



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

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

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under
article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms
of Discrimination against Women**

**Replies of Uzbekistan to the list of issues and questions in
relation to its sixth periodic report*****

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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



Visibility of the Convention

Question 1

1. Awareness-raising activities on gender-based violence are carried out regularly by the courts and law enforcement agencies, for example:

- In 2018, judges made 80 media appearances and delivered 252 lectures.
- The courts produced and distributed two guidance manuals.
- In 2019, judges made 151 media appearances and delivered 319 lectures.
- In the first eight months of 2020, judges made 104 media appearances and delivered 128 lectures.
- The courts distributed a total of 341 guidance manuals. In 2020 alone, the prosecution service carried out 287 activities to raise awareness of laws on the protection of women's rights, including 102 in the media.

2. Item 6 of the road map for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy, approved by a decree of 22 June 2020, sets out measures for developing guidance documents on compliance with international human rights treaties and improving human rights training, including for women, government officials and representatives of non-governmental non-profit organizations on the training courses at the National Centre for Human Rights.

3. The courts do not directly invoke the Convention because article 15 of the Constitution establishes the supremacy of the Constitution and laws of Uzbekistan. The courts are guided by national laws, and international treaties are invoked only after they have been incorporated into national laws.

4. Article 3 of the revised International Treaties Act of 6 February 2019 states that “the international treaties to which Uzbekistan is a party, together with the generally recognized principles and rules of international law, form an integral part of the legal system of Uzbekistan”. In accordance with the National Human Rights Strategy and item 5 of the road map for its implementation, the plenum of the Supreme Court drafted a decision on the application by the courts of the principles and rules of international law and the international treaties to which Uzbekistan is a party. Discussions on the draft decision are ongoing.

Question 2

5. On 24 July 2020, a decree on additional measures to further improve the functioning of the courts and enhance efficiency in the administration of justice was adopted with the aim of facilitating the access of citizens, including women, to justice and improving court proceedings.

6. Rural women are guaranteed access to justice in the same way as urban women. Systematic efforts are being made to improve transport, telephone and Internet connections, which will help to ensure that the rural population has access to justice. More than 70 groups have been established to examine and resolve problems faced by women. They have examined more than 820 cases submitted by women, more than 600 of which were resolved in favour of the women.

7. Items 12 and 22 of the road map on the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy provides for the adoption of an Act on equality and non-discrimination, which in turn provides for the introduction into law of the concepts of “discrimination”, “direct, indirect and multiple discrimination” and

“grounds of discrimination”. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act of 15 October 2020 contains the concept of “discrimination on the grounds of disability”.

8. As part of the implementation of the decree on radically improving the system to raise legal awareness in society, the Advice.uz legal portal was established to provide free advice to the public. A badge for outstanding legal advocacy was instituted for achievements in raising legal awareness among the staff of government authorities and organizations. It has been awarded to 12 citizens, 6 of whom were women.

Impact of the pandemic on women’s rights and gender equality

Question 3

9. On 29 January 2020, the President issued an order establishing a special national commission to prepare a programme of measures to prevent the introduction and spread of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) in Uzbekistan.

10. On 19 March 2020, a decree on priority measures to mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and global crises on the economy was adopted to ensure effective social support for the population, including women, while the spread of the infection is being addressed. A crisis mitigation fund of 10 trillion sum was established to finance measures to combat the spread of COVID-19. Under the decree, parents (persons in loco parentis, guardians or custodians) who are quarantined because of diagnosed or suspected COVID-19 infection and caregivers of their children under 14 years of age receive benefits for temporary incapacity to work equal to 100 per cent of their average wages.

11. Measures were adopted to increase by 10 per cent, from 1 April 2020, the number of recipients of benefits for families with children under 14 years of age, allowances for taking care of children under 2 years of age and financial assistance. A daily supplement of 6 per cent of the monthly basic salary of medical and other workers was introduced to cover the period in which they are engaged in countering the spread of COVID-19.

12. By the end of the first quarter of 2020, 197 centres for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention had been established, comprising 13 regional centres and 184 city and district branches, and, as part of the emergency response, a 1146 hotline had been set up for women to call anonymously. Currently, 19 women and 19 children who have experienced domestic violence are living in these centres. During the pandemic, they have been provided with food, medicine and hygiene products.

13. The government decision of 4 January 2020 on measures to improve the framework for the protection of women and girls from harassment and violence establishes the procedures for:

- Issuing, enforcing and monitoring protection orders
- Referring persons who have committed or are prone to acts of coercion and violence to correctional programmes

14. A national centre for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention has been established.

15. A decree on additional measures to support the population, the economy and business entities during the COVID-19 pandemic was adopted on 3 April 2020. Under the decree, the payment of benefits for families with children, childcare allowances and financial assistance was extended for a continuous period of six months, with no requirement to apply for the continuation of payment in the new period or to provide other documents. The decree of 5 May 2020 on urgent measures to support the textile and garment industry sets out measures to mitigate the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the development of the textile and garment industry, in which the majority of employees are women.
16. On 18 May 2020, a decree on additional measures to support the population and business entities during the COVID-19 pandemic was adopted with the aim of increasing by an additional 10 per cent, from 1 June 2020, the number of recipients of benefits for families with children under 14 years of age, allowances for taking care of children under 2 years of age and financial assistance.
17. On 20 July 2020, a decree on additional measures to support the population, business entities and the food service, trade and services sectors with a view to mitigating the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic was adopted to provide additional support to the population and business entities, especially in the food service, trade and services sectors, in which a large number of employees are women.
18. On 25 July 2020, a decree on measures to mitigate the COVID-19 pandemic and radically improve the framework for disease control and the protection of public health was adopted with a view to establishing a comprehensive framework for disease control and the protection of public health encompassing the mahallas and dwellings.
19. On 30 July 2020, a decree on additional financial assistance for groups of the population in need of aid and social protection during the COVID-19 pandemic was adopted, leading to the establishment of a popular movement known as “Kindness and Support” and the provision of lump-sum financial assistance from the national budget to more than 400,000 families in need, comprising more than 1.7 million people.
20. On 29 August 2020, a decision on additional social support was adopted with the aim of advancing the nationwide Kindness and Support movement. Under the decision, winter clothes, school uniforms and school supplies are provided to children from families in need.
21. The amount of the lump-sum financial assistance for each child under 16 years of age was set at 500,000 sum.
22. In the first three months of 2020, protection orders were issued for 316 women (including 2 minors and 70 young women), of whom 254 had been physically abused, 1 sexually abused, 31 mentally abused and 30 harassed.
23. Almost 600,000 low-income families have received financial assistance. Sponsorship coordination centres have provided food supplies to 320,027 citizens.
24. A comprehensive list of families in need of aid has been compiled, comprising 101,980 families, of whom 49,961 are poor families, 52,019 are families that have lost income as a result of the lockdown and 106,439 are socially vulnerable families with members over 65 years of age. With the cooperation of the mahalla Chair and the crime prevention officer, a patient registry has been established. In liaison with health-care institutions, 74,836 families have been placed under special monitoring.
25. Since the lockdown was declared, 1,961 pregnant women have been quarantined, 338 pregnant women have received emergency medical assistance and 30 pregnant women have tested positive for COVID-19. To ensure timely and good-

quality specialized medical care, 13 maternity clinics with 340 beds for pregnant women infected with COVID-19 and 14 maternity clinics with 740 beds for pregnant women who have come into contact with a person who has COVID-19 have been set up.

26. Regulations on the temporary transition of staff to remote work have been approved, affecting pregnant women, older persons, persons with disabilities and persons with chronic diseases.

27. The State Inspectorate of Labour, together with the epidemiology agency, has begun to systematically monitor occupational health and safety standards at workplaces. Monitoring groups of the Inspectorate have visited 5,757 workplaces and found violations of occupational health and safety standards at 892 workplaces; recommendations to address the shortcomings were made in each individual case. In total, almost 4,500 people have been punished for violating the Labour Code.

