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**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES**

**COMMENTS OF THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
ON THE THIRD OPINION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE
PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES
BY THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

(received on 25 July 2012)

COMMENTS OF THE FEDERAL EXECUTIVE AUTHORITIES OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION ON THE THIRD OPINION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON THE FRAMEWORK CONVENTION FOR THE PROTECTION OF NATIONAL MINORITIES IN THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

The federal authorities of the Russian Federation have thoroughly studied the Third Opinion of the Advisory Committee (hereinafter – Opinion) based on the third periodic Report of the Russian Federation on the implementation of the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities submitted in April 2010, as well as based on the information received during the visit of experts from the Advisory Committee to the Russian Federation in September 2011.

The Russian Federation highly appreciates the advisory assistance provided by the experts of the Advisory Committee, including through their comments, observations and recommendations, many of which coincide with the vision and objectives pursued by the Government of the Russian Federation in this field.

However, certain observations and recommendations made by the Advisory Committee require comments from the competent authorities of the Russian Federation.

Paragraph 8

The conclusion of the Advisory Committee was discussed with the leading scientists on May 15, 2012 at an extended meeting of the Academic Council of the Institute of Ethnology and Anthropology, Russian Academy of Sciences.

Paragraphs 11, 87, 131, 264

Currently, work is being done to amend Russia's current legislation against extremist activities to clarify the definition of extremist activities.

Paragraphs 12,161 – 166

The legislation of the Russian Federation continuously improves. The Strategy of the State National Policy of the Russian Federation is being drafted in addition to amendments to the existing laws and regulations related to the protection of the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, as well as to the activities of national-cultural autonomies and countering extremist activities, etc.

Federal laws in the field of education set forth general regulatory principles and bases in this area, divide the competencies and the responsibilities in the field of education to be assumed by the federal authorities, authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation, local authorities and educational establishment, thus allowing to regulate and control educational matters with due regard for ethnic, regional and other specific conditions, in which the educational process happens.

In accordance with Federal Law dated October 6, 1999 No. 184-FZ on General Principles for the Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Authorities in the Subjects of the Russian Federation, all issues regarding support of learning and teaching of national (native) languages or other ethnically or culturally-specific subjects at educational establishments shall fall within the powers of the authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Direct support, including through introduction of firm guarantees in regional legislation, can not be provided by the federal centre due to the division of powers stipulated by law.

At the same time, it should be noted that in most subjects of the Russian Federation the regional authorities pay close attention to these issues, and the existing approaches to the issue of instruction in languages of national minorities are continuously improved. For example, in 2012 draft law on Amendments to the Law of Perm Krai on Regulation of Certain Issues in the Field of Education (to the article about national education) was submitted for consideration by the Legislative Assembly of Perm Krai. According to this draft law the executive authorities in the field of education will:

- determine the forms and procedure for state (final) examination in the native language and native literature of those who learned their native language and native literature at the stage of primary or secondary (full) education.
- participate in the selection of entities to publish textbooks on native language and native literature that will be allowed to be used in the educational process at educational establishments that have passed state accreditation and are teaching general curriculum.

Paragraphs 13, 40-42, 44-45

The Russian Federation has stated and reiterated its position on the recommendations related to comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation. The Government of the Russian Federation confirms its previous position and notes that Russian national legislation is built on the principle of division into areas, and different areas of relations within society are governed by certain sets of laws and regulations. General regulations prohibiting discrimination based on national (ethnic) origin operate in combination with human rights in a specific area, such as exercising labour rights, right to education, right to speak a native language, right to use cultural achievements and other rights. So, the non-discrimination principle applies to any rights recognized by the Constitution and the legislation of the Russian Federation.

As far as Russian legislation is concerned, anti-discrimination provisions can be found almost in all branches of law. Therefore, the recommendations regarding a comprehensive anti-discrimination legislation are already implemented in Russian legislation, and a set of laws and regulations combined with Russia's Constitution and Russia's Criminal Code constitute adequate anti-discrimination legislation that continuously improves in line with today's realities.

The Russian Federation believes that the adoption of a special anti-discrimination law does not correspond to the logic of Russian legislation, its division into areas and the practice of its application.

To restore rights that have been infringed, improve Russia's legislation in the field of human and civil rights and align it with the generally accepted principles and norms of international law, as well as to develop international cooperation in the field of human rights, promote education on human rights and freedoms, including forms and methods of protection thereof, Human Rights Ombudsperson's office was introduced in the Russian Federation, which also accepts and reviews complaints connected with the violation of rights of national minorities or discrimination in all areas of social life.

The subjects of the Russian Federation also have offices of Human Rights Ombudspersons and Children's Ombudspersons. At the federal level, the office of Children's Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation (Children's Ombudsperson) was introduced.

Paragraph 17

The authorities of the Russian Federation believe that the legalization of house ownership is a mechanism that can eliminate the practice of forced eviction of Roma. Work is being done in close cooperation with the federal, regional and local authorities to legalize Roma settlements. In addition, Roma families also receive state support in the form of provision of housing to those who need to improve their housing conditions.

At the same time, there is a problem with the legalization of Roma population (i.e. receipt of identity documents, registration at the place of residence, etc.) that prevents Roma from exercising all rights guaranteed to citizens by the Constitution of the Russian Federation and relevant federal or regional laws and regulations. Active work is being done in this field in the subjects of the Russian Federation.

Tackling the issues of legalization of housing, eviction without offering alternative housing and provision to Roma of all necessary documents is also included in the plan of socioeconomic and ethno-cultural development of Roma that is being drafted now (see comments on paragraph 18).

Paragraphs 17-18, 23, 58-60, 64, 100, 102, 174, 224

Currently, the federal executive authorities in close cooperation with the national-cultural autonomy of Russian Roma are drafting a comprehensive plan for socioeconomic and ethno-cultural development of Roma ethnic community.

Representatives of the federal national-cultural autonomy of Russian Roma are included in the Consultative Council under the Interdepartmental Working Group and in the Consultative Council on national-cultural autonomies that was set up in 2006 under the Ministry for Regional Development of the Russian Federation, which makes it possible to have constructive discussions on topical issues related to the state of culture and socioeconomic situation of Russian Roma.

The Russian Federation participates through the Council of Europe in the elaboration and implementation of measures to improve the position of Roma in the Member States of the Council of Europe. In particular, in June 2012 Moscow hosted a workshop dedicated to the training of mediators that will be responsible for interaction of Roma communities with the executive authorities at all levels (ROMED).

Paragraphs 19, 23, 40, 50-52, 55, 257, 266 and certain others

Law of the Russian Federation dated June 25, 1993 No. 5242-1 On the Right of the Citizens of the Russian Federation to Freedom of Movement and Choice of the Place of Residence and Stay within the Russian Federation (hereinafter in this section – Law) obliges Russian citizens to register at their place of stay and at their place of residence, but also states that registration or lack thereof may not be a reason for any restriction on, or a condition for the exercise of, any civil rights or freedoms stipulated by Russia's Constitution, or by the Constitution or laws of the republics included in the Russian Federation.

