



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

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Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

## Combined eleventh to fourteenth periodic reports submitted by Kazakhstan under article 9 of the Convention, due in 2025\*, \*\*

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\* The present document is being issued without formal editing.  
\*\* The annexes to the present document may be accessed from the web page of the Committee.



## I. Introduction

1. Since gaining independence, Kazakhstan has considered the promotion and protection of human rights to be one of the priorities of State policy. Kazakhstan is a Party to the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, which was ratified by Act No. 322-I on 26 August 1998, and it consistently fulfils its obligations under the Convention's provisions.

2. This single document, the combined eleventh to fourteenth periodic reports (hereinafter referred to as the report), has been prepared in accordance with article 9 of the Convention and the Committee's reporting guidelines (CERD/C/2007/1), taking into account its concluding observations on the combined eighth to tenth reports of Kazakhstan (CERD/C/KAZ/CO/8-10) of 4 July 2022.

3. The report covers the period 2022–2025 and reflects a range of measures taken by the State to implement the Committee's recommendations, including:

- Improving legislation
- Institution-building
- Developing national mechanisms for the protection of human rights
- Ensuring equal access for all ethnic groups to economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights

4. This report was prepared using national statistics, analytical materials, information from government agencies and national human rights institutions, data from the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, the findings of scholarly research and official documents, including the National Development Plan of Kazakhstan for the period up to 2029 (Presidential Decree No. 611 of 30 July 2024).

5. Particular attention has been paid to the implementation of the Committee's key recommendations, contained in paragraphs 16, 22, 28 and 42 of the concluding observations, concerning freedom of expression, the prevention of inter-ethnic tensions, the preservation of Kazakh identity while respecting ethnocultural diversity and the situation of stateless persons and refugees.

6. Significant contributions were made by consultations with civil society organizations, including those representing ethnic minorities, and international partners (see sect. XII).

7. The report was submitted within the deadline of 25 September 2025 (concluding observations, para. 54).

8. Kazakhstan takes note of the Committee's recommendation to update the common core document submitted in January 2019 (concluding observations, para. 51) and confirms its readiness to bring it into line with the harmonized guidelines on reporting under international human rights treaties, in particular those on the common core document, as adopted at the fifth inter-committee meeting of the human rights treaty bodies, held in 2006, and with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 68/268.

9. Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to an open and constructive dialogue with the Committee and intends to further improve the national human rights protection system in accordance with international standards.

## II. General information about the State

### A. Constitutional framework

10. The Constitution enshrines the fundamental principles of State structure and equality.

11. Article 14 of the Constitution ensures that no one may be subjected to any kind of discrimination on grounds of origin, social, official or property status, sex, race, ethnicity, language, attitude to religion, beliefs, place of residence or other circumstances.

12. Freedom of speech and creation are guaranteed by the Constitution (art. 20), while rights and freedoms may be restricted solely by law and to the extent necessary to protect the constitutional system, public order, human rights and freedoms and public health and morals. Any actions that could disrupt harmony between different ethnic and faith groups are deemed unconstitutional (art. 39).

13. Article 7 of the Constitution establishes the Kazakh language as the State language, while ensuring the free use of Russian and the languages of other ethnic minorities is not restricted.

14. In accordance with article 4 of the Constitution, ratified international treaties take precedence over laws and are directly applicable, unless their application requires the adoption of a special law. This means that the provisions of the Convention can be directly applied to enforcement practices to protect citizens' rights.

## **B. Key reforms for 2022–2025**

15. In recent years, Kazakhstan has implemented a set of political and legal reforms aimed at strengthening democracy, the rule of law and human rights.

16. Political developments include the introduction of a mixed electoral system, the establishment of the National Kurultai, a platform for civil society, and greater public monitoring.

17. On 5 November 2022, the Constitutional Act on the Constitutional Court and the Constitutional Act on the Human Rights Commissioner were adopted with a view to implementing the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles) and enhancing the protection of citizens' rights.

18. The re-establishment of the Constitutional Court, to which citizens can appeal directly, has become one of the key mechanisms for improving the institution of citizen protection and the comprehensive enforcement, observance and implementation of the basic law – the Constitution.

19. The Constitutional Court examines applications regardless of the applicants' nationality, whether they are foreign nationals, stateless persons or refugees, thus upholding the general requirements for the applicants with regard to the principle of access to justice and equality before the law. All persons, the Procurator General and the Human Rights Commissioner may appeal to the Constitutional Court.

20. The Constitutional Court provides guaranteed State-funded free legal assistance to socially vulnerable citizens (veterans, persons with disabilities, pensioners, Kazakh repatriates (*kandas*), orphans, mothers with many children and others) and offers interpretation services, including sign language interpretation.

21. With regard to improving human rights institutions, the mandate of the Human Rights Commissioner has been strengthened. To enhance the role of the Commissioner for Children's Rights, regional representatives of the Commissioner – regional commissioners – were introduced by law in 2024.

22. The relevant Act of 5 July 2024 established the status of Commissioner for the Rights of Socially Vulnerable Groups in the Social Code. The establishment of this human rights mechanism also aims to fulfil the Paris Principles and ensure the effective and independent functioning of national human rights institutions.

23. There are other ombudsmen, including the Commissioner for the Protection of Entrepreneurs' Rights, the Investment Ombudsman, the Banking Ombudsman, the Insurance Ombudsman and the Student Ombudsman.

24. The Online Platforms and Online Advertising Act was adopted in 2023. The concepts of "online platform user" and "influencer" or "blogger" were introduced.

25. The procedure for filing and reviewing petitions is regulated by law, which allows citizens to express their opinions through online enquiries. This measure is aimed at ensuring open and transparent monitoring of the Government’s work.

26. With regard to the media and freedom of expression, the Media Act of 2024 was adopted, introducing a broader concept of “mass media” that encompasses not only traditional media outlets, but also Internet resources. Provision has been made for the creation of a Consolidated Media Platform. The concept of a “special status” for journalists has been introduced.

27. Kazakhstan has adopted policy measures for the promotion of human rights and the rule of law, organized systematically into three plans: a plan of priority measures on human rights (2021); a plan of further measures on human rights and the rule of law (2022); and a plan of action on human rights and the rule of law (2023).

28. Section VI, on article 6 of the Convention, sets out detailed measures for reforms in the field of justice and the administration of justice.

## C. National strategies and plans

29. Kazakhstan has approved a number of key strategic documents that underpin State policy on human rights and directly affect the country’s obligations under the Convention.

30. The 2004 National Development Plan for the period up to 2029 sets out the country’s long-term socioeconomic policy guidelines. The main emphasis is on building a “Just Kazakhstan”, where all citizens have equal opportunities to fulfil their potential and participate in the country’s social and political life.

31. Priorities include strengthening the rule of law, reducing regional disparities, improving the quality of education and healthcare and developing human capital. These areas are directly related to articles 2 and 5 of the Convention, as they ensure equal access for all ethnic and social groups to basic social and economic rights. The National Plan is integrated with the Sustainable Development Goals and contains specific indicators to track progress towards inclusiveness.

32. The policy framework for the development of civil society establishes mechanisms for involving the population and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in decision-making processes. It provides for the further development of public councils, the expansion of grant support to NGOs and the introduction of public monitoring of the activities of the authorities.

33. These measures have strengthened protection against discrimination and enhanced the role of civil society in preventing inter-ethnic conflict, consistent with articles 2, 6 and 7 of the Convention. In addition, this framework takes into account the Committee’s recommendations regarding the active involvement of NGOs in preparing national reports and monitoring the fulfilment of international obligations.

34. The key strategic document outlining State policy on inter-ethnic relations is the policy framework for development of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan for the period 2022–2026 (pursuant to Presidential Decree No. 1014 of 15 September 2022), which is aimed at building civic identity and preventing discrimination on ethnic grounds, respecting cultural diversity, promoting the State language as a language of inter-ethnic communication while providing support for minority languages, involving ethnocultural associations in public and political life, countering hate speech and ethnic stereotypes, and raising public awareness and legal literacy.

35. By order of the Head of State, given at the Assembly’s thirty-fourth session in 2025, a new policy framework for the development of the Assembly for the period up to 2030 is being developed, taking into account new principles and approaches for consolidating society, ensuring harmonious development and protecting the rights of all ethnic groups in Kazakhstan.

36. The policy framework for development of the language policy for the period 2023–2029 aims to preserve and strengthen the Kazakh language as the State language while providing support for ethnic minority languages. The document outlines measures to promote trilingualism in Kazakh, Russian and English and provides support for ethnocultural associations and weekend schools, where members of ethnic communities can learn their native languages.

37. Pursuant to Act No. 157-VIII of 13 January 2025, amendments were introduced to the Languages in Kazakhstan Act of 1997 to make creating the right framework for the study and development of the languages of the people of Kazakhstan one of the main objectives of State regulation of language development. The country's language policy establishes the principle of the free use of the languages of the people of Kazakhstan. This is in keeping with article 5 of the Convention and the recommendations made in paragraphs 28, 33 and 34 of the concluding observations concerning the preservation of ethnocultural diversity.

38. The policy framework on migration for the period 2023–2027 focuses on documenting migrant workers, integrating refugees and streamlining procedures for stateless persons. It is closely linked to the National Action Plan to End Statelessness, with the aim of protecting the social and economic rights of migrants. This framework is in keeping with articles 1 (2) and 5 of the Convention and the recommendations made in paragraph 42 of the concluding observations, which emphasize the need to protect the rights of stateless persons.

39. The gender and family policy framework for the period up to 2030 sets out target indicators to ensure the equal participation of women in decision-making processes. These provisions aim to eliminate intersecting forms of discrimination, which occur when ethnicity and gender are combined, and to implement articles 2 and 5 of the Convention.

40. The Action Plan on Human Rights and the Rule of Law of 2023 has become an important policy, bringing together measures to protect the rights of vulnerable groups, develop Ombudsman institutions and strengthen the independence of the judiciary. Its provisions are consistent with articles 2 and 6 of the Convention and also directly related to the Committee's recommendations on the need for comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation.

41. The anti-corruption policy framework for the period 2022–2026 enshrines the principle of zero tolerance for corruption and aims to ensure equal access to public services for citizens and to protect their rights. This policy framework reinforces the safeguards of a fair trial and equality before the law, in line with articles 2 and 6 of the Convention.

42. The Social Code, which came into force in 2023, codified social protection measures and, for the first time, established uniform rules for providing benefits and assistance. The Code aims to ensure that vulnerable groups in society, such as people with disabilities, pensioners, low-income families and children, have equal access to social services. Its provisions are directly relevant to article 5 of the Convention, as they remove barriers to the enjoyment of social rights and reduce the risk of discrimination in practice.

43. Thus, Kazakhstan has developed an integrated system of strategic documents that covers all levels.

44. The principles of non-discrimination and equal access are firmly established at the strategic level (National Plan 2029, policy framework for civil society, Social Code).

45. At the level of particular areas, specific policies protect the rights of ethnic groups (language policy), migrants and stateless persons (migration policy) and women and vulnerable groups (the policy framework for the development of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, the gender policy framework and the Social Code).

46. At the institutional level, the Human Rights Action Plan and the anti-corruption policy framework have been adopted to ensure equal access to justice and public services.

47. All these documents confirm the country's commitment to fulfilling its obligations under the Convention and creating a regulatory framework for the elimination of all forms of discrimination.

## D. Kazakh identity

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 27 and 28 of the concluding observations

48. Kazakhstan is committed to strengthening national harmony and unity, based on the principles of equality, non-discrimination and respect for the rights of all its citizens, regardless of their ethnic origin. Official discourse, including strategic documents, statements by the country's leaders and the activities of State bodies and State media, excludes narratives that could cause ethnic groups to become divided or feel alienated. On the contrary, the emphasis is on consolidating society, promoting the idea of unity and developing a Kazakh civic identity.

49. Official policy and government programmes do not contain terms or approaches that divide citizens into "natives" and "visitors". State documents and educational standards emphasize the idea of "unity in diversity" and the value of the contribution of all ethnic groups to the country's development. Systematic coverage is given to the topics of inter-ethnic dialogue, cultural diversity and the successful integration of all ethnic groups, including ethnic Kazakh repatriates, into a unified civil society. Regular information and awareness campaigns are conducted to promote tolerance and mutual understanding, prevent discrimination, and shape positive public perceptions.

50. The policy of repatriating ethnic Kazakhs is carried out in strict accordance with international standards and the State's humanitarian obligations. It is aimed solely at ensuring the right to return to one's historical homeland.

51. At the same time, Kazakhstan ensures respect for the principles of non-discrimination and equal access for all citizens to social and economic rights and excludes any form of preferential treatment that could cause social or ethnic tensions. To reduce the potential risks of exclusion and conflict, the State implements adaptation programmes, language instruction and vocational training and takes measures to encourage returnees to participate in the country's social and cultural life.

52. To ensure the sustainable development of inter-ethnic relations in the country, the information space, including the State media, is monitored to prevent the spread of destructive or divisive narratives. The emphasis is on promoting positive content that highlights the contribution of ethnic groups to the development of Kazakhstan and the successes in building an inclusive society.

53. The Ministry of Culture and Information implements a targeted information policy aimed at strengthening social harmony and preventing discrimination on the grounds of ethnic origin. Part of this work includes television and radio broadcasts and Internet projects (such as "Shaýraq", "Dostyq", "Kazakhstan Without Borders", "Dostyq Dastarkhany", "United People", "Jol-Jónekei", "Etno-View", "Ethno Álem" and "My Kazakhstan"), which provide examples of harmonious coexistence, intercultural exchange and equal participation of ethnic groups in the life of the country.

54. 2025 has been declared the Year of Blue-Collar Jobs in Kazakhstan, with special attention being paid to members of ethnic minority groups working in industry, agriculture, science, education and healthcare. The Ministry of Culture and Information has developed a guidance manual entitled "Tools for the Promotion of Blue-collar Jobs among Ethnic Groups", which contains recommendations on information support for members of ethnic communities, thereby helping to strengthen equality and inclusion.

55. Kazakhstan is taking comprehensive measures to prevent discrimination, minimize the risks of exclusion and prevent ethnic tensions, including through a responsible information policy, systematic support for the repatriation of ethnic Kazakhs and the broad involvement of all ethnic groups in the country's social and cultural development.

## E. Statistics

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 5 and 6 of the concluding observations

56. Kazakhstan attaches great importance to the regular collection and analysis of reliable statistical data on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic groups, including people of African descent, with a view to effectively implementing the provisions of the Convention.

57. Kazakhstan has a mechanism for the regular and systematic collection of official statistical information, based on the State Statistics Act of 19 March 2010 and approved methods for calculating the size and structure of the population. Data collection is carried out through national population censuses, sample household surveys and administrative sources.