28. In the first eight months of 2020, 3,600 new entrepreneurs were registered, including 1,400 women and 1,300 young people, and they received 801.6 million sum in subsidies. Subsidies amounting to 635.3 million sum for the payment of monthly wages were granted to 92 employers for recruiting 175 women and 146 young people above the established quota.

29. Human rights in the administration of justice have been ensured during the pandemic through the electronic court proceedings system, which makes it possible to file a court petition online. The plenum of the Supreme Court, in its decision of 28 April 2020 on certain issues regarding the application of laws by the courts in the light of the measures to prevent the spread of COVID-19 in Uzbekistan, provided clarifications to the courts with a view to ensuring the rights of citizens to judicial protection during the lockdown.

30. During the lockdown, the courts continued to hear cases by videoconference, including urgent cases, such as civil writ proceedings relating to the recovery of alimony; and civil and economic cases in which the parties petitioned for the case to be considered in their absence, if the court does not recognize the participation of the parties in the hearings as compulsory.

Definition of non-discrimination

Question 4

31. Article 3 of the Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Act contains a definition of direct and indirect discrimination. Direct sexual discrimination means any distinction, exclusion or restriction aimed at the non-recognition of women and men's rights and freedoms in all spheres of society, including discrimination on the grounds of marital status, pregnancy, family obligations, as well as sexual harassment, different remuneration for equal work and qualifications; indirect sexual discrimination means the creation of a situation, provision or criteria whereby persons of one sex are placed in a less favourable position compared with persons of the other sex, including through narratives of gender inequality in the mass media, education or culture by establishing conditions or requirements with potential adverse effects on persons of one sex.

32. These definitions of direct and indirect discrimination apply not only to the public sphere, but also to the activities of public and private institutions, which are bound by the Constitution and national laws, including those on combating sexual discrimination.

33. The concept of “intersecting forms of discrimination” and the framework for legal protection against possible discrimination in various spheres of public life will be clarified in the draft law on equality and non-discrimination.

National machinery for the advancement of women

Question 5

34. The Gender Equality Commission was established by a decision of 7 March 2019 on measures to further strengthen guarantees of labour rights and support women’s entrepreneurial activity. The Commission’s specific powers are defined in article 12 of the Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Act of 2 September 2019, according to which the Commission coordinates the work of government authorities towards achieving equal rights and opportunities for women and men in all spheres of public life.

35. The Commission monitors and analyses efforts to ensure gender equality in the country and improve social conditions for women, comprehensively support and develop the institution of the family, incorporate generally accepted international norms relating to women into national laws, cooperate with international organizations and ensure the effective implementation of measures to enhance legal awareness among women; and submits information about the current situation in this area to the Parliament every year.

36. The Senate Committee on Women and Gender Equality exercises parliamentary oversight over gender equality and encourages the incorporation into national law of international standards for the elimination of all forms of discrimination against women. The Committee develops recommendations on improving government policy on gender equality and the active participation of women in government and public work, addresses gender equality issues and assesses whether laws on the development of the institution of the family comply with the goals and objectives of the country’s reforms and international law.

37. The Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support was established by a decree of 18 February 2020 on measures to revitalize social and spiritual life, further support the mahallas and enhance the framework for working with families and women. The Ministry is the government authority charged with developing and implementing government policy on support for families, women and older persons, protecting their rights and legitimate interests, and establishing cooperation with citizens’ self-governing bodies. The Ministry is responsible for cooperating fully with the principal organizations engaged in women’s issues and enhancing their effectiveness.

38. From January to September 2020, the Senate Committee on Women and Gender Equality received 699 petitions, of which 46 per cent related to housing and land issues, 14 per cent to family issues and the activities of local self-governing bodies (mahallas), 12 per cent to gender equality issues and 7 per cent to employment and wages issues. The Committee has forwarded these petitions to the relevant organizations for review.

39. The Gender Equality Commission carries out regular monitoring of the outcomes of citizens’ petitions. To date, the issues raised in 100 petitions have been resolved.

40. As at 10 September 2020, the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support had received 124,680 petitions from individuals and legal entities, of which 119,410 (94.1 per cent) had been sent through the virtual help desks and public reception desks in the Office of the President, 2,920 (2.5 per cent) through the virtual help desk of the

prosecution service and 2,350 (1.5 per cent) directly to the Ministry. The petitions were as follows:

- 56,766 related to financial assistance and social benefits
- 4,062 related to family issues
- 183 related to women's issues
- 1,492 related to disagreements with the decisions of the Chairs of citizens' assemblies
- 317 related to women who have taken part in competitions for admission to higher education institutions
- 537 related to financial assistance for medical treatment
- 248 related to housing issues
- 539 related to crime prevention
- 5,209 related to complaints about the actions of staff of mahalla committees and assemblies
- 24,478 related to financial assistance, food and protection for citizens during the lockdown

41. The Ministry has reviewed 105,182 petitions and is currently reviewing 19,498. The Ministry upheld 60,800 of the petitions, provided clarifications for 30,244 and rejected 13,752.

Question 6

42. The national action plan on the implementation of the Committee's recommendations following its consideration of the fifth periodic report of Uzbekistan on the implementation of the Convention was developed with the participation of women's non-governmental non-profit organizations and approved on 10 October 2017. The national action plan covers the period up to 2019 and consists of 24 items aimed at strengthening the legislative and institutional framework for the protection of women's rights, taking into account the Sustainable Development Goals.

43. The process of gathering information and monitoring the implementation of the national action plan consisted of three phases:

- The first phase began on 5 July 2018.
- The second phase began on 3 October 2018.
- The third phase covered the past two years (March–July).

44. On the basis of the documents and information received from government agencies and non-governmental non-profit organizations, a report covering all items of the national action plan has been prepared, and round tables on the implementation of the plan have been held in Fergana, Andizhan, Namangan, Syrdaria, Djizak, Samarkand, Bukhara and Navoi, with a view to analysing the implementation of the plan in the districts.

45. From 6 to 10 May 2019, monitoring of the implementation of the national action plan was conducted in Djizak, Bukhara and Andizhan with the use of case studies and statistical data.

46. As a result of the implementation of the national action plan, the following measures have been taken:

- A decree on measures to radically improve support for women and strengthen the institution of the family was adopted.
- The Fund for the Support of Women and the Family was established.
- The first contribution was paid to support women in need of housing.
- A set of measures to support girls has been developed, including the organization of a girls' summit in Samarkand.
- Social rehabilitation and adaptation centres have been established under the Women's Committee.
- Business incubators have opened in the provinces.
- The Gender Equality Commission was established.
- A draft framework for the implementation of government policies on gender equality has been developed.
- The Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Act and the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence Act were adopted.
- More than 9,000 women are currently working in the mahallas as specialists on working with women and promoting spiritual and moral values in families.

47. With a view to ensuring gender equality and measures to support women in all spheres of public life, a draft strategy for achieving gender equality in the period 2020–2030 has been developed, with provisions for:

- Expanding programmes to support women in realizing their rights and socioeconomic interests, and broadly applying modern technology, including information and communications technology, to promote the empowerment of women
- Ensuring that mechanisms and legal frameworks for the protection of women from domestic violence comply fully with international standards
- Raising awareness of gender equality
- Implementing effective measures to ensure gender equality in all spheres of public life, especially in politics and decision-making
- Developing proposals for the accession of Uzbekistan to international treaties on women's rights and to the Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No. 156) and the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183) of the International Labour Organization (ILO)

Temporary special measures

Question 7

48. As part of the development of a strategy for the introduction and use of temporary special measures to achieve substantive equality between men and women, a study was conducted on the development of proposals for the introduction of temporary special measures to incorporate the provisions of article 4 of the Convention into national law.

