to light. To address violations, the heads of enterprises or their authorized representatives have been instructed to conduct unscheduled inspections to monitor compliance with labour protection requirements, and disciplinary penalties and fines have also been imposed.

2. Drug abuse (art. 33)

274. Despite the decline in drug addiction and substance abuse among adolescents (see paragraph 166 of this report), a decrease in the age of users of psychoactive substances has been noted. The reasons for this phenomenon include juvenile curiosity, peer pressure and solidarity with friends, as well as the search for amusement, domestic problems and child neglect.

275. There is considerable concern about changes in the structure of the drug market in recent years: a decline in the use of so-called “light” drugs and an increase in the use of high-concentration products which cause dependency from the first dose. Synthetic drugs have gained currency. Juveniles are enticed into using synthetic drugs and psychotropic substances above all at establishments offering leisure-time activities for young people and at recreational facilities.

276. In recent years, considerable attention has been given to the prevention of drug addiction. Since 2008 annual interdepartmental preventive initiatives entitled “Adolescents” and “Health” have been conducted to combat the spread of alcoholism and drug addiction among juveniles and their involvement in illegal activities and to detect and curb the use of alcoholic beverages, narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. In 2009, during the period in which these initiatives were conducted, more than 31,000 juveniles were brought before the internal affairs authorities in connection with the consumption of beer and other alcoholic beverages, the use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, public drunkenness or the distribution of narcotic drugs. Medical experts on drug abuse examined 4,800 juveniles, including 321 who had been hospitalized for treatment. Specialists provide counselling for adolescents with various forms of addiction and for their parents.

277. Youth agencies and centres for preventing child neglect, delinquency, alcoholism and drug addiction have been set up in the constituent entities in order to address antisocial behaviour, and 254 regional and 2,891 local bodies active in the field of youth policy provide services for 5 million young people and 30,000 young families.

278. In 2000 a Government commission for combating drug abuse and drug trafficking approved an Outline for the prevention of the abuse or sale of psychoactive substances in an educational environment. The Outline serves as the organizational and methodological basis for work with children and young people on preventing drug addiction and alcoholism.⁸ It seeks to combine efforts in the field of education, social protection and medicine in order to curb the demand for and the spread of narcotic drugs among children and young people, as well as to reduce illness among drug addicts, substance abusers and alcoholics and address the medical and social consequences of psychoactive substance abuse. The idea behind the Outline is that an early start of therapeutic and rehabilitation measures not only restores the individual and social status of children and young people, but also substantially limits the prevalence of narcotic drugs and the commission of other illegal acts.

279. Pursuant to the compulsory minimum content of basic educational curricula, classes on the fundamentals of health and safety must include a topic on key concepts in the area of health and safety which focuses on the prevention of alcohol consumption by minors. In accordance with the compulsory minimum content of the educational curricula of secondary (full) general education, classes in biology and the fundamentals of health and safety must include the study of factors detrimental to health, and the impact of alcohol, nicotine and narcotic drugs on the development of the human foetus.

280. In the course of the implementation of the federal programme on comprehensive measures to combat drug abuse and drug trafficking, which began in 2002, more than 50 educational centres have been set up to provide psychological, special education and rehabilitation services for juvenile drug abusers. The centres have diagnostic and special

⁸ A new version of the Outline is currently being elaborated to take into account the provisions of the Strategy for the State Anti-Drug Policy until 2020, the Outline for the implementation of State policy on reducing alcohol abuse and combating alcoholism in the population for the period until 2020 and the Outline for the implementation of State policy to combat the use of tobacco, 2010–2015.

educational equipment and workshops, including for creative activities; this makes it possible to conduct correctional and rehabilitation work for this category of children.

3. Sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (art. 34)

281. In 2009 nearly 106,000 crimes were committed involving juveniles, of which about 10 per cent were sexual offences. In the same year, the number of registered cases of indecent assault involving juveniles compared to 2003 almost doubled, to 1,652. The largest number of cases were registered in 2006: 3,070. Since then, there has been a downward trend. Over the period 2006–2009 the number of cases of indecent assault involving juveniles decreased 1.9-fold.

282. Amendments have been made to the Criminal Code to introduce heavier penalties for sexual offences involving juveniles, including the enticement of juveniles to engage in prostitution and coercion to continue to engage in prostitution by use or threat of violence, and the transfer of the victim outside the borders of the Russian Federation or the victim's illegal detention abroad. Article 6.12 of the Code of Administrative Offences makes it an offence to receive income from activities involving enticement to engage in prostitution. Heavier penalties have been introduced for offences committed against the life, health or sexual inviolability of minors. In accordance with an amendment to article 47 of the Criminal Code, a court may impose, as an additional punishment, forfeiture of the right to hold a particular post or engage in a particular activity for up to 20 years for crimes against personal freedoms (see paragraph 19 of this report). Consideration is being given to the question of whether to introduce provisions into criminal legislation to take into account the increased public danger of non-violent offences committed against the sexual inviolability of minors, which contribute to the development of criminal enterprises based on the sexual exploitation of children. A federal bill prepared in 2009 on amendments to the Criminal Code which would establish heavier penalties for sexual offences involving minors⁹ is directed at addressing this lacuna and contains a number of important additional guarantees for the protection of minors and underage children against sexual abuse and exploitation (see paragraph 26 of this report).