58. At the beginning of 2025, the population of Kazakhstan was approximately 20.3 million, of whom 14.4 million were Kazakh (or 71.2 per cent of the population), 2.9 million Russian (14.6 per cent), 678,400 Uzbek (3.3 per cent), 371,800 Ukrainian (1.8 per cent), 305,600 Uighur (1.5 per cent), 218,900 Tatar (1.1 per cent), 223,200 German (1.2 per cent), 155,300 Azerbaijani (0.7 per cent), 120,600 Korean (0.6 per cent), 91,700 Turkish (0.4 per cent), and 86,000 Dungan (0.4 per cent).

59. Annually, the Bureau of National Statistics publishes data on the number of the country's 70 largest ethnic groups and birth, death and migration rates broken down by ethnic origin (see annexes 1 and 2 to the report).

60. In education, statistics on students in technical and vocational education and higher and postgraduate education are compiled in a digital database on a single platform, broken down by ethnic origin (see annex 3 to the report).

61. On a quarterly basis, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection compiles information on the following:

- Number of unemployed persons registered at the end of the reporting period by ethnic group
- Number of unemployed persons registered at the end of the reporting period by region
- Number of unemployed persons registered at the end of the reporting period by sex

62. When providing medical care, the patient's legal status (citizen, foreigner, refugee, migrant, etc.) is taken into account to determine the scope of medical care (guaranteed level of free medical care, compulsory social health insurance and compulsory or voluntary insurance).

63. No medical statistics disaggregated by ethnic origin are kept on the number of people seeking care, cases treated, refusals of admission to hospital, case monitoring, screening tests, vaccinations and other treatment and the registration or analysis of complaints. A patient's ethnic background is not a factor in the delivery of medical care.

64. With regard to housing conditions, the 2022 statistical compendium entitled "Dwelling characteristics of the population in Kazakhstan" contains data on the types of dwelling, amenities and living space.

65. Particular attention is paid to ensuring data transparency. All official statistical information is freely available on the Bureau of National Statistics website ([www.stat.gov.kz](http://www.stat.gov.kz)) in the form of spreadsheets, statistical compendiums and interactive dashboards, ensuring equal access for all users.

66. In the ethnicity classifier, people of African descent are included under the category "other ethnicities" (with the exception of Arabs).

67. Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to the principle of non-discrimination and expresses its intention to improve the mechanism for the systematic collection and publication of statistical data on the socioeconomic situation of ethnic groups.

### III. Article 1

#### A. Definition of discrimination in the Constitution and laws

68. Kazakhstan has a comprehensive legal and regulatory system that embodies key human rights principles, including those related to combating discrimination. The Constitution and a number of legislative acts (labour, criminal, administrative, civil codes, etc.) contain provisions that provide protection against discrimination on the grounds of origin, social, official or property status, sex, race, ethnic origin, language, attitude to religion, beliefs, place of residence and any other circumstances.

69. Provisions prohibiting discrimination are contained in a number of codified laws, including the Marriage and Family Code (art. 30), the Labour Code (art. 6), the Social Code (art. 6), the Code of Civil Procedure (art. 13), the Code of Administrative Offences (art. 9) and the Code of Criminal Procedure (art. 21).

70. Furthermore, the Code of Administrative Offences (arts. 75 and 90) and the Criminal Code (arts. 145 and 146) provide for liability for discrimination and violation of the equality of human and civil rights.

71. In national legislation, the term “violation of the equality of rights of citizens” (Criminal Code of 3 July 2014, art. 145) is used as an equivalent of “discrimination”, which is understood as the direct or indirect restriction of human rights and freedoms on the aforementioned grounds, including membership of a voluntary association.

72. Kazakhstan has a mechanism for citizens to submit appeals to protect their rights and legitimate interests, which is governed by criminal procedure, civil procedure and administrative law.

73. In addition, there are human rights institutions and organizations that carry out monitoring and scrutiny of compliance with human rights, including the Constitutional Court, the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner and its regional representatives, the Human Rights Commission under the Office of the President of Kazakhstan, the National Commission on Women's Affairs and Family and Demographic Policy, the Citizenship Commission and other consultative and advisory bodies.

74. Thus, a comprehensive regulatory and legal system has been established in Kazakhstan to consolidate and ensure the implementation of key human rights standards and principles.

75. At the same time, in line with the recommendations of the Committee and other international organizations, Kazakhstan recognizes that this is an ongoing process. The country is committed to improving its national mechanisms and developing cooperation with international partners and civil society with a view to achieving fair and harmonious relations.

#### B. Improving anti-discrimination legislation

##### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 7 and 8 of the concluding observations

76. In accordance with paragraph 24 of the Action Plan on Human Rights and the Rule of Law, approved by Presidential Decree No. 409 of 8 December 2023 and Order No. 120-NQ of 29 March 2024 of the Minister of Culture and Information, a standing interdepartmental working group on improving anti-discrimination legislation was established in 2024 to discuss the issue of anti-discrimination legislation at the State level and to coordinate interdepartmental efforts to implement the Convention.

77. To ensure a comprehensive approach, the working group included representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Information, the National Human Rights Centre, the Office of the Procurator General, the National Security Committee, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Health and also independent experts, human rights defenders and civil society representatives.

78. The working group considered issues relating to the application of existing anti-discrimination legislation, discussed various conceptual approaches to its further development, heard the positions of State bodies and experts and studied the experience of foreign countries.

79. In addition, the Department for the Prevention of All Forms of Discrimination and Improvement of Legislation, established in the Office of the Ombudsman (under the National Centre for Human Rights) in 2024, was responsible for considering complaints and communications and developing recommendations on discrimination issues for State bodies.

80. In 2025, the Centre, with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), conducted a study of international and national experiences in combating discrimination, including systemic racial discrimination, with the participation of independent experts. The results of the study were presented at a meeting of an interdepartmental working group together with a bill on ensuring equality of rights and opportunities in Kazakhstan, which introduced the concepts of direct and indirect discrimination, a mechanism for shifting the burden of proof and measures to protect victims of discrimination.

81. Furthermore, given the direct impact of this issue on the development of social relations and the comprehensive State regulation of certain sectors, it may be too hasty or premature to develop a bill without a thorough, evidence-based analysis.

82. In this regard, the possibility of conducting in-depth research is currently being explored in collaboration with interested government agencies, research organizations and members of the academic community. This will involve unlocking the potential of the interdepartmental research arm of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and engaging representatives of government agencies, civil society and academia.

83. Regarding the concern expressed that the Labour Code has not been amended to prohibit discrimination based on colour, under article 14 (2) of the Constitution, no one may be subjected to discrimination of any kind on the ground of origin, social, official or property status, sex, race, ethnicity, language, attitude to religion, beliefs, place of residence or any other circumstance.

84. “Other circumstances” include any other grounds for discrimination not listed in this article, including in the area of employment.

85. The Labour Code also provides that one may be subjected to any form of discrimination in the exercise of their labour rights on grounds of origin, social, professional or property status, sex, race, ethnicity, language, attitude to religion, beliefs, place of residence, age, physical disability or membership of voluntary associations.

86. Thus, the legislation of Kazakhstan provides a legal framework for protection against all forms of discrimination, including on the basis of skin colour.

87. Kazakhstan is making consistent improvements to its labour legislation with the aim of ensuring equal rights and opportunities for all its citizens, preventing discrimination and promoting conditions for decent work. The Labour Code has been amended to remove the list of jobs in which women’s labour was restricted.

88. The local authorities have established a 2 to 4 per cent job quota for persons with disabilities (excluding jobs involving arduous work or work in harmful or hazardous conditions) to provide them with employment opportunities.

89. According to data from the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, in the first four months of 2025, more than 14,900 persons with disabilities in Kazakhstan were covered by active employment promotion measures. There are 737,400 persons with disabilities in Kazakhstan, accounting for 3.7 per cent of the total population. Of these, 376,700 are of working age. At the same time, 108,900 persons with disabilities are already employed in various sectors of the economy, representing 28.9 per cent of persons with disabilities of working age.

90. Additional measures have been introduced to ensure gender equality in employment and remove hidden barriers to career advancement.

91. As at 1 July 2025, 56.2 per cent of civil servants are women, including 39.1 per cent in managerial positions (44.9 per cent in central bodies and 34.4 per cent in local bodies).

92. According to United Nations recommendations, a minimum target of 30 per cent representation of women is considered necessary in order to adequately consider and reflect their interests at the decision-making level. This threshold has already been crossed in the corporate sector in Kazakhstan: in 2022, 43.4 per cent of senior management positions were held by women.

93. Kazakhstan is also taking measures to implement the Committee's recommendations regarding equal access to employment for ethnic minorities. During the reporting period, programmes for professional development, language courses and occupational adaptation are being implemented for representatives of ethnic and cultural associations.

94. Thus, Kazakhstan has created legislative guarantees of equality and non-discrimination in the area of employment, in line with article 5 of the Convention, thereby contributing to the establishment of an inclusive labour market in the country.

## C. Intersecting forms of discrimination

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 11 and 12 of the concluding observations

95. Kazakhstan recognizes the importance of taking into account intersecting and multiple forms of discrimination, such as when racial discrimination overlaps with discrimination based on other characteristics, including religion, sex, age, disability and sexual orientation.

96. National legislation provides for measures to prevent multiple discrimination. For example, the Labour Code (art. 6) expressly prohibits discrimination on the grounds of sex, disability, age and other circumstances, including ethnic origin; the Social Code (art. 4) provides guarantees of social protection without discrimination, which is particularly important for older persons and persons with disabilities from ethnic minorities; and the Criminal Code (arts. 145 and 174) provides for liability for violating citizens' equality of rights and incitement to hatred. Furthermore, committing a crime motivated by racial, ethnic or religious hatred is classified as an aggravating circumstance (art. 54).

97. On 16 July 2025, the Criminal Code was amended to introduce criminal liability for the unlawful harassment of a person, which entails actions that are aimed at establishing contact with or tracking a person against his or her will and do not involve violence but cause substantial harm (art. 115-1 (Stalking)). This amendment extends protection to vulnerable groups, including women, adolescents and ethnic minorities, who may be subject to persecution on multiple grounds.

98. Government agencies, together with NGOs and international partners (United Nations Population Fund, UNDP, Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)) are implementing projects aimed at improving legal literacy, supporting victims of discrimination and introducing a zero tolerance policy towards harassment and discriminatory practices in any form.

99. In his address to the people of Kazakhstan, "Kazakhstan in the era of artificial intelligence: current challenges and their solutions through digital transformation", on 8 September 2025, the President of Kazakhstan, Mr. Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, emphasized the paramount importance of adhering to the principle of zero tolerance for any offence.

100. Thus, Kazakhstan is developing a comprehensive approach to combating intersectional discrimination, combining constitutional guarantees, special sectoral regulations, criminal law measures and social programmes, which is in line with modern international human rights standards and the provisions of article 1 of the Convention.

101. By way of example (case study): an ethnic minority woman with a disability faces multiple barriers: her ethnic background limits her access to career opportunities and reinforces workplace stereotypes. Her disability creates physical constraints in employment

and requires special working conditions. In addition, her gender increases the risk of discrimination in pay and career advancement.

102. In such cases, several legal provisions apply simultaneously: article 6 of the Labour Code ensures non-discrimination in employment; article 4 of the Social Code establishes the right to social support; articles 145 and 174 of the Criminal Code provide protection against discriminatory actions and inciting discord; and State programmes on gender equality and inclusive employment provide additional support measures for women and persons with disabilities. In other words, the same situation is covered by several legal provisions at the same time.

103. Thus, the current legislation has effectively created a legal mechanism for protection against intersectional forms of discrimination, which is in line with the international standards set out in article 1 of the Convention.

## IV. Article 2

### A. State policy for the prevention of inter-ethnic tensions

#### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 21 and 22 (a)–(c) of the concluding observations

##### (a)

104. Even in a multi-ethnic State with stable inter-ethnic relations, it is understood that there can be displays of prejudice against individual ethnic groups and within such groups, including in community and social life.

105. In Kazakhstan, this may be connected with the ever-changing social processes relating to ethnic groups within the country, which are influenced by migration and the specific ethno-demographic character of different regions (see annex No. 4 to the report).

106. The State recognizes that certain ethnic groups may perceive isolated manifestations of social vulnerability and prejudice as elements of discrimination. To prevent such manifestations, the country is implementing a consistent, comprehensive State policy to support inter-ethnic harmony and inclusive development.

107. The analysis of the inter-ethnic situation conducted by the Institute of Applied Ethno-Political Research under the Ministry of Culture and Information showed that, as at mid-2025, most citizens of Kazakhstan considered the inter-ethnic situation to be calm (60.9 per cent) and favourable (34.9 per cent). A total of 75.5 per cent stated that there were no violations of rights based on ethnicity.

108. As at mid-2025, 84.3 per cent of citizens were satisfied with the State policy for ensuring inter-ethnic harmony. These statistics attest to the overall effectiveness of the Kazakh model for peace and harmony.

109. State bodies are establishing conditions conducive to open social dialogue. In the period 2023–2024, more than 500 public events on inter-ethnic cooperation were held, including forums, round tables and discussions. More than 3,000 articles and television programmes aimed at fostering a culture of respect and non-discrimination were disseminated and broadcast on social networks and in the media.

110. In the domain of education, optional courses on inter-ethnic tolerance have been developed and introduced, and sociological surveys conducted among students and schoolchildren have shown that more than 82 per cent of respondents positively assessed the inter-ethnic atmosphere at educational institutions.

##### (b)

111. Kazakhstan considers strengthening inter-ethnic harmony and fostering a culture of tolerance to be a strategic priority of State policy. To promote inter-ethnic harmony, courses on tolerance, intercultural communication and human rights have been included in the

curricula of schools and universities. Schools have elective courses on the history and culture of the country's ethnic groups.

112. Under State programmes, student organizations at universities are involved in projects to promote intercultural dialogue. Regular training sessions on inclusive and non-discriminatory communication are conducted for master's and doctoral students. A specialized course to promote ethno-political literacy for future journalists has been introduced at 14 universities.

113. The Media Act of 2024 empowers the media to promote a culture of respect and dialogue.

114. National television channels and radio stations regularly broadcast programmes on the country's ethnocultural diversity. Support is provided to projects implemented by ethnocultural associations involving the media and digital platforms.

115. The Ministry of Culture and Information conducts systematic campaigns to promote tolerance, including in the form of social media challenges, documentaries and online projects. In the period 2024–2025, 40 media projects for television audiences and social media users were implemented.

116. In the period 2023–2025, as part of awareness-raising efforts, more than 20 seminars were held with the involvement of more than 500 members of the media.

