



**Convention on the Rights
of Persons with Disabilities**

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Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

**Consideration of reports submitted by States
parties under article 35 of the Convention**

Initial reports of States parties due in 2010

Jordan^{*}, ^{}**

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* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

** Attachments can be examined by referring to the files in the Secretariat.

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I. Basic document

1. Overview of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

A. Location and borders

1. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is located in western Asia and is bordered by the Syrian Arab Republic to the north, Palestine to the west, Iraq to the east, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to the south and east.

B. System of government

2. Jordan is a constitutional monarchy made up of three branches: the executive, which includes the Cabinet; the legislature, consisting of the Chamber of Deputies and the Senate; and the judiciary, represented by the Jordanian Judicial Council.

C. General information and statistics

3. Jordan has an area of 89,213 square kilometres and its capital is Amman. Most of its population works in the service sector. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita is 3,194.5 dinars (JD), and Arabic is the official language of the State. The population is characterized by religious, ethnic and cultural diversity.

4. Jordan has a population of 6.5 million distributed over 12 governorates, mostly concentrated in the governorates of Amman and Zarqa. Population density is 68.8 persons per square kilometre; 37.3 per cent of the population is under the age of 15, and life expectancy at birth is 73 years.

5. Education indicators: students account for 31.5 per cent of the population, the total number of students enrolled in the various stages of education in 2011/12 being 1,883,400. The number of female students in basic education represents 95.5 per cent of the number of male students, while the corresponding proportion at secondary level is 109.7 per cent, and at undergraduate level 103.5 per cent. The illiteracy rate of those aged 15 years and over is around 7 per cent.

2. General human rights situation in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

6. Jordan has acceded to the main United Nations human rights treaties, the most important being:

- The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ratified in 1975 and published in the *Official Gazette*, issue No. 4764 of 15 June 2006;
- The International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, ratified in 1974 and published in the *Official Gazette*, issue No. 4764 of 15 June 2006;
- The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women, ratified in 1992 and published in the *Official Gazette*, issue No. 4839 of 26 July

2007, with reservations to article 9 on nationality and article 16 on marriage and family life. The reservation to article 15 of the Convention concerning the movement of persons and the freedom to choose their residence has been lifted;

- The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, ratified in 1991 and published in the *Official Gazette*, issue No. 4764 of 15 June 2006;
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, ratified in 1991, with a reservation to article 14 on freedom of thought, conscience and religion, and articles 20 and 21 on adoption, and published in the *Official Gazette*, issue No. 4787 of 16 October 2006. The two optional protocols to the Convention have also been ratified, the first one, on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, in 2006, and the second, on the involvement of children in armed conflict, in 2007;
- The Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 31 March 2008 and published in the *Official Gazette*, issue No. 4895 the same year.

7. In compliance with its international obligations, the Government has established specialized bodies to monitor and follow up on progress made in implementation of human rights treaties and to prepare international and national reports thereon. These entities include:

(a) The National Centre for Human Rights, which was established under Act No. 51 of 2006 as a national institution with legal personality and financial and administrative independence. The Centre enjoys complete independence with regard to management of its intellectual, political and humanitarian activities and human rights work.

(b) The Jordanian National Commission for Women, which was established as a quasi-governmental body on 12 March 1992 by decision of the Office of the Prime Minister and is chaired by Her Royal Highness Princess Basma bint Talal. It is the reference point regarding women's activities and issues for all government institutions;

(c) The National Council for Family Affairs, which was established under Act No. 27 of 2001 and is chaired by Her Majesty Queen Rania. It coordinates and facilitates the work of partners from national governmental and non-governmental institutions, international organizations and the private sector that work on family issues;

(d) The Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities, which was established pursuant to article 6 of the Act on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (No. 31 of 2007). The Council is an independent national institution whose role is to support persons with disabilities, defend their interests, design policies, and plan and coordinate with all parties with a view to uniting efforts to improve the living conditions of persons with disabilities and facilitate their integration in society. The functions and powers of the Council are set out in article 7 of the Act. They include: drafting policies on persons with disabilities; proposing legislative amendments relating to persons with disabilities and regulations and instructions to help give effect to the Act; and participating in efforts to realize the goals set out in international instruments and treaties that deal with persons with disabilities.

On 6 January 2009, by a decision of the Cabinet, the Council was assigned the task of preparing the country's initial I report on the human rights situation of persons with disabilities in the Kingdom to be submitted to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

8. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has acceded to several conventions of the International Labour Organization that deal with human rights issues, such as the following: follows:

- The Right to Organize and Collective Bargaining Convention, (No. 98), which was ratified in 1963 and published in the *Official Gazette* the same year;
 - C29 the Forced Labour Convention, and C105 the Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, the former ratified in 1966 and the latter in 1958;
 - C100 the Equal Remuneration Convention, ratified in 1966 and published in the *Official Gazette* the same year;
 - C111 the Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention was ratified in 1963 and published in the *Official Gazette* the same year;
 - C138 the Minimum Age Convention was ratified in 1998 and published the same year;
 - C159 the Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention 1983 was ratified on 13 May 2003;
 - C182, the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention was ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan in 2000 and published in the *Official Gazette* in 2003.
9. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is a member of the League of Arab States.
10. With regard to regional instruments, the Kingdom has signed the Cairo Declaration on Human Rights in Islam, published in 1990 by a conference of foreign ministers of Islamic States. It is a guidance instrument that does not require ratification.
11. The Arab Labour Organization has adopted Convention No. 17 of 1993 on the employment of persons with disabilities to guarantee their right to work. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is committed to implementing it.
12. The Kingdom has ratified the Arab Charter on Human Rights adopted at the Arab Summit held in Tunis in 2004 and published in the *Official Gazette* the same year.
13. In 2002, the Kingdom was one of the first Arab countries to ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, which was published in the *Official Gazette* the same year.¹ It has also ratified the four Geneva Conventions on international humanitarian law.
14. Lastly, Jordan is one of the few countries in the region to have ratified international human rights treaties in general, with a focus on the rights of certain groups, including persons with disabilities, in the belief that a society that accords the necessary care and attention to the rights of this category of persons is one that is characterized by progress, prosperity and social solidarity.

II. Rights of persons with disabilities in the light of the articles of the Convention

Introduction

15. The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has the honour to submit to the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities the first report on the legislation, policies and programmes that the Kingdom has adopted to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

¹ Report on the human rights situation in Jordan for 2009 published by the National Centre for Human Rights.

16. The Kingdom ratified the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities on 31 March 2008, thereby expressing its commitment to implementing its provisions in order to achieve its aim of protecting the rights of persons with disabilities and ensuring their full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

17. In Jordan the rights of persons with disabilities enjoy political support at every level. Expressions of support intensified with the drafting of the Convention. After signing and ratifying the Convention, the Government took the following political measures to support these rights:

- (a) Formation in 2006 of a royal commission to draft the national strategy on the rights of persons with disabilities;
- (b) Adoption of the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, 2007-2015;
- (c) Publication of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act (No. 31 of 2007);
- (d) Establishment of the Higher Council for Persons with Disabilities as an independent national institution responsible for policymaking and planning.

Preparation of the report

18. The report was prepared according to the guidelines for the preparation of reports on the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and international human rights treaties. This report supplements the common core document submitted by the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

19. For the purposes of preparing and revising the draft report, specialized technical committees were formed and workshops held bringing together specialists on legislation, health, education, employment, sports and recreation, culture, rehabilitation, facilities, media and information, statistics, policy and programmes, international cooperation and women and children's issues. Members of civil society organizations took part and there was broad participation by persons with disabilities and the organizations that represent them.

20. The Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities coordinated the work of the technical committees and organized workshops during the preparatory and revision stages. It did this in cooperation with the chairs and coordinators of the specialized committees, of which there were 13.

21. This report covers the legislation, policies and programmes introduced by the Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan between 2007 and 2011 to improve the conditions of persons with disabilities in line with the philosophy, approach and the letter and the spirit of the Convention.

22. The information in this report draws on the following sources:

- (a) The policies adopted by the Kingdom to enhance the dignity and protect the rights of people with disabilities;
- (b) The relevant national legislation;
- (c) The national programmes formulated to implement the rights enshrined in the Convention;
- (d) Data provided by State institutions to help identify and remove obstacles that prevent or limit the participation of persons with disabilities in various fields;

(e) The observations and opinions of experts on disability, as gathered in consultations;

(f) The views and proposals of disabled people's and civil society organizations about obstacles, through consultative meetings.

23. The draft report was put on the website of the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities and the public was asked to comment and make proposals on it.

24. The draft report was presented to an extended meeting of specialists and interested persons in order to gather their comments and views.

Reservations

25. The Kingdom has no reservations regarding the articles of the Convention.

Optional protocol

26. The Government of Jordan has signed the Optional protocol and will ratify it after examination of the obligations pursuant to it.

Measures to implement and review the outcomes of United Nations conferences and summits

27. Jordan has implemented many of the actions and measures set forth in international and Arab conferences, meetings and instruments on the rights of persons with disabilities, including the Standard Rules on the Equalization of Opportunities for Persons with Disabilities, and the Arab Decade and Arab Charter of Human Rights. These actions have reflected positively on the situation of persons with disabilities in the country, earning it a world-class reputation and appreciation expressed in its receiving the Roosevelt Award in recognition of these achievements.

General provisions of the Convention (arts. 1-4)

28. Article 2 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007, defines a person with disabilities as, "Any person with total or partial permanent impairment of any of his/her senses or physical, psychological or mental abilities to a degree that limits the possibility of learning, training or work so that he/she is unable to meet the ordinary requirements of his/her life in the same conditions as a person without a disability". This definition is consistent with the philosophy of the Convention, as it views persons with disabilities as persons with full rights, but it does not explicitly refer to the role of environmental obstacles, cultural and legislative barriers in limiting full participation.

29. Although the definition does not refer to environmental obstacles, the current wording achieves the goals of access by persons with disabilities to services from the institutions supplying them. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities sought to adopt a definition consistent with the one in the Convention.

30. The classification of disabilities is linked to the definition contained in national legislation. The Ministry of Health based the classification of disabilities on the diagnosis mechanism of the Diagnosis of Disabilities Centre (mental, hearing, visual and motor).²

31. Despite the global estimate of the scale of disability at 10 per cent of total population, the data available on its scale in Jordan is still relatively limited³ for various cultural and technical reasons. The available data is based on the results of partial surveys and the reports of diagnosis centres and service institutions. This suggests that there is an urgent need to conduct a thorough and comprehensive survey to identify the scale, type, nature and prevalence of disability, the level of services and facilities available to people with disabilities, and the obstacles and barriers they face that limit their enjoyment of their rights.

32. The Act in force contains definitions of the following concepts:

(a) Discrimination on the basis of disability: “Any limitation, restriction, exclusion, revocation or denial on grounds of disability of any of the rights or freedoms set forth in this Act or any other act”. This definition does not, however, include the concept of denial of reasonable accommodation;

(b) The concept of reasonable accommodation, called reasonable equipment, is “the equipment necessary to adapt environmental conditions in terms of space and time, and the provision where necessary of devices, tools and aids to ensure the exercise of their rights to persons with disabilities on an equal basis with others, provided that does not result in serious damage to the party concerned”. Moreover, article 3 of the same Act affirms the principle of provision of reasonable equipment to enable a disabled person to enjoy some right or freedom or to enable him/her to benefit from a particular service. Article 4, on the rights of persons with disabilities, emphasises the provision of reasonable equipment;

² Ministry of Health letter No. MAT/people with disabilities/166 of 21/2/2012 to the Higher Council on the classification of disability.

³ The data of the Population and Housing Census of 2004 puts the proportion of disability in Jordan at 1.23 per cent:

- The Ministry of Health Diagnosis of Disability Centre conducts diagnosis from birth to 18 years, and diagnosed 40,259 cases of disability between 1990 and the end of 2009;
- The data of the Ministry of Social Development Directorate for Disabled Affairs indicate that 2,941 cases were diagnosed by the Early Diagnosis of Disabilities and Social Rehabilitation Centre in the Tall al-Mantah region and the Early Diagnosis of Disabilities Centre in the Hattin region in the period 2007-2009;
- The Ministry of Health district medical committees, which are responsible for diagnosing cases in those over 18, have published no reports on numbers diagnosed;
- The social rehabilitation programmes supervised by the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities in cooperation with Handicap International and the Ladies of Dalil association conducted a house-to-house survey in the district of Dalil in 2009 that found that 4.8 per cent of people had a disability;
- The Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities is building a database of national information containing complete data on persons with disabilities and the type of services provided to them. It has conducted house-to-house field surveys in cooperation with local organizations through social rehabilitation programmes;
- The Higher Council has helped the Statistics Office to include disabled issues in surveys the Office conducts periodically, including: the updated job opportunities survey, the survey on employment and pay, and a series of economic surveys. It has also reviewed and amended the section on persons with disabilities in the Population and Housing Census to be conducted in 2014.