It is **not** stipulated by the Law that any citizen can be denied of registration at the place of his or her stay or residence provided that the citizen concerned has all documents required by the Law (article 6) and the Registration Rules¹ (paragraphs 9 and 16).

¹ Rules for Registration and Deregistration of Russian Citizens at the Place of their Stay and Residence within the Russian Federation, and a list of public officials responsible for registration were approved by the Resolution of the Russian Federation dated 17.07.1995 No. 713 (revision dated 26.10.2011).

In accordance with the Order of the President of the Russian Federation dated March 13, 1997 No. 232 on the Main Identity Document of a Citizen of the Russian Federation on the Territory of the Russian Federation, and in accordance with Resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation dated July 8, 1997 No. 828 on Approval of the Regulation on Passport of a Citizen of the Russian Federation, Template Form and Description of Passport of a Citizen of the Russian Federation, the identity document of a Russian citizen used within the Russian Federation is not required to state the holder's national (ethnic) origin; so, territorial offices of the Federal Migration Service of Russia do not have such information.

Russian citizens may apply to the prosecutor's office with a complaint regarding denial to exercise any social, economic or other rights because of availability or lack of registration. In this case an investigation will be launched, whereafter the prosecutor, in case there are any reasonable grounds to do so, will take appropriate measures, including filing an application to court in the interests of the citizen concerned to eliminate violations of his or her rights.

Paragraphs 20, 74

In accordance with Federal Law dated February 9, 2009 No. 11-FZ on Amendments to Article 16 of the Federal Law on National-Cultural Autonomy, the federal executive authorities may provide financial support out of the federal budget to federal national-cultural autonomies.

The executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation may provide support out of their regional budgets to regional and local national-cultural autonomies, while local authorities may provide support out of their local budgets to local national-cultural autonomies.

The activities of national-cultural autonomies include preservation of their national identity, development of their native languages, preservation and enrichment of their historical and cultural heritage, promotion of respect for their national traditions and customs, revival and development of folk arts and trades, as well as establishment of mass media, dissemination of information in their national (native) languages, establishment of educational and scientific institutions, cultural organizations, and participation through their authorized representatives in the activities of international NGOs, and establishment of contacts with foreign citizens or public organizations.

Support to ethno-cultural projects is provided through grants of the President of the Russian Federation to not-for-profit organizations, as well as through grants provided by the Ministry of Sport and Tourism of Russia (until May 2012), Federal Target Program The Culture of Russia (2006-2011), subsidies allocated to support numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, as well as within the Federal Target Program Socioeconomic and Ethno-Cultural Development of Russian Germans in 2008-2012, and through subsidies granted to the subjects of the Russian Federation to support socially-oriented organizations, and in 2008-2011 has also been provided through a dedicated target item of the federal budget for activities connected with the implementation of the state national policy.

Socially-oriented organizations include not-for-profit organizations that conduct activity aimed at tackling social problems, developing civil society in the Russian Federation, including provision of legal assistance, either free of charge or at special reduced rates, to people or not-for-profit organizations, education of the general public in the field of law, protection of human and civil rights and freedoms; prevention of socially dangerous forms of behaviour; activity in the field of education, enlightenment, science, culture, art, healthcare, prophylaxis and protection of public health, promotion of healthy lifestyles, improvement of moral and psychological condition of people, promotion of physical training and sport, as well as promotion of spiritual growth of people.

In 2011, tenders were held for subsidies from the federal budget for the total amount of over RUB 600 M to the budgets of subjects of the Russian Federation for implementing regional programs aimed at supporting socially-oriented not-for-profit organizations (provision of financial support to such organizations through tenders); for the total amount of RUB 132 M to socially-oriented not-for-profit organizations for implementing programs in the field of information, advisory and methodical support of such organizations in their main areas of activity; identifying, consolidating and disseminating the best project implementation practices for not-for-profit organizations, including through conferences and workshops; as well as encouraging involvement of volunteers in the activities of socially-oriented organizations.

It was recommended that the executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation in 2011 approve regional programs for support of socially-oriented not-for-profit organizations.

Paragraphs 21, 79

To ensure practical implementation of the Concept Paper on the Sustainable Development of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, a suitable activity plan for implementing the Concept in 2009-2011 was drafted and completed. The plan included a list of specific activities to improve the legal framework for the protection of rights of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, develop effective economic mechanisms for supporting their traditional lifestyle and the use of traditional natural resources, develop a system of healthcare services and education in the areas where they live, study, preserve and promote cultural heritage, and develop traditional culture of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North at the first stage in 2009-2011. Completion of the plan has resulted in successful implementation of the first stage of the Concept.

Currently, a draft activity plan for the second stage of implementation of the Concept Paper on the Sustainable Development of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East in 2012-2015 is being prepared for adoption.

The progress of implementation of the Concept is regularly discussed at numerous conferences (6th Congress of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, All-Russian Conference on Enforcement of the Constitutional Rights of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, International Conference dedicated to the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People, annual all-Russian meetings dedicated to implementation of the state national policy and ethnic-cultural development of Russian peoples, etc.), as well as within the 10th and the 11th session of the United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (New-York, May 24, 2011).

Communities of numerically small indigenous peoples as well as other nongovernmental and expert organizations are actively involved in the Concept implementation.

As far as amendments to legislation are concerned, please see comments on paragraph 84.

Paragraphs 22,157-159, 265

According to the 2010 census, an overall number of languages and dialects used in Russia amounts to 277, with 89 languages used in children's education, 39 of which are used for teaching and 50 are studied as school subjects.

Overall schooling is provided in a number of languages of indigenous small peoples of the North, including the Chukchi, the Evenki, the Even and the Yukaghir languages. They are used for teaching not only humanities, but also sciences, such as math's and physics. Languages of other small indigenous peoples are studied as school subjects.

In accordance with the Russian legislation, release of TV and radio programs and publication of print periodicals, including in national minority languages, fall within sole jurisdiction of the founders of mass media, either an individual or a legal entity. Broadcasting of TV and radio programs is an exclusive right of TV and radio companies.

Print and electronic media, book publishing and release of TV and radio programs in the languages of the peoples of Russia receive state funding on a competitive basis.

At the close of 2011 4418 mass media in the languages of the peoples of Russia were registered in the Russian Federation, including 2 062 print, 2 251 electronic media and 105 media outlets working in 66 languages of the peoples of Russia.