117. Kazakhstan has increased and continues to strengthen measures to promote inter-ethnic harmony and overcome prejudices and negative stereotypes through the education system, the media, the involvement of young people and the development of civil society institutions. These steps are contributing to a sustainable model of peace and harmony in the country based on the principles of non-discrimination and equality.

**(c)**

118. Under Government Decision No. 262 of 2 May 2020, the Institute of Applied Ethno-Political Research was established under the Ministry of Culture and Information, whose main objective is to provide analytical, scientific and expert support for State policy and conducting statistical research on inter-ethnic relations.

119. The Institute's key areas of activity include: regular monitoring of the status of and trends in sociopolitical processes and the social well-being of ethnic groups; analysis of the inter-ethnic situation, with risk assessment and forecasting; research on ethno-demographic and ethno-economic trends; academic and methodological support for State policy in the area of inter-ethnic relations, including the development of an early warning system for ethnic tensions and conflicts; and systematization and coordination of academic research and methodological work, ensuring consistent approaches to analysis and forecasting.

120. The Institute has established the Centre for Ethno-mediation, which acts as the primary national organization responsible for defining the strategy for the development of ethno-mediation and designing measures to prevent and deter inter-ethnic conflicts. The Institute trains a pool of professional ethnic mediators and negotiators. Between 2022 and 2025, more than 770 professionals in all regions of the country were trained in accordance with the Institute's approved curriculum.

121. The Institute has developed guidance materials on countering racist hate speech. These include a code of ethics (QazNetEtiquette), which was developed in partnership with international organizations (in particular, the MediaNet International Centre for Journalism, with the support of the Kazakhstan office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation). The code contains a definition of hate speech and guidelines on how to prevent it in public communications.

122. A special manual on monitoring and preventing hate speech has been prepared for civil servants. The document outlines the monitoring methodology, the legal boundaries of what is permissible and the possible consequences of using hate speech, and provides information on legal liability for discriminatory statements.

123. In 2024, as part of the in-service training of civil servants and efforts to prevent ethnic tensions, the Academy of Public Administration under the Office of the President of Kazakhstan held training seminars on the themes “Conflict resolution and ethno-mediation” and “Strategies for successful crisis communication”, in which more than 40 government employees participated. In 2025, new courses were introduced, on the themes “Public policy in inter-ethnic affairs” and “Negotiation and mediation in the public sector”, with more than 130 civil servants from the country’s regions trained thus far.

124. The master’s programmes offered by the Academy include specialized courses on the following themes: “Mediation and conflict management”, “Information policy and nation-building” and “Migration and demographic policy”. As part of these courses, lectures are being held with the participation of representatives of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and experts in the field, and master’s projects on the implementation of mediation practices in public administration are being developed. In addition, modules on the prevention of discrimination and inter-ethnic conflicts have been introduced.

125. Training programmes for employees of government agencies, oblast and local authorities (*akimats*) and law enforcement bodies are conducted on a regular basis. In 2024, more than 2,500 employees received training on the prevention and resolution of ethnic tensions.

126. To monitor the situation and respond promptly when necessary, oblast administrative heads (*akims*) hold monthly meetings with representatives of law enforcement bodies, ethnocultural associations and local authorities at which topical issues related to inter-ethnic stability are addressed.

## B. The role of Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan

### Follow-up information relating to paragraph 22 (d) of the concluding observations

127. Kazakhstan is consistently strengthening the legal and political role of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan and enabling it to be more effective in promoting peaceful coexistence between ethnic groups and preventing and addressing ethnic tensions and conflicts, including through mediation.

128. During its 30 years of activity, the Assembly has evolved from an advisory and consultative body into a constitutional institution with the right of parliamentary representation.

129. The Assembly is a civil society institution with a broad representative composition that includes public figures, members of the Parliament of Kazakhstan and local representative bodies (*maslikhats*) at the oblast level, and representatives of NGOs, ethnocultural associations and other entities. The Assembly occupies a special place in the system of bodies that ensure social harmony and political stability, which are enshrined in article 1 of the Constitution as fundamental guiding principles of the nation.

130. The legal framework for the Assembly’s activities is set out in the Act of 20 October 2008 on the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. Under article 7 of the Act, the Assembly is chaired by the President, thereby emphasizing its high public and political status.

131. The Act establishes the Assembly’s responsibilities: ensuring social harmony and national unity, assisting State bodies in preventing and eliminating inter-ethnic tensions, participating in shaping the political and legal culture of citizens and developing the traditions, languages and cultures of the country’s ethnic groups (arts. 3, 4 and 6).

132. The Assembly has the right to participate in politics by submitting proposals to the President for the appointment of five members to the Senate, the upper house of Parliament, which ensures that ethnocultural associations are represented at the legislative level.

133. In Parliament, the Bir el – bir müdde parliamentary deputy group, which works to strengthen national unity and social harmony, has been created. The group is distinctive in that its presence is not limited to the Majilis, the lower house of Parliament, as was previously

the case, but extends to the Senate, the upper house. The group includes 30 members of Parliament: 10 from the Senate and 20 from the Majilis.

134. Deputy groups supporting the work of the Assembly have been established in all local representative bodies in the oblasts.

135. Particular attention is paid to developing the institution of mediation in an inter-ethnic environment. Article 6 of the Act establishes that the activities of the Assembly are focused on promoting the development of mediation in the domain of social harmony and national unity. In this regard, elders' (*aksakals*) and mothers' councils, inter-ethnic mediation bodies and other community organizations under the Assembly throughout the country participate in the prevention and resolution of community and inter-ethnic incidents with the involvement of ethnic groups and foster dialogue between the State authorities and the public.

136. The Assembly has established a network of civil society inter-ethnic mediators that includes eminent representatives of ethnocultural associations and NGOs.

137. The Assembly has an expert advisory board that develops methodological approaches to inter-ethnic mediation and is implementing two educational projects, one on inter-ethnic mediation and another on mediation in an inter-ethnic environment. *Jańgyrý joly*, the Assembly's youth wing, plays an active role in dialogue-based and voluntary initiatives aimed at building trust and mutual understanding.

138. In addition, the Assembly's activities are supported by "Qoǵamdyq kelisim" State institutions at central and local levels and by a network of friendship houses that serve as forums for inter-ethnic cooperation, cultural exchange and mediated dialogue.

139. Currently, one of the major trends in the development of the Assembly is the growing role of its civil society organizations, which are able to effectively achieve important social objectives and encompass all the rich social, cultural, generational and professional diversity of Kazakh society.

140. The following community projects have brought substantial social returns: the "Assembly. Parliament. Maslikhats" project, *Adal azamat, Unity in Diversity, Memlektik til – etnosaralyq qatynas tili, Salaýatty sana, Jomart jan, Birtutas qoǵam: kelisim jáne senim, Eldesý jáne tatýlasý, Jańa tolqyn and Tamyrlas*.

141. The Assembly's legal and political role is thus enshrined in the Constitution and a special act, while its institutional mechanisms, including for the development of the institution of ethno-mediation, effectively promote the peaceful coexistence of ethnic groups and prevent and eliminate ethnic tensions and conflicts.

## V. Article 3

### Prohibition of segregation

142. Constitutional provisions (see sect. II) preclude the introduction or justification of racial segregation policies.

143. Kazakhstan does not allow segregation in any domain. Children from ethnic minorities have equal access to preschool, school and higher education (see sect. VII on art. 5). In medical establishments, the principle of non-discrimination is applied and complaints are considered without regard to ethnicity. Access to State housing development programmes and social benefits is provided to all citizens on equal terms, regardless of ethnicity or origin.

144. To prevent the possible exclusion of ethnic groups, programmes to promote trust and inter-ethnic harmony are being implemented. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and its community organizations (including elders' councils and mothers' councils, the Jastary Assembly, "Jomart jan" centres and friendship houses) organize cultural, social and educational projects aimed at involving members of ethnic minorities in public life.

145. As part of ethno-mediation efforts (see sect. IV, art. 2), more than 1,000 meetings and dialogue-based forums are held every year to discuss the prevention of community and inter-ethnic conflicts. A particular emphasis is placed on working with youth and vulnerable groups to foster values of mutual respect and a common civic identity.

146. National policy is guided by the article 3 of the Convention and takes into account the recommendations of the Committee condemning racial segregation and apartheid. Government agencies systematically monitor the ethno-social situation in the regions in collaboration with the Assembly's expert advisory board and the Bureau of National Statistics (see sect. II). These data are used to develop targeted programmes to strengthen inter-ethnic harmony.

147. Kazakhstan fulfils its obligations under article 3 of the Convention. Constitutional and legislative guarantees rule out the possibility of segregation in practice, including in the key areas of education, healthcare and housing.

148. Article 83 of the Code on Public Health and the Healthcare System establishes that Kazakh repatriates, refugees, foreign nationals and stateless persons permanently residing in Kazakhstan are entitled to a guaranteed level of free medical care on an equal footing with citizens of Kazakhstan. In addition, Kazakh repatriates, refugees and asylum-seekers, foreign nationals and stateless persons present in Kazakhstan have the same obligations in the area of healthcare as citizens of Kazakhstan.

149. Foreign nationals and stateless persons temporarily staying in Kazakhstan and asylum-seekers are entitled to a guaranteed level of free medical care for diseases that pose a danger to others. Consideration is also being given to vaccinating such persons in areas affected by infectious disease outbreaks based on public health criteria.

150. In all regions, children of internal migrants receive medical care, including vaccinations, at the medical facility to which they are registered.

151. According to the Electronic Register of Inpatients, during the period 2022–2024 and the first eight months of 2025, 1,195 children (under 18 years of age) of foreign nationals received medical care in Kazakhstan, including 1,097 children who received emergency care.

152. State policy is focused on integration, promotion of inter-ethnic harmony and prevention of the exclusion of ethnic groups through the activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, language policy and social programmes.

## VI. Article 4

### A. Freedom of expression

#### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 15 and 16 of the concluding observations

153. Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to protecting the right to freedom of expression guaranteed under article 20 of the Constitution and key international treaties to which it is a Party.

154. Article 174 of the Criminal Code (Incitement of social, ethnic, tribal, racial, class or religious discord) is aimed at protecting public security and preventing inter-ethnic conflicts. Under amendments to its provisions introduced pursuant to Act No. 349-VI ZRK of 26 June 2020, the term used for fomenting strife was replaced with the term “incitement”, the elements of the offence were clarified and a more differentiated system of punishments was introduced, including a fine of up to 7,000 times the monthly calculation index.

155. According to the Supreme Court, during the period 2022–2024 and the first six months of 2025, there were 86 convictions at courts of first instance and a total of 88 persons were finally convicted. Of those cases, there were 12 convictions at first instance in 2022, with 12 persons finally convicted; 18 convictions at first instance in 2023, with 20 persons finally convicted; 32 convictions at first instance in 2024, with 30 persons finally convicted; and

24 convictions at first instance in the first six months of 2025, with 26 persons finally convicted.

156. A total of 46 cases under article 174 were recorded in 2022, 84 in 2023 and 91 in 2024 (see annex No. 5 to the report).

157. In 2024, 39 per cent of the criminal cases recorded (36) were terminated owing to the absence of intent to incite discord.

158. Between 2022 and 2024, the number of criminal cases recorded increased from 46 to 91, indicating that law enforcement agencies are stepping up their monitoring and response to such cases.

159. In order to prevent the provisions of the article from being used disproportionately, guidelines on conducting comprehensive forensic examinations in cases of incitement to hatred were developed and approved in 2024, and training seminars have been held for investigators, judges and experts.

160. The guidelines are intended for use by linguistic experts carrying out forensic psychological and linguistic assessments.

161. The Forensic Centre of the Ministry of Justice has drawn up a leaflet for law enforcement and specialized agencies on ordering such assessments in relevant cases.

162. Kazakhstan is of the view that criminal offences under article 174 of the Criminal Code pose a threat to society by violating the basic constitutional principle of equality. The direct object of the crime, or the protected interest that the crime harms, is the principle, enshrined in international law and the Constitution, of non-incitement to social, ethnic, tribal, racial, class or religious enmity or discord.

163. The drafting process for all laws and regulations affecting human rights, particularly freedom of expression, includes a compulsory independent legal review in which human rights defenders, including representatives of ethnic minorities, are invited to take part. This ensures that the specific interests and vulnerabilities of such minorities are taken into account and that the potential discriminatory impact of the draft legislation is assessed.

164. The participation of human rights defenders as independent experts guarantees objectivity and a focus on the protection of human rights. Their review covers the compliance of the draft legislation with international standards, the risks of violations of rights (including the rights to freedom of expression and non-discrimination), potential negative consequences for vulnerable groups and the balance between the objectives of regulating and protecting fundamental rights.

165. The State thus ensures a balanced approach, preventing the dissemination of hate speech and incitement to discrimination on the one hand while, on the other, ensuring that article 174 is not applied disproportionately to human rights defenders, journalists and representatives of ethnic minorities.

166. The Media Act sets out clear and exhaustive grounds for suspending or terminating the activities of media outlets. Article 23 of the Act provides that such grounds are limited to cases of propaganda inciting the violent overthrow of the constitutional order, terrorism and extremism, incitement of inter-ethnic and interfaith discord and propaganda promoting a cult of cruelty and drug use and other actions that pose a threat to public security.

167. The decision to suspend or terminate the activities of a media outlet is taken exclusively by a court or the owner, which precludes the arbitrary restriction of freedom of expression.

168. The Ministry of Culture and Information implements measures to foster a culture of responsible use of freedom of speech and prevent hate speech. In the period 2023–2025, Astana Media Week, the Central Asian Media Forum and training seminars for journalists were held. More than 50 guidance resources were prepared, the QazNetEtiquette code of ethics was developed and the #Birge information campaign was conducted. Projects aimed at countering discrimination in the media sphere and promoting the values of intercultural dialogue are being implemented.

169. Kazakhstan is taking steps to improve criminal legislation and regulation of the media landscape with a view to striking a balance between protecting public security and guaranteeing freedom of expression.

170. These measures are designed to eliminate disproportionate interference in the activities of the media, human rights defenders and representatives of ethnic minorities, in line with the country's obligations under the Convention.

## **B. Measures to combat hate speech**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 17 and 18 of the concluding observations**

#### **(a)**

171. Kazakhstan has adopted legislative measures aimed at preventing the dissemination of illegal content in the digital environment.

172. The Online Platforms and Online Advertising Act of 10 July 2023 prohibits the posting and dissemination of content containing propaganda for racial, ethnic or religious superiority, xenophobic or discriminatory statements and other information endangering public safety and inter-ethnic harmony.

173. The Office of the Procurator General and national law enforcement agencies systematically monitor the Internet and collaborate and coordinate with online platforms. In cases where illegal content is identified, measures are taken to remove it, and preventive work is carried out with the public.