49. The following goals of the study were achieved:

- The Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Act and the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence Act were adopted.
 - Provisions establishing the same marriage age for women and men were added to article 15 of the Family Code, and the Labour Code was amended.
50. By a decision of 7 March 2019 on measures to further strengthen guarantees of labour rights and support for women's entrepreneurial activity:
- Prohibitions on the use of women's labour in certain industries or professions were lifted.
 - A new list of recommended industries or professions that may have a negative impact on women's health was approved.
 - Employers were prohibited from forcing women to retire.
51. A government decision of 12 April 2018 established the procedure for providing affordable housing to women and girls who are in difficult situations, mothers with disabilities, on low incomes, raising children as single parents or in need of better housing conditions.
52. With the help of mahalla activists and relevant organizations, 15,290 families on the verge of divorce were reconciled. Protection orders were issued for 3,592 women affected by violence, and their families were monitored.
53. A total of 7,700 women living in difficult conditions were identified for a district programme for the employment of women living in difficult conditions in 2020. Jobs were provided to 5,500 of them (71.0 per cent).
54. Assistance was provided to 11,000 women professionals and entrepreneurs in obtaining more than 1 trillion sum in loans from commercial banks.
55. In each mahalla, more than 37,000 women were identified as being in need of career guidance and short-term training, and 3,716 of them received training.
56. Commercial banks provided credit in the amount of 92 billion sum to be allocated as preferential loans through the Public Fund for the Support of Women and the Family to 5,500 women for small business projects.
57. Advisory councils on women's entrepreneurship have been established to support women's entrepreneurship, in particular the development of a women's agrarian movement in rural areas. Such councils are standing bodies consisting of women entrepreneurs and representatives of non-governmental non-profit organizations and government agencies for entrepreneurship.
58. A gender equality survey of the citizens of Uzbekistan, which was conducted in 2019 and had 1,400 respondents, showed that society has come to understand the importance of equal education for boys and girls (89 per cent of respondents). Men and women from all age groups noted the need for young people of both sexes to study at higher education institutions in order to be competitive in the labour market. However, about 60 per cent of respondents thought that men make the best leaders, while 26 per cent believed that sex has no bearing in that regard.
59. The following conclusions can be drawn from the results of a public opinion poll on the reproductive attitudes of citizens, reproductive health and reproductive rights:
- The majority of poll participants (73.9 per cent), from all districts, men and women, regardless of their age, level of education or financial status, agreed with the statement "the main purpose and value of the family is in having children".

- The poll revealed the public’s opinion on the optimal age for a woman to have her first child. The majority of citizens believed that it is better for a woman to have her first child between the ages of 21 and 25 years.

60. An opinion poll on the subject “The Uzbek family during lockdown: relations and areas of responsibility” showed that the most important values in Uzbek society remained the family and children and the upbringing and spiritual and moral development of children. The majority of poll participants (67.5 per cent) believed that the family is responsible for raising children and facilitating their path to adulthood, and that raising children is the primary responsibility of parents and their most important parental duty.

Stereotypes and harmful practices

Question 8

61. The Gender Equality Commission and the Senate Committee on Women and Gender Equality are coordinating the process of drafting and discussing with governmental and non-governmental organizations the strategy for achieving gender equality in the Republic of Uzbekistan in the period 2020–2030, which is aimed at ensuring equal rights and opportunities for women and men in the social, economic and political spheres and has been developed in accordance with the Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

62. As part of developing the strategy, a gender equality survey of the citizens of Uzbekistan was conducted with the aim of objectively and comprehensively assessing the social aspects of gender relations and existing traditional gender stereotypes in society. The measures taken towards achieving these goals are expected to contribute holistically to the elimination of discriminatory gender stereotypes, patriarchal attitudes and harmful practices.

63. In accordance with article 5 of the Education Act, equal rights to education are guaranteed, regardless of sex, race, ethnicity, language, religion, social origin, beliefs or personal or social status. With a view to cultivating awareness of gender equality among school-age children, pupils at general schools are given equal opportunities to receive good-quality education regardless of their sex.

64. There are plans to provide special courses on human rights, women’s rights and children’s rights at higher education institutions to enhance the legal knowledge of students, and retraining and professional development courses for university professors covering human rights and gender issues and the profound impact of gendered behaviour on teaching and learning processes.

65. A total of 146 innovative schools for future brides and grooms have been established. More than 400 specialists have been employed in these schools, and more than 62,070 future brides and grooms have received training.

66. The Youth Union has donated more than 700 art books to the innovative schools. With the support of the Centre of Social and Psychological Services for Young People, 20,000 booklets entitled “Notes for future grooms” and “Notes for future brides” have been compiled and published to prepare young people for marriage. Three types of posters have been produced, with slogans such as “For parents”, “For young men and women” and “Separating is not a solution”, and 30,000 prints have been issued and distributed to all the mahallas. The My Homeland and Youth television channels filmed 16 public service announcements, which were broadcast as part of the “Family – the key to success” programme on the Family channel and the “One million for happiness” programme on the Youth channel.

Gender-based violence against women

Question 9

67. A regulation has been adopted on the procedure for issuing protection orders, ensuring the observance of women's rights and monitoring women victims of harassment and violence, which was approved by decree on 4 January 2020. The law enforcement authorities registered 8,773 instances of domestic abuse as administrative offences (compared with 16,692 in the first eight months of 2018 and 12,237 in the first eight months of 2019), and 571 serious and very serious crimes committed against women (compared with 473 in the first eight months of 2018 and 292 in the first eight months of 2019).

68. In the first eight months of 2020, protection orders were issued for the benefit of 4,780 women (of whom 44 were minors and 1,222 were between the ages of 18 and 30). Of those protection orders, 2,421 were for physical abuse, 25 for sexual abuse, 1,946 for mental abuse, 57 for economic abuse, and 398 for harassment. During the same period, the prevention service of the law enforcement agencies identified 213 marginalized women and girls in centres for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention.

69. On 2 September 2019, the Protection of Women from Harassment and Violence Act was adopted. The Act contains definitions for the terms violence, sexual abuse, physical abuse, economic abuse, psychological abuse, and others.

70. In article 118 of the Criminal Code, rape is defined as "sexual intercourse obtained by violence or threats, or by exploiting the victim's helplessness". Under subparagraph b of its third paragraph, the targeting of a close relative constitutes an aggravating circumstance and entails a more severe penalty.

71. Other forms of sexual abuse are provided for in Article 119 of the Criminal Code, which criminalizes "the gratification of sexual needs in an unnatural manner, obtained by violence or by making threats, or by exploiting the victim's helplessness". Under subparagraph b the third paragraph of article 119, the targeting of a close relative constitutes an aggravating circumstance and entails a more severe penalty.

72. Under the first paragraph of article 121 of the Criminal Code, it is a criminal offence to "force a woman to have sexual intercourse or to gratify sexual needs in an unnatural manner if the woman is dependent on the perpetrator for employment, or is materially or otherwise dependent on the perpetrator." The law also defines "rape within the marriage" and "other forms of sexual abuse" as criminal offences. It would not be advisable to include a definition of consent-based rape in the Criminal Code because the concept of rape itself presupposes physical abuse, psychological abuse (in the form of threats) or exploitation of the victim's helplessness, which would be at odds with any voluntary consent on the part of the victim.

73. The Gender Equality Commission established within the prosecution service is assisting the General Prosecution Service Academy in integrating the topic of gender equality at the prosecution service into its curriculum. Questions related to the violation of women's rights are included in the module on managerial decision-making intended for managers at the district-level prosecution services.

74. At the Academy of the Ministry of the Internal Affairs, law enforcement officers are trained in applying the criminal provisions on gender-based violence and violations of women's rights, and learn about procedures for investigating gender-based violence without mediation. In the period 2018–2020, the Academy held interactive lectures and seminars on the general theory of human rights to increase the knowledge of international standards in that area among recruits receiving

in-person training, distance learners and established staff. During the same period, the Academy held 7 conferences, 9 round tables and 12 seminars, which explicitly dealt with the application of the criminal provisions on gender-based violence.

75. The Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support operates a free, round-the-clock helpline. Callers can obtain information about the procedures established and the measures taken to provide help, about consultations and about preventing the harassment of and violence against women.