At the close of 2010 4444 mass media in the languages of the peoples of Russia were registered, including 2 071 print, 2 279 electronic media and 94 media outlets. The slight reduction in the number of print periodicals and electronic media in the languages of the peoples of Russia (by 0.4% and 1.2% respectively) within the last two years is explained by the impact of the world financial crisis which reduced the number of mass media both in the national minority languages and in the Russian language. An overall number of mass media registered by the end of 2011 has been reduced by 1.5% compared to the same period in 2010. At the same time there was significant growth in the number of internet-projects in the languages of the Russian Federation, which are not registered as mass media.

In 2011 33 print media organizations, which publish journals and magazines in the languages of the Russian Federation and implement socially useful projects, received state support through the Ministry of Communications and Mass Media. They include journals and magazines in the Bashkir, the Tatar, the Mari, the Finnish, the Veps, the Karelian, the Circassian, the Abazin, the Buryat, the Kalmyk, the Udmurt, the Moksha, the Erzya and the Mordovian languages. The State also rendered its support to 22 electronic projects, aimed at raising awareness on ethnic culture, developing interethnic relations, tolerance, preventing terrorism, with a total amount 41 099 000 rubles.

All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company (hereinafter VGTRK) actively participates in the implementation of state policy, aimed at preserving and developing television and radio broadcasting in the languages of the peoples of Russia on the territory of our country.

There is an annual increase in the number of regional branches of VGTRK, broadcasting in the languages of the peoples of Russia. Thus, in 2012, within the "Russian Television", 27 regional branches and 4 territorial departments have already been broadcasting in the national minority languages. Within the radio program "Radio of Russia" 25 VGTRK regional branches and 4 territorial departments release programs in the languages of the peoples of Russia. The average daily information and thematic broadcasting in the national minority languages is 20.5 within the "Russia TV-channel" and 50.3 - within the "Radio of Russia".

VGTRK regional branches produce and broadcast information and thematic TV and radio programs in more than 50 languages of the peoples of Russia. The regional branch "GTRK Dagestan" itself broadcasts programs in 13 languages.

In the framework of the action plan on the implementation of state national policy for the period 2011-2012 the Federal state unitary enterprise Russian information agency "RIA Novosti" is establishing a website in the languages of the peoples of Russia.

This project is aimed at supporting harmonization of interethnic relations, facilitating the adaptation of migrants from CIS.

Since 2008 the Ministry of regional development of the Russian Federation jointly with the Guild of interethnic journalism, "Radio of Russia" and "Rossiyskaya Gazeta" annually hold an All-Russian competition of mass media for the best coverage of themes of interethnic interaction among the peoples of Russia and their ethnocultural development "SMIrotvorjets". Holding such a competition is already bearing fruit. The "SMIrotvorjets 2011" results showed, that within three years (2009-2011) the number of positive publications on interethnic development in the Russian federal, regional and ethnic media had grown two times.

If in 2008 134 federal and regional and 71 ethnic media took part in this competition, in 2009 there was already 301 participant, with 98 ethnic media among them. In 2010 360 media applied for this competition, including 171 ethnic media, in 2011 – 625 media.

Paragraphs 23, 59, 176-177, 188

The Law on Education of the Russian Federation No. 3266-1 of July 10, 1992 (version of December 3, 2011, with the amendments and additions entering into force on February 1, 2011) protects the constitutional right of every citizen of the Russian Federation to education and states that the rules for admission to the state and municipal educational institutions at the stage of primary general, basic general, secondary (complete) and primary professional education have to ensure admission of all citizens residing in a certain territory and having a right to education of the appropriate level.

According to Article 46 of the Typical Provisions on General Education Institutions approved by the Government Decree of the Russian Federation No. 196 of 19 March, 2001 (version of March 10, 2009), the rules for admission to the state and municipal general education institutions at the stage of primary general, basic general and secondary (complete) education have to ensure admission of all citizens residing in a certain territory and having a right to education of the appropriate level. Those who do not reside in this territory can be denied admission only due to the lack of available space in the institution.

Moreover, children's access to the first grade of the state and municipal general education institutions of all types on a competitive basis is prohibited (Article 5, paragraph 3 of The Law on Education of the Russian Federation). According to the Letter of the Ministry of Education of the Russian Federation No. 03-51-57ИИ/13-03 of March 21, 2003, concerning Recommendations on the procedure for access to the first grade, all children who have reached school age are enrolled in the first grade of the state and municipal educational institution, regardless of their level of training. Teacher's interview with a child can be carried out in September in order to design a curriculum for each pupil.

Pursuant to the Federal Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation No. 115-FZ of July 25, 2002, foreign citizens in the Russian Federation have the same right to education as the citizens of the Russian Federation.

Special attention in the area of education system is paid to work with Roma children. Education of Roma children in general education institutions of Russia is generally carried out in two ways: co-education with their coevals on an equal basis, as well as education in special remedial classes for children.

The practice of teaching Roma children in special classes exists in a number of constituent entities of the Russian Federation, particularly in the Volgograd Oblast. However, it is not a compulsory segregation. This practice is caused by the low pre-school education level and sometimes by the lack of knowledge of the Russian language by some Roma children upon enrollment in school. A child can be promoted to a higher grade upon the application of a parent.

At the same time, the majority of general education institutions of the Russian Federation stand for co-education of children. It results in the improvement of education process. This is the case in Penza, Tula, Ryazan, Lipetsk and other regions. Co-education is a mechanism for integration of Roma children into the general education system. This approach corresponds to paragraph 27 of the Recommendations of the Committee, as well.

In some constituent entities of the Russian Federation there are schools with Roma ethno-cultural component. For example, in the secondary general education school with ethnic Roma children, situated in the Oselki village of the Leningrad Oblast, there are courses of the Roma culture and language.

Paragraphs 24, 193-194, 201-202

In accordance with Article 68 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the Russian language is the state language on the whole territory of the Russian Federation.

According to Article 6 of the Law on Education of the Russian Federation (hereinafter "the Law"), the general aspects of language policy in the educational sphere are governed by the Law of the Russian Federation on Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation (hereinafter "the Law on Languages").

Citizens of the Russian Federation have the right to get their basic general education in their mother tongue, and also to choose the language of tuition within the range of possibilities afforded by the educational system.

Procedure for the exercise of citizens' right to choose the language of tuition depends on the capacity of the education system: available facilities of an educational institution for teaching in that language, teachers who can teach the language, language study materials, etc.

The right of citizens to get an education in their mother tongue is ensured through the establishment of the appropriate required educational institutions, classes, groups and conditions for their functioning.

According to Article 6, paragraph 3 of the Law, the language (languages) of instruction and education is (are) defined by the founder and enshrined in its Charter. In this case, the parents (legal representatives) of minors have the right to choose an educational institution with specific language of education and instruction (Article 52, paragraph 1 of the Law).

Teaching of the state languages in the republics is carried out in accordance with their legislation (Article 10, paragraph 3 of the Law on Languages).

According to Article 29, paragraph 1, subparagraph 5.2 of the Law, the bodies of state power of the constituent entity of the Russian Federation are involved in the development of exemplary basic education programs, taking into account their level and orientation, including in the area of national identities on the basis of the federal state educational standards.