174. To prevent the escalation of social tensions and the emergence of inter-ethnic incidents, the departmental website of the Office of the Procurator General and the media constantly publish appeals to citizens warning of criminal responsibility for inciting inter-ethnic discord, advocating separatism and distributing false messages.

#### **(b)**

175. To counteract racist hate speech in public statements, the Ministry of Culture and Information has drawn up a number of guidelines for citizens and government agencies.

176. To overcome inter-ethnic hate speech in Kazakhstan, the QazNetEtiquette code of ethics was developed in partnership with international organizations (the MediaNet International Centre for Journalism) and with the financial support of the Kazakhstan office of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. The code of ethics provides a conceptual framework in relation to hate speech and offers brief reminders of how to prevent hostile statements in the form of words, images or other information being addressed at a particular group of people united by a common feature.

177. In order to prevent discrimination against citizens in the education sector and to foster and build up a culture of inter-ethnic tolerance among children and teachers, the Ministry of Culture and Information has drawn up and sent out to all educational establishments a leaflet on promoting a culture of positive inter-ethnic communication and fostering inter-ethnic tolerance among students.

178. The Law Enforcement Agencies Academy under the Office of the Procurator General provides educational programmes on ethno-mediation and preventing the escalation of inter-ethnic conflicts.

#### **(c)**

179. Kazakhstan recognizes the importance of taking a systematic approach to monitoring, preventing and responding to cases of hate speech, including racist hate speech. As part of efforts to follow up on the Committee's concluding observations, measures are being taken to develop a system for collecting and analyzing data on and preventing such cases.

180. The prevention of cases of xenophobia and hate speech in the information space and the matter of liability for such acts are being reviewed. The Ministry of Internal Affairs, together with the State agencies concerned, is currently working on providing a legislative framework for administrative liability for actions that do not constitute a criminal offence but are intentional illegal actions aimed at diminishing the dignity of a person or group of people on grounds of ethnicity, race, language or religion, including on the Internet.

181. Currently, article 174 of the Criminal Code provides for criminal penalties for deliberate actions aimed at inciting ethnic or racial discord, insulting ethnic honour and dignity, or advocating exclusivity, superiority or inferiority on the basis ethnic or racial affiliation, including through the use of media or telecommunications networks.

182. Pursuant to Order of the Minister of Culture and Information No. 20-NQ of 22 January 2025, the Ministry of Culture and Information, together with the organizations that are subordinate to it and NGOs, and taking into account the requests of media circles, approved the plan for developing public media literacy and the skills of media professionals for 2025, which is aimed at the development of specialized journalism, public media literacy and the skills of press secretaries of central and local authorities and members of regional media outlets.

183. The plan includes training sessions for journalists in Kazakh and Russian covering all regions of the country, on subjects including ethical and legal aspects of journalists' professional activities, fact-checking, cybersecurity and other relevant topics. At least 50 journalists from the national and regional media are being trained on a quarterly basis.

184. Special attention is paid to the subject of journalistic ethics. Between 2024 and 2025, major events on the raising of ethical standards in the media were held with the participation of representatives of the Ministry of Culture and Information, the media and NGOs, including a round table on journalists' ethics with the participation of the Minister of Culture and Information, journalists, universities and heads of media conglomerates; a meeting on the protection of journalists' rights in the context of the development of media ethics, held jointly by the Ministry of Culture and Information and the Zhetysu Oblast authorities in Taldykorgan; and a training course for journalists on the legal and ethical aspects of their professional activities.

185. The measures taken were aimed at striking a balance between ensuring freedom of expression and preventing the spread of hate speech and racist hate speech. Kazakhstan reaffirms its readiness to continue its efforts in this regard and to ensure that international organizations are regularly informed about the results achieved.

## C. Prohibition of extremist organizations and measures to combat incitement to violence

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 19 and 20 of the concluding observations

186. Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to article 4 of the Convention and the principle of non-incitement to violence and hostility on racial, ethnic or other discriminatory grounds.

187. Current Kazakh legislation attests to the existence of an extensive system of provisions aimed at countering incitement to violence and discrimination on grounds of race, nationality, ethnicity and descent.

188. The principles underpinning their legal prohibition are enshrined in the Constitution, the Criminal Code and other laws, including the Anti-Extremism Act, the National Security Act and the Media Act.

189. Incitement to discord, participation in the activities of extremist organizations and promotion of intolerance are criminal and administrative offences, as evidenced by the growing number of cases recorded under articles 174, 404 and 405 of the Criminal Code. Enforcement measures include monitoring of the information space, the blocking of extremist content, conflict prevention and cooperation between designated bodies. Overall, the measures in place are assessed as providing a sufficiently effective response.

190. In accordance with the Committee's recommendation, Kazakhstan has taken steps to improve its legislation (see para. 6.1).

191. Kazakh national laws contain a number of provisions explicitly prohibiting incitement to violence and the activities of organizations that incite racial discrimination:

(a) The Constitution (arts. 14 and 20) prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity and origin, and propaganda for racial superiority or a cult of violence and cruelty. The Criminal Code (art. 174) establishes liability for inciting social, ethnic, tribal, racial or religious discord. In the period 2022–2024, 221 criminal cases were registered under article 174 of the Criminal Code. Around 40 per cent of cases are generally dismissed owing to the absence of intent to incite discord, which demonstrates that the courts approach such charges on a case-by-case basis and ensure that the article is not applied disproportionately;

(b) The Anti-Extremism Act provides for the dissolution of associations whose activities are connected with propaganda for racial or ethnic intolerance. Article 404 of the Criminal Code provides that establishing or leading an association proclaiming racial or ethnic intolerance is a crime punishable by between 3 and 7 years' imprisonment. In the period 2022–2024, four criminal cases were opened under article 404 of the Criminal Code (one case in 2022, one in 2023 and two cases in 2024);

(c) Article 405 of the Criminal Code provides that participation in the activities of a prohibited association is a crime punishable by a fine of up to 2,000 times the monthly calculation index or up to 2 years' restriction of liberty or imprisonment, in addition to expulsion for foreign nationals. In 2022, 27 criminal cases were registered under article 405; in 2023, 23 cases; and in 2024, 22 cases. The Code of Administrative Offences (art. 489) supplements this system of measures by establishing liability for participation in unregistered associations and funding of their activities. In the period 2022–2024, 38, 60 and 64 cases were registered each year, respectively.

192. Law enforcement agencies constantly monitor the media and the Internet to identify signs of extremism, racial hostility and incitement to violence. If there are signs of conflict, the police and local authorities hold preventive discussions. If necessary, professional ethnic mediators and negotiators are involved.

193. Kazakhstan has implemented the Committee's recommendations to prohibit incitement to racial and ethnic violence, declare illegal organizations and activities that promote and incite discrimination, and establish criminal and administrative liability for participation in such activities. Furthermore, preventive measures, including ethno-mediation, awareness-raising campaigns and inter-institutional monitoring, are being strengthened in line with article 4 (a)–(c) of the Convention.

## VII. Article 5

### A. The rights to security and protection from violence

#### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 23 and 24 of the concluding observations

(a)

194. Throughout 2021 and thus far in 2025, there have been no cases of ethnic violence against persons belonging to the Dungan community in Zhambyl Oblast, and the inter-ethnic situation has been stable.

195. Designated bodies (local authorities, the procurator's office, the police and the National Security Committee department) work to prevent, detect at an early stage and defuse inter-ethnic problems.

196. Following the events of February 2020, the State adopted a comprehensive inter-agency plan for integration and community development in Korday District, under

which measures are being implemented to improve infrastructure, develop the economy and build trust between ethnic groups.

197. In the period 2021–2025, the procuratorial authorities, local authorities, ethnocultural associations and the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan jointly held more than 3,200 events, including forums, training sessions and dialogues, that were attended by more than 237,000 people overall.

198. In 2025, the Korday District Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan has been providing institutional support for dialogue and preventive work on the ground. According to an opinion survey conducted in Zhambyl Oblast in the period 2023–2024, 87 per cent of residents of the Oblast expressed a positive view of the inter-ethnic situation and 92 per cent of respondents stated that they feel safe regardless of their ethnicity.

**(b)**

199. On 27 April 2021, the specialized inter-district criminal court of Zhambyl Oblast acquitted 1 defendant and convicted 50 others of participation in the mass disorder in Korday District. Nineteen of those convicted were sentenced to imprisonment and 7 to restriction of liberty, while 24 received suspended sentences.

**(c)**

200. Compensation amounting to more than 230 million tenge was paid to the affected families, who also received assistance from NGOs and charitable foundations.

201. More than 30 billion tenge were allocated for the restoration of Korday District: 128 residential buildings were rebuilt and refurbished; 20 commercial facilities were reopened; 92 families were provided with building materials; compensation was provided for the loss of 112 cars and 86 cattle; and more than 500 families were provided with humanitarian assistance.

202. Every victim had the opportunity to file a civil claim for compensation for material and moral damages.

203. Kazakhstan has implemented a set of measures to investigate and legally assess the events of February 2020, ensure justice, compensate the victims and ensure community integration in the long term. Following systematic efforts, the level of trust in Zhambyl Oblast has increased: according to the surveys conducted in 2024, more than 85 per cent of residents believe that the inter-ethnic situation in the region is better than it was in 2020.

## **B. The right of minorities to political participation**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 29 and 30 of the concluding observations**

204. The Constitution and the Civil Service Act establish the principle of the equal right of citizens to access to public service without any discrimination on the basis of origin, sex, race, ethnicity, language, beliefs and other circumstances. Positions are filled exclusively on a competitive basis, taking into account professional competence and individual merit.

205. The requirements for candidates to qualify for public service positions depend only on the responsibilities of the position in question and are established by law.

206. The Civil Service Act of 23 November 2015 provides for the realization of the constitutional right of citizens to universal access to public service, regardless of ethnicity, through an open competition.

207. Furthermore, paragraph 16 of the competition regulations for staff positions (B corps), approved pursuant to Civil Service Affairs Agency Order No. 40 of 21 February 2017, provides that no passing mark is to be set for the State language test, which therefore presents no obstacle to members of non-Kazakh ethnic groups who do not speak the State language.

208. To eliminate bias, the Civil Service Affairs Agency introduced E-Qyzmet, a digital portal, to ensure the transparency of competition procedures. Candidates are assigned an identification number, and a proctoring system is used, which eliminates the “human factor”. The new selection format allows candidates to participate in the competition online from anywhere in the country or from abroad.

209. According to the Civil Service Affairs Agency, members of more than 50 ethnic groups work in the civil service, of whom members of about 40 different ethnic groups (more than 1,500 people) hold managerial positions.

210. As at 1 July 2025, 56.2 per cent of civil servants are women, including 39.1 per cent in managerial positions (44.9 per cent in central bodies and 34.4 per cent in local bodies).

211. Monitoring that takes into consideration the breakdown of the workforce by sex and ethnic group is carried out on a quarterly basis.

212. The Academy of Public Administration under the Office of the President of Kazakhstan has introduced subjects covering diversity, inclusiveness, prevention of discrimination and ethno-mediation into the following master’s and advanced training programmes: Mediation and Conflict Management; Information Policy and Nation-Building; Migration and Demographic Policy; and Effective Communications and Leadership.

213. In the period 2024–2025, seminars on conflict resolution, ethno-mediation and crisis communication strategies were held with the participation of more than 170 civil servants from eight regions. In addition, 43 political appointees to the civil service received training under a programme aimed at producing a new generation of leaders.

214. The Civil Service Affairs Agency conducts awareness-raising campaigns in the media and on social networks to promote the civil service among all ethnic groups. Special projects are being implemented on the 24 KZ television channel (such as the “Elge qyzmet” and “In the Service of the Country” projects), and booklets, webinars and videos on career opportunities in government agencies are being disseminated. Awareness-raising activities for young members of ethnocultural associations are being organized jointly with the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and NGOs.

215. In the last three years, there have been no complaints of discrimination against members of ethnic minorities in connection with entrance into or performance of public service. If received, such complaints are subject to review in accordance with the Code of Administrative Procedure and the regulations for State monitoring of the civil service.

216. To prevent discrimination and ensure a safe environment in the civil service, in 2025, a seminar for ethics officers of central government agencies on ensuring a safe and ethical environment in the civil service was held in cooperation with UNDP and with the participation of 30 public officials.

217. Kazakhstan ensures that members of all ethnic groups and women, including women from ethnic minorities, have equal opportunities for access to public service. The selection and promotion system is grounded in the principles of meritocracy, digitalization and transparency. Moreover, measures are being taken to promote civil service among members of ethnic minorities, expand training programmes, monitor representation and remove possible barriers.

## C. Right to education

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 31 and 32 of the concluding observations

218. In 2024, the Head of State delivered an address entitled “A Just Kazakhstan: Law and Order, Economic Growth and Social Optimism” in which he underscored that the foundation of a just society is the development of human capital.

219. In this connection, the Government implements a systematic policy aimed at ensuring equal, non-discriminatory and inclusive access to all levels of education for every child, regardless of his or her origin or citizenship or the legal status of his or her parents.

220. There is a steady migration inflow into Kazakhstan from Uzbekistan, the Russian Federation, China, Mongolia, Turkmenistan and other countries. Over the previous three years, the country has seen an increase in the number of immigrants, including families with children: 17,425 (including 1,029 children) in 2022; 25,387 (including 1,930 children) in 2023; and 29,282 (including 3,272 children) in 2024. A significant proportion of children arrive with their parents or accompanied by other legal representatives, and there are also cases of arrivals of unaccompanied minors.

221. The legal and regulatory framework governing migration and the protection of migrant children in Kazakhstan is based on the Constitution, the Population Migration Act, the Refugees Act and the Children's Rights Act. Article 12 of the Constitution provides that foreign nationals and stateless persons in the country are to enjoy the rights and freedoms and assume the responsibilities established for citizens unless otherwise provided for by the Constitution, laws and international treaties.

222. Kazakhstan is consistently expanding opportunities for all groups, including children of migrants, refugees, stateless persons and members of ethnic minorities, to receive a high-quality and accessible education.

223. Article 4 of the Children's Rights Act establishes that all children in Kazakhstan have equal rights regardless of their origin, race and ethnicity, social and property status, sex, language, education, religious views, place of residence, state of health and other circumstances relating to the child and his or her parents or other legal representatives.

224. For families seeking asylum, the Refugees Act provides for the protection of refugee children's rights in accordance with the standards of Kazakh law, the reunification of separated families, confidentiality and access to medical care and judicial protection. The protection afforded to children who arrive without parents is specified separately. The Social Code, which was enacted in July 2023, established a system of social guarantees, including separate support measures for vulnerable groups.

