



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

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

**Replies of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the
list of issues in relation to its initial report* ****

[Date received: 13 December 2023]

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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



I. Purpose and general obligations (arts. 1–4)

Reply to paragraph 1 (a) of the list of issues (CRPD/C/PRK/Q/1)

1. The Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (hereafter DPRK) introduced the attitude of respect for the dignity and personality of the persons with disabilities into the general public and any practice devaluing them with despising expression is not allowed legally. The Law on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Persons with Disabilities, DPRK (hereafter LPPRPD) provides in Article 5 that the State shall strictly prohibit all forms of discrimination and violence against persons with disabilities and protect their dignity and personality from any infringement based on disabilities and in Article 56 that the publishing institutions and relevant organ shall not use the uncultured and nonstandard expressions about persons with disabilities when publishing and releasing publications and videos.
2. In addition, the names of all “schools for the blind” and the “schools for the deaf and dumb” throughout the country have been changed into “schools for visually impaired persons” and “schools for persons with hearing impairment” respectively since 2020.

Reply to paragraph 1 (b) of the list of issues

3. In keeping with the requirement of the evolving reality, the DPRK Supreme People’s Assembly adopted, by Ordinance No.22, the LPPRPD with the aim of thoroughly ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities in all fields of social and personal life comprehensively and in a unified manner throughout the country. The newly adopted LPPRPD replaces the previously adopted law on the protection of the persons with disabilities, provides for the rights of persons with the disabilities more clearly and reflects detailed measures for their implementation.
4. And relevant legislative measures have been taken to harmonize the provisions of the domestic sectoral laws with those of the Convention.
5. For instance, new provisions for the promotion and protection of the rights of persons with disabilities were added to the existing laws such as the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Children’s Rights (amended on July 7, 2020), the Law on Red Cross Committee (amended on July 29, 2021), the Law on Nursing and Upbringing of Children (amended on December 14, 2021) and the Law on the Prevention of Disasters, Rescue and Restoration (amended on August 19, 2022).

Reply to paragraph 1 (c) of the list of issues

6. In the DPRK, the phased policies and national strategies for the realization of the rights of persons with disabilities including woman and children with disabilities living in rural and remote areas are implemented by comprehensive national strategy and departmental strategies like Education Strategy, Public Health Strategy and Labour Strategy, etc.
7. For instance, Education Strategy and Public Health Strategy include detailed targets and indicators for the promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities in accordance with DPRK national country-wide Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.
8. For the details of the Strategies, please refer to answer to (g) of Art. 1-4 and (b) of Art. 6.

Reply to paragraph 1 (d) of the list of issues

9. The representative bodies ensuring the full and effective participation of persons with disabilities and their representative organizations in the DPRK include the committees for the protection of persons with disabilities at central and local levels, people’s committees at different levels and the Central Committee of the Korean Federation for the Protection of the Disabled (hereafter KFPD) and its branch offices in the local provinces.
10. For detailed organizational structure and activities of the organizations mentioned above, please refer to answer to (a), (b) of Art. 33.

Reply to paragraph 1 (e) of the list of issues

11. The ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention by the DPRK is currently under consideration.

Reply to paragraph 1 (f) of the list of issues

12. In the DPRK, remarkable advances have been achieved in the promotion and protection of rights of persons with disabilities since the 2017 official visit of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

13. As regards the measures taken in accordance with recommendations by the Special Rapporteur, please refer to the appendix.

Reply to paragraph 1 (g) of the list of issues

14. The protection of persons with disabilities in the DPRK has been undertaken comprehensively on a nation-wide scale by the unified guidance and development plan of the state.

15. In line with the spirit of the CRPD to include the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in all policies and plans of the state, the DPRK has been establishing and implementing the strategies aimed at developing the work for the protection of the rights of persons with disabilities in all spheres of the state and social life in a unified manner.

16. The Strategy consists of 9 thematic areas including rehabilitation, education, employment, culture, assistive devices, barrier-free environment, organizations of DPOs, monitoring and evaluation.

17. The Strategy is developed jointly by the various committees, ministries, central organizations and KFPD under the supervision of the Cabinet.

18. The main responsible bodies for the implementation of the Strategy are the committees for the protection of persons with disabilities at central, provincial, city and county levels, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Labor and other committees, ministries, central organizations, people's committees at provincial, city and county levels.