(c) Communication and language are not directly defined in the Act in force and there is little reference to this concept in the provisions on education and higher education (art. 4 (b) (iii) and (ix));

(d) The Act in force does not include the definition of universal design contained in the Convention, in article 4 (e) referring only to environmental construction-related facilities, public transport and information technology.

33. Article 7 of the Jordanian Constitution guarantees the principle of respect for the inherent dignity of persons and their individual autonomy, including freedom to make their own choices and independence. This principle has found expression in the vision of the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, which stipulates “the creation of a society in which persons with disabilities enjoy a decent sustainable life that affords them participation based on fairness and equality”.

34. Article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution lays down the principle of equality and non-discrimination, and article 2 of the Act in force defines discrimination on the basis of disability. People who suffer from discrimination as a result of lack of knowledge of the mechanisms that ensure the application of these principles can complain of discrimination against them.

35. The Act in force includes provisions that ensure full and effective participation and inclusion of persons with disabilities in the community, as follows:

(a) Integration is defined in article 2 as “measures, programmes, plans and policies aimed at full participation of disabled persons in all aspects of life without any form of discrimination and on an equal basis with others”;

(b) The Act contains a set of principles and provisions that ensure the full participation of persons with disabilities in the development of plans and programmes and decision-making concerning them, in addition to integration in all aspects of life and in all fields at various levels, including their inclusion in comprehensive development plans;

(c) The involvement of persons with disabilities in the development of policies, legislation and programmes, ensuring their integration through their representation on the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, on which they account for one third of members;

(d) Legislative provisions requiring the integration of persons with disabilities in the programmes of educational, health, labour, social life, political, public, sports, cultural and recreational institutions;

(e) Examples of this are the active participation of persons with disabilities and their organizations, as well as the organizations that represented them in the preparation of the national strategy and the Act and the stages of preparation of this report, and their active participation in raising awareness of their rights, such as the campaign to prohibit and criminalize the sterilization of women with mental disabilities and the “Equal” campaign to ensure their political participation.

36. The principle of respect for difference and acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity and humanity is provided for in article 3 (e) of the Act in force.⁴

⁴ Article 3 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007, stipulates: “The philosophy of the Kingdom towards disabled persons flows from Arab Islamic values, the Jordanian Constitutions, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles and provisions set forth in the international conventions on the rights of persons with disabilities, and emphasizes the following pillars: (e) acceptance of persons with disabilities as part of human diversity”.

37. Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Jordanian Constitution enshrines the principle of equality of opportunity,⁵ and this is affirmed in article 3, paragraph (c), of the law in force.⁶ The second phase of the National Strategy also includes this principle.

38. Legislation and policies deal with the right to ease of access. This is stipulated in article 4 (e) of the Act in force⁷ and the National Strategy gives it special attention.

39. Jordanian legislation has established the principle of equality between men and women in article 6, paragraph 1, of the Constitution,⁸ and article 3 (d)⁹ of the Act in force.

40. Despite the emphasis on this principle, there is discrimination in many areas for cultural reasons and because of the community's general view of women, women with disabilities in particular. Examples include the limited participation of women with disabilities in public life, employment, education and recreation, and the right to marry and have children and live independently.

41. Article 3 (e) of the Act in force guarantees the principle of the right of children with disabilities to build their capabilities, develop their skills and enhance their integration in society.¹⁰

42. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has introduced several legislative, administrative and other measures to enforce the rights enshrined in the Convention.

43. In 2009, with the participation of all the relevant parties, the National Strategy was comprehensively assessed and revised. Its plans and programmes were amended and new themes were added on violence, exploitation, networking with civil society organizations and the creation of a monitoring, follow-up and evaluation mechanism.

44. In order to guarantee enforcement of the rights of persons with disabilities, a liaison officer has been appointed to liaise between the Higher Council and official and non-official bodies to coordinate institutions' means of implementing their obligations under the Convention and national legislation and policies.

⁵ Article 6, paragraph 2, of the Jordanian Constitutions stipulates: "The Government shall ensure work and education within the limits of its capabilities, and shall ensure a state of tranquillity and equal opportunities to all Jordanians".

⁶ Article 3 (c) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in force provides for: "Equal opportunities and non-discrimination between persons on the grounds of disability".

⁷ Article 4 (e) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act provides as follows:

1. Application of the National Building Code for Persons with Disabilities issued by the competent authorities in all public and private sector building open to the public. It shall be applied to existing buildings to the extent possible.
2. No building permit shall be issued to any party without confirmation of the commitment to the provisions contained in subparagraph 1.
3. Public transport companies, tourist offices and car rental offices shall secure at least one means of transport with specifications enabling disabled persons to use or move in and out of it easily.
4. Access of persons with disabilities to technology and information systems, including the Internet and the various print and audiovisual media, and the emergency services, including provision of sign language interpreters.

⁸ Article 6, paragraph 1, of the Jordanian Constitution stipulates that "Jordanians shall be equal before the law. There shall be no discrimination between them as regards their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion".

⁹ Article 3 (d) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act stipulates: "Equality between men and women with disabilities in terms of rights and duties".

¹⁰ Article 3 (e) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act stipulates: "Guarantee the rights of children with disabilities, build their capabilities, develop their skills and enhance their integration in society".

45. In order to enhance the capacity of institutions to implement the provisions of the Convention, the Higher Council has adopted a set of joint programmes with ministries, such as a project to build the capacities of Ministry of Education officers, and the development of accreditation and quality standards for institutions and special education programmes.

46. In fulfilment of its obligations to review legislation to ensure the removal of all forms of discrimination against persons with disabilities, the Government has, with the participation of persons with disabilities, taken a range of actions including:

(a) Amendment of article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution¹¹ to include persons with disabilities in paragraph 5 thereof;

(b) Promulgation of the Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007;¹²

(c) Amendment of the percentage contained in article 13 of the Jordanian Employment Act¹³ under Interim Act No. 26 of 2010, equal to the percentage contained in the Act in force, which is 4 per cent;

(d) Coverage of persons with disabilities by the Social Security Act 2010 and allowing them optional participation in and benefit from old-age insurance (in case of lack of access to job opportunities);

(e) Amendment of electoral procedures to facilitate the participation of persons with disabilities in political life;

(f) Encouragement of the establishment of associations, centres and institutions for persons with disabilities through promulgation of the Associations Act amending the system of centres and institutions for persons with disabilities, No. 96 of 2008, and its directives.

47. With regard to remedies, the Constitution and legislation of Jordan guarantee individuals the right to sue, to address the authorities, and recourse through courts of different kinds and degrees, and to submit objections and complaints to the public administration, the Office of the Ombudsman, the National Centre for Human Rights, the Higher Council and civil society organizations defending the rights of individuals and groups.

48. Despite the multiplicity of legal and administrative means of action and appeal available to individuals if their rights and status are infringed, people with disabilities do not know about them or how to use them to claim their rights, and rarely have recourse to them because of difficulty of access and the slowness of proceedings, which undermine confidence in lodging a request for redress.

49. In order to promote the full enforcement of the rights contained in the Convention without discrimination on grounds of disability, a series of measures has been taken, including:

(a) The Higher Council has included in its membership the secretaries-general of the Ministries of Finance, Health, Labour, Education, Social Development, and Youth and Sport, and of Greater Amman, in order to oblige these institutions to establish and

¹¹ Article 6, paragraph 5, of the Jordanian Constitution stipulates that “The law shall protect motherhood, childhood and the elderly and shall care for young people and persons with disabilities and protect them from abuse and exploitation”.

¹² The Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007, is appended.

¹³ Article 13 of the Employment Act stipulates: “Employers shall employ the percentage of disabled workers set forth in the Persons with Disabilities Act in force and in accordance with the conditions set forth therein, and shall send to the Ministry a statement of the workers with disabilities they employ and their remuneration”.

implement policies and programmes that achieve equality for persons with disabilities in obtaining appropriate goods and services without discrimination;

(b) Surveys have been conducted to identify the scale and nature of the legislative, environmental and cultural obstacles and barriers to accessing goods and services faced by persons with disabilities, demonstrating the infringement of their rights and status and how to respond to such infringements;

(c) The authorities that plan, construct, implement and manage buildings and public facilities have been reviewing the standards and specifications in place to ensure compliance with the rules of universal design;

(d) Provision of information technology to persons with disabilities and facilitated access to educational materials;

(e) In order to encourage the use of information technology and help people with visual impairment to use it for communication and learning, each blind university student is provided with a talking computer, in addition to equipment and educational programmes and materials, free of charge;

(f) Establishment of a website to facilitate the access of people with disabilities to the services offered to them;

(g) Capacity-building programmes for professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities in the education, employment, health and other fields;

(h) In addition to measures to protect the rights of persons with disabilities contained in the Convention, the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has granted them additional privileges to give them access to university education outside competitive frameworks and at nominal fees not exceeding 10 per cent of the true cost.

50. The provisions of the Convention apply to the geographic and demographic components of the Jordanian State and no ethnic, religious, age or other group is excluded from them.

Article 5

Equality and non-discrimination

51. National legislation guarantees equality before the law and legal protection to all citizens through legislation on the courts to obtain a fair trial. People with disabilities can go to court on the basis of the provisions of the law. The legislator has given the courts the power to determine capacity (performance and duty).

52. With regard to reasonable accommodation to ensure effective protection, several courses have been held to train the judiciary to comply with the terms of the provision on reasonable accommodation in all phases of litigation, including the provision of sign language interpreters. Much still needs to be done to provide the necessary accommodation to protect persons with disabilities, such as Braille, environmental and other facilities.

53. Jordanian legislation includes legal provisions that give people with disabilities additional opportunities in terms of education, work, transport and special equipment. This is done through:

(a) Reduction of university tuition fees for students with disabilities to 10 per cent of total university fees for credit hours, and acceptance of everyone who obtains 65 per cent and above in Jordanian universities, including bridging;

(b) Jordanian legislation requires institutions and public and private sector businesses to employ people with disabilities so that they account for no less than 4 per cent of the total workforce;

(c) There are customs and tax facilities to enable persons with disabilities to obtain the equipment and services they need, including special vehicles, medical, educational and sports equipment, assistance, and to employ health and personal care workers for the severely disabled. The facilities also include the exemption of schools, centres and institutions for the disabled from all customs duties and general sales tax.

Article 8

Awareness-raising

54. The Jordanian legislator seeks to guarantee the rights of persons with disabilities and to protect them through awareness of those rights. Articles 3 (j)¹⁴ and 7 (b)¹⁵ of the Act in force stress the need to raise awareness of the issues affecting persons with disabilities and impose an obligation to do so. This is done by:

(a) The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities at all stages included a special focus on raising awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities in order to enhance their integration into society;

(b) A series of training workshops and programmes on the Convention and mechanisms to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities has been organized for media professionals and civil society organizations. The Higher Council monitors, follows up and develops the awareness-raising carried out by media and civil society organizations through the media committee set up for this purpose;

(c) As a result of the awareness-raising efforts, several media organizations¹⁶ and professionals have run programmes designed to change stereotypes of people with disabilities and move to a human rights view of them as part of human diversity;

(d) With regard to training people to raise awareness of the rights of people with disabilities, several specialized programmes and workshops have been run on leadership and communications skills for persons with disabilities in various regions of the country;

(e) Workshops have helped to raise awareness and train persons with disabilities and media professionals to identify specialized rights organizations such as “I’m a person with the rights of people with disabilities”, and media professionals specializing in disability issues;

(f) Over the past three years several awareness campaigns have been launched to define and reduce violations of rights, such as the white stick campaign, the campaign to prohibit and criminalize the sterilization of girls with mental disabilities, and the My Place is Among You campaign (inclusive education);

(g) In addition to what has been done by the communications media, organizations and associations have been working to spread awareness of the rights of people with disabilities and how they are defined in the Convention through campaigns on World Disability days.

¹⁴ Article 3 (j) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act stipulates: “Disseminate awareness and education about the issues affecting and rights of persons with disabilities”.

¹⁵ Article 7 (b) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act stipulates: “Partnership with the relevant authorities in the development of a comprehensive national awareness and prevention plan to reduce the incidence of, mitigate and prevent the aggravation of disabilities”.

¹⁶ Television, radio, the press and the Internet.