In cases stipulated by the legislation of the Russian Federation in the field of education, curricula developed by educational institutions to ensure enactment and implementation of the requirements of the standard, provide for the opportunity to receive education in the state languages of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation and in a native (non-Russian) language as well as for the ability to study them; they also establish the number of teaching hours devoted to them by the grades (years) of study.

The introduction by the laws of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation of the study of the state languages of the constituent entities of the Russian Federation at the institutions of general education violates neither the right of everyone to a free choice of the language of upbringing and education (Article 26, paragraph 2) and the right to education (Article 43) both enshrined by the Constitution of the Russian Federation, the right of parents (legal representatives) to choose an educational institution with a specific language of upbringing and education of children (Article 9, paragraph 3 of the Law on Languages) and the right to receive basic general education in their native language (Article 6, paragraph 2 of the Law), which are both derived from the Constitution, it is also in agreement with such principle of state education policy as protection and development through educational system of national cultures, regional cultural traditions and features in a multinational state and corresponds to the requirement for the content of education to promote understanding and cooperation between people and nations, regardless of nationality and ethnicity (Article 2, paragraph 2 and Article 14, paragraph 4 of the Law).

Paragraphs 25, 211-218

The last few years saw a considerable increase in the number of institutional platforms for involving institutions of civil society, including representatives of national minorities in the activities of authorities at different levels.

Participation of representatives of national public associations and religious organizations in decision-making on the implementation of the state national policy is achieved first of all through their membership in, and involvement in the activity of, expert consultative bodies under various public and local authorities. There are expert consultative bodies under the Government of the Russian Federation (Interdepartmental Working Group for Interethnic Relations chaired by the Deputy Chairman of the Government), under the Federation Council, under federal ministries (public councils under every federal executive body, Consultative Council for Affairs of Federal National-Cultural Autonomies under the Ministry for Regional Development of Russia), under executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation, and all such bodies and councils include representatives of national-cultural autonomies and other national public associations, including those of numerically small indigenous peoples of Russia.

Representatives of numerically small indigenous peoples are included in the Expert Consultative Council under the Interdepartmental Working Group for Interethnic Relations led by the Deputy Chairman of the Government of the Russian Federation. This Expert Consultative Council is an effective form for involving representatives of numerically small indigenous peoples of the Russian Federation in decision-making on issues of their social and cultural development.

In addition, representatives of indigenous peoples are also included in the National Organizing Committee for the preparation of the Second International Decade of the World's Indigenous People in the Russian Federation. The Organising Committee is responsible for planning and control of a range of specific activities for promoting socioeconomic and ethno-cultural development of numerically small indigenous peoples in Russia.

There is also the Expert Consultative Council for Affairs of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East under the plenipotentiary representative of the President of the Russian Federation. In the Far Eastern Federal District, the issues of interaction with associations of small indigenous peoples are addressed by the Interdepartmental Committee for Public and Religious Associations under the plenipotentiary representative of the President of the Russian Federation for the Far Eastern Federal District.

In addition, representatives of small indigenous peoples are included in the Working Group at the Public Council for Ethno-Cultural Policy and Human Potential under the Ministry for Regional Development, and they are also represented at the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation.

On May 7, 2012 the President of the Russian Federation issued Order on Ensuring Interethnic Concord, whereby the Presidential Executive Office and the Government of the Russian Federation were commissioned to draft a proposal regarding establishment of a council for interethnic relations under the President of the Russian Federation.

Therefore, one can say that a considerable progress has been achieved in this field.

Amendments to national legislation that abandoned quotas for indigenous peoples in various authorities stem from the desire to ensure equal access to political rights irrespectively of ethnic origin, as well as by the fact that in accordance with its international obligations the Russian Federation abandoned the practice of including ethnic origin in its national identity documents.

Paragraphs 26, 136

The Russian Federation does not support racial discrimination by any persons or organizations. In the Russian Federation, which is a multiethnic state, such practice may cause stratification of its society and jeopardize its territorial integrity. Russia's Constitution prohibits activity of any public associations, the objectives or actions of which are aimed at inciting social, racial, ethnic or religious intolerance (Article 13), while Article 9 of Federal Law dated July 11, 2011 No. 95-FZ on Political Parties prohibits the creation of political parties established on the grounds of racial, national or religious belonging. The creation of political parties on the grounds of racial, national or religious belonging can jeopardize peaceful coexistence of nations and religions in the country and undermine the principles of a secular state. These arguments were admitted by the European Court on Human Rights that with its Decision on admissibility of complaint No. 17582/05 *Igor Vladimirovich Artyomov vs. Russia* dated December 7, 2006 declared that the complaint filed by the leader of the Russian National Union regarding denial by Russia's Ministry of Justice of registration of a political party of the same name was inadmissible.

Paragraphs 28, 29

After signature of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (hereinafter – the Charter) the Government of the Russian Federation launched work on the ratification thereof within the interdepartmental working group set up in accordance with direction of the President of the Russian Federation dated May 5, 2009 No. 3489.

Within the activities of this interdepartmental working group the federal executive authorities and the subjects of the Russian Federation have conducted a number of studies and workshops, and have also collected, consolidated and analyzed information needed for possible ratification of the Charter by the Russian Federation.

In 2009-2011, the Ministry for Regional Development of Russia in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the European Commission implemented the program entitled National Minorities in Russia: Development of Languages, Cultures, Media and Civil Society (hereinafter – the Program) that was aimed, *inter alia*, at exploring the possible consequences of the ratification.

Its results enabled authorities to reasonably evaluate the organizational, financial, legal, ethnic and political implications of the ratification and implementation of the Charter. The results received by the expert community demonstrate that the application of the Charter does not suit the specific multilingual situation seen in the Russian Federation.

During the implementation of the Program an overwhelming majority of Russian and foreign experts stressed Russia's specific situation that can not be seen elsewhere in Europe, and they also believed that it was necessary to clarify a range of issues related to the Charter itself and its applicability in the conditions observed in Russia before taking any decision whether or not a relevant ratification instrument should be drafted.

In this connection, it is important to identify the challenges that the ratification of the Charter will bring both for Russia in general and for the status of individual languages in particular, as well as organizational and financial costs that the ratification could entail.

To have a wide discussion on the issue of ratification of the Charter, hearings were held at the Public Chamber of the Russian Federation (June 2010), and also parliamentary hearings were held at the State Duma of the Russian Federation (October 2010).

During the implementation of the Program many representatives of executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation that previously advocated the ratification of the Charter changed their position.

Nevertheless, both foreign and Russian experts acknowledge that the legislation of the Russian Federation on the whole satisfies the requirements of the Charter in terms of the protection of language diversity and ensures a high standard for the protection of minority languages (much higher than in most countries that ratified the Charter), and that the issue of ratification requires further study by various departments.