283. Federal Act No. 215 of 27 July 2009 on Amendments to the Criminal Code introduces heavier penalties for the circulation of materials containing pornographic images of minors or, for a person who has reached 18 years of age, the enticement of minors to participate as performers in entertainment of a pornographic nature, as well as for the production, possession, distribution, public demonstration or advertisement of materials or objects containing pornographic images of persons known to be minors, the transfer of such materials or objects out of the Russian Federation for the purpose of distribution, demonstration or advertisement or, for a person who has reached 18 years of age, the enticement of persons known to be minors to participate as performers in visual entertainment of a pornographic nature. The production and circulation of materials or objects containing pornographic images of minors under the age of 14 by the parents or other persons legally responsible for the care of a minor, as well as by teachers or the staff of an educational, instructional, medical or other institution responsible for a child's supervision, is punishable by deprivation of liberty and forfeiture of the right to hold a particular post or to engage in a particular activity (see paragraph 19 of this report).

284. The intensification of efforts to combat the circulation of materials and objects containing pornographic images of minors has contributed to an increase in the number of violations detected in this area. Over the reporting period, the number of registered offences concerning the circulation of materials and objects containing pornographic images of

⁹ Adopted on first reading by the State Duma on 26 January 2011

minors rose more than 10-fold, to 356 in 2009. Most of the materials were circulated on the Internet.

285. The prevention of offences associated with the circulation on the Internet of materials containing pornographic images of minors is regarded as a priority area of the fight against crime. On 15 December 2009 a helpline entitled "Children online" began operating which provides psychological and practical assistance to children and adolescents who have encountered a dangerous or unpleasant situation while using the Internet or mobile telephones (cyberstalking, harassment, vulgarity, blackmail, fraud etc.) and counselling for parents and teachers on the safe use of the Internet and mobile telephones by children.

286. Work is currently under way to ensure that the Russian Federation is prepared to become a party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and to sign and ratify the Council of Europe Convention on the Protection of Children against Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse. A Government plan of action has been elaborated on the implementation of measures needed to ensure that the Russian Federation is prepared to comply with the obligations of States parties under those international instruments (see paragraph 31 of this report).

4. Sale, trafficking and abduction (art. 35)

287. Federal Act No. 256 of 28 April 2004 ratified the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. In April 2008, the thirteenth plenary session of the Interparliamentary Assembly of the States parties of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) adopted recommendations on the unification and harmonization of legislation in the CIS States parties on combating trafficking in persons, as well as Model Acts on suppressing trafficking in persons and assisting victims, which were elaborated for the Interparliamentary Assembly by specialists of the Russian Federation's Academy of the Office of the Procurator-General. These international documents have special sections on the suppression of trafficking in children and their commercial exploitation, as well as assistance for child victims of these offences.

288. Article 127.1 (Trafficking in persons) of the Criminal Code, introduced in 2003, establishes a punishment of deprivation of liberty for up to 5 years for the purchase or sale of human beings or other related transactions or for the recruitment, transport, delivery, concealment or reception of human beings for the purpose of their exploitation. If such offences are committed in connection with a person known to be a minor, they are punishable by deprivation of liberty for 3 to 10 years. If they result through negligence in the death of or serious harm to the health of the victim, have other serious consequences, are committed in a way that jeopardizes the life or health of a large number of persons or are perpetrated by an organized group, they are punishable by deprivation of liberty for 8 to 15 years (Federal Act No. 162 of 8 November 2003). In 2008 this article was amended to bolster efforts to combat crimes against personal freedoms. The period of deprivation of liberty for the purchase or sale of human beings or other related transactions or for the recruitment, transport, delivery, concealment or reception of human beings for the purpose of their exploitation was increased from 5 to 6 years. A punishment of deprivation of liberty for 3 to 10 years was introduced for offences committed against a person known by the perpetrator to be in a helpless state or who is materially or otherwise dependent, as well as against a woman known by the perpetrator to be pregnant (Federal Act No. 218 of 25 November 2008).

5. Other forms of exploitation (art. 36)

289. Russian legislation protects children from other forms of exploitation prejudicial to their legitimate rights and interests; this includes the protection of housing and property rights. Children must be raised in a manner that is free from neglectful, cruel, brutal or degrading treatment or abuse, as well as exploitation.

290. The interests of the child must be taken into account in the privatization of a residence. When parents divorce, the property interests of the child are taken into account and maintenance provisions are set.