55. Despite the efforts to change the stereotype of people with disabilities, the negative view remains prevalent in the media. This calls for additional measures and actions to deepen knowledge and change attitudes in order to arrive at a cultural and social environment based on equality and non-discrimination, and enable persons with disabilities to participate and enjoy their rights. Such measures include a unified terminology on disability, preparation of a guide for those working in the awareness-raising field, increased training of media professionals on disability issues, and raising awareness of international instruments and standards on the rights of persons with disabilities.

56. The limited information on the scale, geographical distribution, age structure and characteristics of disability and the living conditions of people with disabilities remains one of the major challenges facing awareness-raising, communications programmes, services and capacity-building efforts.

Article 9

Accessibility

57. The Act in force contains provisions on environmental facilities, including compulsory application of the National Disabled Access Building Regulations.

58. The Act contains a provision on easy access to information by people with disabilities through the provision of technological facilities, an information system and Internet network, and requires the broadcast media, the Press and emergency services to take into account the needs of persons with disabilities, including by providing sign language interpreters.

59. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities at all its stages is in harmony with the provisions of this Act, devoting a section to access that seeks to ensure people with disabilities have equal access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, public facilities and services, and the removal of all barriers in all governorates.

60. The authorities supervising the planning and organization of cities have adopted the National Disabled Access Building Regulations, No. 32 of 1993, which contain rules and standards to give persons with disabilities to and safe use of buildings and public facilities. Compliance with these design standards and implementation are still below the required level, however.

61. Although there are legislative texts guaranteeing persons with disabilities access to public buildings and facilities, the authorities granting licences and those supervising the design, construction and supervision of buildings do not adhere to them as there are no control, monitoring and inspection bodies and no legislation containing deterrent penalties.

62. In light of the low level of compliance with the rules on design appropriate to the needs of people with disabilities, national efforts are being made to activate their application, as follows:

- (a) A series of workshops for a group of engineers on application of the National Disabled Access Building Regulations, No. 32 of 1993;
- (b) Awareness courses on environmental facilities for school students of various age groups;
- (c) Printing and publishing the National Disabled Access Building Regulations and distributing them to engineering firms;

(d) Preparation of a handbook on building requirements for people with disabilities containing specifications and standards for: stops, pavements, walkways, traffic lights and pedestrian crossing areas, in addition to steps and ramps in buildings and public parks, external signage, public phones, public health facilities, ATM machines and lifts.¹⁷

63. Work is under way with some municipal administrations on the gradual environmental planning of public space, including the habilitation and rehabilitation of buildings, pavements and squares.

64. The Act in force contains a clause requiring public transport companies, tourist offices and car rental firms to secure one means of transport with facilitated access for persons with disabilities. Thirteen buses for the use of persons with motor disabilities have been provided through the integrated transportation company, and there is a discount of at least 50 per cent of the bus fare for people with disabilities.

65. Stickers with the international emblem to denote the cars of persons with disabilities have been distributed to the Public Safety Directorate/Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department, and the Jordanian Disabled Sports Union.

66. With regard to facilitating access by persons with disabilities to goods and services, an office with environmental facilities has been allocated on the ground floor of several ministries and government institutions to provide services to the public; parking has been allocated, some health facilities have been adapted, and ramps installed for the use of persons with disabilities.

67. A guide has been issued to some tourist sites for the use of persons with disabilities.

68. Many public institutions have made a formal commitment to providing the necessary access to persons with disabilities and environmental facilities but there are some obstacles that limit access and safe use.

69. Many public institutions and facilities have limited ability to provide services to people with various disabilities. This is exemplified by a lack of or limited environmental configuration, especially of existing old leased buildings, and lack of staff training.

70. Many newly established commercial institutions and centres provide environmental and smart facilities that are superior to the facilities and services provided by public sector institutions.

71. The strategic plan includes long- and short-term goals on environmental facilities for people with disabilities in some institutions and ministries.

Article 10

Right to life

72. The right to life is among the fundamental rights enshrined in the international instruments ratified by the State and in national laws. All individuals enjoy this right on an equal basis and without discrimination.

73. Under the Jordanian Criminal Code, the foetus has a right to life even before birth and a penalty is imposed on those who infringe this right. Jordanian law allows abortion only if the pregnancy poses a threat to the mother's health or to the life of the foetus.¹⁸

¹⁷ Municipality of Greater Amman questionnaire.

¹⁸ Articles 321-325 of the Jordanian Criminal Code and amendments thereto:

Article 321. A woman who through any means performs an abortion on herself or consents to another person applying such means shall be sentenced to six months' to three years' imprisonment.

74. In addition to legislation, religion is a key factor in preserving the life of the human being and outlaws assault upon it.

Article 11

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies

75. Jordanian law guarantees the right of civilians to safety, health and protection from danger and threats, including disasters and crises. This is contained in the Civil Defence Act and the amendments thereto, the Military Criminal Code, Law No. 58 of 2006, and the Hashemite Commission for Military Casualties Act and the amendments thereto, Law No. 13 of 2008.

76. In order to enforce this right the State has established specialized bodies and trained officers to perform civil protection and defence missions in ordinary and exceptional circumstances.

77. In the event of war, armed conflict, natural disaster or crisis requiring intervention to provide relief, aid and protection to victims, the national civil defence agencies cooperate with international relief organizations and the relevant bodies to provide protection, care and support to people at risk. The priorities taken into account include the specificity and needs of persons with disabilities.

78. Given the multiplicity and frequency of armed conflicts in neighbouring countries, specialized relief agencies have been founded, such as the Hashemite Charitable Organization, to respond to the needs of victims inside and outside their countries and to provide refugees and displaced persons fleeing from conflict zones with protection, care and services commensurate with their needs. The priorities taken into account include the specificity and needs of persons with disabilities.

Article 12

Equal recognition before the law

79. Article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution enshrines the principle of equality before the law and non-discrimination between Jordanians as regards their rights and duties on grounds of race, language or religion, including persons with disabilities, who enjoy all rights and bear the same duties without any discrimination. Paragraph 5 of the same article, which was added in recent constitutional amendments, stipulates that the law protects

Article 322. (1) Whoever by any means performs an abortion on a woman with her consent shall be sentenced to one to three years' imprisonment.

(2) If the abortion or the means employed for it result in the death of the woman, the perpetrator shall be sentenced to a minimum of five years' hard labour.

Article 323. (1) Whoever intentionally performs an abortion on a woman without her consent shall be sentenced to up to ten years' hard labour.

(2) The sentence shall not be less than ten years if the abortion or the means employed result in the death of the woman.

Article 324. A woman who performs an abortion on herself in order to save her honour shall benefit from a mitigation of punishment. Similarly, a person who performs any of the acts described in Articles 322 and 323 in order to preserve the honour of a descendant or a relative to the third degree shall benefit from the same mitigation.

Article 325. If the perpetrator in this section is a physician, surgeon, pharmacist, or midwife, the established sentence shall be increased by one third.

motherhood, childhood and old age, and takes care of and protects young people and those with disabilities from abuse and exploitation.

80. The Kingdom's philosophy towards persons with disabilities springs from Arab-Islamic values, the Jordanian Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the principles and provisions set forth in international conventions on the rights of persons with disabilities. According to article 3 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007, these values are based on several pillars, the most important being respect for the rights, dignity and freedom of choice of persons with disabilities, respect for their private life, equality of opportunity, non-discrimination between people on grounds of disability, in addition to equal rights and duties of men and women with disabilities.

81. Legal capacity: The Civil Code, Law No. 43 of 1976, regulates the legal aspects of civil capacity. Under its provisions, capacity has two aspects: duty and performance. The first gives the person the right to obtain rights, such as inheritance and bequest, in which all people are equal. The same Act also regulates matters relating to the support of persons with disabilities in decision-making, article 132 stipulating that, if a person is deaf and dumb or blind and deaf or blind and mute and is therefore unable to express his/her will, the court may appoint a legal guardian to assist him/her in actions where his/her interests so require. In this case, guardianship is restricted to assisting a person with disabilities with decision-making. According to the explanatory memorandum, the guardian may not become involved in risky actions, and assistance is not a bar for lack of capacity but a form of protection. The mission of the judicial assistant is laid down in the court decision. The law gives the judge the authority to assess the extent of the individual's capacity to understand his/her actions. The Civil Code also distinguishes between degrees of mental disability: if legal capacity is restricted for foolishness and stupidity, the person's transactions, instructions and administrative acts will be valid if the court so authorizes. If the person is unable to understand his/her actions, the legal guardian will conclude the actions on his/her behalf. The law also distinguishes between cases of permanent and temporary insanity, whereby if the person recovers, his/her insanity is considered temporary and his/her actions reasonable.

82. The law guarantees the right to contract to all individuals unless capacity is denied or limited by order of the law. This includes the right to inherit property, manage financial affairs, and to take out bank loans and mortgages if the conditions for doing so are fulfilled.

83. According to the Notary Act, No. 11 of 1952, and the amendments thereto under the Justice Act, No. 2 of 2004, the notary shall when entering into any transaction with the clerk of the Department of Justice verify the identity of the parties and ensure that they have capacity to contract. This is stipulated in article 12: "The notary shall verify the identity of the party by presentation of the identity card issued by the Jordanian Civil Status Office or the passport of a non-Jordanian. He/she shall also verify their capacity to contract under the provisions of general laws, ensure the legal validity of their consent, and clearly mention the forename, family name and place of residence of each party in the documents and papers he/she certifies and, if this law so requires, of the witnesses, the parties to the contract and the translator — if there is someone who has made a translation — and the date of certification in both letters and figures, all of it signed and sealed".¹⁹ Article 14 of the same Act stipulates: "If the party is suffering from a disability that prevents him/her from expressing his/her will naturally and that is attested to by a medical report, the notary shall, with the consent of the presiding judge, assign a person to the party to sign the document on his/her behalf in the presence of two witnesses and shall where possible take a

¹⁹ The article was amended under the Justice Act, No. 2 of 2004. The earlier provision was in article 17 of the Notary Act, No. 74 of 1951, under which persons with disabilities were not competent to testify in any civil or commercial transactions.

fingerprint of the person with the disability”. Article 17 on appearance before a notary stipulates: “The parties or their agents shall appear in person before a notary within whose jurisdiction the permanent or temporary place of residence of one of them is located, except in the case of official endorsement. The translator shall fulfil the conditions set forth in this Act”.²⁰

Article 13

Access to justice

84. The Jordanian Constitution guarantees to everyone the right to litigate, Article 101, paragraph 1, providing that the courts are open to all and immune from interference in their affairs. Article 4 (i) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act on litigation states: “(1) Account shall be taken of the health conditions of persons with disabilities in terms of places of arrest, if the nature and circumstances of the case so require. (2) Assistive technology shall be provided to persons with disabilities, including translation of sign language”.

85. With regard to criminal proceedings, article 3 (b) of the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates: “If the victim in a criminal case is under 15 years of age or suffers from a mental disability, the complaint shall be lodged by his/her guardian. If the offence is against property, the complaint shall be accepted from the guardian or the agent”. In order to protect the rights of persons with disabilities, if their interests conflict with the interests of their guardian, paragraph (c) of the same article stipulates: “If the interests of the victim are incompatible with the interests of their representative or if he/she has no one to represent him/her, the public prosecutor shall represent him/her”.

86. Legislative measures to protect the rights of persons with disabilities: The Jordanian Criminal Code contains provisions on persons with mental disabilities: such a person is exempt from punishment if he/she has committed an act or failed to act if at the time of its commission he/she was incapable of understanding his/her actions or of understanding that he/she was prohibited from performing that act or failed to act because of the disturbance of his/her mind. He/she shall be detained in a hospital for the mentally ill where he/she shall receive the care his/her case requires until such time as the medical committee report establishes that he/she is cured and not considered a threat to public safety. This is stipulated in articles 92 and 29. If this happens during execution of judgement, article 29, paragraph 2, of the Criminal Code stipulates that, “A person serving a custodial sentence or detained on remand who becomes insane shall be confined in the hospital referred to in the previous paragraph where he/she shall receive the care his/her case requires, provided that the period of confinement does not exceed the remainder of the sentence execution of which has been suspended, unless the convicted person is a threat to public safety”.

87. The case law of the Court of Cassation in this regard includes Decision No. 342/2004 (Fifth Chamber) of 29 March 2004: “The General Chamber of the Court of Cassation has decided ... and concluded that the intended concept of healing is the healing of the symptoms of the illness or what is known as social recovery. This is when the mental patient is under the influence of treatment so the symptoms of the illness disappear and the patient does not constitute a danger to the community and can live within it. If it is

²⁰ The previous Act, No. 74 of 1951, stipulated: “The parties or their agents shall appear in person before a notary within whose jurisdiction the permanent or temporary place of residence of one of them is located. The witnesses shall be rational adults who know the identity of the parties and shall not be blind or mute, nor shall they or their spouses be ascendants or relatives of the parties. Those presenting shall be acquainted with the identity of the parties. It shall be sufficient for the translator to be of sound mind”.

established in the medical report and the certificates of the psychiatrists who organized the report that he/she is cured of the symptoms, is not a threat to public safety and can live in the community, the conditions required by article 92, paragraph 2, of the Criminal Code shall have been fulfilled regarding the convicted person and require that he/she be released”.