Paragraphs 32-33

There are 47 numerically small indigenous peoples in the Russian Federation based on the four criteria that peoples of Russia shall satisfy to be classified as numerical small indigenous groups:

- they should live within the areas of traditional habitation of their ancestors;
- they should maintain traditional lifestyles and activities;
- they should perceive themselves as independent ethnic communities;
- their number in the Russian Federation should be under 50,000 people.

Numerically small indigenous peoples enjoy a particular status fixed in the Constitution of the Russian Federation. They live in compact settlements in more than 30 subjects of the Russian Federation and speak 47 languages and dialects.

Out of these 47 groups, 40 peoples fall to a special group and live in extreme conditions of the circumpolar zone; and they enjoy state support and a special legal status of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East (hereinafter – numerically small indigenous peoples of the North)².

Currently, numerically small indigenous peoples of the North live in 28 subjects of the Russian Federation. Because of particular vulnerability of their traditional lifestyles and environments, Russian legislation guarantees them a special legal status and a priority right to use natural resources.

The remaining 7 numerically small indigenous peoples (the Abazins, the Votes, the Izhorians, the Nağaybäks, the Setos and the Shapsugs) do not live in the circumpolar zone, but also enjoy special rights with respect to the preservation of their national identity, social security and preservation of their traditional lifestyles and activities.

Representatives of ethnic groups may apply to the competent authorities (the government or the administration of the subject of the Russian Federation concerned) with a request to be granted a status of a numerically small indigenous group. Every application is considered in cooperation with research institutes and a reasonable informed decision is taken. In 2008, the Votes, a numerically small Finno-Ugric group living in compact settlements in Leningrad Oblast, were added to the Uniform Register of the Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation, and in 2010 the Setos were included in the Register.

Paragraph 51

In accordance with Federal Law No. 109-FZ of July 18, 2006 On Migration and Registration of Foreign Nationals and Stateless Persons in the Russian Federation, the registration at place of sojourn has notification character for foreign citizens and stateless persons. As for the residency registration of foreign nationals and stateless persons, the procedure applied to these persons is similar to that applied to Russian citizens, and is not burdensome.

Over the past few years, a number of amendments to the above mentioned federal law have been adopted to provide foreign nationals and stateless persons with a broader set of opportunities to stay legally at the territory of the Russian Federation and also to eliminate unnecessary administrative procedures.

For instance, a foreign citizen no longer needs to submit a detachable part of a special form of notification of the foreign citizen's arrival at the place of sojourn and their deregistration is now the responsibility of the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation. Besides, foreign nationals that have not been registered at the place of sojourn are not subject to liability for violation of migration registration rules.

Paragraphs 52, 128, 175-176, 180, 253.

According to Article 62, paragraph 3 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation and Article 4 of the Federal Law No. 115 of July 25, 2002, "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation", foreign citizens and stateless persons shall enjoy in the Russian Federation the rights and bear the obligations of the citizens of the Russian Federation, except for cases envisaged by the federal law or an international agreement of the Russian Federation.

² The official listing of these peoples was approved by resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation dated April 17, 2006 No. 536-p.

Enrolment of foreign citizens and stateless persons in mainstream or pre-school educational establishments shall be carried out on the basis of a personal application made by parents (legal guardians) of the child and the identity document of one of the parents (legal guardians) or the identity document of a foreign citizen in the Russian Federation, according to Article 10 of the Federal Law No. 115 of July 25, 2002, "On the Legal Status of Foreign Citizens in the Russian Federation", copy of the document proving relationship to the applicant (or legitimacy of the provision of rights of persons receiving education), of the document proving the applicant's right to reside in the Russian Federation and of the medical assessment report on the absence of health conditions preventing the child from attending school.

The documents of foreign citizens and stateless persons indicated above shall be presented in Russian or together with their translation into Russian, notarized in accordance with the established procedure.

According to Article 16 of the Law "On Education" of the Russian Federation (hereinafter referred to as "the Law"), the rules on the enrolment of citizens in educational establishments shall be determined by the founders of these educational establishments, in compliance with the legislation of the Russian Federation, and shall be fixed in the statutes of these educational establishments. Educational establishments shall independently form their student bodies, within the limits of the quota specified in its license (Article 32 of the Law).

Therefore, the enrolment of foreign citizens and stateless persons, including compatriots residing abroad, in mainstream or pre-school educational establishments shall be carried out on the same terms as the enrolment of Russian citizens.

Paragraphs 80 - 84

The initiatives aimed at changing the existing legislation in the field of sustainable development of numerically small indigenous peoples include provision of priority access to the use of land resources, including agricultural lands, forests and water resources, fisheries and hunting grounds.

The draft federal law on the Territories of Traditional Natural Use of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East (hereinafter – the Draft Law) eliminates the gaps in legal regulation pertaining to the creation and operation of territories of traditional natural use. In particular, the fact that Federal Law No. 49-FZ stipulated no clear procedure for the creation of territories of traditional natural use hindered the creation of such territories for various purposes. Because of this and also due to the fact that in accordance with the Land Code of the Russian Federation the boundaries of territories of traditional natural use shall be determined by the Government of Russia, currently there are no official territories of traditional natural use in the subjects of the Russian Federation.

In addition, in accordance with Federal Law No. 49-FZ territories of traditional natural use fall to the category of special protected territories (protected territories). However, the status of protected territories created for nature preservation contradicts the sense and purposes of territories of traditional natural use created to support and ensure traditional use of natural resources. In this connection the Draft Law will exclude territories of traditional natural use from the category of protected territories and will also clarify the procedure for the creation of territories of traditional natural use, thus simplifying their creation. In particular, the creation of territories of traditional natural use may be initiated by the authorities of the Russian Federation, by the authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation, by local authorities or associations of numerically small indigenous peoples with an application filed to a higher executive authority of the subject of the Russian Federation concerned.

The Draft Law on the territories of traditional natural use also provides for differentiated use and protection of such territories, as well as a possibility to create territories of traditional natural use on the lands of various categories within the areas of traditional habitation and traditional activities of numerically small indigenous peoples in the Russian Federation.

Such approach corresponds to the objectives pursued through the creation of territories of traditional natural use, i.e. help numerically small indigenous peoples preserve their traditional lifestyles based on the use of natural resources and ensure their sustainable socioeconomic development.

The terms and definitions used in the Draft Law are aligned with the norms of the Federal Laws on Guarantees of the Rights of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples in the Russian Federation, and on Environmental Protection, while the procedure for the creation of territories of traditional natural use was aligned with the Federal Constitutional Law on the Government of the Russian Federation. The powers of the Government of the Russian Federation with respect to the creation of territories of traditional natural use were determined.

Article 1 of the Draft Law defines the term “association of numerically small indigenous peoples.”