D. Children belonging to a minority or an indigenous group (art. 30)

291. The Constitution defines the status of national minorities. By law, all citizens, including children, have the right to use their own language, to their culture and to practise their religion (see paragraph 367 of the third periodic report).

292. In 2008 the Bod, a small Finno-Ugric people, of which there is a large population in Leningrad province, was placed on the national inventory of small indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation.

293. The right of all peoples of Russia to receive basic general education in their native language is guaranteed by law. The educational rights of children are not divided along ethnic or social lines. Children have equal access to education. The Constitution, the Education Act, the Act on Ethnic and Cultural Autonomy and the Act on the Languages of the Russian Federation specify that citizens of the Russian Federation who are members of a given ethnic community have the right to receive education in their ethnic (native) language and to choose the language of upbringing and instruction, to the extent possible, offered by the educational system in accordance with Russian law.

294. At the end of 2009, there were 2.2 million children living in regions of the Far North and similar areas, where their living conditions are particularly difficult. In 2009, the crude birth rate in these regions exceeded 13.8 per 1,000. A number of factors have contributed to the rise in the birth rate, above all measures to reinforce the system of support for families and children, an improvement in the standard of living of the population, a strengthening of the institution of the family and changes in the reproductive behaviour of the population. In 2009 birth rate indicators in areas of traditional habitation of indigenous peoples continued to be high, which is associated with the ongoing tradition among indigenous peoples of having many children. In recent years, infant mortality in the regions of the Far North and similar areas has fallen by 18 per cent, from 9.8 per 1,000 births in 2007 to 8.0 in 2009. However, some areas have registered high infant mortality: it stood at 12.6 per 1,000 in Chukchi Autonomous Area, 16.1 per 1,000 in the Republic of Tyva and 9.7 per 1,000 in the Republic of Altai. A nomadic way of life and the great distance between places of residence and medical establishments providing specialized paediatric care are the main reasons for the high infant mortality rate in the first year of life in the indigenous (tundra) population.

295. During the reporting period, the number of children living in the regions of the Far North and similar areas who were enrolled in preschool establishments grew by 53,400, from 455,400 in 2003 to 508,800 in 2009.

296. Between 2003 and 2009, the number of State and municipal educational establishments decreased by 567, to 4,326. Mobile forms of education are developing. More than 12,000 children were enrolled in 292 small general education establishments located in the immediate vicinity of their parents' place of work (compared to 4,500 children in 173 general education establishments in 2002).

297. In the 2008/09 school year, 35,000 children from more than 30 small indigenous peoples of the North were taught their native language as a separate subject in 778 of the 997 State and municipal general education establishments (not including evening and shift schools) located in areas where they live. The percentage of pupils learning their native language fell from 46.0 per cent in the 2001/02 school year to 44.4 per cent in the 2008/09 school year, whereas the number of children learning their language as an option grew considerably.

298. Regulations have been introduced for the placement of textbooks on and in native languages, as well as on the history and culture of religions, on the federal inventory of textbooks recommended/approved for use in schools with a general education curriculum and with State accreditation (see paragraph 372 of the third periodic report).

299. In 2008 religious educational establishments were granted the right to use curricula that meet State educational standards and to confer State accreditation by issuing to those who successfully complete the course of study State standard equivalency certificates for the corresponding educational level.

300. Action is being taken to ensure access to vocational education for children from small indigenous peoples. In 2009 there were 24 State (municipal) secondary vocational schools in areas inhabited by the small indigenous peoples of the North, at which 9,600 children were enrolled.

301. Creative arts schools, taught by the best teachers from higher education institutes, have been set up for talented children from remote regions (Kamchatka, Sakhalin, Khakasia, Buryatia and Altai).

302. Two federal programmes, one on children of the North and another on the economic and social development of the small indigenous peoples of the North until 2011, have introduced special measures of social support for children from small indigenous peoples.

303. One of the most topical areas concerning the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities is ethnic cultural autonomy. In 2009 the Federal Act on Ethnic Cultural Autonomy established regulations for the funding and support of activities associated with the exercise of the rights of autonomous ethnic cultural organizations, to be paid for from the federal, regional and local budgets.

304. The Outline approved in 2009 for the sustainable development of the small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and the Russian Far East constitutes a set of current trends, principles, goals and tasks associated with the sustainable development of the small indigenous peoples of the North. A plan for its implementation over the period 2009–2011 was also approved.

305. All northern regions have their own special programmes which provide for the funding of children's establishments, child health-care services, assistance to children in difficult situations, the preservation of traditional ways of life and the development of traditional economic areas.

306. Efforts are being made to reinforce the logistical basis of health-care institutions, staff them with travelling paramedics, improve specialized medical treatment for children and provide career guidance to children from small indigenous peoples of the North on how to enter the medical profession and find work in ethnic communities.

307. Given the unfavourable natural and climatic conditions in the regions of the Far North and similar areas, measures are being taken to organize leisure and recreational activities for children in regions with a more favourable climate.