88. Article 231 of the Code of Criminal Procedure stipulates: “If a deaf mute is among the witnesses or the accused and knows how to write, the clerk of the court shall underline the questions and comments and hand them to him/her and he/she shall reply in writing. The clerk of the court shall take charge of all this during the session”.

89. With regard to mental disability, the Code of Criminal Procedure sets forth the measures to be taken to protect such persons, article 233 stipulating that: “(1) Whenever it is believed that the accused is suffering from a psychological illness or mental disability the prosecutor shall place him/her under the necessary medical supervision for verification of his/her psychological and mental state. That shall not suspend the investigation concerning him/her. (2) If it appears to the court that the accused is suffering from a psychological or mental illness, it shall issue a decision placing him/her under the supervision of three government doctors specialized in psychological and mental illnesses for the period it deems necessary to furnish a report on his/her medical state. (3) If the court ascertains from the medical supervision that the accused is suffering from a psychological illness, he/she shall remain under medical supervision until such time as he/she becomes fit to stand trial and understand the proceedings, when the trial shall proceed. If, however, there is no hope of the mental illness being cured, the court shall decide that he/she be placed in a hospital for the mentally ill. (4) If the court finds that the mentally ill person committed the offence attributed to him/her at a time when he/she was suffering from the illness that rendered him/her unable to understand his/her actions or that they were prohibited or at the time of the omission that constitutes the offence, it will find him/her not guilty and not criminally responsible and article 92 of the Criminal Code shall be enforced concerning him/her. (5) If the medical supervision finds that the accused is suffering from a mental disability (mental retardation) and that he/she committed the offence attributed to him/her, the court shall find him/her not guilty and not criminally responsible and shall place him/her under the supervision of a probation officer for one to five years. There is, however, nothing to prevent the court first placing him/her in a national mental health centre or any other residential care establishment for treatment of the behaviour accompanying his/her retardation that is a danger to public safety”.

90. The case law of the Jordanian Court of Cassation in this regard includes Decision No. 664/2007 of 12 July 2007: “(1) The provisions of article 233 of the Code of Criminal Procedure amended by Law No. 16 of 2001, indicate the measures incumbent upon the court where the accused is suffering from a psychological or mental illness. If it appears to the court that the accused is suffering from a psychological or mental illness, it shall issue a decision to place him/her under the supervision of three government doctors specialized in psychological and mental illnesses for the period it deems necessary to provide the court with a report on his/her medical state. (2) If the court finds that the mentally ill person committed the offence attributed to him/her at a time when he/she was suffering from the illness that rendered him/her unable to understand his/her actions or that they were prohibited or at the time of the omission that constitutes the offence, it will find him/her not guilty and not criminally responsible and article 92 of the Criminal Code shall be enforced concerning him/her. Paragraph 2 of that article stipulates that anyone exempted from punishment shall be detained in a hospital for the mentally ill until such time as the medical committee report establishes that he/she is cured and no longer a threat to public safety. The Central Criminal Court referred the accused to the National Mental Health Centre for placement under the supervision of three doctors for one month in order to ascertain his psychological and mental condition. The doctors submitted a medical report on his state

and their testimony was heard. The accused was found to have been suffering from chronic schizoaffective disorder since 2000. This is a disorder of thought processes and mood caused by disturbances in the secretions of the brain. It is a chronic disease that cannot at present be cured. The accused is not at present a danger to the community. (3) The Central Criminal Court concluded that the accused had committed the offence attributed to him but that at the time the offence was committed was suffering the effects of a chronic mental illness and was unaware of his actions. It therefore exempted him from punishment and applied paragraph 2. It found that he was taking medication and was therefore not a danger to the public, that healing in the meaning of article 92 (2) of the Criminal Code is healing of the symptoms of mental illness, which is social recovery and that the person is not a danger to public safety, provided that treatment continues after detention pursuant to the case law of the General Authority for the Court of Cassation No. 592/2003”.

91. Environmental facilities have been installed to ensure that persons with disabilities have access to the criminal justice system in order to exercise their right to appear and bring legal proceedings without discrimination in all the Kingdom’s courts of justice. The National Disabled Access Building Regulations have been taken into account and work is under way to install such facilities in the remaining courts.

92. In order to facilitate judicial proceedings, assistive technology has been used such as sign language for deaf victims, perpetrators and witnesses on the basis of article 233 of the Code of Criminal Procedure. In order to ensure the success of this, the courts have been provided with a list of approved sign language specialists. CCTV has been used when taking the testimony of children with disabilities.

93. After its ratification, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities became part of Jordanian law and has to be implemented. It has been included in the human rights module taught to diploma students at the Judicial Institute, while continuous training programmes for judges and prosecutors include courses on human rights in general and the rights of persons with disabilities in particular in order to train judges and all those working in the justice system on the right of persons with disabilities to access to the justice system.

94. Many awareness workshops have been held in order to reduce the factors that limit access to this right by persons with disabilities, improve their knowledge of their rights and to raise community awareness.

95. In reform and rehabilitation centres, legislative measures have been introduced: article 26 of the Reform and Rehabilitation Centres Act, No. 9 of 2004, stipulates: “If the director of the centre finds that an inmate is mentally deranged, he/she shall transfer him/her to a specialized medical authority for the necessary medical procedures. The inmate shall remain in treatment for as long as his/her condition so requires. If his/her sentence ends, he/she shall be released immediately, the necessary measures being taken to address the competent medical authority”.

96. As a component of the justice system, the police are required to provide security services in line with the principles laid down in international conventions, foremost among them the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.²¹

²¹ This involves local security councils.

- Several sign language courses have been held; 25 courses in various public security training institutes. Translators are provided when such persons refer to any public security departments;
- Such people are protected from any form of discrimination on the basis of disability and citizens are equal before the law;

97. One reform and rehabilitation centre has been renovated and provided with environmental facilities such as individual cells and dormitories, external areas, access routes to the mosque, refectory, library, clinic and visitor reception, and arrangements have been made for visitors with disabilities. All this to guarantee persons with disabilities an appropriate environment in reform and rehabilitation centres.

Article 14

Liberty and security of the person

98. Under article 7 of the Jordanian Constitution, personal freedom is inviolable and, under constitutional amendments introduced in 2011, the same article states that every infringement of rights and public freedoms or of the inviolability of the private life of Jordanians is an offence punishable by law. Article 8 stipulates that no person may be seized, detained, imprisoned or the freedom thereof restricted except in accordance with the provisions of the law. Security and tranquillity are basic rights of all citizens as stipulated in Chapter 2, articles 6-23, of the Jordanian Constitution.

99. The constitutional view is embodied in the Criminal Code, which includes provisions that make it an offence to attack the freedom of any person, article (346) providing: “Anyone who detains a person and deprives them of their liberty unlawfully shall be liable to imprisonment not exceeding one year or a fine not exceeding JOD50. If he/she has detained them by falsely claiming to hold an official position or possess a warrant for his/her arrest, he/she shall be liable to between six months’ and two years’ imprisonment. If such acts are perpetrated on an official in the exercise of his/her functions or because of actions he/she was performing by virtue of his/her office, the penalty shall be imprisonment for between six months and three years”.

100. Because of the discrepancy between legislative theory and community practices with regard to the right of persons with disabilities to personal liberty and security, work has been done to design and implement programmes to raise the awareness of families and the authorities responsible for the protection and care of persons with disabilities in order to reduce such infringements and create knowledge, attitudes and practices that respect their rights to self-determination and the exercise of freedoms guaranteed by the Constitution and provided for in legislation.

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- Security centres, reform and rehabilitation centres and all public security units have wheelchairs to facilitate the movement of persons with mobility disabilities, headphones for those who suffer from hearing impairment, and other equipment and materials to assist people with disabilities;
 - The rights of persons with disabilities have been promoted by holding lectures and seminars for public security employees with the participation of civil society organizations;
 - The provision of mobile terminals to enable movement to the home of the complainant and place all available investigative capabilities at the service of the people with disabilities;
 - Providing in reform and rehabilitation centres all the facilities and services that meet the needs of prisoners with disabilities according to the condition of each individual. It is intended to launch a “concern” initiative, which means establishing a special wing for inmates with disabilities who are unable to look after themselves, where environmental facilities will be available in a modern centre;
 - An agreement will soon be signed between the Public Safety Directorate and Penal Reform International to start a joint venture to provide greater protection and better living conditions for vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities, within detention centres and reform and rehabilitation centres.

Article 15

Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment

101. The constitutional amendments of 2011 included an explicit provision: “2. Any person seized, detained, imprisoned or the freedom thereof restricted shall be treated in a manner that preserves human dignity; he/she may not be tortured in any manner, or bodily or morally harmed; and may not be detained in places other than those permitted by law; any statement uttered by any person under any torture, harm or threat shall be disregarded”.

102. Article 208 of the amended Jordanian Criminal Code criminalizes torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment of all individuals, including persons with disabilities, stipulating, “(1) Any person who inflicts on a person any type of torture that is not permitted by law in order to obtain a confession to or information about an offence shall be liable to between six months’ and three years’ imprisonment. (2) For the purposes of this article torture shall mean any act resulting in severe physical or mental pain intentionally inflicted on a person for such purposes as obtaining from him/her or from another person information or a confession or punishing him/her for an act he/she or another person has committed or is suspected of having committed or to intimidate that person or coerce him/her or another person, or inflicting such pain or suffering for any reason based on discrimination of any kind or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity. (3) If the torture causes illness or injury, the penalty shall be hard labour. (4) Notwithstanding the provisions of Articles 54 bis and 100 of this Code, the court may not suspend execution of the sentence handed down for the offences listed in this article, nor may any mitigating factors be taken into account”.

103. Since Jordan’s ratification of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, the authorities have been responsible for monitoring, following up and preparing the reports on violations in general, including abuses against persons with disabilities.

104. In order to determine the scale and forms of subjection to torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading punishment, persons with disabilities need to be included in the plans and strategies of the authorities concerned.

105. In the same context and with regard to trafficking in human beings, the Prohibition of Trafficking in Human Beings Act, No. 9 of 2009, has been passed. It adopts a definition in line with that contained in the Palermo Protocol and considers the commission of the offence on a person with disabilities an aggravating circumstance.

106. As for the medical measures taken to guarantee protection of persons with disabilities from medical or scientific experimentation, article 2 of the Jordan Medical Constitution, on the duties of doctors, stipulates that, when carrying out any medical procedure, steps must be taken to ensure that free consent is given.

107. Moreover, article 22 of the rules of procedure of the Medical Association, No. 24 of 1976, issued under article 18 of the Jordanian Medical Association Act, on the rights and duties of doctors stipulates: “The Medical Constitution shall define the rights, professional duty and rules of conduct and regulate the relations between them and the basis of their dealings with patients. It shall set out everything relating to the honour and conduct of the profession in general”.

Article 16

Freedom from exploitation, violence or abuse

108. Article 6, paragraph 5, of the Jordanian Constitution protects persons with disabilities from abuse and exploitation.

109. National legislation contains provisions on the protection of children with disabilities from exploitation, violence and abuse, including the Jordan Employment Act and the amendments thereto.

110. The Jordanian Juveniles Act takes into account the best interests of the child through the principles it relies upon, including secrecy of trial, making juvenile cases urgent, not sentencing juveniles to death, detaining juveniles in a place particular to them, and not taking measures detrimental to the freedom of such juveniles.

111. The Jordanian Criminal Code contains legal provisions on the protection of children and women from all forms of abuse.²² Punishments are also imposed for offences relating to the abuse and neglect of children²³ and on the perpetrators of rape and indecent assault.²⁴

²² Articles 333-335 of the Jordanian Criminal Code on abuse.

Article 333. Anyone who intentionally hits a person or wounds or injures a person by any violent act or assault resulting in illness or inability to work for more than 20 days, shall be liable to three months' to three years' imprisonment.

Article 335. If the act results in the severing, eradication or amputation of a limb or causes one of the senses to cease to function, significant physical disfigurement or other permanent disability or apparently permanent disability, the perpetrator shall be liable to hard labour for a period not exceeding 10 years.

²³ Articles 287-291 on neglect and abuse.

Article 287. Anyone who performs an act that leads to a minor being affiliated to a woman who did not give birth to him/her or to a man who is not his/her father shall be punishable by temporary hard labour.