So, adoption of this Draft Law will not prejudice the rights of numerically small indigenous peoples, but will enable indigenous peoples to exercise their rights to the fullest extent within official territories of traditional natural use. The Ministry for Regional Development has already prepared the Draft Law for submission to the Government of the Russian Federation in accordance with the applicable procedure.

To ensure priority access for numerically small indigenous peoples to natural resources, draft Federal Law on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation Governing Traditional Fishing has been elaborated (hereinafter – Draft Law on Traditional Fishing).

The purpose of the Draft Law on Traditional Fishing is eliminating legal gaps in the field of regulation of traditional fishing to preserve the traditional lifestyles and activities of numerically small indigenous peoples in the areas of their traditional habitation, ensure exercise of their right to engage in traditional activities, including fishery, and prevent unreasonable assignment of the priority right of access to water resources used for fishing to any persons not belonging to numerically small indigenous peoples.

The Draft Law on Traditional Fishing was drafted by a special interdepartmental working group that was set up for discussion of disputable issues pertaining to the regulation in the field of traditional fishing. In 2010-2011, the working group held three meetings that were also attended by representatives of the Association of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East.

According to the Draft Law on Traditional Fishing people who belong to numerically small indigenous peoples and permanently live in the areas of traditional habitation and traditional activity of indigenous peoples and lead traditional lifestyles will have the right for traditional fishing as required to satisfy their personal, family, household or other needs, which are not connected with business activity, freely, without any charge or restrictions on the amount of catch, and without allocating any special fishing areas.

It should also be noted that in terms of regulation of relations in the field of traditional fishing the Draft Law on the Territories of Traditional Natural Use of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East, and the Draft Law on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation Governing Traditional Fishing clearly provide for priorities and preferences for numerically small indigenous peoples.

Discussion of draft federal laws affecting numerically small indigenous peoples involves representatives of Russian and interregional organizations of indigenous peoples, and all draft legislative acts are uploaded to and available at the official website of the Ministry for Regional Development of Russia at www.minregion.ru to solicit opinions of experts.

In December 2009, Method for Calculation of Losses Caused to Associations of Indigenous Peoples by Business or Other Activity of Entities of any Form of Ownership or Individuals in the Areas of Traditional Habitation and Traditional Activity of Indigenous Peoples in the Russian Federation was approved. This method is based on the principles of corporate social responsibility that is voluntarily adopted by companies operating in the areas where indigenous peoples live.

This method was applied to calculate losses caused to households of traditional natural use in the Nenets Autonomous Area by customers, and in Yamalo-Nenets Autonomous District, Amur Oblast, Zabaykalsky Krai and in the Republic of Sakha (Yakutia).

Calculations over the period between 2010 and 2011 were also performed for payment of losses by 15 mining companies.

Based on those calculations, organizations of indigenous peoples receive compensation of losses.

A practice exists in the Russian Federation, whereby corporations performing any mining operations near the territories of traditional habitation of numerically small indigenous peoples enter into agreements with regional authorities and indigenous peoples for support of various cultural, educational and other projects initiated by indigenous peoples. Among major companies that have entered into such agreements and have been providing target support to the communities of small indigenous peoples are OJSC TNK-BP, OJSC Gazprom Neft, OJSC Lukoil, OJSC Novotek, OJSC Surgutneftegaz and others.

Paragraphs 21 and 261 contain a negative assessment of the existing legislation on hunting and preservation of hunting resources with regard to the provisions related to the rights of indigenous peoples to use of hunting resources.

Such an assessment does not correspond to the current situation concerning the rights of indigenous peoples to hunting and the existing problems in this area.

According to Article 12 of the Federal Law on Hunting and Preservation of Hunting Resources and on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation No. 209-FZ of July 24, 2009 (hereinafter "the Law on Hunting"), hunting with a view to ensuring the traditional way of life and carrying out the traditional economic activity of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation, is considered as individual type of hunting.

According to Article 19 of the Law on Hunting, this type of hunting is carried out by numerically small indigenous peoples or their communities, as well as by non-indigenous peoples permanently residing in their traditional territories and territories of their traditional economic activity, whose basis of existence is hunting, freely (without any permission) to the extent of use of hunting resources, necessary to satisfy personal consumption needs. Hunting goods are used for own consumption or sold to organizations purchasing hunting goods.

Pursuant to Federal Law on Guarantees of the Rights of Numerically Small Indigenous Peoples of the Russian Federation No. 82-FZ of April 30, 1999, the Government of the Russian Federation approved a list of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East of the Russian Federation (hereinafter "NSIPN"), a list of traditional territories and territories of traditional economic activity of NSIPN and a list of types of their traditional economic activity. Commercial hunting, processing and sale of hunting goods are considered to be a type of traditional economic activity of NSIPN and their traditional territories are considerably large. For example, almost all Khabarovsk Krai belongs to such territories.

In this way, the existing legislation of the Russian Federation respects the right of NSIPN to unimpeded and free use of hunting resources in their traditional territories and territories of their traditional economic activity.

Moreover, pursuant to draft Federal Law No. 406814-5 on Amendments to the Federal Law on Hunting and Preservation of Hunting Resources and on Amendments to Certain Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation (hereinafter "Draft Law"), elaborated as legislative initiative by the Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation, the Law on hunting requirements concerning one-time payment for conclusion of hunting and economic agreement do not refer to the communities and other associations of NSIPN.

Changes proposed by the Draft Law ensure the access of persons having a right to traditional hunting, to use of hunting resources in traditional territories and territories of traditional economic activity of NSIPN.

Paragraphs 25-129

In 2010, the department to facilitate integration was set up in the framework of the Russian Federal Migration Service (the FMS of Russia) to promote the integration of migrants into the Russian society as well as the principles of tolerance and preventing discrimination and xenophobia against migrants.

The activities of the department are aimed at resolving a set of issues in the field of facilitating integration. They involve:

- elaborating the strategy for the integration of migrants into the Russian society;
- arranging the work of the regional bodies of the FMS of Russia in the sphere of adjustment of different categories of foreign citizens having arrived in the Russian Federation and in the sphere of integration meaning a full-fledged involvement of migrants into the social and cultural structure of the Russian society;
- cooperation with Russian and international social and human rights organizations as well as national entities;
- cooperation with the mass media;
- information support of the FMS of Russia activities regarding the implementation of the state migration policy.

Furthermore, the FMS of Russia in the framework of the Council of Heads of Migration Bodies of the CIS member States devotes special attention to lending support to the citizens of the CIS member States who temporarily work in the countries of the Commonwealth while they are adapting to social and cultural conditions of the host country.

The leadership of the FMS of Russia has many times made statements in the mass media concerning the development of tolerance towards migrants.

Paragraph 127

The Federal Migration Service of Russia has drafted a concept for the state migration policy (hereinafter – Draft Concept), with one of the main principles of such policy being zero tolerance to discrimination in any form.