225. The country currently has 11,800 preschools attended by more than 1 million children, 470,000 of whom attend State kindergartens and more than 540,000 of whom attend private kindergartens. As a result of systematic efforts, including the opening of new kindergartens and the introduction of modern funding mechanisms, 93.1 per cent of children aged between 2 and 6 years are now enrolled in preschool, and 95 per cent will be by the end of 2025.

226. To further improve accessibility, a plan for the period 2023–2027 has been approved, under which 195 kindergartens with 14,800 places have been opened since the beginning of 2025, and more than 49,000 more places will be created by the end of 2025.

227. In Kazakhstan, all children, regardless of their parents' citizenship and legal status, have equal rights to education.

228. To ensure uniformity in the quality of education provided throughout the country, in 2025, the largest infrastructure modernization programme in the country's history is being implemented, under which 232 new schools with 267,000 places are being built and are scheduled to open.

229. In parallel, a programme to renovate existing buildings is being implemented, under which 245 schools will undergo major repairs in 2025. In addition, more than 1,000 rural schools are being upgraded, and, for 680 of these institutions, more than 1,100 modern specialized classrooms are being purchased.

230. To make learning more accessible and flexible, electronic versions of all school textbooks, with interactive content, have been produced.

231. A particular focus is being placed on supporting ethnic minority students in obtaining post-secondary education. Such students have access to preferential educational loans and 300 differentiated grants, under which the State covers 50 or 75 per cent of the cost of tuition and the student receives a full scholarship.

232. The provision of student housing is no less important to creating conditions conducive to learning. Pursuant to a presidential instruction, the Government has been tasked with creating at least 10,000 places in student halls of residence every year. The systematic efforts

made in this area are already yielding tangible results: since 2018, 251 new halls of residence with 62,000 places have been opened. In 2025, 29 halls of residence with more than 10,000 places will be opened, including the largest hall of residence in the country's history for the Eurasian National University, with 2,656 places, in the capital city.

233. As a result, the problem of the shortage of halls of residence has been solved in almost all regions of the country, with priority given to young people from rural areas and ethnic groups.

234. A modern "student residence" model is being introduced, and the State has been reimbursing the living expenses of students from socially vulnerable groups since 2023.

235. Schoolchildren are receiving careers guidance – with more than 107,000 recipients in 2024 – to orient them towards occupations that are in demand in the labour market. Student scholarships have been increased: since September 2024, payments for undergraduate students have increased by 20 per cent and have reached 75,000 tenge for students on teacher training courses, with further growth to 200 per cent projected by 2029.

236. The National Fund for Children programme has been introduced, under which funds are set aside for all children's education, regardless of social background. By the end of 2024, more than \$880 million had been credited to children's accounts. The new Keleshek savings scheme, to which the State contributes with initial funding in the amount of 60 times the monthly calculation index and a bonus of up to 7 per cent, allows parents to systematically save more than 5 million tenge for education. If a student receives a government grant, the funds accumulated through the Keleshek programme can be put towards housing.

237. To integrate Kazakh education into the international educational space and ensure equal access to high-quality educational programmes, 24 branches of foreign universities, including Cardiff, Coventry and Woosong Universities and Anhalt University of Applied Sciences, operate in the country, with programmes in English, Russian and Kazakh available. Higher education institutions are opening new educational programmes, including in artificial intelligence, cybersecurity and engineering.

238. Ninety-five universities received free access to the Coursera platform, and Kazakhstan won the platform's prestigious international award. As a result, students have created 119 artificial intelligence agents that are currently in the testing phase, with another 395 in development. To support this ambitious task, a supercomputer cluster with a capacity of 42 petaflops is being created at Nazarbayev University, the Eurasian National University, Satbayev University and Al-Farabi Kazakh National University. Courses in artificial intelligence have become compulsory at all universities. Twenty universities have opened 25 new educational programmes in artificial intelligence, machine learning and cybersecurity.

239. Furthermore, measures to protect children's rights are being strengthened: the number of specialists in guardianship agencies has almost tripled, from 303 to 896, enabling the provision of timely and professional assistance to families. The KiVa and DosbollIKE anti-bullying programmes are being implemented at schools to tackle bullying. A safe physical environment is being created: 98 per cent of schools are equipped with turnstiles, 97 per cent have licensed security guards, 96 per cent have alarm buttons and 81 per cent are connected to police operations centres.

240. In terms of children's leisure time, the country is actively developing supplementary education, which 2,142 organizations currently provide to 3.3 million children, or 87.2 per cent of the total child population, with plans to increase this figure to 90 per cent by the end of 2025. In the summer of 2024, 3.2 million children, including 500,000 children from socially vulnerable groups, were provided with organized recreational activities.

241. A core principle of State educational policy is inclusiveness. The necessary conditions for ensuring that children with special educational needs feel at ease have been put in place at 90 per cent of schools, and 85 per cent of such children receive appropriate support. These efforts are being supported with the development of a network of 508 specialized schools and 121 support rooms, and with the introduction of new staff positions, such as teaching assistants and special education teachers. In the future, the Government plans to establish the National Centre for Continuous Inclusive Education and to draft a bill on comprehensive support for children with special educational needs.

242. Kazakhstan is thus acting on the Committee's recommendations by ensuring that all children, regardless of their ethnicity or legal status, enjoy equal educational opportunities and conditions, and is implementing targeted measures to support members of ethnic minorities at all levels of education, from preschool to higher education.

## D. Minority languages

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 33 and 34 of the concluding observations

243. In Kazakhstan, the equal rights of all children to education in their native language are guaranteed by the Constitution and by law (Constitution, art. 19; and Education Act, arts. 8 and 9).

244. In addition, article 3-1 of the Languages of Kazakhstan Act states that the primary purpose of legislation on languages is to regulate the legal framework for the use of languages in the country. Article 3-2 of the same Act sets out the goals of State regulation in this area, including to ensure respect for all the languages of the people of Kazakhstan, expand the use of Kazakh and create conditions for the study and development of the languages of ethnic groups. These principles are reflected in article 3-3 of the Act, which affirms citizens' right to freely use the languages of the people of Kazakhstan.

245. The preschool education system of Kazakhstan includes over 11,000 institutions providing access to education, meals and learning materials free of charge to all children, including the children of migrants, refugees and stateless persons.

246. Kazakhstan has put in place a comprehensive framework to realize the right of children from ethnic minorities to education in their native language. These measures serve to preserve the country's linguistic and cultural diversity and strengthen inter-ethnic harmony and national unity. The right to be taught in one's native language, which is enshrined in the Constitution, is upheld in practice in preschool, general secondary and supplementary education, including extracurricular activities.

247. In 2024, more than 14,000 children were learning their native languages in kindergartens and at weekend schools.

248. For instance, education for preschool-age children is provided in Uighur at 12 preschools in Zhetysu and Almaty Oblasts and in Uzbek at 5 preschools in Turkistan Oblast.

249. In the 2022/23 school year, Kazakhstan had 6,909 general education schools (compared with 6,957 in 2020 and 6,941 in 2021). Of these schools, 3,743 (54.2 per cent) had Kazakh as the language of instruction, 1,055 (15.3 per cent) had Russian as the language of instruction, 2,106 schools (30.5 per cent) had mixed-language instruction and 5 schools (0.07 per cent) had Uighur as the language of instruction. Total student enrolment in these schools stood at 3,484,139, of whom 2,307,960 (66.2 per cent) were taught in Kazakh, 1,077,915 (31.0 per cent) in Russian and 98,264 (2.8 per cent) in other languages. In the 2020/21 school year, total student enrolment stood at 3,368,702, of whom 2,223,455 (66 per cent) were taught in Kazakh, 1,041,909 (30.9 per cent) in Russian and 103,338 (3.1 per cent) in Uighur, Uzbek or Tajik. This shows that the number of children taught in Kazakh, as well as in Uighur, Uzbek and Tajik, is growing each year.

250. Education in Tajik is provided at 11 mixed-language schools in Turkistan Oblast, where Tajik is taught as a subject. Following meetings between the Ministry of Education and the Embassy of Tajikistan in 2023 and 2024, a working group was set up to translate Kazakh school textbooks into Tajik for Kazakh citizens of Tajik descent.

251. Uzbek is the language of instruction at 141 schools in Turkistan Oblast and Shymkent, where Uzbek classes are offered. Instruction is provided in Uighur at six dual-language schools in Almaty and Almaty Oblast.

252. Under Order No. 500 of 8 November 2012 of the Minister of Education and Science approving model curricula, schools teaching in Uzbek, Uighur or Tajik follow curricula that

include the study of students' native language as a separate subject, alongside other subjects taught in that language, at all levels (primary, basic secondary and general secondary).

253. Each year, the Ministry of Education publishes over 150,000 textbooks in the languages of ethnic minorities. In 2024, through a State procurement process, professional development courses were run to develop the subject-specific language skills of teachers of Uzbek language and literature (for 25 teachers) and the subject expertise of teachers of Uighur language and literature (for 25 teachers).

254. The activities planned for 2025 include courses on content and language integrated learning (CLIL) methodology in primary education (for 100 teachers) and on developing functional literacy through Uzbek language and literature classes (75 teachers) and continued Uighur language and literature courses for an additional 25 teachers.

255. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and ethnocultural associations are actively involved in educational work. In 2023, more than 250 events were held, reaching around 50,000 children. Across all regions, there are Qoğamdyq Kelisim institutions and 32 friendship houses, where each year over 20,000 children attend clubs to study the language, history and culture of their ethnic groups.

256. Plans for the period 2025–2027 include training more than 1,000 new teachers, revising at least 70 per cent of textbooks, opening preschool playgroups for 3,000 children and holding more than 500 cultural and educational events.

257. Kazakhstan thus not only ensures access to education in students' native languages but also systematically expands these opportunities, implementing the recommendations of international bodies and developing an inclusive education system responsive to the country's cultural and linguistic diversity.

## **E. Rights of Roma**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 25 and 26 of the concluding observations**

258. The official publication *Population by Ethnicity* of the Bureau of National Statistics includes data on the Roma (Gypsy) population, disaggregated by region and sex. In addition, since 2022, national-level data on the Roma population disaggregated by gender have been published. In 2024, a Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey – an international household survey programme developed by the United Nations Children's Fund – was carried out to gather data under key indicators for assessing the situation of children and women. As part of the survey, women were able to self-identify their ethnicity.

259. According to data from the Bureau of National Statistics, Kazakhstan has about 4,400 Roma residents, representing less than 0.03 per cent of the total population. Members of the community live in almost all regions, including major cities.

260. Roma ethnocultural associations are active in Almaty (Roma, since 2010) and in Aktobe Oblast (Gypsy Diaspora, since 2011) as part of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. These associations currently participate in the system of public councils and attend meetings of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, the mothers' council and the Jastar Assembly, ensuring that they are in regular dialogue with central and local authorities.

261. Together with State bodies, they carry out social and cultural projects. These include the annual "Road to School" charity events, the provision of legal advice on obtaining identity documents and meetings on vocational education and employment. As a result, the proportion of school graduates enrolling in vocational and higher education institutions has been increasing each year, and the number of young people in work continues to grow.

262. Gypsy Diaspora has a council of elders, and the Desh Folk Song and Dance Ensemble, consisting of 11 performers, actively participates in the cultural events of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, including the annual Gypsy song and dance festival.

263. Roma ethnocultural associations play an active role in the cultural, social and public life of the regions. They hold youth events, participate in the Assembly's programmes to foster inter-ethnic harmony and carry out educational and cultural initiatives.

264. Kazakhstan has created an environment that supports the work of artistic troupes, clubs and native-language study classes, enabling Roma to preserve their cultural identity while integrating into the wider cultural environment of Kazakhstan.

265. Kazakhstan is taking steps to create conditions for dialogue between Roma communities and the authorities and to include them in the Assembly's activities. These steps are aimed at implementing the Committee's recommendations, taking into account the principles of equality, inclusivity and interculturalism.

## F. Rights of migrant workers

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 35 and 36 of the concluding observations

266. Kazakhstan takes consistent measures to prevent violations of the labour rights of migrants. In 2024, labour inspection functions were strengthened through the establishment of the State Labour Inspection Committee under the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. Its 321 inspectors monitor companies, including in sectors with high concentrations of foreign workers, such as construction, agriculture and services.

267. In 2023 and 2024, there were 326 inspections of employers that hire migrant workers. These uncovered 194 violations of legislation, and fines totalling over 5.5 million tenge were imposed. Following the inspections, employers were issued directives to improve working and living conditions.

268. All migrant workers, including illegal and undocumented migrant workers, have the right to file a complaint with the labour inspectorate, the procurator's office or the courts (Labour Code, art. 22). In the period 2022–2024, 929 communications relating to violations of the labour rights of foreign nationals were registered. They are guaranteed free legal assistance, provided with support from NGOs and international organizations, including from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), OSCE and UNDP.

269. Since early 2024, over 800 on-site visits have been conducted, reaching approximately 10,000 workers, along with over 1,000 campaigns in the media and on social networks. Information on the rights of migrants is published in Kazakh, Russian and English.

270. The Ministry of Health guarantees access to emergency medical care, vaccinations and preventive services for migrants, including women and children. Over the period 2022–2025, 155 foreign nationals received vaccinations based on public health risk factors in nine regions of the country.

271. Under article 8 of the Education Act, all children in Kazakhstan, including the children of migrants and stateless persons, have equal rights to access education.

272. Kazakhstan cooperates with international bodies on the protection of migrant workers. In June 2025, representatives of Kazakhstan participated in regional OSCE and Prague Process exercises on combating trafficking in persons and labour exploitation, alongside experts from seven Central Asian countries and Türkiye.

273. Kazakhstan takes comprehensive measures to prevent abuses of migrant workers and to ensure their equal access to minimum social standards. This includes strengthening labour inspections, providing access to legal protection and medical services, ensuring the equal right of the children of migrants to education, supporting international students and maintaining systematic cooperation with international partners.

## G. Rights of refugees and asylum-seekers

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 39 and 40 of the concluding observations

#### (a)

274. Kazakhstan is a Party to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the 1967 Protocol thereto. In 2009, Kazakhstan adopted the Refugees Act, which establishes the right to seek protection and the principle of non-refoulement (1951 Convention, art. 33).

275. On 1 January 2022, the functions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs regarding migration and refugee issues – except for functions and powers relating to preventing illegal immigration, readmitting illegal immigrants, issuing exit and entry visas and documenting the population and citizenship – were transferred to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection.

276. Transferring these functions to the authority responsible for social policy demonstrates the resolve of Kazakhstan to implement the recommendations of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and United Nations human rights treaty bodies for a more humane migration policy.