76. Victims of harassment and violence or their legal representatives can request shelter. In such cases, the relevant authorities and organizations arrange placement of the victims in special centres.

77. Work is being done to approve a textbook and set up pilot training programmes on cross-sectoral responses to gender-based violence. Standard operating procedures have been prepared for medical staff dealing with victims of gender-based violence. The standard operating procedures consist of practical steps that medical staff can take to facilitate the integration of cross-sectoral response services into the daily work of medical institutions that offer help to victims of gender-based violence.

78. More than 24,000 information events and discussions have been held on ways to achieve a stable social and mental family environment and prevent gender-based violence.

79. A mechanism has been created for registering and considering petitions to the commissions on the strengthening of family values of the mahalla citizens' assemblies. In 2020, more than 18,000 such petitions were filed, of which 14,000 were related to family disputes. On the basis of those petitions, the commissions resolved disputes in more than 11,698 families (compared with 15,000 in 2018 and 11,000 in 2019) and prevented divorces in 4,577 families (compared with 6,000 in the first eight months of 2018 and 7,000 in the first eight months of 2019).

80. The total number of incidents of domestic abuse and crimes resulting in various degrees of physical injury can be broken down as follows. There were 4,691 incidents of domestic abuse. Of those, 863 were motivated by jealousy or family disputes; 863 led to physical injury. The injuries were inflicted by the husband on the wife (in 335 cases), inflicted by the wife on the husband (41), or inflicted on neighbours (75), brothers (69) or other relatives (343), by persons involved in the dispute (22), persons with prior convictions (9), persons dependent on alcohol, narcotics or toxic substances (1), persons with a psychiatric disorder (8), others who were under the supervision of law enforcement (13), persons with a criminal record at the time of committing the offence (45) and persons under the influence of alcohol (93). The same 863 criminal offences can be disaggregated by location as follows: at the family home (646), in a hotel (9), in public (20) and elsewhere (188). In 513 cases, law enforcement authorities were alerted following a workplace investigation.

81. There were 500 cases of premeditated murder and attempted murder, 188 criminal offences motivated by jealousy and family disputes and 189 premeditated murders within the family. The 189 premeditated and attempted murders within the family can be broken down as follows: the wife targeted by the husband (80), the husband targeted by the wife (7), the targeting of neighbours (8), brothers (22) or other relatives (72), and targeting by persons with prior convictions (15), persons who have committed a crime in a domestic setting (7), persons with a psychiatric disorder (9), persons under the supervision of law enforcement (5), and persons under the influence of alcohol (40). The same 189 criminal offences can be broken down by location as follows: at the family home (152), in a hotel (2), in public (10) and elsewhere (25). In 261 cases, law enforcement authorities were alerted following a workplace investigation.

82. To prevent gender-based violence and ensure gender equality, the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Special Education has established an advisory board on equal rights and opportunities for women and men. In addition, the General Prosecution Service has established a commission on gender equality and the Ombudsperson for the Rights of Children has created a council on women's rights. Within the law enforcement agencies, 360 female inspectors have been assigned to work with women in need of legal and social assistance.

83. Pursuant to a presidential decision of 2 July 2018 on measures to improve the system of social rehabilitation and adaptation and prevent domestic abuse, rehabilitation and adaptation centres have been set up to provide victims of domestic abuse with psychological, legal and social assistance.

Question 10

84. In 2019, 1,309 investigations into gender-based violence were opened involving 1,545 suspects. Charges were brought against 1,218 suspects in 1,025 criminal cases. Of the 1,218 convicted perpetrators, 1,016 were men and 202 were women. Of the convicted perpetrators, 40 were under 18 years of age, 502 were between 18 and 30, 644 were between 31 and 60, and 32 were older than 60. Altogether 908 were unemployed. Among the victims were 1,079 ethnic Uzbeks, 1 Kyrgyz, 19 Kazakhs, 26 Tajiks, 2 Turkmens, 10 Tatars, 53 Russians and 28 members of other ethnic groups.

85. Of the same 1,025 criminal cases leading to 1,218 convictions, 386 cases (451 convicted perpetrators) concerned domestic abuse, 197 cases (229 convicted perpetrators) concerned sexual abuse, 4 cases (7 convicted perpetrators) concerned discrimination and abuse in the workplace, 438 cases (531 convicted perpetrators) concerned other types of discrimination and abuse. Of the convicted perpetrators, 36 were a parent of the victim, 45 were a sibling, a sibling of the spouse or the wife of the husband's brother, 209 were the victim's spouse and 98 were another relative. In 830 cases, the perpetrator came under another category.

86. Across all cases investigated, 1,505 persons were identified as victims. Of those, 140 were under the age of 18, 560 were between 18 and 30, 742 between 31 and 60, and 63 older than 60. Altogether 657 were unemployed. Among the victims were 1,364 ethnic Uzbeks, 1 Kyrgyz, 16 Kazakhs, 11 Tajiks, 3 Turkmens, 12 Tatars, 58 Russians and 40 members of other ethnic groups. Altogether 447 were the victims of domestic abuse, 248 of sexual abuse, 4 of discrimination or abuse in the workplace, and 489 of other types of abuse. The courts awarded material or moral damages to 155 victims; 83 victims were awarded other types of compensation. Of the convicted perpetrators, 15 were made to undergo involuntary treatment, which helped to safeguard the rights of the victims and protect them from further violence. In 2019, 256 cases in respect of 291 perpetrators were tried in mobile court sessions. The courts issued 700 ancillary orders to remedy causes and circumstances that had contributed to the crime.

87. In the first eight months of 2020, the courts tried 972 cases of gender-based violence in respect of 1,141 persons. There were 688 criminal cases leading to 807 convictions. Of the 807 convicted perpetrators, 631 were men and 176 were women, 16 were under 18 years of age, 291 between 18 and 30 years of age, 582 between 31 and 60 years of age, and 18 were over 60 years of age. Altogether 639 were unemployed. Of the convicted perpetrators, 732 were ethnic Uzbeks, 2 were Kyrgyz, 19 were Kazakhs, 8 were Tajiks, 3 were Turkmens, 3 were Tatars, 23 were Russians and 17 were members of other ethnic groups.

88. Of the 688 cases (807 convicted perpetrators), 258 cases (296 convicted perpetrators) concerned domestic abuse, 129 cases (149 convicted perpetrators)

sexual abuse, 7 cases (7 convicted perpetrators) discrimination and abuse in the workplace, and 294 cases (355 convicted perpetrators) discrimination and abuse of another type. Of the convicted perpetrators, 26 were a parent of the victim, 40 were a sibling, a sibling of the spouse or the wife of the husband's brother, 153 were the victim's spouse, 84 were another relative and 504 came under other categories.

89. Across all investigations, 1,077 persons were identified as victims. Of those, 91 were under 18 years of age, 342 were between 18 and 30 years of age, 576 were between 31 and 60 years of age, and 68 were over 60 years of age. Altogether 550 were unemployed. Among the victims were 972 ethnic Uzbeks, 14 Kazakhs, 14 Tajiks, 4 Turkmens, 8 Tatars, 36 Russians and 29 members of other ethnic groups. There were 270 victims of domestic abuse, 152 victims of sexual abuse, 8 victims of discrimination or abuse in the workplace, and 342 victims of other types of abuse. The courts awarded material or moral damages to 93 victims; 63 victims were awarded other types of compensation.

90. Of the convicted perpetrators, five were made to undergo involuntary treatment, which helped to safeguard the rights of the victims and protect them from further violence. In the first eight months of 2020, 73 cases in respect of 78 perpetrators were tried in mobile court sessions. The courts issued 455 ancillary orders to remedy causes and circumstances that had contributed to the crime.

Question 11

91. Uzbekistan has favourable organizational and legal arrangements for protecting the rights of victims of gender-based violence. Currently, the country has 197 centres for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention. One of those is national, 14 are at the provincial level and 183 at the city and district levels. The centres provide urgent medical care as well as psychological, social educational and legal assistance to persons who have been marginalized because of family problems and domestic abuse.