Article 288. Anyone who places a minor in a home for foundlings and conceals his/her identity knowing that he/she is recorded in the civil status registry as of illegitimate birth or recognized legitimate birth shall be punishable by at least two years' imprisonment.

Article 289. (1) Anyone who abandons a minor under the age of 15 years without legitimate or reasonable cause and that leads to risk to his/her life or is likely to cause permanent damage to his/her health shall be punishable by between two months' and one year's imprisonment.

(2) The penalty shall be between one and three years' imprisonment if the minor is under 12 years of age.

Article 290. The following shall be punishable by between three months' and one year's imprisonment:

(1) (a) Anyone who is the parent or guardian of a minor under fifteen years of age or has been assigned by religion or law to maintain and care for him/her, and has refused or neglected to provide him/her with food, clothing, bedding and other necessities while being able to do so, thus causing damage to his/her health.

(b) Anyone who is the parent or guardian of a minor or has been assigned by religion or law to maintain and care for him/her and intentionally or without legitimate or reasonable cause has abandoned him/her — while being capable of supporting him/her — and leaves him/her without means of support.

(2) The penalty in any of the cases provided for in paragraph (1) of this article shall be between six months' and two years' imprisonment if the minor was under 12 years of age.

291. (1) (a) Anyone who kidnaps or takes away a minor under the age of 18 years, even with his/her consent, with the intention of removing him/her from the authority of the person who has guardianship over him/her shall be punishable by one month's to two years' imprisonment and a fine of between JOD30 and JOD100.

112. The Jordanian legislature has passed a law on protection from domestic violence, introduced a set of legal and judicial safeguards for the protection of victims of domestic violence and set up the domestic protection directorate to deal with domestic violence cases. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act in force does not contain a provision criminalizing violence against persons with disabilities.

113. Although the domestic protection directorate has dealt with a group of 6,364 domestic violence cases, including cases perpetrated on persons with disabilities, it still needs trained staff to deal with people with disabilities, especially the deaf.

(b) The penalty shall be three months' two years' imprisonment and a fine of between JOD50 and JOD200 if the minor was under 12 year of age.

(2) If the minor was kidnapped or taken away by deception or force, the penalty shall be six months' to three years' imprisonment.

²⁴ Articles 292-299 on rape and indecent assault:

Article 292. A. (1) Any person who has sexual intercourse with a female, other than his wife, without her consent, whether by force, threats, deception or deceit shall be sentenced to hard labour for not less than 15 years.

(2) Any person who rapes a girl under the age of fifteen years shall be sentenced to death.

B. If the victim is over 15 but under 18 years of age, the sentence shall be 20 years' hard labour.

Article 293. Any person who has sexual intercourse with a female other than his wife who is unable to resist because of weakness or physical, psychological or psychiatric disability shall be guilty of the offence provided for in Article 292 of this Act and shall be liable to the penalty stipulated therein.

Article 294. (1) Any person who has sexual intercourse with a female other than his wife who is over 15 but under 18 years of age shall be sentenced to hard labour for at least seven years.

(2) If the victim is over 12 but under 15 years of age the minimum sentence shall be 15 years.

(3) If the victim is under 12 years of age the perpetrator shall be considered to have committed the offence provided for in article 292, paragraph (2) of this law and shall be liable to the penalty stipulated therein.

Article 295. 1. (a) Any person who has sexual intercourse with a female who is over 15 but under 18 years of age and is an ascendant, whether legitimate or not, or a relative who may not lawfully marry her (*mahram*), or is responsible for her care or upbringing or has legal authority over her shall be liable to 20 years' hard labour.

(b) The sentence shall be hard labour for life if the victim was over 12 but under 15 years of age.

2. The same penalty as that established in the previous paragraph shall be imposed if the perpetrator is a cleric or manager or worker in an employment office, as the act will have been committed by abuse of authority or the facilities derived from such authority.

Article 296. (1) Any person who attacks the honour of another person with violence or threats shall be liable to at least four years' hard labour.

(2) The minimums sentence shall be seven years if the victim is under 15 years of age.

Article 297. Any person who attacks the honour of another person who is unable to resist because of physical disability or cognitive impairment or is compelled to perform the act as a result of force or deception shall be sentenced to temporary hard labour.

Article 298. (1) Any person who attacks, without having recourse to violence or threats, the honour of a child, whether male or female, who is under 15 years of age or causes such a child to commit such an act shall be liable to temporary hard labour.

(2) The sentence shall be not less than five years if the victim, whether male or female, is under 12 years of age.

Article 299. Any person who uses violence or threats to attack the honour of a child, whether male or female, who is under 12 years of age or causes such a child to commit such an act shall be liable to hard labour for at least eight years.

114. The overall scale of violence against persons with disabilities remains unknown and there is no accurate data on the numbers and percentage of such persons among the victims of domestic violence.

115. Article 9 of the Trafficking in Human Beings Act imposes heavier penalties on offenders where the victim is disabled.

116. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Optional Protocol on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography in the text of Article 9, paragraph 2 (b) of the Convention.

117. As preventive measures to eliminate violence, several authorities have programmes to support the families of persons with disabilities through home visits in order to train them to deal with them. However, the visiting teams require training and capacity-building in detecting and dealing with domestic violence.

118. The National Human Rights Centre is the independent body responsible for monitoring and following up human rights violations, including cases of domestic violence against persons with disabilities.

119. There are specialized institutions for specific age groups to attend to the various needs of people with disabilities who are subject to violence and abuse

120. There are laws, policies and programmes designed to eliminate violence against women and children but their effectiveness is limited because they conflict with traditional societal attitudes that consider the management of family affairs and members to be a private matter supported by personal status laws, traditions and cultural heritage.

Article 17

Protecting the integrity of the person

121. National legislation guarantees the right to integrity of the person through the Constitution,²⁵ while articles 334 and 335 of the Jordanian Criminal Code emphasize the importance of the protection and safety of persons and impose severe penalties for the commission of any act that causes the abuse and victimization of persons.

122. The Public Health Act guarantees the right of persons, including those with disabilities, to full and free consent to any medical treatment or surgical operation. Consent is given by the guardian if the person is unable to understand.

123. Under the Medical Constitution, doctors are legally liable for any medical error that affects the integrity of the person and heavy penalties are imposed for the commission of medical errors, including medical experiments affecting life.

124. Jordanian legislation does not permit abortion except in the exceptional cases referred to in law and for the protection of personal integrity.

125. In order to strengthen the right of persons with disabilities to physical integrity and to eliminate the violations to which women with disabilities may be exposed, a national campaign to eradicate and criminalize the sterilization of women with mental disabilities

²⁵ Article 2, paragraph 8, of the Constitution stipulates: “Any person seized, detained, imprisoned or the freedom thereof restricted shall be treated in a manner that preserves human dignity; he/she may not be tortured in any manner, or bodily or morally harmed; and may not be detained in other than the places permitted by law; any statement uttered by any person under any torture, harm or threat shall be disregarded”.

was organized in the regions of the country and benefited 455 families of women with mental disabilities.

126. There are many civil society organizations that defend the rights of people with disabilities by monitoring and following up implementation of this right.

Article 18

Liberty of movement and nationality

127. Article 9 of the Jordanian Constitution guarantees citizens' right to freedom of movement, to choose their place of residence and not to be compelled to reside in a particular place.

128. This is regulated by articles 39-42 of the Jordanian Civil Code, the home being considered the place where a person normally resides. A person may have more than one home and has freedom of movement. A person who has no place of residence is considered homeless.

129. The Residence and Affairs of Foreigners Act, No. 24 of 1973 and amendments thereto, enables foreigners, including persons with disabilities, to enter and leave the territory of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan provided they have a passport or travel document issued by the government of their country recognized by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. Under article 29 (h), the Interior Minister grants exemption from residence fees for humanitarian cases.

130. Article 5 of the Constitution guarantees the right to nationality.

131. Article 3, paragraph 3, of the Nationality Act, No. 6 of 1954, gives those born to a father possessing Jordanian nationality the right to nationality.

132. Under the Passports Act, No. 5 of 2003, all Jordanian citizens, including persons with disabilities, have the right to obtain a passport.

133. The Civil Status Act, No. 9 of 2001, guarantees children with disabilities the right to obtain a name and nationality.

Article 19

Living independently and being included in the community

134. The Jordanian Constitution stipulates the right of individuals to live independently, and the sanctity of the home.

135. This right is taken into account in legislation, but people with disabilities live within a family environment and receive help from family members; few of them live independently. This has contributed to the limited actions and measures taken to plan for independent living.

136. Measures taken to ensure the right to independent living for people with disabilities have included updating, preparing and equipping model homes for people with mental disabilities. Twelve young people with mild and moderate mental disabilities occupy them.

137. In order to support the right of persons with disabilities to independent living, the local community has been made aware of these people's rights and the role of different sections of society in enabling them to enjoy this right.

138. To enhance disabled people's experience of independent living, employment opportunities have been provided in businesses and professions appropriate to their experience in their local communities.

139. In order to enable people with disabilities to participate and become integrated in society, institutions provide support services and facilities to help them live in their community, including equipment such as wheelchairs and electronic devices.

140. In addition to governmental institutions, the private sector runs several residential institutions that provide a shared living environment that takes the type of disability into account.

141. Although the legislation does not distinguish between persons with disabilities and others in receiving services, they will have greater difficulty accessing their right to services for reasons mainly to do with a lack of appropriate equipment, difficulty of access to service outlets and lack of familiarity with their needs and requirements on the part of existing service institutions.

Article 20

Personal mobility

142. Nothing in Jordanian legislation restricts the freedom of movement of individuals, including persons with disabilities.

143. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities includes their right to equal access to the physical environment, transportation, information and communications, public facilities and services, and the removal of all obstacles in the Kingdom.

144. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act makes provision for the right to mobility by guaranteeing affordable means of transport with specifications that assist persons with disabilities to use them and move about easily.

145. In order to enhance the opportunities for persons with disabilities to access their rights, the Act contains a provision guaranteeing their access to technology and the various information systems.

146. The law includes a one-time exemption from customs duties and general tax of one means of transport for the use of a person with disabilities, and exempts persons with severe disabilities from payment of work permit fees for one non-Jordanian to be employed in their homes.

147. A series of measures has been taken and implemented to guarantee enhanced mobility opportunities to persons with disabilities in a secure environment:

(a) Provision of rehabilitative aids and mobility devices to persons with disabilities with support from civil society institutions and the relevant governmental agencies;

(b) Distribution of stickers bearing the international emblem to denote cars of persons with disabilities to the Public Safety Directorate / Drivers and Vehicles Licensing Department and the Jordanian Disabled Sports Union;²⁶

(c) People with disabilities were granted some 44,380 exemptions from work permits for non-Jordanians in 2007-2008 in order to facilitate their personal mobility;²⁷

²⁶ Report of the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities, 2010.

²⁷ Paper on achievements of the first phase of the national strategy prepared by Mohammed Al Daffur.

(d) People with mobility disabilities have obtained customs exemptions, 7,000 exemptions being granted in 2011;²⁸

(e) The National Disabled Access Building Regulations are applied when building permits are granted to any party;

(f) Training programmes on mobility skills for persons with disabilities and specialized staff have been planned and implemented;

(g) High quality technologies have been provided to persons with various disabilities within available resources, such as wheelchairs and electrically powered chairs;

(h) Public safety instructions on the national airline are provided in sign language and Braille.

148. Work is being done with producers and suppliers of aids and equipment to design and supply products and aids that are accessible and sensitive to the needs of persons with various disabilities and appropriate to the local environment.

Article 21

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information

149. The Constitution guarantees freedom of expression in its various forms to all individuals without distinction.

150. The Constitution also establishes the confidentiality of telephone conversations, postal and telegraphic communications and that they should not be suspended or interrupted.

151. The law provides for the right of all Jordanians to obtain the information they request in accordance with the provisions of this law.²⁹

152. The Press and Publications Act stipulates the freedom of the press and freedom of opinion to all Jordanians through all means of expression.

153. In spite of the legislative framework protecting this right, the limited measures and actions taken limit access by persons with disabilities to the information necessary for their participation in public life and the enjoyment of their rights on an equal basis with others.

154. Apart from the requirement that State television present a news broadcast in sign language six times per week, there is no obligation for media, information and service institutions to provide information in forms appropriate to the various disabilities, such as sign language and Braille.

155. Communications technology, environmental and information facilities are not provided in an appropriate manner to all persons with disabilities and this restricts their communication with their surroundings and reduces the chances of their knowing what is happening around them and their effective participation.

156. Despite the multiplicity and diversity of audiovisual and print media and the increasing use of technology as a means of communication in social circles, media using language appropriate to the needs of persons with disabilities are few or non-existent.