In addition, the Draft Concept provides for promotion in society of culture of relations between different nations and religions, developing among immigrants and the receiving community skills required for intercultural communication, combating xenophobia, national and racial intolerance.

The draft Concept of the State Migration Policy (hereinafter referred to as the draft Concept) was considered and approved at the Security Council of the Russian Federation meeting on April 27, 2012.

The draft Concept envisages promoting the culture of inter-ethnic and interreligious relations, teaching migrants and the host community the skills of intercultural communication as well as combating xenophobia, national and racial intolerance.

The draft Concept also comprises a section on the improvement of approaches to the labour migration through working out differential mechanisms for attracting, selecting and employing different categories of foreign workers.

The draft Plan of Activities to Implement the Concept in 2012-2015 (first stage) envisages conducting the activities aimed at social and cultural integration of migrants into the Russian society, development of tolerance, prevention of discrimination and xenophobia and organizing information campaigns in the mass media.

Paragraph 130

Following the adoption of Federal Law No. 86-FZ, foreign nationals arriving visa-free can now be employed by individuals. The said foreign nationals have the right to buy a licence from a territorial office of the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation for a period between one and three months which can then be prolonged for up to 12 months. In addition, the term of a licence is extended by the period for which the tax on personal income is paid in the form of a fixed upfront payment. In such case, there is no need to visit a territorial office of the Federal Migration Service of the Russian Federation.

When the term of the licence is extended and the temporary stay period of a foreign citizen is extended too.

From July 1, 2010, to April 30, 2012, 1 million 240 thousand licences have been issued.

The introduction of the licences allowed to settle the legal status of a significant number of foreign nationals and legalize their income derived from work for individuals. The licences accounted for 67.8% of all work permits issued in 2011 (810 thousand out of 1 million 195 thousand).

As for the registration of migrant workers (at the place of sojourn), the procedure can be accomplished both at the place of residence and at the place of actual stay or work. Moreover, it is not the duty of a foreign national to provide the documents, but of the individual at whose place the foreign national actually lives (stays) or for whom he works.

The same Federal Law has introduced the concept of a "highly skilled specialist" which is applied to a foreign national who has experience, skills and achievements in a specific area, if, according to the conditions of his employment, his salary (wage) meets the requirements specified by the Federal law.

Foreign workers, who deem to be highly skilled specialists, and their family members has received a number of additional opportunities: they can get a work permit and a multi-entry work visa for up to three years, as well as a residence permit, they also enjoy the exemption from the procedure of residency registration for up to 90 days.

Paragraphs 142, 144, 186

Following the results of the comprehensive course for general education institutions "Foundations of religious cultures and secular ethics", which includes the foundations of Orthodox, Islamic, Buddhist, Judaic and world religious cultures, as well as foundations of secular ethics (hereinafter the FRCSE course) and which was tested in 21 regions, the Government of the Russian Federation has approved the plan of activities to introduce this course into general educational institutions from 2012/13 academic year in all constituent entities of the Russian Federation.

The Decrees of the Ministry of education and science of the Russian Federation updated the federal component of state educational standards for primary general, basic general and secondary (complete) general education, the federal basic curriculum and exemplary curricula for educational institutions of the Russian Federation implementing general education programs (Decree No. 69 of January 31, 2012 and No. 74 – of February 1, 2012).

Since September 1 of the 2012/13 academic year the course "Foundations of religious cultures and secular ethics" is included in the educational program for the fourth grade as a compulsory subject, which consists of 34 hours.

This comprehensive course is targeted at motivating students (minor teenagers) to make conscious and honest deeds, based on knowledge and respect for cultural and religious traditions of the multinational peoples of Russia, as well as to dialogue with representatives of other cultures and ideologies.

The FRCSE course consists of 6 modules: "The foundations of the Orthodox culture", "The foundations of the Islamic culture", "The foundations of the Buddhist culture", "The foundations of the Judaic culture", "The foundations of world religious cultures", "The foundations of secular ethics".

This religious cultures module is designed to provide general acquaintance with relevant religions, their cultures (history, traditions, moral values, outstanding representatives etc.) and does not give critical assessments to other religions and ideologies.

The teaching of secular ethics is based on civil moral values and norms universal for all Russians. In state and municipal educational institutions acquaintance with foundations of religious cultures and secular ethics upon the choice of pupil's parents corresponds with the principles of freedom of conscious and religion, respect of existing diversity views with regard to education, it also helps students exercise their right to the free choice of opinions and convictions (paragraph 4 of Article 14 of the Law).

In accordance with constitutional norms which prohibit establishing obligatory state ideology or religion (Articles 13 and 14 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation), studying of religious cultures and secular ethics is carried out upon the free choice of students and parents (legal representatives) of minor students.

During the FRCSE course testing the module "The foundations of secular ethics" was mostly welcomed and was chosen for studying by 42% of parents. 30% of parents preferred their children study "The foundations of the Orthodox culture", 18% - "The foundations of the world religious cultures", 9% - "The foundations of the Islamic culture". 1% of parents chose "The foundations of the Buddhist culture" as a subject and less than 1% - "The foundations of the Judaic culture".

Paragraph 152

The statutory right of people to organize in a registered religious association (religious organization) or in an unregistered religious association (religious group) is a democratic and liberal norm. All religious organizations enjoy the same benefits, including tax and rate preferences, rights and obligations.

State registration of religious organizations is performed in accordance with the Federal Law on State Registration of Legal Entities and Individual Entrepreneurs and is subject to the special procedure applicable to the registration of religious organizations under Federal Law No. 125-FZ.

In addition, Federal Law No. 125-FZ also stipulates in which cases religious organizations may be denied of state registration (article 12). More specifically, a religious organization may be denied of state registration, if:

- the objectives or activities of the religious organization concerned contradict the Constitution or the legislation of the Russian Federation, in which case references to specific articles of laws shall be provided;
- the organization to be created is not recognized to be a religious organization;
- the charter or any other submitted document does not meet the requirements of Russian legislation, or any information provided therein is not true;
- the organization with the same name has already been registered in the state register of legal entities;
- the founder(s) is/are incompetent.

As of January 1, 2012, 54 religious organizations of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), 76 religious organizations of the Society for Krishna Consciousness and 410 religious organizations of Jehovah's Witnesses.

Paragraphs 168-169

Article 10 of the Framework Convention does not contain any regulations governing selection of the alphabet. Linguists proved that graphical signs are not connected with the language itself in any way and do not hinder or facilitate its functioning.

Being guided by scientific data and expert opinions, the Government of the Russian Federation does not share the opinion that the Latin alphabet is particularly convenient for Turkic or Finno-Ugric languages, since its introduction is connected with the use of a considerable number of diacritic signs and combinations of letters, which would slow down rather than simplify transliteration of speech. The Tatar language used the Latin alphabet from 1927 to 1939. The fact that the Latin alphabet was used for 12 years is not enough to make a conclusion about its traditional use.