92. As at 1 October 2020, the centres had helped 11,570 persons, of whom 10,229 were women (of whom, in turn, 5,046 were in difficult living conditions), 1,122 were men and 205 were children under 18 years of age. A total of 5,322 persons had come to the centres on their own initiative. Of those, 4,706 were women, 481 were men and 135 were children under 18 years of age. The centres were contacted through the telephone helpline by 5,013 persons. Of those, 4,361 were women, 624 were men and 28 were children under 18 years of age.

93. The centres were contacted through social media by 120 women. Of the 507 persons who contacted various offices of the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, 418 were women and 18 were children under 20 years of age. Of the 587 persons who contacted the law enforcement and justice agencies, 548 were women, 17 were men and 22 were children under 18 years of age. One woman contacted the health authority, two women contacted the labour and employment authority, and 21 women contacted other organizations.

94. Legal assistance was provided to 4,145 women, psychological assistance to 3,242 women and medical care to 708 women. Employment was provided to 313 women, while 1,686 women were provided home-based work.

95. In 2019, the non-governmental non-profit organization Madad, whose objective is to provide legal assistance to citizens free of charge, including through a free telephone helpline, opened branch offices and legal advice centres in various cities and districts around the country. Under article 26 of the Prosecution Service Act, if the rights and freedoms of a citizen have been violated and those rights can be

defended in court, but the citizen is unable to appear in person to defend the case in view of his or her health, age or other reasons, the case is to be brought and defended by a prosecutor.

96. In addition, under article 985 of the Civil Code, victims can make a civil claim for moral and material damages outside the criminal proceedings. Under article 8, paragraph 5 of the State Duties Act of 6 January 2020, claimants seeking compensation for material losses resulting from a criminal offence are exempt from paying State duties for lodging their claim. Claims for moral losses, including those resulting from a criminal offence, are handled in civil proceedings in accordance with articles 1021 and 1022 of the Civil Code.

97. In 2019, the national centre for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention and its branches in the country were contacted by 21,558 persons. Between January and September 2020, the centres were contacted by 4,317 persons. Free legal assistance was given to 385 women and 57 men, psychological support was given to 3,140 women and 208 men, while medical care was given to 307 women who had suffered from domestic abuse to 6 men and to 34 children under 18 years of age. Protection orders were issued to ensure the protection and inviolability of 180 women.

98. The national centre for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention is funded by the State and by the centre's founders, and from other sources not prohibited by law.

99. The national centre for the rehabilitation and adaptation of victims of violence and suicide prevention has a telephone hotline that can be reached from anywhere in the country by dialling 1146. Its purpose is to help women in difficult living conditions, act as a communications channel with citizens and offer emergency psychological, psychotherapeutic and legal support, as well as consultations with and information about organizations that can provide additional help.

Trafficking in persons and exploitation of prostitution

Question 12

100. On 31 July 2019, a decree was adopted on additional measures for the further improvement of the system to combat trafficking in persons and forced labour. Under the decree, the national inter-agency commission on combating trafficking in persons has been replaced by a national commission on combating trafficking in persons and the use of forced labour. In addition, a national rapporteur has been appointed whose remit comprises the same areas. In 2019, a total of 53 instances of trafficking in persons were identified, of which 50 concerned sexual exploitation and 3 concerned labour exploitation. The 50 instances of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation were perpetrated by 61 individuals (6 men and 55 women). The 3 instances of trafficking in persons for labour exploitation were perpetrated by 3 individuals, all of whom were men. During the same period, 66 criminal cases concerning trafficking in persons were investigated (4 cases were carried forward from 2018, 6 of the cases opened in 2019 were carried forward into 2020). Of those, 59 concerned sexual exploitation and 7 labour exploitation.

101. The number of crimes related to trafficking in persons is currently diminishing thanks to the opening of more than 170 new law enforcement branches in cities and villages (bringing the number from 108 to 283) and more than 820 local posts (bringing the number from 4,024 to 4,848), and an increase in the number of

prevention officers to more than 1,100 (an increase of 19 per cent, from 5,867 to 6,969) full-time equivalents.

102. On 17 August 2020, the revised Trafficking in Persons Act was adopted, bringing certain criminal provisions into line with the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children. Furthermore, on 16 September 2008, an Act was adopted amending and supplementing the Criminal Code in connection with the adoption of the Trafficking in Persons Act. The article previously entitled “Recruitment of persons for exploitation” was given the new heading “Trafficking in persons”; moreover, the penalties were made much more severe, and trafficking in persons with aggravating circumstances can now be classified as a serious or very serious crime.

103. To reinforce the legal framework governing trafficking in persons, the Accession by the Republic of Uzbekistan to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography Act was adopted, as was the revised Trafficking in Persons Act of 17 August 2020.

104. To align the country’s criminal legislation with the Optional Protocol, articles 130, 1301 and 131 of the Criminal Code were amended and supplemented. In 2019, two criminal investigations were conducted into the sexual exploitation of two minors by three individuals (pimping). The criminal conduct was classified as trafficking in persons under article 135, third paragraph, subparagraph a, of the Criminal Code.

105. Foreign or stateless persons identified as victims of trafficking in persons are entitled to temporary residence in Uzbekistan regardless of the circumstances in which they entered the country. Victims of trafficking in persons are relieved of any civil, administrative or criminal liability for acts committed while being forced or threatened.

106. A website has been launched (www.ht.gov.uz) and a law enforcement hotline opened (998 99 311 01 01) for victims of trafficking in persons to come forward and receive social and legal assistance. Between 2018 and 2020, the non-governmental non-profit organization Istiqbolli Avlod provided legal advice to 3,223 women, including 294 victims of trafficking in persons, and helped 170 trafficked women to return to their countries of origin.

107. In 2019, 137 the number of victims of trafficking in persons was 137 (of whom 90 were women and 2 were minors). A total of 220 individuals (of whom 63 were women and 36 were minors) contacted the rehabilitation centre. During the first six months of 2020, the number of victims of trafficking in persons was 54 (of whom 47 were women and 2 were minors). A total of 54 individuals (of whom 28 were women and 6 were minors) contacted the rehabilitation centre for help.

108. On 10 May 2018, the Government issued a decision to make participation in hashars (community service events) organized and conducted by State bodies and other organizations strictly voluntary.

109. The State Labour Inspectorate is taking a series of measures to end forced labour in all its forms. A rapid response system has been set up through the 1176 hotline of the Ministry of the Interior, through the official website dmi.mehnat.uz, through the @mehnathuquqbot channel on the Telegram messaging service and through social media. As a result, in August 2020, charges were brought against 47 officials, of whom 12 were women.

110. On 22 January 2020, an Act was adopted amending and supplementing the Administrative Liability Code. Officials who force another person to perform work were made liable for a financial penalty of between 50 and 100 base accounting units.

The offence now carries a penalty of between 70 and 100 base accounting units if committed in respect of a minor. In addition, the offender is criminally liable for the use of the labour of a minor.

Question 13

111. Under current law, prostitution is an administrative offence only. In 2019, the administrative courts heard 1,449 cases concerning administrative offences in respect of 1,741 individuals under article 190 of the Administrative Liability Code. Of those, 1,601 were given fines or were put under administrative arrest.

112. In 2018 and 2019, the Istiqbolli Avlod centre for reducing the demand for prostitution carried out a project entitled “New habits, new opportunities” with funding from the small grants programme of the Embassy of the United States of America in Uzbekistan.

113. In 2020, the Istiqbolli Avlod centre started preparations for a national project entitled “Expanding reintegration services for vulnerable victims of trafficking in persons in Uzbekistan” with funding from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.

114. The centre held a number of events aimed at preventing trafficking in persons:

- 10 information seminars reaching 1,187 participants, volunteers and staff of the centre, held in 2018;
- 63 information seminars reaching 14,000 people, held in 2019;
- A winter training camp for volunteers entitled “Leaving no one behind”, 14 seminars and 70 meetings in the mahallas of Tashkent, all held in 2020; an information marathon on the theme “Thirty days’ partnership against trafficking in persons”, and others.