277. Assigning institutional responsibility for refugee issues to the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection strengthens guarantees of access to education, healthcare and employment for asylum-seekers. The reform serves to strengthen applicants' trust, ensures that applications are considered more transparently and fairly in accordance with the principle of non-refoulement and reaffirms the commitment of Kazakhstan to human rights.

278. Under Order No. 118 of 7 April 2022 of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection, approval was given to the rules for the registration and consideration of applications for refugee status, under which an application is to be registered on the day it is submitted, with a decision rendered within three months or within one year in special cases.

279. All applications are processed without discrimination based on national or ethnic origin. Neither the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection nor the Border Service of the National Security Committee has received any complaints concerning violations of the principle of non-refoulement.

280. From 2022 to 2025, a total of 37 refugees have been registered in Kazakhstan: 34 from Afghanistan, 2 from Ukraine and 1 from Syria.

#### (b)

281. At all State border crossing points, asylum-seekers have the possibility of submitting a written application at the migration control point. Where no such point exists, the application must be submitted on the same day to a unit of the Border Service. The asylum-seeker, together with the application, is then referred to the local authority for employment matters, which registers the application and issues a certificate.

282. Where no State border crossing point exists, an asylum-seeker who is forced to cross the border illegally must apply to the local authority for employment matters within 24 hours of the crossing. To improve these procedures, the competent State body is considering the possibility of amending Order No. 118 of 7 April 2022 of the Minister of Labour and Social Protection approving the rules for registering and considering applications for refugee status.

283. In addition, to ensure compliance with international standards, the procedure for cooperation among the competent State bodies with regard to registering and considering applications for refugee status is currently being further improved.

#### (c)

284. In accordance with the Refugees Act and the international obligations of Kazakhstan, persons whose applications have been rejected but who cannot return to their country of origin for objective reasons may remain temporarily in Kazakhstan. In practice, the principle

of non-refoulement is consistently upheld to ensure that persons are not expelled to countries where they may be in danger.

285. Such persons are granted access to social and economic rights, including medical assistance within the framework of the guaranteed level of free medical assistance, and the compulsory social and health insurance system (Code on Public Health and the Healthcare System, art. 8); free emergency treatment for diseases that pose a risk to others; and, for children, the right to education regardless of the nationality or the legal status of their parents (Education Act, art. 8).

**(d)**

286. Under current legislation, refugee status is granted for a period of one year, renewable annually. There is currently no provision for granting the status for a period of at least three years. However, the matter is under discussion, in dialogue with UNHCR and international partners, with a view to further improving national legislation.

287. Kazakhstan upholds its international obligations to protect the rights of refugees, ensuring that the principle of non-refoulement is observed; that applications can be filed at all border points; that all asylum-seekers, including those whose applications have been rejected, have access to medical and educational assistance; and that the question of extending the duration of refugee status is discussed.

## **H. Stateless persons**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 41 and 42 of the concluding observations**

**(a)**

288. Kazakhstan is taking consistent measures to identify and provide documents to stateless persons in accordance with its international obligations.

289. Between September 2020 and May 2022, as part of an identification campaign carried out with the support of UNHCR and the NGOs Sana Sezim and the Kazakhstan Bureau for Human Rights, 8,822 persons without identity documents were detected. Of these, 5,618 persons confirmed that they were Kazakh citizens, and 3,204 were provided with documents.

290. From July to December 2024, an additional 835 undocumented persons were detected. Of these, 715 were recognized as citizens of Kazakhstan and were issued with identity documents, 90 received identification documents for stateless persons, and the cases of 35 persons remain under review.

291. From 2022 to the end of August 2025, a total of 29,449 stateless persons, including 1,154 children under 18 years of age, were registered.

292. The procedure for determining statelessness is regulated by Order No. 607 of 20 September 2020 of the Minister of Internal Affairs. The application review period has been reduced to 30 days. The Migration Police information system is currently being upgraded to provide automated recording of persons of undetermined status, taking into account sex, age, ethnic origin and place of residence.

**(b)**

#### *Revising the Citizenship Act to prevent statelessness*

293. Article 10 of the Constitution of Kazakhstan provides that no Kazakh citizen may be deprived of citizenship, except as determined by a court in cases involving terrorism or serious harm to State interests.

294. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has prepared a set of proposals to amend the Citizenship Act with a view to preventing statelessness among children.

295. The proposals envisage, in particular, that the following should automatically be recognized as Kazakh citizens: children born abroad to at least one Kazakh citizen; children born in Kazakhstan to foreign parents, where the parents are unable to pass on their nationality to the child; children with one parent who is a Kazakh citizen, if the other parent is deceased, missing or has been deprived of parental rights; children placed under the guardianship of Kazakh citizens if their parents' country does not grant them nationality; and children under 14 years of age upon establishment of paternity, where the mother is stateless and the father is a Kazakh citizen.

**(c)**

296. The national action plan for the Global Action Plan to End Statelessness 2014–2024 is being implemented through an inter-agency effort involving the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection and the National Security Committee, with support from UNHCR and NGOs.

297. In 2019, article 187 of the Marriage and Family Code was amended to allow birth registration for mothers without identity documents. The Ministry of Justice has drafted amendments to provide for the registration of births outside medical facilities to undocumented mothers. The Ministry of Internal Affairs has drawn up proposals to amend the Citizenship Act to prevent statelessness among orphaned and abandoned children.

298. Since 2014, with UNHCR support, Kazakhstan has detected more than 30,000 stateless persons, half of whom have since acquired Kazakh citizenship. The Ashgabat Declaration on Ending Statelessness in Central Asia of 8 November 2024 recognizes significant achievements in the region, including the contribution made by Kazakhstan to addressing this issue.

**(d)**

299. The question of accession by Kazakhstan to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness has been considered at the inter-agency level, with the participation of relevant State bodies, including law enforcement agencies, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection, the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Economic Affairs.

300. The existing legislation of Kazakhstan already ensures a high level of protection for the rights of stateless persons. Under article 12 of the Constitution and the Act on the Legal Status of Aliens, stateless persons enjoy all the rights and freedoms granted to citizens of Kazakhstan, except the rights to vote, serve in the military, hold public office and work for law enforcement agencies. Article 29 of the Act provides that stateless persons are granted all the fundamental rights provided for by international standards.

301. As at 1 September 2025, about 7,000 stateless persons are living in Kazakhstan. They have the right to apply for citizenship through the general procedure, and each application is considered individually.

302. Decisions on granting citizenship are taken by the President of Kazakhstan in accordance with the Constitution.

303. Over the past five years, more than 7,000 stateless persons have been granted citizenship of Kazakhstan: 1,655 in 2020, 1,808 in 2021, 1,374 in 2022, 1,542 in 2023, 676 in 2024 and 396 in 2025 as at 1 September.

304. In addition, Kazakhstan is already implementing the 1957 Convention on the Nationality of Married Women, which it ratified in 1999. In the past five years, about 10,000 persons have obtained citizenship under a simplified procedure.

305. The existing legislation of Kazakhstan also contains safeguards to ensure that children do not become stateless.

306. Article 14 of the Citizenship Act thus provides that any child born in Kazakhstan to stateless parents with a permanent place of residence is automatically recognized as a Kazakh

citizen. Similarly, article 3 of the Act establishes the principle that a child born in Kazakhstan who does not hold citizenship of a foreign State is recognized as a citizen of Kazakhstan.

307. In 2025, article 2-1 of the Citizenship Act was amended to include the prevention and reduction of statelessness among the main objectives and principles of State policy in this area.

308. Nevertheless, when examining the matter of ratifying the conventions in question, significant legal and political risks were identified. In particular, international practice shows that States Parties, including several Commonwealth of Independent States countries, have come under considerable pressure from international NGOs to completely naturalize all stateless persons. Conducting a mass campaign to grant citizenship to all stateless persons without exception could lead to a limitation of the discretionary powers of the Head of State as provided for in the Constitution of Kazakhstan and violate the principle of sovereignty in matters of nationality.

309. Taking into account the above and the outcomes of inter-agency analysis, the accession of Kazakhstan to the 1954 Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness appears premature at the current time.

310. Nevertheless, as part of the global campaign to end statelessness, consultations with international organizations and NGOs are ongoing, and the matter remains on the State policy agenda.

## **I. Trafficking in persons**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 37 and 38 of the concluding observations**

311. On 5 July 2024, Kazakhstan adopted its first dedicated law on combating trafficking in persons, drafted at the President's instruction: the Act on Combating Trafficking in Persons.

312. The law provides for the harmonization of certain definitions with international standards, the introduction of new concepts, the determination of the competent authorities and their rights and responsibilities, the determination of the actors involved in combating trafficking in persons and their powers, clarification of the role of NGOs, guarantees of the rights of victims of trafficking, including minors and foreign nationals, the introduction of risk assessment and a victim referral procedure and a basis for international cooperation. Its purpose is to bring national legislation into line with international standards and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.

313. The law was drafted with the participation of more than 50 experts, including the Ombudsman, the Secretary of the Human Rights Commission, representatives of State bodies, international organizations (IOM, the United Nations and OSCE) and NGOs and civil society organizations, as well as academics from scholarly research institutes, national higher education institutions and departmental higher education institutions. The law introduces a new category of offences into the Criminal Code, namely offences related to trafficking in persons, and a new concept, "other sexual services", which include those provided remotely in real time over the Internet. The law also establishes criminal liability for the following acts:

- Inducing persons, including minors, to provide other sexual services, as well as procurement for these purposes
- Promoting and/or advertising prostitution or other sexual services for the purpose of involving persons in such activities, as well as for the purpose of procurement
- Organizing or maintaining premises for prostitution or the provision of other sexual services, and procurement using telecommunication networks, including the Internet

314. These measures make it possible to hold organizers accountable under articles 134, 308 and 309 of the Criminal Code and article 450 of the Code of Administrative Offences.

315. The law also establishes criminal liability for obtaining prostitution services, or other services of a sexual nature, from a person known to be a minor. This makes it possible to hold perpetrators accountable under article 122 of the Criminal Code. Reconciliation can no longer be used to avoid criminal liability for offences involving trafficking in persons. Under the Code of Administrative Offences, officials of medical establishments and child protection institutions are now liable if they fail to inform a tutorship or guardianship body and the procurator's office of cases of abandoned newborn children or the admission or transfer of orphaned children and children deprived of parental care.

316. The internal affairs bodies ensure that all cases of trafficking in persons, including those involving transnational networks, are effectively investigated by experienced officers using thorough pretrial investigation methods, such as forming inter-agency groups and cooperating with organizations.

317. So far in 2025, 78 criminal cases involving trafficking-related offences have been registered, namely:

- 4 cases under article 116 of the Criminal Code (Trafficking in organs).
- 6 cases under article 128 of the Criminal Code (Trafficking in persons).
- 4 cases under article 134 of the Criminal Code (Involvement of a minor in prostitution).
- 6 cases under article 135 of the Criminal Code (Trafficking in minors).
- 4 cases under article 308 of the Criminal Code (Involvement of a person in prostitution).
- 54 cases under article 309 of the Criminal Code (Organizing or maintaining premises for prostitution or procurement). In addition, there was 1 case concerning the creation and leadership of an organized group, as well as participation in that group (Criminal Code, art. 262).

## VIII. Article 6

### A. The Convention in domestic law

#### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 9 and 10 of the concluding observations

318. Kazakhstan is aligned with the Committee's position regarding the direct application of the Convention in the domestic legal system.

319. In accordance with article 4 of the Constitution, existing Kazakh law consists of the provisions of the Constitution, the laws and regulations corresponding to them, the country's international treaty and other obligations and the regulatory decisions of the Constitutional Court and the Supreme Court.

320. Consequently, the provisions of the Convention are already part of national legislation and are applied when cases are considered.

321. To ensure that the courts apply the provisions of international treaties, including the Convention, the Supreme Court adopted Regulatory Decision No. 1 on 10 July 2008 on the application of provisions of international treaties to which Kazakhstan is a Party, which was amended on 28 November 2024.

322. This decision gives precedence to international treaties over national laws and explains how they are to be applied by the courts.

323. International treaties play a key role in ensuring judicial protection of the rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens and organizations. Accordingly, where necessary, courts must, within the jurisdiction of Kazakhstan, be guided by the rules of international law.

324. In January 2016, building on these provisions, the Supreme Court sent a letter to local courts (No. 6001-16-3-1-7/36) highlighting the need to apply the provisions of international treaties directly and to refer to them explicitly in court decisions. Arrangements have been made for the systematic recording and monitoring of practice.

325. Over the period 2022–2025, the courts have adopted six judicial decisions making reference to the Convention (see annex No. 6 to the present report).

326. In total, from 2022 to mid-2025, the courts rendered about 10,000 judicial decisions referring to international treaties ratified by Kazakhstan, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters, adopted at Aarhus on 25 June 1998.

327. Kazakhstan ensures that judges, lawyers and other relevant officials undergo systematic training on the provisions of the Convention.

328. From 2016 to 2024, the Academy of Justice (now under the Supreme Judicial Council) held about 100 training events, in which more than 3,000 judges participated, on the international obligations of Kazakhstan with regard to the judicial protection of human rights.

329. To implement the Committee's recommendations and provide systematic training for professionals, the Academy of Public Administration under the Office of the President has been steadily expanding its training programmes for civil servants to include courses on diversity, inclusivity and the prevention of discrimination.

330. In 2025, content on the principles of the Convention was posted on “Lifelong learning | APA KZ”, an educational channel on the Telegram messaging platform, reaching a wide audience (over 8,000 subscribers). These measures help to integrate international standards into the day-to-day work of civil servants.

331. The presidium of the National Bar Association provides regular advanced training for lawyers, which requires them to study international standards, including the provisions of the Convention. According to the Ministry of Justice, lawyers receive systematic training on the Convention as part of their legal education.

332. As part of specialized master's programmes, research and teaching master's programmes and distance-learning master's programmes, the Academy of Law Enforcement Agencies under the Office of the Procurator General offers a course entitled “Alternative methods of mediation and restorative justice in procedural activities”, which includes the study of ethno-mediation.

333. At educational institutions subordinate to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, thematic lectures and seminars are held to strengthen ideas of inter-ethnic harmony and unity, bringing together representatives of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and voluntary organizations. Projects are actively being implemented jointly with the Assembly and voluntary organizations.

334. Vocational training, retraining and advanced training for law enforcement agencies cover topics focused on preventing ethnic conflicts, developing skills for respectful communication in a multi-ethnic environment, ensuring adherence to the principles of equality and the prohibition of discrimination based on ethnicity and maintaining inter-ethnic harmony and social stability.

335. National legislation and judicial practice thus provide a legal basis for the application of the Convention by the courts, and systematic measures are taken to train judges, lawyers, State officials and other professionals on its provisions.