The Latin alphabet was used for teaching the Karelian language during a short period of time, from 1938 to 1940. During that period approximately 200 books were published using the Latin alphabet. In 1940, the republic was transformed into a Karelo-Finnish Republic and the use of the Karelian as a written language ceased, since it was replaced with the Finnish language. The Latin alphabet in Karelia was reintroduced in 1987 and was used to 2002 until the Law on the Languages of the Peoples of the Russian Federation was amended. In other words, Karelian people used the Latin alphabet for writing in their native language for 18 years, and for 15 years for writing in the Finnish language.

Paragraph 207

According to All-Russia census 2010, the population of Komi-Permyaks amounts to 81 094 persons or 3.08% of the total population of the Perm Kray. Komi-Permyaks are the third largest ethnic minority in the region after Russians and Tatars (115 544 persons or 4.38%). Allocation of "ethnic quotas" is a violation of citizens' rights to elect and to be elected. If only ethnic Komi-Pemyaks from the territory of the Komi-Perm Okrug are nominated as candidates, it shall be, for example, a violation of rights of the Russian population from the Yurlin area of the Komi-Perm Okrug, which has 98% of the Russian population. Such formal allocation of seats in government bodies based on ethnic identity is a violation of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, which declares equal rights of all citizens regardless of their ethnic or religious affiliation. Two single-mandate electoral districts have been established on the territory of the Komi-Perm Okrug. It is worth mentioning, that in the Legislative Assembly of the Komi-Perm Kray there are Komi-Permyak deputies, elected by the mixed population of the Komi-Perm Okrug. The special status of the Okrug is also enshrined in the Charter of the Perm Kray. At the same time, ethnic factor (including knowledge of language) is taken into account by regional authorities while taking decisions on staffing issues.

Paragraph 208

Federal Law No. 40-FZ on Amendments to the Federal Law on the General Principles for the Organization of Legislative (Representative) and Executive Public Authorities in the Subjects of the Russian Federation, and to the Federal Law on the Main Guarantees of Suffrage and the Right to Participate in Referenda for the Citizens of the Russian Federation (hereinafter – Federal Law No. 40-FZ) was adopted on May 2, 2012 and is aimed to introduce electiveness of top public officials in the subjects of the Russian Federation (heads of senior executive authorities in the subjects of the Russian Federation) by the citizens of the Russian Federation that live in the subject of the Russian Federation concerned and pursuant to federal law are eligible to vote based on universal, equal and direct suffrage with voting by ballot.

Federal Law No. 40-FZ becomes effective on June 1, 2012, and the first elections of top public officials in the subjects of the Russian Federation will take place in autumn 2012 in those regions where the term of office of such officials expires before January 1, 2013.

Paragraph 225

In all subjects of the Russian Federation, where numerically small indigenous peoples live, various programs are implemented to facilitate self-employment of unemployed people and promote creation by unemployed people, which started their own business, of new jobs to employ other unemployed people. Unemployed people belonging to numerically small indigenous peoples of the North, which have received assistance in starting their own business, work mainly in the field of traditional trades and activities, production and selling of agricultural products and animal products, or lumbering.

Regional healthcare programs are being implemented in 24 out of 28 subjects of the Russian Federation, where numerically small indigenous peoples of the North live. New medical care standards are introduced for people belonging to numerically small indigenous peoples of the North.

More than 1,000 medical organizations are involved in the activities within regional healthcare modernization programs in areas where numerically small indigenous peoples of the North live.

While special measures aimed at reducing alcohol abuse and preventing alcoholism among indigenous peoples are taken in all 28 subjects of the Russian Federation where people belonging to numerically small indigenous peoples of the North live, in 7 subjects of the Russian Federation (Vologda Oblast, Krasnoyarsk Krai, Chukotka Autonomous District, Republic of Altai, Kemerovo Oblast, Tyumen Oblast and Zabaykalsky Krai) special programs are being implemented to reduce alcohol consumption.

Steps taken in the field of healthcare have improved the overall situation with the protection of health of numerically small indigenous peoples of the North. For example, from 2005 to 2010, a tendency towards natural population growth (reduced natural population decrease) was seen in most regions where these indigenous peoples live.

In addition, in 2009 vs. 2008 the number of doctors and nursing staff providing medical care to numerically small indigenous peoples of the North increased by 6.4 and 4.2%, respectively.

In general, availability of nursing staff in areas where numerically small indigenous peoples of the North live is greater than on average in Russia by 31.3%, while availability of doctors exceeds the average figure for Russia in four subjects of the Russian Federation (in Chukotka Autonomous District – by 76.9%, in Komi Republic – by 67.3%, in Khanty-Mansi Autonomous District – by 49.4% and in Tyumen Oblast – by 42.4%).

Paragraphs 229- 233

As of April 1, 2009 all displaced persons from Chechnya that were registered by territorial offices of the Federal Migration Service of Russia in accordance with form No. 7 on the territory of the Russian Federation were deregistered upon their requests for return to their previous places of living.

People that suffered from the crisis in Chechnya and are permanently residing in Chechnya received compensation for lost accommodation and property: 75,510 families (124,745 people) received compensation worth RUB 26.43 billion. People that were affected by the crisis in Chechnya and left Chechnya forever receive compensation for lost accommodation and/or property in accordance with resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation dated April 30, 1997 No. 510 on Payment of Compensations for Lost Accommodation and/or Property to People that were Affected by Resolution of the Crisis in the Chechen Republic and left the Chechen Republic Forever. Under this resolution, compensation worth RUB 4.075 billion was paid to more than 38,000 families.

Currently, the number of displaced persons from Chechnya makes 2,589 families/7,094 people, including 1,448 families/4,885 people that voluntarily refused to return to Chechnya and decided to live in the Republic of Ingushetia.

The federal target program Socioeconomic Development of the Republic of Ingushetia in 2010-2016 approved by resolution of the Government of the Russian Federation dated December 24, 2009 No. 1087 provides for state assistance with accommodation to displaced persons living in the Republic of Ingushetia, starting from 2011.

This program includes target subsidies worth RUB 4.2 billion from the federal budget to the budget of the Republic of Ingushetia for providing social allowance to displaced persons. Specific measures to assist displaced persons with accommodation will be implemented by the Government of the Republic of Ingushetia.

As far as families of displaced persons from Chechnya, which are registered in other subjects of the Russian Federation – 1,141 families/2,209 people, are concerned, assistance with accommodation will be provided as special payouts in the form of a state housing certificate for purchase of accommodation.

In addition, under the federal target program Socioeconomic Development of the Chechen Republic in 2008-2012 assistance people receive social allowance for restoration of their private houses destroyed during the crisis in Chechnya (under the program RUB 2,824.4 M was allocated for this purpose for providing social allowance to 3,388 people, and RUB 1,123.3 M was already paid, with 592 people received their allowance completely, and 1,392 people received their allowance partially).