Participation in political and public life

Question 14

115. As part of efforts to implement the Guarantees of Equal Rights and Opportunities for Women and Men Act, work is being done to increase the social and political involvement of women, and to enable them to realize their potential and take advantage of opportunities in various domains. At present, more than 1,380 women are in managerial positions in government and civil society organizations.

116. Structures have been created to prepare women who play active roles in society for managerial positions by offering them training and professional development. In 2016, the proportion of women managers was 7 per cent; by 2020, it had risen to 12 per cent. In 2019, for the first time in the history of Uzbekistan, the number of women in the national parliament rose to 48, or 32 per cent of the 150 members elected to the legislative body. In the Senate, the share of women rose to almost 25 per cent.

117. In the local councils, women make up more than 23 per cent of representatives. More than 1,000 women are heading mahalla citizens’ assemblies, and for the first time, six women have been appointed district hokims.

118. Women are occupying high positions, such as leading positions in the Senate, or the positions of Ombudsperson for the Rights of Children, Minister for Pre-School Education, Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary Ambassador of Uzbekistan to Israel, Deputy Minister for Public Health, Deputy Minister for Culture and Deputy Minister of Mahalla and Family Support.

119. The Senate is currently working on an action plan to implement the decision of the Gender Equality Commission of 16 July 2020 to train and create a reserve of women eligible for managerial positions. A bill on the State civil service prepared by the Civil Service Agency is currently under consideration.

120. At the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the current share of women in various bodies is as follows: 22.6 per cent at headquarters, 4 per cent in the diplomatic and consular missions abroad, 32 per cent at the Ministry's Dunyo information agency, 32 per cent at the Ministry's bureau of interpreters, 18 per cent at the Ministry's bureau for servicing the diplomatic corps, 32 per cent at the Ministry's information-analytical centre for international relations, 62 per cent of the faculty and managerial staff at the Ministry's University of World Economy and Diplomacy, and 20 per cent of the University student body.

121. The Electoral Code requires that the participation of political parties in elections be funded exclusively by the State under dedicated budget items. All other funding or material support for the participation of political parties in elections is prohibited. A total of 46.6 billion sum was set aside in the State budget for the participation of political parties in the parliamentary elections of 2019.

122. As proposed by the political parties, 30 per cent of the funding for electoral campaigning was deposited directly into the candidates' accounts.

Nationality

Question 15

123. No official applications regarding the granting of political asylum have been filed by foreign citizens to date. The drafting and adoption of an Act on political asylum is under discussion in the light of the recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

124. The amended Citizenship Act was adopted on 13 May 2020. Since 2016, Uzbekistan has granted citizenship to 16,298 stateless persons (179 in 2016, 1,064 in 2017, 2,759 in 2018, 6,318 in 2019 and 5,978 in the first eight months of 2020).

125. In accordance with the Act, 4,734 stateless persons who had been permanently registered in Uzbekistan before 1 January 1995 but had not been granted citizenship were recognized as citizens of Uzbekistan.

126. Uzbekistan is making concerted efforts to improve the legal framework for the protection of the rights of citizens and non-citizens living in the country against discrimination in various spheres of public life. The road map for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy includes: the development of draft laws on equality and non-discrimination (item 12), the legal status of foreign nationals and stateless persons in Uzbekistan (item 15) and labour migration (item 41); the consideration of the ratification of the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (item 43); and the preparation of proposals for the accession of Uzbekistan to international treaties on protecting the rights of migrants (item 72), including the Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness.

Education

Question 16

127. The Education Act provides for 11 years of compulsory education. Girls are entitled to free secondary education at general education schools and basic vocational education at vocational schools as part of the 11 years of education, regardless of their district of residence or health status.

128. The status of enrolment in education in Uzbekistan is as follows: in general education institutions, 5,850,852 students were enrolled in 2018, of whom 2,847,197 were girls, and 6,168,198 students were enrolled in 2019, of whom 2,989,962 were girls; in academic lycées, 71,809 students were enrolled in 2018/19, of whom 29,502 were girls, and 43,193 students were enrolled in 2019/20, of whom 15,679 were girls; in vocational colleges: 656,297 students were enrolled in 2018/19, of whom 327,432 were girls, and 239,240 students were enrolled in 2019/20, of whom 129,003 were girls; and in universities, 360,204 students were enrolled in 2018/19, of whom 159,399 were girls, and 440,991 students were enrolled in 2019/20, of whom 202,537 were girls.

129. There are currently more than 78,000 children with disabilities, of whom 21,100 (27 per cent) are enrolled in 86 specialized schools and boarding schools, 6,100 (8 per cent) are enrolled in 21 boarding schools with medical facilities, 13,300 (17 per cent) are homeschooled and more than 13,000 (17 per cent) are enrolled in general education schools.

130. A system for the classification of professions for persons with disabilities, which describes the professions that can be obtained by students depending on their medical condition, has been developed and approved, taking into account the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED 2011) and labour market requirements.

131. A favourable environment for the education of women has been created with a view to enabling them to take their rightful place in society. The proportion of female students is increasing every year. In 2019, the number of female students had increased by an average of 16 per cent (14.3 per cent in the humanities, 11.9 per cent in social sciences, economics and law, 8.8 per cent in manufacturing and technology, 13 per cent in agriculture and water management, 17.9 per cent in health care and social services, and 24.2 per cent in services) compared with 2017.

132. The number of female students enrolled in master's degree programmes increased between 2017 and 2019. There were 1,632 female students in 2017, 2,706 in 2018 and 4,488 in 2019, marking an increase of 27.5 per cent compared with 2017.

133. Under a decision of 12 June 2020 on the parameters of the government order on admission to higher education institutions of the Republic of Uzbekistan in the academic year 2020/21, in addition to the general quotas of State-funded places on in-person undergraduate courses, there is a 4 per cent quota of such places for women who have been recommended by the Ministry of Mahalla and Family Support, thus eliminating inequalities in education for girls and women. Citizens who had been recommended by the command of a military unit before the 2019/20 academic year are awarded an additional 50 per cent of the grade received in the entrance examination.

134. A special expert working group established under the National Centre for Education has developed a system for reviewing school textbooks and teaching materials for general secondary education institutions and school curricula, including with respect to gender equality issues. The road map for the implementation of the National Human Rights Strategy provides for: professional development in human

rights and women's rights through the human rights courses at the National Centre for Human Rights (item 4); the inclusion of topics relating to human rights, including women's rights, in the curricula at all levels and types of educational institutions (item 64); and training courses and textbooks on women's rights (item 68).

Employment

Question 17

135. Measures are being taken to provide employment for the population, including women, by promoting the broad participation of citizens in paid work and vocational training. By an order of the Ministry of Labour, regulations were approved on the granting of subsidies and grants from the State employment fund, according to which subsidies and grants for employers are provided to organizations to cover the costs of training, retraining and professional development courses in the amount of four times the basic calculated amount per month for a period of six months. As a result, more than 19,000 unemployed persons, including more than 13,500 women, have participated in training, retraining and professional development courses led by district labour authorities.

136. In the first eight months of 2020, almost 3,600 new entrepreneurs were registered, including 1,400 women and 1,300 young people, and they received 801.6 million sum in subsidies. Subsidies amounting to 635.3 million sum for the payment of monthly wages were granted to 92 employers for recruiting 261 people in need of work, including 175 women and 146 young people above the established quota.

137. In accordance with a decision of 5 March 2019 on a government order for employment and job creation in 2019, grants were allocated in 2019 to vocational training institutions to defray the costs of retraining the unemployed, especially citizens returning from labour migration and women from low-income families.