157. With regard to recognition of sign language, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act provides for facilitated access by disabled people to all the rights contained in the Act.

²⁸ Customs Department.

²⁹ Article 7 of the Right to Information Act, No. 47 of 2007.

Measures taken include granting accreditation licences to sign language interpreters for their employment by the relevant authorities.

Article 22

Respect for privacy

158. Article 7 of the Constitution stipulates that “Personal freedom shall be guaranteed”, and violation of the sanctity of private life is an offence punishable in law.

159. Articles 191, 193, 358, 359 and 360 of the Criminal Code impose a prison sentence of between three months and two years or a fine of between JOD2,000 and JOD10,000 on any person who attacks the life, honour or reputation of others whether by libel, slander or contempt. The penalty is more severe where the offence is repeated.

160. Articles 7, 10 and 18 of the Jordanian Constitution provide for the protection of private life and the sanctity of the home and private correspondence, while article 347 of the Criminal Code contains several provisions on respect for the privacy of the individual and non-violation of the sanctity of the home and private life and imposes a penalty on anyone who commits such acts.

161. The Jordanian legislature protects the private life of individuals in article 348 of the Jordanian Criminal Code by imposing a prison sentence not exceeding three months on anyone who intrudes upon the private life of others by any audio or visual means, whether by sound recording, taking pictures or using a telescope. The penalty is doubled for a repeat offence.

162. National legislation on the protection of private life does not distinguish between people with and without disabilities considering this an inherent personal right.

163. The authorities competent to gather and manage data take measures to respect the privacy and confidentiality of the personal health information of persons with disabilities in all actions concerning them. Persons with disabilities suffer no discrimination with regard to respect for their privacy.

164. Despite the provisions protecting the private life of persons with disabilities, they are vulnerable to violation of this right through concealment and being prevented from enjoying their rights and participation in public life for various reasons, including:

(a) The low level of awareness in society of the right to privacy;

(b) The right to protection of privacy is considered a right of the family and not of the individual, which pushes families to conceal cases of disability on the pretext of protecting the privacy of the family, as the existence of people with severe disabilities in a family affects its social status and other people’s view of it and its members.

165. In addition to what the judicial system does to hold to account anyone who violates the privacy of others, the Jordanian Government has taken a series of measures to protect victims of violence, exploitation and neglect of all categories, including persons with disabilities. These include:

(a) Making the public aware of the need to inform the judicial authorities or the Family Protection Department of any attack, violence, exploitation or neglect committed upon any individual in the community in all spheres, including the family;

(b) The training of staff capable of detecting, detaining and investigating cases of assaults on people by their family members;

(c) Provision of protection to victims during the judicial processing of cases and then dealing with the circumstances that led to the assault.

Article 23

Respect for the family

166. The family is an entity respected by religion, established by the Constitution and protected by national legislation.

167. The legislative framework is the basis for and regulates marriage and the family through the personal status laws and the Civil Code.

168. The family is the basic organizing unit of Jordanian society and the vast majority of individuals live within family structures. Society thus encourages individuals, including those with disabilities, to marry and have families with their free and full consent.

169. Generally, people with disabilities marrying and founding a family is viewed as an effective means of rehabilitation and reintegration by providing a supportive and inclusive community in a family environment.

170. The impact of tradition and community perception means that opportunities vary for males and females with a disability to access their right to found a family, as women with disabilities suffer discrimination on the basis of disability, gender, and poverty.

171. Article 4 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act contains provisions on marriage, the family and family life as follows:

(a) The right to health awareness through preventive health education programmes, health care for women with disabilities during pregnancy and childbirth, and beyond;

(b) The right of a child with disabilities to live within his/her original family and under the protection of his/her parents, the family bearing full responsibility for his/her care and protection and the development of his/her personality. If this is not possible, alternative care must be secured;

(c) Training the families of persons with disabilities to deal with them and integrate them and their care and rehabilitation within the family. If that is not possible, alternative care and rehabilitation are provided in official and non-official institutions.

172. Legislation requires medical examination before marriage through Medical Regulations, No. 57 of 2004. Everyone undergoes this before marriage, including persons with disabilities.

173. Articles 170-186 of the Personal Status Act contains provisions on custody and visitation.

174. With regard to adoption, the provisions of Islamic Sharia sets forth the *kafalah* system for a child by a family that undertake his/her care and support throughout his/her life in accordance with the regulations of the competent authorities.

175. The law assigns to parents and guardians the duty of care and support of children until they reach the age of majority. Legislation therefore contains provisions to punish neglect or negligence in the performance of these duties, including:

(a) Imprisonment of the father of any child under 12 years of age who has neglected his/her upbringing or care or failed to provide him/her with food and shelter thereby causing him/her harm, and also punishment of anyone who abandons a child under

two years of age without a legitimate reason thus endangering his/her life - articles 289 and 290;

(b) Punishment of the commission of offences concerning minors and disability - articles 278-291.

176. Awareness-raising campaigns on disabilities and reproductive health and family planning have been organized for people with disabilities. Fifty campaigns were run on disabilities in 2008-2009, covering all regions of the country in special education and health centres, all of which are accessible to persons with disabilities.³⁰

177. With respect to providing support to parents with disabilities in carrying out their responsibilities, families are trained to deal with persons with disabilities by using programmes keeping pace with modern developments by updating the *Burtij* software, which is an educational training programme for early intervention that applies to children with disabilities from birth to nine years. Eighty-eight volunteers from community-based rehabilitation programmes and preschool teachers have been trained on the application and use of the programme in six training courses held in several governorates in order to build capacity in this regard.

178. In addition to training families to deal with persons with disabilities, official and non-official institutions provide alternative day and residential care for children without family care. They include:

- (a) 24 child day-care centres;
- (b) 810 children's homes;
- (c) Nine training, educational and professional skills training centres in various governorates.

179. With regard to measures taken to prevent the forced sterilization of persons with disabilities, there is no legal provision preventing it, especially in women and girls, and it is left to the doctor's assessment and appreciation of the situation.

Article 24

Education

180. Article 6 of the Jordanian Constitution guarantees the right to education for all within the limits of the resources of the State. Chapter II (Philosophy and aims of education) of the Education Act, No. 3 of 1994, article 6 (c), entitled Social foundations, point (vi) stipulates that "Education is a social necessity and the right of everyone in accordance with their abilities and capacities". Education is available in all Education Ministry schools to all students, without exception, both male and female, whether they are disabled or not, within the available resources.

181. Article 20 of the Constitution makes education compulsory and free: "Basic education shall be compulsory for Jordanians and free in government schools". Education is thus compulsory and free up to class 10 in government schools, so students do not have to pay fees or for books.

182. The Education Act, No. 3 of 1994, stipulates that education is a social necessity, the right of everyone in accordance with their abilities and capacities, and that curricula in educational institutions need to be extended to include special education programmes. To implement this, the Ministry of Education has introduced programmes for those with

³⁰ Ministry of Health questionnaire.

special needs to bring them into line with their capabilities. This has included developing resource rooms for students with learning difficulties, introducing classes for children with hearing impairments and mental disabilities in ordinary schools, the development of schools for the blind and deaf, and the provision of facilities in buildings by adapting bathrooms, laundries and other school facilities to enable students with disabilities to use them, making adjustments to the curriculum, appointing specialists to work with the disabled, creating a department in the Ministry of Education responsible for disabled programmes, training staff, examining international and local experience in the education of students with disabilities and providing transportation to take students with disabilities from their homes to school and back.

183. In application of the constitutional provisions and the goals of legislation to give everyone the right to education, the measures and administrative procedures taken to facilitate the access and integration of persons with disabilities in the educational system, include:

(a) Amendment of the bases of success, failure and completion of the stages of education since 1996;

(b) Amendment of General Secondary School Certificate examination instructions in line with the needs of deaf students in terms of the appointment of a sign language interpreter for deaf students.

184. Some measures that were taken in order to facilitate opportunities for persons with disabilities to be integrated in the educational system need to be amended because of their discriminatory nature. These include the exemption of blind students from maths and physics and materials that include mathematical symbols, and amendment of General Secondary School Certificate examination instructions for them.

185. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act lays down the principle of equality and non-discrimination on grounds of disability and full integration in all stages of education. Article 4 (b) of the Act refers to the right of persons with disabilities to school education and higher education.

186. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities has at all its stages contained the theme of school and higher education for persons with disabilities to enable them to enjoy their right to education through an educational environment that includes them equally, males and females, in all parts of the country.

187. In practical terms there is nothing to preclude the admission of persons with disabilities to public education institutions of the various stages. According to Ministry of Education statistics, 7,239 students with disabilities entered primary and secondary education in 2011, of whom 3,640 were male and 3,599 female.

188. There are no complete data on differences in the education of males and females, but the numbers of boys and girls with disabilities enrolled in public education are largely the same.

189. The Government has taken a series of measures to ensure access to schools and subjects and to provide facilitative arrangements, including:

(a) Preparation and development of general accreditation criteria for special education institutions and programmes in order to control and improve the quality of services provided to persons with disabilities;

(b) Providing support for people with disabilities in inclusive schools by bearing a certain percentage of the cost of tuition fees;

(c) Equipping more than 700 resource rooms in Education Ministry schools;

(d) Purchase of rehabilitation, training and education services in the institutions that serve people with disabilities by signing agreements with institutions providing services for persons with disabilities;

(e) Training teaching staff to work with children with learning difficulties and capacity-building of those working in autism centres and schools for the deaf and blind;

(f) Introduction of classes for autistic children.

190. In spite of the measures taken to facilitate the access of persons with disabilities to public education, the reality is that most schools are not well-prepared to adopt and implement inclusive programmes:

(a) Lack of transport equipped to carry persons with disabilities;

(b) Inadequacy of the physical environment of most schools for access and safe use by persons with disabilities;

(c) Lack of harmonization of curricula commensurate with the needs of persons with disabilities, particularly in the basic phases. For example, systematic mathematics and computer studies for blind and deaf students are not included;³¹

(d) Lack of educational facilities appropriate to the needs of persons with disabilities;

(e) Limited human resources trained to manage inclusive educational programmes;

(f) Limited action taken to rehabilitate the school social environment to accept the idea of inclusive education and interaction with and acceptance of persons with disabilities.

191. A licensing system has been put in place for sign language interpreters to regulate their work, train employees in sign language and promote the linguistic identity of the deaf.

192. Establishment of the Royal Academy for the Blind to provide them with appropriate education.

193. Currently, 10 Jordanian universities offer special education studies programmes at the bachelor or graduate level.

194. Some Jordanian universities, colleges or departments have introduced support services, such as the Faculty of Rehabilitation Sciences at the University of Jordan, which offers bachelor programmes in audiology and speech therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy, and assistive equipment.

195. In the past five years, several projects have been carried out with the support of the European Union and the United States Agency for International Development on the development of special education policies and the preparation of special education teachers.

196. Dozens of scientific studies have been conducted on children with disabilities and their families in recent years, and dozens of measurements and tests have been developed or modified for used in evaluation and diagnostics in special education.

197. The Government has taken a series of measures to facilitate access to higher education by persons with disabilities, including:

³¹ Workshop, 23 November 2010, working groups.

(a) Reduction of the prescribed university fees by up to 90 per cent for students with disabilities, the reduction depending on the level of disability determined by the competent medical committee;

(b) Acceptance of all students with disabilities with an average of 65 per cent or above in official Jordanian universities. They are distributed according to their wishes and grades;

(c) Provision of a grant to support the education of university students with disabilities;

(d) Some Jordanian universities provide sign language interpreters to accompany students with hearing impairments during lectures and at examinations;

(e) Providing all blind university students with laptop computers with text-to-speech software;

(f) Printing in Braille many documents important for persons with disabilities.

198. Around 250 students with disabilities enter official Jordanian universities each year with the reduction set for them on the basis of official acceptance.

199. In spite of the facilities provided for students to enter universities, the fields and specialities that students with disabilities can enter are limited and this restricts their freedom choice.

200. There is no specific subject on the rights of persons with disabilities in the programmes and requirements of the majority of Jordanian universities.

201. There is nothing in the university curriculum or compulsory subjects to raise awareness of the rights of persons with disabilities, with the exception of some of the subjects in the plans and curricula of special education departments.³²

202. Despite the arrangements and measures taken to facilitate the enrolment of students with disabilities in higher education institutions, persons with disabilities face many obstacles resulting from the lack of environmental and information technology facilities, and there are no arrangements to ensure their access to lifelong learning.

203. There is early diagnosis to identify persons with disabilities and the nature of their disability and this diagnosis is often used to determine their educational needs.