336. Kazakhstan confirms its readiness to further expand the practice of applying the Convention in national courts and strengthen the capacity of professionals in this field.

## B. Access to justice and protection

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 43 and 44 of the concluding observations

337. Kazakhstan acknowledges the Committee's concern about the low number of complaints and court decisions on racial discrimination and reaffirms its commitment to ensuring effective access to justice for all citizens and persons in its territory.

338. The practical implementation of the Convention is ensured through:

- The judicial system, with the courts applying the provisions of the Convention when interpreting rules of law and considering complaints related to discrimination (see para. 8.1)
- The activities of the National Human Rights Centre, which accepts complaints from citizens, provides clarification on rights and documents violations of the principle of equality
- The system of free legal assistance, which guarantees access to lawyers and legal advisers for victims of discrimination
- Capacity-building, with mandatory courses on international law
- International mechanisms, with Kazakhstan recognizing the right of citizens to submit individual communications to the United Nations treaty bodies

339. Under article 13 (3) of the Constitution, everyone is guaranteed the right to receive qualified legal assistance. Legal assistance is provided free of charge where required by law.

340. To raise public awareness, including among members of ethnic minorities, about the right to protection from racial discrimination and the legal remedies available, regular information campaigns are conducted to explain what constitutes racial discrimination and how discriminatory practices will not be tolerated; resources on the right to free legal assistance, including consultations, defence and representation in court, are widely disseminated; digital platforms (eGov, e-Otinish and the websites of State bodies) are used to provide information in accessible languages; and thematic meetings are held with ethnocultural associations and NGOs.

341. The Legal Information Service, in operation since January 2011, offers free advice and accepts communications from citizens, including complaints concerning the conduct of judicial enforcement officers. For convenience, online services are available: WhatsApp, the “119Kenesbot” Telegram bot and the “Get Legal Advice” feature on the Adilet portal.

342. Since its establishment, the Legal Information Service has provided more than 1.6 million consultations, with a satisfaction rate exceeding 95 per cent in 2022 and 2023.

343. To serve residents of villages and small towns, 210 law offices have been set up, providing access to the Adilet legal information system, e-Otinish and the Open Laws and Regulations portal. In 2024 and 2025, campaigns such as “People’s Lawyer”, “Justice System Advice” and “Free Legal Assistance Days” have been carried out, benefiting more than 1,700 citizens.

344. The mechanism for the consideration of complaints is based on the principles of confidentiality and protection of complainants. Complaints are accepted regardless of the complainant’s ethnic or other affiliation.

345. Under the Code of Administrative Procedure, complainants may take part in administrative proceedings in their native language or a language in which they are proficient and use the services of an interpreter (Code of Administrative Procedure, Act No. 350-VI of 29 June 2020, art. 22).

346. All medical establishments have patient support systems based on the principle of immediate response, ensuring that complaints are handled without any discrimination. The Ministry of Health works with the World Health Organization on protecting the health of refugees and migrants and removing obstacles to medical care.

347. Alongside these measures, comprehensive training and professional development are provided for law enforcement officials. All internal affairs officers receive training on international standards on human rights, non-discrimination and ethics. Seminars, workshops and lectures are organized with international experts, including representatives of OSCE, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and other organizations. A system is being introduced to assess the effectiveness of police officers in responding to complaints, including those concerning discrimination, and measures are in place to prevent reprisals against persons who report racial discrimination. There are internal regulations and disciplinary procedures to protect complainants from retaliation, coercion and secondary victimization. Communications and complaints are logged in centralized databases to track trends and ensure timely responses.

348. With regard to the provision of accurate translations of laws in the main languages used in Kazakhstan, in accordance with article 7 of the Constitution, Kazakh is the State language in Kazakhstan. In State organizations and local authorities, Russian is used officially alongside Kazakh.

349. Moreover, in accordance with article 4 of the Languages of Kazakhstan Act, the State language is used for public administration, legislation, judicial proceedings and official record-keeping, and applies across all spheres of public life throughout the entire country. Every citizen of Kazakhstan has a duty to master the State language, which is a key factor in unifying the people of Kazakhstan.

350. In Kazakhstan, there is no legislative division of the languages of ethnic groups into those that are “main” languages and those that are not, nor are they divided on the basis of ethnicity. In 2022, a sociological and analytical survey on language policy in Kazakhstan, conducted by NewGroup.kz, a limited liability partnership, found that 0.4 per cent of members of other ethnic groups reported Kazakh as their native language, compared with 1 per cent in 2020 and 1.2 per cent in 2021. The share of the population (regardless of ethnicity) proficient in Kazakh and Russian amounted to more than 80 per cent and 90 per cent, respectively. Thus, irrespective of ethnic background, the overwhelming majority of citizens of Kazakhstan regard Kazakh and Russian, spoken by more than 80 per cent of the population, as the main languages.

351. Under article 37 of the Legal Instruments Act, all laws and regulations must be officially published in the Adilet reference database in Kazakh and Russian, and the Constitution as well as the key codes – the Criminal Code, the Civil Code and the Social Code – have also been translated into English.

352. To prevent errors in translations of laws and regulations and make legislation more accessible, article 33 of the Legal Instruments Act provides for an expert linguistic review of draft legislative acts focused on ensuring the authenticity of the Kazakh and Russian texts.

353. Pursuant to Act No. 157-VIII of 13 January 2025, amendments were introduced to the Languages of Kazakhstan Act of 1997, providing for a definition of the term “authentic translation of a text”.

354. Kazakhstan is thus taking comprehensive measures to ensure that members of ethnic minorities and all population groups are aware of their rights and available remedies and have access to free legal assistance and that their complaints of discrimination are effectively considered by the courts and law enforcement authorities.

## IX. Article 7

### A. Education and culture

#### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 21 and 22 (b) of the concluding observations

355. Kazakhstan views education, culture and information policy as key tools for preventing racial discrimination and strengthening inter-ethnic harmony. In accordance with

article 7 of the Convention, steps are being taken to promote tolerance, respect for human rights and civic identity.

356. Schools and higher education institutions offer courses on human rights and civic education, such as “Human rights and the foundations of democracy”. The Ministry of Education is working to update curricula, with a focus on tolerance and cultural diversity.

357. The model curricula for social sciences and the humanities seek to instil in students the values of unity among the people of Kazakhstan, tolerance towards ethnic groups and civic conduct.

358. At the primary level, for example, students acquire basic knowledge about a stable State, the essential rights and responsibilities of persons, their conduct and moral concepts. They learn about the history of their homeland, the names of the cities and oblasts of Kazakhstan, State symbols and the history of the flag, coat of arms and anthem, along with national traditions, holidays and prominent figures.

359. The subject “Literary reading” plays a key role in introducing younger schoolchildren to the country’s literary heritage. Classes include the study of the genres of folk art and works about the customs and traditions of the ethnic groups of Kazakhstan.

360. To foster civic awareness among younger schoolchildren, primary education curricula have been enriched with local history content, which, at an age-appropriate level, introduces them to fundamental values: the individual, the family, the home region and the homeland.

361. The basic content of “History of Kazakhstan” classes covers the values of the civic unity of the people of Kazakhstan, tolerance towards ethnic communities and civic conduct:

- In the sixth grade, students at general education schools study the topic “One people, one country, one destiny (peoples of my region)”, with the goal of enabling them to describe the history and traditions of the various ethnic groups in their home region
- In the ninth grade, students study the topics “The Kazakh model of inter-ethnic and interfaith harmony” and “The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan”, which addresses the Assembly’s role in strengthening interfaith and inter-ethnic harmony and maintaining internal stability
- In the tenth grade, as part of the subject “World history”, students study the topic “The ethnic map of the world: past and present”, with the goal of explaining ethnic developments in different historical periods using a world map and why it is important to preserve ethnic and cultural diversity in the context of globalization
- In the eleventh grade, as part of a unit on political and legal processes, students explore the concepts of “agrarian policy”, “resettlement policy,” “mono-ethnic composition”, “deportation”, “persons exiled to special settlements”, “multi-ethnic society”, “ethnicity policy”, “internationalism”, “migration”, “returnee”, “diaspora” and “irredenta”

362. One of the objectives of the optional course “Secularism and the basics of religious studies” is to highlight the inter-ethnic and interfaith harmony of Kazakhstan through the lens of secularism, fostering in students a sense of civic responsibility and maturity.

363. The model curriculum for the course “History of inter-ethnic relations” for the eighth grade includes the study of the development of a culture of inter-ethnic communication, which is identified as a key priority of youth education. The curriculum plays an important role in shaping the next generation into citizens who are tolerant and respectful of the values of other ethnic groups.

364. The objectives of this course include identifying the role that the concept of ethnicity plays in a person’s life and its main characteristics and functions and explaining the basic patterns and features of ethnocultural developments in Kazakhstan; exploring the history of inter-ethnic relations; acquainting students with ethnic history, the culture of ethnic groups and their role in shaping the life of society; and identifying the distinctive features of the experience of Kazakhstan in creating a multi-ethnic and multi-faith society.

365. As the history of inter-ethnic relations covers all aspects of the development of ethnic groups at different stages of their existence, there is significant potential for making interdisciplinary connections. These connections draw on the facts, concepts and ideas common to a given ethnic group, fostering students' creative engagement with the learning material and the development of study skills and competencies. The subjects relevant to the content of the course include not only the humanities, such as history and literature, but also subjects in the field of natural sciences and mathematics.

366. Subject teachers thus actively design lesson content that cultivates patriotic feelings and spiritual and moral qualities, promotes civic responsibility among students, enhances their national identity and tolerance, strengthens secular values and builds an ability to communicate in the multi-ethnic environment of Kazakhstan.

367. Since 2024, the “Söz Marjan” Collaboration Fest has been held to enhance students' reading literacy, develop text comprehension skills, improve creative and cognitive skills and familiarize them with media literacy.

368. Professional development courses are organized for education professionals on inclusion and fostering an inter-ethnic culture of communication. Kazakhstan cooperates with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization and OSCE on educational initiatives to advance non-discrimination.

369. Within the higher education system, 10 institutions of higher education have set up student assemblies of the people of Kazakhstan, while 43 have university departments of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan. There are also various youth clubs.

370. In 2014, the Shańyraq Association of Departments of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan was established as a voluntary organization at L.N. Gumilyov Eurasian National University. It brings together Assembly departments of higher education institutions.

371. The Association serves as a key methodological hub that supports the development of educational and training programmes to develop and strengthen the civic identity of Kazakhstan, drawing on experience in cooperating with State bodies and the ethnocultural community.

372. As recommended by the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, new, innovative educational programmes such as “Ethno-political processes in the modern world”, “Ethno-religious trends in State policy”, “Historical memory policy”, “National branding” and “Policy for shaping the nation's genetic code” have been introduced. The Shańyraq Association regularly holds enlarged meetings. Invitations to the meetings are extended to the heads of existing Assembly departments, Assembly members, experts and representatives of voluntary organizations.

373. Systematic awareness-raising activities are under way, including among ethnic groups, to enhance the public's legal literacy regarding inter-ethnic relations. Seminars and round tables are organized, and instruction leaflets, videos and other materials are published, to clarify the concepts of discrimination and tolerance and the legal protection mechanisms available to citizens, including the right to free legal assistance.

374. During the first half of 2025, State bodies coordinated more than 2,000 training and preventive events in such settings as schools, colleges, higher education institutions, workplaces and service sector organizations. More than 500 banners were prepared and displayed, over 10,000 information materials were published, and 15 documentary films and 6 short videos were shown.

## X. National human rights institutions

### Follow-up information relating to paragraphs 13 and 14 of the concluding observations

375. In implementation of the Paris Principles, Kazakhstan has taken measures to strengthen the Office of Ombudsman as an institution. In 2022, article 83-1 was added to the

Constitution, enshrining in law the Office's status as an independent body working to ensure guarantees of State protection of rights and freedoms.

376. On 5 November 2022, building on these constitutional provisions, the Constitutional Act on the Human Rights Commissioner was adopted, incorporating over 50 per cent of the recommendations of the Venice Commission. The Act enshrined the independence of the Ombudsman and established a transparent process for appointments and dismissals and a right to petition the Constitutional Court.

377. Under the new Constitutional Act, the Ombudsman was granted constitutional status, guaranteeing independence and the right to petition the Constitutional Court. The Ombudsman is appointed by the President with the agreement of the Senate, the upper house of Parliament, ensuring transparency and the participation of the legislative branch in the appointment process. The Ombudsman's tenure may be terminated only on clearly specified grounds, such as voluntary resignation, violation of the law or a criminal conviction, which prevents arbitrariness and safeguards institutional independence.

378. Financial and organizational independence is secured through a separate budget line for the allocation of funding for the Office of the Ombudsman and its regional representatives. The unit for preventing all forms of discrimination and improving legislation, established under the National Human Rights Centre in 2024, considers complaints and formulates recommendations for State bodies.

379. The prevention of discrimination, including racial and ethnic discrimination, is addressed through systematic monitoring, on-site activities and the analysis of communications. Citizens' complaints are considered through general procedures, and confirmed cases are reflected in the Ombudsman's annual report.

380. Overall, the number of communications addressed to the Ombudsman has risen, from 2,300 in 2021 to 6,748 in 2024, or by 193 per cent, which reflects increased public trust in the institution.

381. The Ombudsman's regional representatives actively cooperate with civil society through expert councils operating in all regions. The members of these councils are drawn from NGOs, academia and the activist community. In 2025, they have held 38 events focused on the legal protection of citizens, including non-discrimination.

382. The Office of the Ombudsman regularly publishes information about its activities. In 2024 and 2025, it has released over 1,700 news items and 558 articles on rights protection mechanisms, including for protection from discrimination. Recommendations made by the Ombudsman and participants in the national preventive mechanism have been formally incorporated into the legal monitoring of State bodies (through amendments introduced to the Rules on Legal Monitoring pursuant to Ministry of Justice Order No. 1070 of 31 December 2024).

383. In the current year, guidelines on the fundamental rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights have been published on the Ombudsman's official website. This document provides up-to-date information on each human right, including the right to non-discrimination. These guidelines are intended to support the practical application of international standards by State bodies, educational institutions, NGOs and the expert community, serving as a tool for strengthening legal awareness with regard to protection against discrimination.

## **XI. Additional obligations**

### **A. Ratification of other treaties**

#### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 45 of the concluding observations**

384. Kazakhstan is a Party to all the core United Nations human rights treaties except for the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and

Members of Their Families of 1990. Nevertheless, national legislation (the Constitution, the Labour Code and the Population Migration Act) provides for guarantees of the rights of migrant workers.

385. In 2023, an interministerial commission under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs considered the merits of ratifying the Convention. It was noted that its provisions have been partially implemented through national legislation.