138. The number of women in administrative and leadership positions is increasing. While women accounted for 40,364 out of 149,479 administrative personnel in 2018, they accounted for 41,015 out of 153,945 in 2019. The number of women who are heads of companies and organizations is increasing: women accounted for 47,632 out of 434,135 heads in 2018 and 51,495 out of 462,634 in 2019.

139. The proportion of women in the total number of employees in small and medium-sized enterprises, including farms, grew at a rather slow rate from 2014 to 2016 (from 21.7 to 22.5 per cent). Since 2017, however, the involvement of women in small and medium-sized enterprises and entrepreneurial activity has been increasing rapidly. At the beginning of 2018, there were more than 182,000 women entrepreneurs in the country, representing 29 per cent of all registered business entities.

140. On 25 February 2019, a memorandum of cooperation was signed between the Ministry of Labour, the Tashkent office of the Korea International Cooperation Agency and the Keimyung College University of the Republic of Korea on the implementation of a project to train the staff of the Samarkand Centre for Vocational Training to provide professional development courses for specialists. In accordance with the memorandum, specialists received training in the technology of mechanical engineering and computer design at the Centre for Vocational Training, and a start-up business incubator was established in Samarkand.

141. Article 5 of the Labour Code lays down the principle of equal labour rights of employees and the prohibition of discrimination in employment and occupation. Article 256 prohibits discrimination in remuneration. In accordance with article 112

of the Labour Code, each employee's employment contract must include mandatory provisions on the job function, the terms of remuneration, the employee's base rate of pay or fixed salary, supplemental pay, benefits and incentive pay.

142. The State Labour Inspectorate monitors government-funded organizations on a monthly basis and carries out inspections of organizations on the basis of responses submitted through feedback channels. During the reporting period from January to August 2020, the Inspectorate detected 2,708 cases of wage violations, of which 336 involved violations of women's labour rights.

143. The gender pay gap is being eliminated through government-approved systems for the classification of occupations and the classification of employees' posts and professions, which establish gender-neutral names for professions (posts) and their qualification requirements.

144. Under a decision of 7 November 2018 on measures to strengthen financial incentives for employees of government health facilities and health agencies, the salaries of medical and pharmaceutical employees of government health facilities were gradually increased: by 1.2 times from 1 December 2018; and by 1.15 times from 1 April 2019. The Ministry of Health has established a development and financial incentives fund for employees of health agencies.

145. In 2018, 157,186 collective agreements were in force in the country. The following amendment was made to the section entitled "Women's labour regulations: additional benefits and guarantees for women and persons with family responsibilities": the working week was reduced by one hour with no reduction in wages for women with two or more children under 12 years of age or with children with disabilities under 16 years of age, and for single mothers whose children are enrolled in primary school.

Question 18

146. Under article 225 of the Labour Code, "the employment of women in jobs with adverse working conditions and in underground work, with the exception of some underground work, is prohibited". Women are prohibited from lifting or moving loads that exceed the limits set for women.

147. By a decision of 7 March 2019 on measures to further strengthen guarantees of labour rights and support for women's entrepreneurial activity, the prohibition of the employment of women in certain industries and professions was lifted from 1 May 2019.

148. The list of jobs with adverse working conditions previously approved on 5 January 2000, in which the employment of women is fully or partially prohibited, is no longer valid. In 2019, the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Health developed and approved a list of professions and jobs which have a negative impact on women's health and in which it is not recommended to employ women.

149. In 2020, Uzbekistan ratified the following ILO conventions: the Promotional Framework for Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 2006 (No. 187); the Workmen' Compensation (Accidents) Convention, 1952 (No. 17); the Maternity Protection Convention, 2000 (No. 183); and the Safety and Health in Construction Convention, 1988 (No. 167).

150. The provisions of these international instruments have been incorporated into the Labour Code, the Occupational Safety Act and other laws and regulations. The Occupational Safety Act guarantees occupational safety rights.

151. An amended Labour Code that provides for the approval of the list of jobs with adverse working conditions in which the employment of women is restricted was recently submitted to Parliament and has been transferred to social partners.

Health

Question 19

152. In the years since Uzbekistan gained independence, the maternal mortality rate has decreased by a factor of three, from 65.3 to 21.4 per 100,000 live births. The target rate under the Millennium Development Goals was 22.7. That goal was achieved by 2015. Thereafter, the maternal mortality rate was as follows: 17.4 in 2016; 21.0 in 2017; 20.1 in 2018; and 19.1 in 2019.

153. The infant mortality rate was 9.9 per cent in 2018 and 9.3 per cent in 2019, a decrease of 0.6 per cent from the previous year.

154. In 2019, the early neonatal mortality rate (between zero and seven days after birth) was 3.8 per cent, compared with 4.8 per cent in the previous year, representing a decrease of 1.0 per cent. The late neonatal mortality rate (between 8 and 28 days after birth) was 5.2 per cent in 2020, compared with 6.3 per cent in 2018, representing a decrease of 1.1 per cent.

155. According to current data, the causes of newborn deaths in 2019 were as follows: respiratory distress syndrome (39.2 per cent); birth defects (18.2 per cent); asphyxia (16.5 per cent); birth injuries (8.2 per cent); congenital pneumonia (6.9 per cent); sepsis (5.3 per cent); and other causes (5.7 per cent).

156. Across the country, there are 5,146 obstetricians and gynaecologists, or 57.6 per 100,000 women of childbearing age. In rural areas, there are 2,124 obstetricians and gynaecologists, or 48.8 per 100,000 women of childbearing age. There were 1,564 women of childbearing age (15–49 years) for every obstetrician and gynaecologist in 2019.

157. Pregnant women and girls with tuberculosis receive inpatient treatment at national, provincial and city tuberculosis hospitals (children's and adult hospitals) and outpatient treatment at city tuberculosis centres and family clinics in their place of residence.

158. Pregnant women and girls living with HIV/AIDS receive inpatient treatment at national, provincial and city hospitals for infectious diseases, AIDS centres and the Research Institute of Virology, and outpatient treatment at family clinics in their place of residence.

159. In the period 2018–2020, suicide rates among women decreased. There were 857 deaths from suicide among women in 2018, 793 in 2019 and 389 in the first half of 2020. The number of deaths from suicide among girls increased from 145 in 2018 to 164 in 2019. In the first half of 2020, 68 deaths from suicide among girls were recorded.

160. Specialized psychiatric care is provided in accordance with the Psychiatric Care Act for both outpatients and inpatients, regardless of sex or age, at the voluntary request of the patient or with his or her consent. Restrictions on the rights and freedoms of persons with mental health conditions are not permitted.

161. All psychiatric inpatient facilities are available to women with disabilities on an equal basis with all other patients.

162. Addressing micronutrient deficiencies, which increase significantly during pregnancy and breastfeeding, has a significant impact on reducing high neonatal and infant mortality rates. On 22 July 2010, a decision was adopted on additional measures to improve the reproductive health of mothers and children in rural areas, setting out measures to be taken in the period 2018–2020 to provide pregnant women living in rural areas with special multivitamin complexes containing folic acid and other ingredients to support vitality.

163. Under a national programme for the fortification of flour with iron and micronutrients, weekly iron supplements are provided to at-risk groups. A healthy nutrition strategy for the period 2015–2020 has been developed and implemented. For the past seven years, all pregnant women have received free multivitamin complexes containing folic acid and iron through the primary health-care system.

164. As a result of the implementation of this strategy, anaemia rates decreased during the period 1996–2019 by a factor of three among women of childbearing age, from 60 to 20 per cent, and by a factor of more than four among children under 5 years of age, from 61 to 16 per cent.

Question 20

165. In Uzbekistan, men and women have the right to obtain information on and access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice and other methods of fertility regulation provided by law. They have the right of access to health facilities where women and adolescents can receive contraceptive services. Improving the quality of and harmonizing approaches to family planning services, including the choice of contraceptive methods, will help to reduce the frequency of unwanted pregnancies and the risk to women's health, the rate of maternal and child mortality and the number of pregnancies among adolescent girls and prevent HIV infection.