19. The bodies for consulting and technical support are the central committee of KFPD and its branch organizations-Korean Association of Rehabilitation of Persons with Disabilities, Korean Association of Women with Disabilities, Deaf Association of Korea and Blind Association of Korea.

II. Specific rights (art.5–30)**Equality and non-discrimination (art. 5)****Reply to paragraph 2 (a) of the list of issues**

20. The DPRK has newly adopted LPPRPD reflecting the need to ensure equal rights of all citizens in all fields of the state and social life as required by the Socialist Constitution of the country.

21. Article 3 of the LPPRPD stipulates that ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities is a consistent policy of the State and inherent requirements of the socialist system. The state shall ensure that the persons with disabilities exercise their rights to the fullest possible extent in all fields of social life such as politics, economy and culture. Article 4 provides that the state shall ensure the participation of the persons with disabilities in social life on an equal footing with others regardless of the degree and types of disabilities, gender, position, merits, parents or guardians. Especially, it is provided in the Article 5 that the State shall prohibit all kinds of discrimination against and abuse of the persons with disabilities and ensure that their dignity and personality are not violated on the grounds of disability.

22. In addition, the Laws on Criminal Procedures, Civil Procedures, Protection and Promotion of the Rights of the Child, Socialist Labor Law and Public Health Law are maintaining the articles in detail on special care and provision of labor and living conditions and convenience for the children and adults with disabilities. There are no articles relating to the discrimination against the persons with disabilities on the grounds of disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 2 (b) of the list of issues

23. LPPRPD includes articles on the provision of safe and convenient working conditions and environment for the persons with disabilities (Art 33), free access to the cultural and welfare service facilities (Art 48) and preferential service to the persons with disabilities at institutions of the public service, transport, and communication (Art 61).

24. Accordingly, the relevant regulatory and supervisory institutions (public prosecutors and security institutions, etc.) study and investigate the implementation and violation of the laws by institutions, enterprises and organizations and impose the administrative and criminal liabilities in the event of infringement.

25. Besides, the DPRK has a well-organized national system to consider and discuss the complaints and petitions submitted by the persons with disabilities to the complaints mechanisms or disability-related organizations in case their request for appropriate convenience services were refused.

Women with disabilities (art. 6)

Reply to paragraph 3 (a) of the list of issues

26. In the DPRK, all women including those with disabilities exercise equal rights with men and there is neither legal nor institutional factor which discriminatively restricts universal rights of women with disabilities. Therefore, all women with disabilities are enfranchised to vote and to be elected in elections to people's assemblies at all levels from county-level to the supreme level throughout the country including rural and remote areas, acting as the masters of the State and society. They are also embraced in all political and public organizations such as the General Federation of Trade Unions of Korea and the Socialist Women's Union of Korea as well as to disability associations such as the Korean Association of Women with Disabilities and actively take part in the work for the promotion of the rights of all women including those with disability.

27. For instance, the Associations of Women with Disabilities organized under the umbrella of the KFPD in 4 provinces of South Hamgyong, Kangwon, North and South Phyongan provinces as an exemplary case in 2011, have been reorganized into a central level Association, the Korean Association of Women with Disabilities (KAWD) in Pyongyang with its branches throughout the country since 2019. Provincial branches of the KAWD let their members visit every county and village looking for women with disabilities to collect data on their needs and demands to include women with disabilities in their planning and implementation.

Reply to paragraph 3 (b) of the list of issues

28. All the policies, plans and strategies including the Plans for the Development of the State Economy and sectional strategies in the DPRK have been consistent with the promotion of the rights and interests of all citizens including women and girls with disabilities.

29. For instance, the Strategy for the Protection and Promotion of Persons with Disabilities (2019-2020) contains provisions of appropriate occupations and labour conditions for women with disabilities at working age according to their abilities and physical conditions as its important contents. Further, associations of women with disabilities at all levels focus on their capacity-building and on investigation of actual situation and needs of women with disabilities and satisfactions of their demands, so as to ensure all efforts for women with disabilities in the area be based on their needs and demands, thus bringing about real benefits to them.