Article 25

Health

204. Although the Constitution contains no explicit provision on health, there are provisions affirming the protection of the law and the provision of tranquillity to all segments of society, including persons with disabilities since the Jordanian Constitution guarantees citizens equality of rights and duties.

205. Under the Public Health Act and the amendments thereto, the State provides preventive and curative health services and monitoring through hospitals, and primary and comprehensive health centres without discrimination.

206. The Jordanian health system includes a variety of advanced health services in the public, private and international sectors.

³² Both Jordan University and Mutah University have introduced Braille and sign language courses as compulsory subjects (departmental requirements) for special education and social services students and optional subjects (university requirements) for other university students.

207. The health system provides health care services to women and children during pregnancy, childbirth and beyond, including monitoring children's development and providing vaccines in accordance with the requirements of reproductive health and family planning.

208. More than 80 per cent of the population is covered by health insurance, while health services for children under the age of six are free of charge.

209. In cases where individuals cannot afford treatment, the State is working to provide coverage of established treatment costs in Ministry of Health tenders.

210. There is nothing to prevent people with disabilities receiving the health services available in hospitals and Ministry of Health centres. (According to the agreements with the Royal Medical Services and university hospitals they are transferred only for the purpose of admission, like non-disabled persons (disabled insurance category)).

211. In addition to the services and health insurance available to the majority of members of the community, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act contains a provision on coverage persons with disabilities by health insurance.

212. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities has in all its phases included a theme on health and disability so that persons with disabilities are able to access health services, including the most effective mechanisms for early diagnosis and detection, and early intervention and referral.

213. Limited training is provided for some medical staff on the methods and ways of providing health services to people with various disabilities.

214. Under national legislation, embryos have the right to life and doctors may not prescribe any drug to abort a pregnant woman or perform an abortion unless the pregnancy constitutes a threat to her life.

215. With regard to the consent of persons with disabilities to treatment programmes, national legislation stipulates that people may not undergo treatment or surgical interventions except of their own volition and with prior written consent. If a person is unable to write or speak, consent is given by the accompanying relatives.

216. The Government has taken several measures and actions to facilitate access by persons with disabilities to medical rehabilitation and assistive services free of charge or at symbolic cost, including:

(a) The provision of services free of charge to persons with motor impairment, cerebral palsy, those needing assistive equipment and people with industrial and sports injuries;

(b) Prosthetics, orthotics and assistive equipment are paid for at 5 per cent of the value of the service, with a ceiling of 10 dinars;

(c) Physiotherapy and occupational therapy sessions are provided to people with health insurance.

217. With regard to detection and early intervention programmes, the health authorities concerned run medical and laboratory screening programmes for newborns in all 436 health centres supervised by the Ministry of Health. This includes:

(a) Phenylketonuria (PKU) screening;

(b) Congenital hypothyroidism screening for newborns aged 3-14 days;

(c) Early detection of sciatic dislocation, early intervention programme, activation and follow-up;

(d) Early detection of hearing impairment for newborns programme: the hearing of newborns is checked in government hospitals to detect hearing impairments;

(e) Updating and developing the record of the child's growth and development so that staff in Ministry of Health childhood and motherhood centres are able to detect early any delay in development and intervene speedily;

(f) Publication of a procedures manual for the *Burtij* early intervention software, building the capacity of staff to use it in associations and preschools in several governorates;

(g) Review and analysis of the services provided to persons with disabilities in current diagnostic centres and running a series of training courses for those centres.

218. There are four disability detection and diagnosis centres in Jordan distributed throughout the country according to population density.

219. With regard to the training of specialist doctors, three workshops on the rights of persons with disabilities have been held for motherhood and childhood centre doctors.³³

220. Despite the proliferation of health service institutions covering all geographical areas, the standards and specifications are lacking to enable them to provide adequate health services for people with various disabilities, as such people have difficulty accessing and using them safely. There is also a lack of provision of information in formats accessible to them, such as Braille and people's own language.

Article 26

Habilitation and rehabilitation

221. National health legislation covers the habilitation and rehabilitation of persons with disabilities.

222. Article 2 of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act defines habilitation as: "A multifaceted system that seeks to enable a person with disabilities to achieve or restore physical, mental, vocational, social or economic abilities to the level possible". It defines rehabilitation as: "Measures, programmes and plans the purpose of which is the maximum possible retrieval, enhancement or maintenance of capacity and skills and their development in the health, work educational, social or any other field in order to achieve equal opportunity and full integration of persons with disabilities in society and the exercise of all rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal footing with others".

223. The Act also includes a definition of social habilitation as: "a set of programmes within the framework of the development of society to achieve equal opportunities for habilitation and social integration for people with disabilities".

224. Article 4 (d) of the Act in force stipulates that the relevant authorities will provide comprehensive services and programmes for habilitation and rehabilitation in the professional and social fields and support services of all kinds.

225. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in all its phases has included habilitation and rehabilitation aimed at "Access by the various categories of persons with

³³ In 2008, 70 doctors of these centres were trained (10 per cent of the doctors currently being trained for this purpose), while 10 workshops were held for doctors, nurses and midwives of motherhood and childhood centres in 2009, when 160 medical personnel were trained. The early detection of disability department ran 50 awareness campaigns for the families of persons with disabilities in the various governorates between 2007 and 2009.

disabilities to high quality habilitation and rehabilitation services in all governorates, including diagnosis and physiotherapy and occupational therapy services, education and training”.

226. Habilitation and rehabilitation programmes are provided for children with disabilities in special education institutions and centres. The health institutions in the governmental, charitable and military sectors also offer such services to other persons with disabilities.

227. The Government provides the necessary aids for people with motor, hearing and sight impairments, as well as support and equipment.

228. The Government has adopted a social habilitation strategy and promotes and supports the establishment of community-based rehabilitation programmes in local communities in cooperation with civil society organizations.

229. Several capacity-building programmes have been run for staff working in different parts of the country to enable local communities and people with disabilities and their families to run community-based rehabilitation programmes and activities based on volunteer work and networking, coordination and training of persons with disabilities and their families through home visits in order to achieve integration.

230. In addition to the participation of families and relatives in planning, implementing and assessing habilitation and rehabilitation plan for persons with disabilities, disabled persons’ associations and organizations are providing the environment and opportunities for family members and relatives to give support to disabled people and their families by carrying out joint activities and exchange of experiences and views about habilitation and rehabilitation programmes, including contributing to their review and development.

231. The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan is keen to participate in international and regional events to keep up-to-date with developments and the application of modern approaches and methods, benefit from techniques and aids, offer its expertise to many friendly association and to enhance international cooperation and exchange of experiences regarding habilitation and rehabilitation.

232. Training and educational programmes and degrees are currently available at some Jordanian universities in Rehabilitation Sciences faculties, and in special education colleges, and are having a positive impact on disability awareness and care for people with disabilities.

Article 27

Work and employment

233. Article 6 of the Constitution stipulates that Jordanians are equal before the law and that the State shall within the limits of its capabilities ensure that everyone has work.

234. Nothing in national employment legislation precludes the admission of persons with disabilities to employment, including the Jordanian Employment Act, as amended, the Civil Service Statute and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act.

235. The condition “physical fitness” constitutes an obstacle to persons with disabilities accessing employment opportunities. It prevents their competing for the majority of available jobs and discriminates against them.

236. In recognition of this fact, the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act stipulates that public and private sector institutions shall employ specific percentages of persons with disabilities of up to 4 per cent of the workforce.

237. The Jordanian labour market is characterized by high numbers of qualified university graduates seeking work and limited employment opportunities, making competition fierce and contributing to high rates of unemployment among job-seekers, including persons with disabilities.

238. Although some people with disabilities are employed in positions appropriate to their qualifications and experience, there are cases in which they are employed in positions that are not and at wages lower than those of people who do not have disabilities.

239. In order to improve employment opportunities for people with disabilities, vocational training institutions are designing and running capacity-building programmes appropriate to labour market needs but the numbers of people who have received training remain low because some training centres do not have appropriate environmental facilities, in fact such facilities exist in only nine of 42 training centres.

240. In addition to discrimination on the part of employers, difficulty accessing the work environment is another obstacle restricting opportunities for people with disabilities to enjoy their right to work.

241. Under Jordanian employment legislation, employers are required to provide a healthy, safe and appropriate work environment, and the labour inspectorate conducts periodic inspections to ensure compliance.

242. Although there are many development refresher, and worker performance development programmes and establishments are keen to improve the productivity of their workers, people with disabilities do not enjoy equal opportunities for the training necessary for their professional advancement. This is due to the prevailing culture among employers and the lack of provision of facilitated training in the work environment.

243. Several charitable initiatives have appeared in recent years for the habilitation and employment of persons with disabilities, especially women, through productive projects and cultural “heritage” industries, in work environments designed to take into account the needs of persons with disabilities.

244. There is nothing in national legislation to prevent persons with disabilities forming and joining trade unions that defend their employment rights, and many people participate in the committees and activities of such unions.

245. Jordanian legislation includes a system to of protection for people who suffer occupational injuries and give them and their families the right to appropriate compensation and social security.

246. National legislation guarantees that people who suffer injury as a result of their work can continue to work with the provision of an appropriate environment, retraining and compensation in some cases.

247. The Government has taken a series of measures to protect workers from arbitrary dismissal.

248. There is a need for additional remote employment programmes for persons with disabilities by using information and communications technologies and arrangements that allow work from home.

249. In local communities employers make arrangements to employ some persons with disabilities in work that does not require and is not covered by the umbrella of employment legislation, such as agriculture, grazing and local workshops.

250. Persons with mental disabilities suffer from limited employment and work opportunities, while the opportunities for people with other disabilities are affected by the type of disability and their level of training and habilitation. In industrial establishments,

people with hearing impairments are the category with most access to various employment opportunities. This is not the case of people with motor and sight disabilities.

251. Access to soft loans to finance small productive projects is limited: since its inception, the Development and Employment Fund has given only 20 loans to people with disabilities.

Article 28

Adequate standard of living and social protection

252. The Jordanian Constitution gives all citizens the right to work, education, tranquillity, equal opportunities and protection and care at all stages.

253. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act includes the right of persons with disabilities to receive support services of all kinds in order to achieve their integration and active participation, including the monthly assistance to persons with disabilities for production in accordance with the provisions of the National Assistance Fund Act.

254. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities contained at all its stages a theme on family empowerment and social protection in order to improve the level of services provided to persons with disabilities to achieve integration and independence.

255. To enable persons with disabilities to overcome the environmental obstacles that limit their participation in society, the Act in force contains a number of customs and tax exemptions for equipment, tools and machinery, including educational and medical materials and aids and means of transport, in addition to the charitable schools, centres and institutions that provide them with free services.

256. Official state institutions and charities run support programmes for families and individuals with incomes below the poverty line. This includes the provision of free housing for the poor, financial and in-kind assistance and many facilities to people with disabilities and their families.

257. All individuals, including persons with disabilities, are covered by Jordanian social insurance for disability, old age and death.

258. Social protection programmes extend throughout the Kingdom in all governorates, including areas classified as pockets of poverty.

259. With regard to public housing programmes, the measures and actions taken include the allocation of 5 per cent of the housing units in General Organization for Housing and Urban Development projects to persons with disabilities, with specifications appropriate to their needs.

260. The National Poverty Reduction Strategy acknowledges a link between poverty and disability.

Article 29

Participation in political and public life

261. National legislation guarantees all citizens the right to political participation. This is set forth in the following:

- (a) The Jordanian Constitution, Chapter Two, articles 6, 16, 17, 22, 24 and 67;
- (b) Under the Elections Act in force and regulations and instructions, the Government has taken a series of measures and actions to expand the participation of

persons with disabilities in the electoral process and access to, entry and use of polling stations;

(c) The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act contains provisions guaranteeing people with disabilities the right to public and political life, including nomination and election and the creation of suitable places and facilities to enable them to vote in secret, as well as the right to participate in non-governmental organizations and bodies;

(d) The National Strategy for Persons with disabilities at all its stages included a special theme on political and public participation in order to enhance participation and integration in public life, including political life;

(e) Action taken to adopt and implement awareness campaigns to widen the circle of participation of the various segments of society in political life, including persons with disabilities;

(f) For the most recent parliamentary elections in 2010, 232 polling stations throughout the country were rehabilitated to receive persons with disabilities;

(g) Seventy-five sign language interpreters were distributed to polling stations for people with disabilities;

(h) A hotline was allocated to receive inquiries from persons with disabilities to facilitate their access to information about their designated polling stations;

(i) Awareness campaigns aimed at women with disabilities have been organized in order to extend their participation in public and political life and increase their participation in local and parliamentary elections;

(j) People with disabilities have been encouraged to run for election to the House of Representatives and to train to manage an electoral campaign focusing on disabled persons' issues and rights. These efforts resulted in the nomination in their constituencies of five people with various disabilities;

(k) The measures taken by the electoral administration body take into account the independence and confidentiality of elections, respect for voter's will and their protection from interference and exploitation by providing facilities that enable people to vote in secret, whether on their own or with the help of their companions.