166. The use of contraceptives and public awareness-raising on reproductive health have helped to reduce unwanted pregnancies and births, including births among adolescent girls aged between 15 and 17 years, and abortions.

167. In March 2011, a working group was established to adapt the Safety Route programme for use in Uzbekistan. The model of the Safety Route programme developed for Uzbekistan was recommended for use in practical preventive measures targeting young people.

168. Activities under the Safety Route programme are conducted on a regular basis at colleges and lycées. In 2017, women's consultation units and girls' health centres were set up in every district multidisciplinary clinic.

169. All medical procedures related to voluntary surgical contraception are performed only with the free, prior and informed consent of the patient or married couple.

170. In Uzbekistan, which has a population of 33.3 million, 8.9 million women (27 per cent) are of childbearing age, and the abortion rate is 4.6 per 100,000 women of childbearing age and 56.5 per 100,000 live births.

171. Order No. 124 of the Minister of Health on the approval of regulations for the induced termination of pregnancy was adopted on 12 June 2020. As a result of the measures taken, no maternal deaths due to the induced termination of pregnancy or abortion and no cases of "unsafe" abortion have been recorded over the past three years.

Economic empowerment and social benefits

Question 21

172. On 2 February 2018, a decree on measures to radically improve support for women and strengthen the institution of the family and, on 7 March 2019, a decision on measures to further strengthen guarantees of labour rights and support for women's entrepreneurial activity were adopted.

173. A poverty reduction strategy and programme have been developed and submitted to the Government for approval. These documents not only cover general areas of poverty reduction but are also aimed at supporting women. The poverty reduction programme includes measures for improving the health of women and families, supporting women's entrepreneurial activity and providing comprehensive assistance to women in their work.

174. A decision on the issuance of temporary employment cards for self-employed citizens was adopted on 9 July 2019. Since 1 September 2019, all the main employment departments in the provinces and the city of Tashkent and the district (city) centres for employment promotion have been issuing temporary employment cards, which enable self-employed persons to obtain tax benefits, record their work experience and receive free training in vocational and entrepreneurial skills. From September to December 2019, a total of 39,119 employment cards were issued to informally employed citizens, of which 19,938 were issued to women. From January to June 2020, a total of 35,529 cards were issued, of which 18,527 were issued to women.

175. On 8 June 2020, a decision on measures to simplify government regulation of entrepreneurial activity and self-employment was adopted, stipulating that self-employed persons must register by submitting a notification through a special mobile application or the taxpayer's personal account and obtaining a matrix barcode (Quick Response Code) to confirm their registration as self-employed. By this decision, the temporary employment cards were abolished.

176. Under the Tax Code, income from self-employment is not included in the total income of an individual. Self-employed persons must pay a social tax for 2020 in the amount of not less than 50 per cent of the basic calculated amount, regardless of the hours actually worked as self-employed. The amount of such tax is fully transferred to the Extrabudgetary Pension Fund and forms the basis for determining the earnings for the calculation of the pension in accordance with the procedure established for self-employed entrepreneurs.

Rural women

Question 22

177. Under the "Well-appointed Village" and "Well-appointed Mahalla" government programmes, the situation in more than 112,900 dwellings has been studied and more than 13,994 families living in difficult circumstances have been identified. To improve the economic situation of the women living in such families, 1,629 women have received training in sewing and been given sewing machines, and 780 have registered as homeworkers.

178. The number of women working in handicrafts has now reached 12,185. Under the Master Apprentice system, 5,604 women in the districts have been employed in the handicraft trade, 13,754 women have been provided with home-based work, and

more than 800 mini sewing workshops have been set up in the mahallas. In Karakalpakstan, for example, there are 200 such job opportunities in Manas village, 200 in Galaba mahalla and 100 in Beruniy District. Measures have been taken to provide employment for about 10,000 young women.

179. During the period 2019–2022, there are plans to establish 295 sewing and knitting workshops in the country, which will provide jobs for 44,000 rural women.

180. With a view to creating opportunities for women to study at higher education institutions, a decision was adopted on 23 June 2020 on the approval of regulations on the recommendation of women for participation in the competitive examination and the quota of places for women at higher education institutions funded by additional government grants.

181. Pursuant to a decision of 11 August 2020 on engaging poor and unemployed citizens in entrepreneurial activity, enhancing their labour activity and professional development and providing employment for the population, 14 multifunctional centres, 30 vocational training centres, 136 mahalla vocational training centres and 11 short-term vocational training courses in the districts of Tashkent have been established as part of the employment and labour relations framework.

182. In 2019, a total of 5,568 women were trained in the fundamentals of entrepreneurship by the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, while thus far in 2020, a total of 6,634 have been trained.

183. Women account for 5.4 per cent (8,105) of heads of farms in Uzbekistan, and their areas of specialization are as follows: horticulture and viticulture (36.3 per cent); cotton growing and viticulture (35.5 per cent); oilseed crops and melon growing (10 per cent); vegetable growing (7.7 per cent); cattle breeding (6.2 per cent); and vegetable and melon growing (4.4 per cent).

184. A government-funded centre for training in the fundamentals of entrepreneurship has been established, regulations on the admission of poor and unemployed persons to training have been approved, and district vocational training centres are also up and running.

185. According to statistical data, the current population of Uzbekistan is more than 33.5 million people, 49.5 per cent of whom are living in rural areas. Of the total population, 16,544,900 are rural women.

186. Involving rural women in entrepreneurship, providing them with financial support and health care and increasing their level of education and entrepreneurial activity are among the main tasks to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. Fulfilling those tasks is important for the development of the country and society.

187. With a view to enhancing the participation of young people, including rural girls, in the management of public affairs, a youth parliament has been established under the chambers of the Oliy Majlis with the following aims: to form a pool of young leaders, including girls; to encourage the development of innovative ideas by young people; to involve young people in the creation of start-ups and in public oversight of the rights of rural young people, including women; and to raise the level of the legal and political awareness of young people.

188. By a decree of 29 October 2019, a strategy for the development of agriculture in the Republic of Uzbekistan for the period 2020–2030 and a road map for its implementation were approved with the aim of improving government policy on food security, which covers food safety, the production of the required quantity of food for the population, the introduction of mechanisms to reduce the role of the Government in the agricultural sector, the establishment of a modern system of public

administration to improve the production rate at farms, and the development of research, education and information services for the rural population.

Disadvantaged groups of women

Question 23

189. The issues raised in this question are addressed in detail in the following reports of Uzbekistan: the third periodic report on the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;¹ the combined tenth to twelfth periodic reports on the implementation of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;² and the fifth periodic report on the implementation of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.³

Marriage and family relations

Question 24

190. In a decision of 13 July 2020 on measures to address child marriage, early childbearing and family dissolution, the Senate approved a comprehensive plan of action for 2020–2021 to address child marriage and early childbearing and family dissolution.

191. With a view to preventing child marriage and early childbearing among minor girls, the Ministry of Internal Affairs held more than 23,000 meetings and discussions with secondary school pupils, more than 7,000 with students at academic lycées and vocational colleges, and 321 with students at higher education institutions, totalling 48,000 meetings. In an effort to prevent child marriage, the General Prosecution Service conducted 3,605 outreach activities in the first eight months of 2020 and 6,680 in 2019 on the negative consequences of child marriage and the establishment of liability (under article 473 of the Administrative Liability Code and article 1251 of the Code of Criminal Procedure).

192. With the aim of preventing child marriage and raising awareness of its negative consequences, the General Prosecution Service spearheaded the filming of an educational video entitled “Special report”, which was shared with the general public through the media. As a result of these awareness-raising measures, 145 child marriages have been prevented, and no cases of child marriage were detected during the period in question, nor were any persons held administratively or criminally liable for violations of family law.

¹ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=E%2fC.12%2fUZB%2f3&Lang=ru.

² https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CERD%2fC%2fUZB%2f10-12&Lang=ru.

³ https://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/15/treatybodyexternal/Download.aspx?symbolno=CAT%2fC%2fUZB%2f5&Lang=ru.