Reply to paragraph 3 (c) of the list of issues

30. Article 8 of the Family Law stipulates that citizens are entitled to free marriage. Article 45 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights stipulates that Women shall have rights to free marriage. No act of infringing upon rights to free marriage or interfering in the exercise thereof shall be committed. According to these laws, any act of forcing marriage to women including those with disabilities shall be considered as a crime and the concerned person shall be held accountable under the criminal law. In the DPRK, marriage is arranged only according to the free will of the parties concerned and not by external force or pressure.

Reply to paragraph 3 (d) of the list of issues

31. The Central Committee of the Korean Federation for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities (KFPD) has different sectional associations such as Blind Association of Korea, Deaf Association of Korea, Korean Association of Women with Disabilities (KAWD) and Korea Disability Rehabilitation Association, etc. and regional branch committees at all levels. The female staffs with disabilities of these associations account for around 40%. KAWD has branches at central and local levels and take steps to closely contact with KFPD.

Children with disabilities (art. 7)**Reply to paragraph 4 (a) of the list of issues**

32. The DPRK makes every effort to ensure close contact between child-care institutions, schools at all levels and families, with a view to preventing children with disabilities from being isolated at home and falling into similar situations.

33. For instance, the Korean Rehabilitation Centre for Children with Disabilities (KRCCD) set up early registration system of children with disabilities in Pyongyang to register and to provide them with necessary technical advice. The KRCCD provides not only weekly care service but also daily rehabilitation service so that the children with disabilities can benefit from education and rehabilitation service with their parents or caretakers. The KRCCD also specially includes integrated recreation in the daily schedule for the children and inclusive art performance and recreation activities on the occasion of the International Children's Day every year.

34. Workshops are also organized on a regular basis to disseminate information on knowledge about disability and about basic rehabilitation and education which can be easily carried out at home to parents or the caretakers of children with disabilities. Guidelines and manuals on disability assessment are also regularly developed and distributed in order to improve the skills of caretakers and teachers of nurseries and kindergartens to detect disabilities as early as possible and adapt appropriate methods.

Reply to paragraph 4 (b) of the list of issues

35. In the DPRK, all children with and without disabilities including those with intellectual disabilities and with psychosocial disabilities actively participate and voice their opinion through participation in different meetings and contests and through publications.

36. Article 16 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights stipulates that children shall have the rights to join the Children's Union or other children's organizations and freely express their opinions either orally, in writing or through publications or works of art. According to this law, all children with disabilities of school age as well as those without disabilities actively participate in various meetings including sub branch meetings and general assemblies of the Children's Union and express their opinions. School teachers also guide the children with disabilities so that they can actively participate in social activities with confidence since their childhood, while elaborately arranging for providing conditions and environments for them to actively and voluntarily take part in different kinds of school meetings or discussion.

37. Children with disabilities also display their abilities and aptitudes at national contests such as “April 15 Mangyongdae Prize” Creation Contest, national art festival of schoolchildren, schoolchildren’s art concour, etc.

38. Children with disabilities are free to publicize their opinion including their experience or their feelings of school life, or their literary works through periodicals such as “Saenalsinmun”, the newspaper for children at the age of 14-16, and “Sonyonsinmun”, the newspaper for children at the age of 7-13 as well as monthlies such as “Saesedae” and “Haksaenggwahak”.

Awareness-raising (art. 8)

Reply to paragraph 5 (a) of the list of issues

39. In the DPRK, the awareness-raising of persons with disabilities, relevant professional groups and government officials at all levels about the rights and dignity of all persons with disabilities is conducted through major celebrations meetings, mass media propaganda and the organization of workshops and meetings of various subjects.

40. For instance, June 18 every year is greeted meaningfully throughout the country as the National Day of Persons with Disabilities. The DPRK organizes national art performances, joint celebrations, photo exhibitions and exhibitions of accomplishments, aiming to make the occasion of Day of Persons with Disabilities be a turning-point for better understanding about the persons with disabilities and for attitude towards them in society. Various kinds of artistic and recreation activities are conducted also at regional levels according to the actual situations on the ground as well as supporting activities including visits to families of persons with disabilities to inspire them and provide them with material support. Events and activities mentioned above are also organized on December 3, the International Day of Persons with Disabilities and are publicized through mass media such as important newspapers, radiobroadcasts and TV.

41. In the DPRK, big efforts are being made to organize workshops and trainings on different subjects including rehabilitation, education, labour, barrier-free environment with the aim of raising awareness and improving expertise on disabilities among relevant professional groups and government officials at all levels.