262. In spite of the action taken to build the capacities of people with disabilities to defend their rights and motivate them to participate in political life, they accounted for only 0.5 per cent of total candidates at the recent elections.

263. No comprehensive data are available on the level of political participation of persons with disabilities. There is low demand for the establishment and membership of organizations defending their rights. No more than 50 per cent of those heading or on the boards of 23 such organizations are people with disabilities. This may be the result of lack of awareness of the importance of participation.

264. People with mental disabilities are exempted from exercising their right to participation at elections in accordance with the provisions of the current Elections Act.

265. The formation of political parties and associations is a fundamental right provided for by the Constitution and regulated by the laws in force and there is nothing to prevent individuals exercising this right.

266. A coalition of organizations of persons with disabilities has been formed aimed at: awareness, advocacy and defence of the rights of persons with disabilities.

Article 30

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport

267. Cultural legislation and the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act regulate access by individuals to their right to participate in cultural life.

268. National legislation guarantees the right of individuals to cultural expression, such as writing, music, composition, sculpture, painting and performance. Their right to enjoy cultural productions and participate in cultural activities without discrimination is also recognized.

269. A concern for culture has been clear at all phases of the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities through the inclusion of themes that aim to extend the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural life.

270. In order to facilitate access to and participation in cultural life by persons with disabilities, a series of measures and actions has been taken:

- (a) Several books have been published in Braille;
- (b) An art group of persons with visual impairment has been formed;
- (c) Material support has been given to the rights of authors with disabilities, including children. Support is given to printing and publishing the works of people with disabilities, provided the literary work is worthy of publication and achieves the highest literary standards;
- (d) Some cultural centres are now able to receive people with disabilities by requiring application of the National Disabled Access Building Regulations to modern buildings;
- (e) Hearing impairment has been recognized by the printing and distribution of books;
- (f) To encourage and recognize painters with disabilities, their work has been included in local publications, and books and magazines for children;
- (g) Provision of books and references in Braille in academic institutions;
- (h) Support for children with disabilities in cultural competitions held in schools as extracurricular activities;
- (i) Institutions and other bodies have been made aware of the need to respect the cultural rights of persons with disabilities;
- (j) The cultural rights of persons with disabilities have been enhanced by providing infrastructure, equipment and support for the activities of clubs and centres they have founded and run. Three cultural organizations have been established concerned with the cultural rights of persons with disabilities, in Amman, Zarqa and Mafraq, while many clubs and associations have programmes that include activities and cultural events organized by people with disabilities and in which disabled people take part;
- (k) Discussion sessions are held in the governorates in the presence of administrative governors in order to guarantee optimum implementation of the National Disabled Access Building Regulations, particularly in tourist areas.

271. In order to broaden the participation of persons with disabilities in cultural activities and events, more support and resources are needed to develop the cultural skills and talents of such people in remote areas. Communication needs to be improved between intellectuals

with disabilities and those without, and easy access to all cultural institutions and facilities ensured.

272. National legislation guarantees that persons with disabilities may enjoy sporting rights. This is provided for in the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act and the Olympic Committee and Sports Federations Act.

273. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities in all its phases has included a theme on sport aimed at increasing the participation of persons with disabilities in sports, recreation and entertainment activities.

274. A Sports for the Disabled Federation has been set up in Jordan that works to organize, coordinate, manage, support and expand their participation at the local, national, regional and international levels. The most prominent sports gatherings for people with disabilities are the world championships, the Asian championships, the Pan-Arab Games, and the Paralympics.

275. Jordan takes part in local, national, regional and international competitions and championships and has significant sporting achievements to its name.

276. Around 30 per cent of women with disabilities participate in sporting activities and tournaments at all levels.

277. Disabled people's organizations run sports programmes so that students with disabilities are able to enjoy this right. Children and students from special schools and training centres and their teachers and instructors have access to Sports Committee establishments, stadiums and halls to enable them to practise sports and recreational activities.

278. Notwithstanding the above, there is still a need for participation by persons with disabilities in the Arab school sports, local school sports games and school sports and to train teachers to make that possible.

279. In order to put into effect the principle of integration in sports in all governorates, sport for persons with disabilities has been included in the plans and programmes of the clubs of persons without disabilities.

280. To facilitate the enjoyment by persons with disabilities of their right to leisure and entertainment recently established cinemas, theatres, clubs and public parks have been made accessible and safe to use, while existing institutions are being rehabilitated to provide the necessary facilities for people with various disabilities.

281. Despite the availability of many facilities for people with disabilities to exercise their rights to leisure and entertainment, there are obstacles that restrict their enjoyment, such as: lack of guidelines, translation into sign language and speaking programmes.

282. Persons with disabilities face difficulties and obstacles in accessing, entering and using safely many tourist sites and their facilities.

III. Children and women with disabilities

Article 6

Women with disabilities

283. The Jordanian Constitution establishes the principle of equality between women and men.

284. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act affirms the principle of equal rights and duties of women and men.

285. The National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities embraces this principle.

286. The National Strategy for Women includes rights for women with disabilities.

287. To supplement national policies on the rights of women with disabilities, a committee has been formed with a membership of women with different disabilities in order to defend their rights through the preparation and implementation of programmes and projects, and awareness of their rights in the local community.

288. Despite the increased awareness of gender-related rights and the relative change in the position and status of women in politics and the administration, the judiciary, the media, education, health and the environment, there are some areas in which they are discriminated against, such as the right to pass their citizenship to their children, to obtain equal pay for equal work, and others.

289. For cultural reasons, women with disabilities suffer discrimination in accessing equal rights with men as a result of living in a conservative society that gives men guardianship over them.

290. The economic and social discrimination suffered by women with disabilities affects their families. Poor women with disabilities suffer greater discrimination than others.

Article 7

Children with disabilities

291. Concern for childhood is a national priority.

292. Directive No. 2 of 2008 has been issued on the licensing of government nursery school homes under article 20 of the Nursery School Order, No. 52 of 2005.

293. The Education Act, No. 3 of 1994, and amendments thereto, provides for the adoption of a preschool period of a maximum of two years, provision of a suitable environment for the child to create a balanced upbringing, including the personal, physical, mental, spiritual and emotional aspects, and compulsory free education in public schools.

294. The Kingdom ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 2007, thereby committing the country to the rights of the child.

295. National legislation contains principles and provisions to ensure the survival, protection, development and participation of children of all ages through the adoption of a series of laws, regulations and directives on education that are implemented under the auspices of the Ministry of Education.

296. The National Childhood Strategy contains programmes and actions that guarantee the right of all children, including those with disabilities, to a balanced and secure early childhood replete with entertainment, play and activities in line with his/her developmental abilities, to obtain a good education and acquire skills, knowledge and the ability to decide and communicate with others, and to enable them to exercise their right of expression and active participation.

297. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007, sets forth the right of children with disabilities to build their capacities, develop their skills and enhance their integration in society. This law includes health and preventive care for children with disabilities, diagnosis and early detection, medical and psychological rehabilitation, free health insurance, the provision of general, vocational and higher education opportunities,

the adoption of programmes for the integration of students with disabilities with their peers without disabilities, provision of the equipment necessary to help them learn, specialized staff, outreach, education and awareness programmes for people with disabilities and their families, environmental facilities, customs and tax exemptions, participation in public and political life, and provision of sports programmes and recreational and cultural activities.

298. The National Strategy addresses children with disabilities in the themes on health and disability and inclusive education, and prohibits abuse and violence against persons with disabilities.

299. The right to inclusive education is provided for in the National Plan for Childhood. Children with disabilities are integrated in preschools. There are resource rooms for students with learning difficulties and classes for children with hearing impairments in ordinary schools, either through students with disabilities being integrated with other children in the classroom or by having their own classes within the school, such as classes for those with mental disabilities or hearing impairments.

300. Children with disabilities receive services that meet their basic rights to health, education and protection of cultural expression through institutions that offer such services without discrimination.

301. In addition to the existing institutions providing the service, there are many private sector institutions, associations and programmes offering health, rehabilitation, education, and other services for the protection and participation of children with disabilities. Standards have been adopted for these institutions.

302. The Juveniles Act has been amended to ensure that juvenile offenders, including those with disabilities, are not deprived of their liberty. Article 4 (i) of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, No. 31 of 2007, entitled "Litigation" guarantees: "The health conditions of a person with disabilities shall be taken into account regarding places of arrest if the nature and circumstances of the case require arrest. Persons with disabilities shall be provided with assistive technology, including sign language interpretation".

303. A manual has been published for the preservation of justice when dealing with juveniles. It is based on international standards and contains procedures for dealing with juveniles focusing on how they are questioned and tried before the competent courts.

IV. Specific obligations

Article 31

Statistics and data collection

304. Under Jordanian legislation, institutions and individuals are obliged to provide data on their situation to the authorities responsible for managing the census and statistical surveys.

305. The Statistics Office is responsible for the collection and compilation of demographic, economic and social data on a regular basis, including data on the situation of persons with disabilities.

306. Population and Housing Census data (2004) showed the rate of disability among the population in the Kingdom to be no more than 1.23 per cent.

307. In order to check the census data on the scale of disability, a series of statistical surveys was conducted in specific geographic areas. They found the disability rate to be four times as great as that recorded by the Census.

308. The low disability rate recorded in the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan compared with the global rate is the result of factors relating to society's view of disability and the way the census was conducted.

309. In order to devise programmes and activities to meet the right to full participation, comprehensive and sufficient data are needed on the scale and types of disability, geographic and age distribution, and detailed data on the extent to which persons with disabilities use public services and facilities and specialized services.

310. Many measures and actions have been taken to expand the available data on the scale, types and distribution of disability and the services and obstacles in the various areas of rights, as follows:

- (a) Preparation for the collection of detailed data on disabilities and the situation of disability according to global standards in the next census;
- (b) Publication and dissemination on websites of the available data on disability;
- (c) Launch of the national data system to provide information and data on persons with disabilities.

311. Involvement of people with disabilities in data collection and research.

Article 32

International cooperation

312. The Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act asserts the importance of participating in efforts to achieve the objectives of international charters and conventions on the affairs of persons with disabilities ratified by the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan.

313. Jordan wishes to cooperate with relevant international and regional institutions and authorities by participating in conferences, seminars, workshops and initiatives and exchange of experiences.

314. Jordan is involved with Arab, regional and international disabilities institutions and bodies in the advancement of persons with disabilities, such as the Arab Decade of Disability, Rehabilitation International, and the Arab Organization of People with Disabilities.

315. Jordan is a member of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

316. In the framework of international cooperation, Jordan provides neighbouring countries with qualified staff in the various fields, while academic and training institutes receive special education, habilitation and rehabilitation trainees.

317. Jordan receives financial and technical support for the implementation of programmes in the fields of education, rehabilitation and integration, and staff training, in addition to assistive devices and information technology.

318. Within the framework of international cooperation, Jordan has over the past four years received financial and technical assistance from several countries, organizations and bodies.

319. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2013-2017 includes clauses on disability issues, and programmes receiving conditional assistance relating to the provision of environmental facilities for persons with disabilities.

320. Some international organizations operating in the development field, such as Mercy Corps, are working on the habilitation and capacity-building of some 75 charitable

organizations and associations in five governorates so that they can accommodate people with disabilities and integrate them in their programmes.

321. As a result of increased awareness, people with disabilities are taking part in the design, implementation and assessment of some programmes and projects aimed at enhancing the dignity and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, such as a campaign to ensure equal political participation, and the coalition working to prepare the civil society report on the state of implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

Article 33

National implementation and monitoring

322. The Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities was established as a national coordinating body to follow up application of the Convention with the relevant agencies.

323. The Higher Council is, within its capabilities, responsible for supporting people with disabilities, defending their interests and working to integrate them in public life by providing the means and environmental, legal and social facilities.

324. The National Centre for Human Rights is responsible for monitoring human rights violations in the Kingdom and receiving complaints of violations, including of the rights of persons with disabilities.

325. Civil society organizations are involved in monitoring and following up implementation of the Convention and preparing reports on the subject.

326. In line with the National Strategy for Persons with Disabilities, the subject of disability has been included in the strategies of several relevant government agencies, including the National Youth Strategy, the Educational Development Plan and the draft education reform, Towards the Knowledge-based Economy.

327. Part of the government budget has been allocated to supporting the Higher Council for Affairs of Persons with Disabilities in its capacity as the authority responsible for policy development and implementation.