386. In addition, the protection of migrant workers is regulated by bilateral agreements. It was also established that ratification of the Convention would require additional budgetary expenditure. Accordingly, the matter remains subject to further examination.

387. Most of the countries that have signed the Convention are countries of origin of migrants, such as Mexico, Morocco and the Philippines. For these countries, the Convention represents an important instrument for protecting their citizens living abroad.

388. However, many developed States have not become Parties to the Convention, as the rights and freedoms guaranteed in their legislation meet the requirements of the Convention and, in many cases, exceed them.

389. Commonwealth of Independent States countries, including those that have ratified the Convention, namely, Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan, are not in a position to fulfil its requirements in practice.

390. The Convention defines the economic, social and cultural rights of migrant workers and members of their families as equal to – and, in many cases, as greater than – those of citizens, which imposes certain obligations on the State.

391. The Convention also provides for the establishment of the Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families to monitor compliance with the provisions of the Convention.

392. The social aspects of becoming a Party to the Convention encompass most of the issues likely to attract considerable public attention.

393. While there are advantages to recognizing the rights of migrant workers to equal treatment, as are already provided for in the current legislation of Kazakhstan, it is important not to overlook the other side of labour migration processes, namely:

- Additional budgetary expenditure
- The provision of any medical care
- The provision of educational services and the organization of language courses
- Access to housing for labour migrants under social housing schemes
- The right to participate in public affairs and to vote and to be elected
- The enjoyment of political rights in the State of employment
- Access to cooperatives and self-managed enterprises, which is not to imply a change of their migration status
- The provision of various forms of social assistance for addressing unemployment among labour migrants, including the right to receive unemployment benefits
- Non-imposition of imprisonment merely on the ground of failure to fulfil a contractual obligation
- Freedom of expression, including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of their choice
- The right to form associations and trade unions for the promotion and protection of their economic, social, cultural and other interests, which may not be subject to restrictions

- Collaboration with States of origin in pursuing policies aimed at facilitating the integration of the children of migrant workers in the local school system, particularly in respect of teaching them the local language
- Facilitation for the children of migrant workers of the teaching of their mother tongue and culture
- Exemption from import and export duties and taxes in respect of their personal and household effects as well as the equipment necessary to engage in remunerated activity
- The avoidance of double taxation on the earnings and savings of migrant workers and members of their families (who are not to be liable to taxes, duties or charges of any description higher or more onerous than those imposed on nationals and are to be entitled to deductions or exemptions from taxes of any description and to any tax allowances applicable to nationals in similar circumstances, including tax allowances for dependent members of their families)
- Equality of treatment with nationals of Kazakhstan with respect to protection against dismissal, unemployment benefits and access to public work schemes intended to combat unemployment
- The prohibition of expulsion for the purpose of depriving a migrant worker or members of his or her family of rights arising out of the authorization of residence and the work permit
- Assistance with the repatriation to the State of origin of the bodies of deceased migrant workers or members of their families, as well as assistance with compensation relating to death

394. The negative economic consequences for Kazakh citizens include an increase in unemployment among Kazakh citizens; increased budgetary expenditure on healthcare for all migrant workers and members of their families; increased budgetary expenditure on education for the children of migrant workers; increased budgetary expenditure on the provision of social housing for migrant workers and members of their families; budgetary costs for the repatriation of the bodies of deceased migrant workers or members of their families; reduced revenue due to the avoidance of double taxation; increased budgetary expenditure on unemployment benefits; and reduced revenue due to exemption from import and export duties and taxes in respect of the equipment necessary to engage in remunerated activity.

395. Some of the negative consequences of becoming a Party to the Convention are criminological in nature. Specifically, the rights and freedoms guaranteed to migrants under articles 12, 13, 20, 26, 40, 41, 43, 44 and 49, among others, which provide migrant workers and members of their families with a broad range of social, economic and cultural rights, may generate social tension.

396. As the Convention establishes the same rights with respect to legal and illegal labour migration and provides for a wide array of rights, it creates conditions for increased security risks across various domains in Kazakhstan. This may cause distortions to the country's social, demographic and territorial organization, increased competition in local labour and housing markets, clashes between ethnic and subethnic stereotypes and behavioural norms, social and cultural marginalization and crime, and the emergence of pockets of social tension.

397. Certain provisions of the Convention, moreover, are at variance with the Constitution and current legislation of Kazakhstan.

398. For reference:

- Article 5 (4) of the Constitution prohibits the activities of political parties and trade unions of other States and of parties founded on a religious basis, as well as the financing of political parties and trade unions by foreign legal entities and citizens, foreign States and international organizations
- Article 20 (2) of the Constitution provides that everyone has the right to receive and disseminate information freely by any means not prohibited by law and that the

categories of information constituting State secrets of Kazakhstan are to be determined by law

- Article 33 (2) of the Constitution provides that Kazakh citizens have the right to vote in elections to central and local government bodies, be elected to such bodies and participate in national referendums
- Article 19 of the Act on the Legal Status of Aliens provides that foreign nationals in Kazakhstan may not vote in elections to central and local government bodies, be elected to such bodies or participate in national referendums

399. In the light of the international practice of other States, domestic legal and budgetary constraints and the availability of alternative mechanisms for protecting the rights of migrants, Kazakhstan continues to pursue domestic reforms and international cooperation to protect the rights of migrant workers without formally becoming a Party to the 1990 Convention.

## **B. Amendment to article 8 of the Convention**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 46 of the concluding observations**

400. Kazakhstan is examining the question of accepting the amendment of 1992 to article 8 of the Convention, which concerns the financing of the Committee from the regular budget of the United Nations. The amendment will enter into force once it has been accepted by two thirds of States Parties.

## **C. Follow-up to the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 47 of the concluding observations**

401. Kazakhstan consistently takes into account the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, as well as the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action of 2001, including the outcome document of the Durban Review Conference held in Geneva in 2009.

402. In accordance with the principles set out in these instruments, Kazakhstan is taking systematic measures to strengthen inter-ethnic harmony, foster a culture of respect and inclusiveness, and prevent and eliminate all forms of racial discrimination.

#### *Strategic documents*

403. A key instrument for giving effect to these principles is the policy framework for the development of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan for 2022–2026 (Presidential Decree No. 1014 of 15 September 2022), which has the following priority areas:

- Fostering a shared civic identity based on equality and non-discrimination
- Strengthening the status of the State language, while respecting linguistic and cultural diversity
- Ensuring the participation of ethnic minorities in political life, including through deputies from the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan
- Preventing hate speech and ethnic stereotyping in the media
- Promoting education and outreach on human rights and anti-discrimination standards

#### *Legal and institutional measures*

404. A national action plan on human rights and the rule of law has been approved, setting out measures to promote inter-ethnic harmony and prevent discrimination.

405. Amendments to the Citizenship Act have been drafted with a view to preventing statelessness, including among children.

406. Work is under way to analyse and discuss the draft of a comprehensive anti-discrimination law.

407. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan ensures ongoing public dialogue regarding inter-ethnic relations.

408. In 2025, the National Human Rights Centre issued guidance on fundamental rights, covering non-discrimination and the protection of minority rights.

409. The Ombudsman and regional ombudsmen monitor respect for citizens' rights, including those of vulnerable groups.

*Education and outreach*

410. The education system now includes courses on inter-ethnic tolerance, human rights and civic equality. Higher education institutions training media professionals have introduced a course entitled "Ethno-political literacy". In 2024 and 2025, over 2,000 training activities have been conducted in schools, colleges, universities and workplaces. More than 10,000 information materials were produced, together with 15 documentaries and 6 videos about tolerance and combating discrimination.

*Supporting cultural diversity*

411. The country has over 1,000 ethnocultural associations, and around 400 weekend schools offer classes in the native languages of ethnic communities.

*Ethno-statistics and monitoring*

412. Kazakhstan regularly publishes ethno-statistical data, including population figures disaggregated by ethnicity and data on access to social rights. The Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey conducted in 2024 provided additional information on the situation of vulnerable groups, including women and children.

*International cooperation*

413. Kazakhstan actively cooperates with UNHCR, OSCE, the European Union and UNDP on projects to integrate migrants and refugees, foster intercultural dialogue and combat discrimination.

414. In November 2024, Kazakhstan joined the Ashgabat Declaration on Ending Statelessness in Central Asia. Under this initiative, more than 200,000 cases of statelessness have been resolved in the region.

415. Kazakhstan is thus pursuing a comprehensive, cross-sectoral approach consistent with the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action. The measures that have been taken cover the legislative, institutional, educational and cultural dimensions, serving to strengthen the principle of equality, develop a culture of tolerance and advance a sustainable model of inter-ethnic harmony.

## **D. International Decade for People of African Descent**

### **Follow-up information relating to paragraph 48 of the concluding observations**

416. Kazakhstan recognizes the significance of General Assembly resolution 68/237, by which the Assembly proclaimed 2015–2024 the International Decade for People of African Descent, as well as Assembly resolution 69/16 on the programme of activities for the implementation of the Decade. Kazakhstan supports the international community's goals of ensuring recognition, justice and development for people of African descent.

417. In accordance with the State Statistics Act, the Bureau of National Statistics collects data on the ethnic composition of the population. In the ethnicity classification, people of African descent are listed under the category "other ethnicities".

418. According to the 2021 national population census, people of African descent make up less than 0.01 per cent of the population. In the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey carried out

in 2024, women had the option of reporting their ethnicity, including as being of African descent.

419. People of African descent, like members of all other ethnic groups, enjoy equal rights throughout Kazakhstan. In education, they have equal access to preschool, secondary, vocational and higher education. Some students of African descent attend Kazakh higher education institutions under scholarships or on a fee-paying basis. In healthcare, they receive medical assistance within the framework of the guaranteed level of free medical assistance and the compulsory social health insurance system on an equal footing with citizens and other foreign nationals.

420. In the labour market, people of African descent have the right to choose their career freely, enter into employment contracts and receive social guarantees in accordance with the Labour Code.

*Awareness-raising and intercultural dialogue*

421. Kazakhstan is taking systematic measures to strengthen tolerance and inter-ethnic harmony and combat discrimination. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan and its community-based bodies organize cultural events focused on the diversity of ethnic cultures, with the participation of African communities, students and temporary residents in Kazakhstan. Higher education institutions and schools carry out educational projects to foster respect for cultural diversity, including in relation to Africa and the African diaspora.

422. In 2023 and 2024, more than 40 national and regional media projects were carried out on inter-ethnic harmony and tolerance.

423. Kazakhstan cooperates with African States through educational and cultural exchanges. In 2024, students from African countries, including Nigeria, Egypt, Morocco, Ghana and Kenya, studied at Kazakh higher education institutions. Through student exchanges and joint cultural activities, African students are involved in projects of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, youth initiatives and cultural festivals.

424. The African Cultural Centre, a voluntary association active since its registration in 2020, participates in the implementation of socially significant projects and activities of the Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan, as well as projects and activities involving the Assembly's community-based bodies and ethnocultural associations.

425. As the International Decade for People of African Descent came to an end in 2024, Kazakhstan is exploring ways in which to continue strengthening its legal and institutional framework to combat racial discrimination, including by developing national indicators on the situation of ethnic minorities, such as people of African descent.

426. Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to achieving the goals and objectives of the International Decade for People of African Descent. Kazakhstan provides equal access for people of African descent to education, healthcare and employment, takes measures to strengthen intercultural dialogue and actively involves African communities in the country's cultural and educational life.

## **XII. Consultations with civil society, non-governmental organizations and ethnocultural associations in the preparation of the report**

**Follow-up information relating to paragraph 49 of the concluding observations**

427. Kazakhstan reaffirms its commitment to the principles of open and inclusive cooperation with civil society organizations, including human rights organizations, ethnocultural associations and citizens' initiative groups working against racial discrimination and protecting the interests of ethnic minorities.

428. To foster constructive dialogue, the Committee on the Development of Inter-Ethnic Relations under the Ministry of Culture and Information posted an announcement on its official website inviting all stakeholders to submit proposals regarding the implementation

of the Convention, with a channel for feedback made freely available (email: [k.kense@mki.gov.kz](mailto:k.kense@mki.gov.kz)).

429. Under the policy framework for civil society development for 2025–2030, there are mechanisms for regular interaction in the form of public councils, expert forums and round tables within State bodies. NGOs play an active role in the preparation and discussion of draft legislation and receive support through the system of State grants, social procurement and digital platforms, which ensures transparency and accountability in public administration.

430. In preparing the combined eleventh to fourteenth periodic report, broad consultations were held with more than 15 NGOs and human rights organizations. Associations representing the interests of ethnic minorities, women, young people and persons with disabilities took part in the discussions. All the proposals were compiled, with some incorporated into the text of the report and others to be taken into account as part of efforts to improve anti-discrimination legislation. The draft report was posted on the Ministry of Culture and Information website, ensuring transparency and the option of submitting written comments.

431. The Assembly of the People of Kazakhstan remains the key platform for the participation of ethnocultural associations in public policy development. During the preparation of the report, the Assembly organized more than 10 meetings with representatives of ethnic minorities. Discussions at friendship houses covered education in students' native languages, participation in political and public life, access to justice and non-discrimination.

432. The resulting proposals from communities were transmitted to an inter-agency working group and taken into account in the preparation of the report. In addition, ethnocultural associations contributed to the creation of awareness-raising materials on the Convention, which have been disseminated among the public.

433. Civil society representatives also actively participate in research and expert-level projects aimed at improving anti-discrimination legislation.

434. Kazakhstan intends to maintain dialogue with NGOs, including organizations representing the most vulnerable ethnic groups, and will prioritize the involvement of NGOs in the early stages of the preparation of the next report and the incorporation of their suggestions into the plan for legislative and institutional reform.

### **XIII. Conclusion**

435. Kazakhstan reiterates its unwavering commitment to the goals and principles of the Convention. Through the implementation of the Committee's recommendations, Kazakhstan has made substantial progress in strengthening its legislative and institutional framework, fostering inter-ethnic harmony, securing equal access for ethnic minorities to socioeconomic, political and cultural rights and raising awareness of human rights and tolerance in society.

436. Kazakhstan will continue to implement political, institutional and legal reforms to strengthen the rule of law, improve the effectiveness of mechanisms for safeguarding citizens' rights, prevent discrimination and ensure equal opportunities for all ethnic and social groups. Special emphasis will be placed on enhancing anti-discrimination legislation, widening access to justice, developing digital tools and supporting civil society.

437. Kazakhstan stands ready to engage in open and constructive dialogue with the Committee, seeing its recommendations as a key guide to further modernizing the national legal system and practice. Kazakhstan places high importance on its cooperation with international organizations and intends to further strengthen its partnership with the Committee to ensure effective implementation of the Convention and achieve lasting progress in human rights protection.