42. For example, the KFPD hosted a technical training for professionals of architectural design and execution sectors to introduce universal design in architecture, so that the participants understand the world trend towards universal design and development orientation of architectural design for all.

Reply to paragraph 5 (b) of the list of issues

43. The DPRK pays due attention to information dissemination on talents, deeds and potentials of persons with disabilities. Article 47 of LPPRPD stipulates that the mass media and competent organs shall give wide publicity of cultural events such as art performance and sports games of persons with disabilities and patriotic deeds of persons with disabilities by making and releasing the TV programs, radio broadcasting and literature and art works.

44. Accordingly, TV programs and audio programs as well as news articles are edited to introduce different persons with disabilities including artists and sports persons with disabilities and their contribution to society and noble virtue through central TV channels, radios, newspapers and magazines on a regular basis. Furthermore, various programs of different subjects including labour and cultural life of persons with disabilities as well as information on disability are reported on the occasions of National and International Days of Persons with Disabilities, which is of great importance to promote better understanding of persons with disabilities in society.

Reply to paragraph 5 (c) of the list of issues

45. In the DPRK, appropriate measures have been taken to raise the social awareness on the persons with different kinds of disabilities such as intellectual and/or psychosocial

disabilities and cerebral palsy, autism, Down's syndrome, spinal bifida and small persons with disabilities.

46. In particular, there is no disability type-based discrimination in disseminating the talents, exploits and capacities of the persons with disabilities, but introduce their contribution through TV, radiobroadcasting, publication, national events and celebration meetings.

47. On the occasion of the National Day of Persons with Disabilities, International Day of Persons with Disabilities, June 1 International Children's Day, and March 8 International Women's Day the positive looks of citizens catering the persons with disabilities are introduced all over the country.

48. Particularly, school education is provided in a diverse ways to teach the children to treat the persons with disabilities kindly and respect their personality and dignity.

Accessibility (art. 9)

Reply to paragraph 6 (a) of the list of issues

49. In order for the persons with different kinds of disabilities at central and local levels to participate in a social life to their full and independently, the DPRK has taken measures to provide them with good physical environment and means of transportation, information and communication and free access to the facilities and services that people enjoy.

50. Included in the measures are the compulsory provision of safe and comfortable working conditions, environment and facilities considering the physical character and convenience of the persons with disabilities at their offices and workshops, making accessible the cultural and public service facilities including theatres, cinemas, gyms, and restaurants, diversified and preferential provision of service for the persons with disabilities at facilities of public catering service, convenience service and transportation by providing private seat and channel for the persons with disabilities only and developing the various IT tools and applications at the information industry guidance institution to help the persons with disability access to the information and communication and technical system through fixed or mobile communication network.

Reply to paragraph 6 (b) of the list of issues

51. The DPRK has taken legal measures for the persons with disabilities to increase accessibility to the all facilities, services and techniques as well as to use all the products comfortably and conveniently that people utilize.

52. For instance, in regard to the provision of barrier free environment of the buildings and facilities, the Article 60 of LPPRPD has stipulated that the institutions of DPRK construction control, designing, urban management, building operation, land and environment protection, social security as well as institutions, enterprises and organizations concerned shall, when designing, constructing and remodeling dwelling houses, public buildings, structures, roads, recreation and tourist resorts, ensure the comfortable accessibility for the persons with different kinds of disabilities.

53. With regard to the accessibility and universal design requirements, various laws such as the Laws on Public Service, Dwelling House, Construction and Design, Urban and Town Planning and Urban and Town Management have reflected in detail the accessibility and products and services with universal design for the persons with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 6 (c) of the list of issues

54. For the purpose of providing a convenient and comfortable living environment to the persons with disabilities, the DPRK has included the accessibility and barrier free environment as an important component in the Strategy on the work for the protection of persons with disabilities, DPRK.

55. In order to implement the goals of this Strategy, the Ministries of Urban Management, Construction Control, Information Industry, Light Industry and Public Bureau for People and other disability related ministries and central institutions included in their middle and long term development plans the practical issues to ensure the accessibility and barrier free environment, which are under implementation.

Right to life (art. 10)

Reply to paragraph 7 of the list of issues

56. Homicide is regarded as the most serious crime in the DPRK and in particular, infanticide including those with disabilities becomes an unforgivable crime. It is stipulated in Article 305 of the Criminal Law that a person who has intentionally committed murder shall be subjected to reform through labor of more than 5 years but less than 10 years. In case of murder from base motive he/she shall be committed to discipline through labour of not less than 10 years. In case of a grave offence, he/she shall be committed to reform through labour for an indefinite period or death penalty.

57. As the laws stipulating the free mental and physical development of children with disabilities, the Law on Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Children provides in the Article 30 that the children with disabilities shall have equal rights with others to receive education and medical care, while LPPRPD in the Article 50 that a child with disability shall be entitled to live under the legal protection of the DPRK on an equal basis with others after birth.

Situations of risk and humanitarian emergencies (art. 11)

Reply to paragraph 8 (a) of the list of issues

58. The DPRK has included in the DPRK Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction 2019-2030 the issues to respond to the immediate or long-term needs of persons with disabilities in case of humanitarian crisis related with health and climate change and it is implementing them. This strategy was developed in March 2019 by the DPRK Emergency Disaster Commission and informed to the KFPD, Blind Association of Korea, Deaf Association of Korea and disability related organizations at central and local levels. Whenever the strategy has been renewed, the appropriate measures have been taken to notify the persons with disabilities through disabled people's organizations (DPOs).

59. The Strategy includes in detail the measures to give priority to the persons with disabilities in rescue, rehabilitation and recovery in case the emergency crisis like natural disaster or COVID-19 pandemic breaks out.

Reply to paragraph 8 (b) of the list of issues

60. At the outbreak and early stage of prevalence of the COVID-19 at the beginning of 2020, the DPRK has taken pre-emptive and positive countermeasures recognizing the catastrophic danger of this Pandemic.

61. The common knowledge on prevention and treatment of COVID-19 and patient management was extended in a diversified way through TV and other mass media, and particularly, by the joint efforts of the Korean Federation for the Protection of the Disabled, Deaf Association of Korea and Blind Association of Korea, the visual handouts, video clips with sign language and audio programs for the persons with sensory impairments were produced and disseminated so as to contribute to the scientific prevention and management of the pandemic.

62. The DPRK has taken a proper measure not to exclude even a person with disability from the vaccination in the local region, especially in the remote areas while keeping close contact with the KFPD during the vaccination on the residents at Dong and People's Unit levels in the country.

Reply to paragraph 8 (c) of the list of issues

63. The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction and Paris Agreement on Climate Changes are implemented in the DPRK through the National Strategy on Forest Construction (2015-2044), National Strategy on the Protection of Environment (2019-2030) and National Strategy on Disaster Risk Reduction (2019-2030) by the DPRK Emergency Disaster Commission, Ministry of Land and Environmental Protection, Urban Management and national power organs at all levels.

64. These strategies which were developed under the inclusive consultation between the KFPD and other disability related organizations have reflected the requirements and interests of the persons with disabilities to the full including the provision of primary assistance during emergency crisis.

Equal recognition before the law (art. 12)

Reply to paragraph 9 (a) of the list of issues

65. In the DPRK, every citizen with and without disability is recognized equal before the law and the right to be protected by the law on equal basis is legally guaranteed. This means no limitation on the basis of disability to the legal capacity enjoyed by persons with disabilities can be allowed.

66. In particular, on behalf of persons with psycho-social and intellectual disabilities, their guardians conduct legal actions in the country. The reason is that there may be cases in which persons with disabilities are found both subjectively and objectively difficult to judge their action and its result at the very moment of conducting. It is likely to see inadvertent actions from persons with disabilities which may cause unexpected harm to themselves or their relatives or the third party, in such cases the guardianship will prevent any undesirable results and will ensure equal recognition before the law, especially for those with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 9 (b) of the list of issues

67. Replacing guardianship and other systems of substituted decision-making with supported decision-making regimes is now under consideration.

Reply to paragraph 9 (c) of the list of issues

68. In the DPRK, all citizens with and without disabilities are ensured to enjoy equal rights in both public and private sectors. As the Socialist Constitution stipulates, the DPRK shall effectively guarantee the genuine democratic rights and freedoms as well as the material and cultural well-being of all its citizens. Hence, discrimination of persons with disabilities including women with disabilities is never allowed and does not exist in ownership and inheritance of property, in accessing bank services as equal as others.

Access to justice (art. 13)

Reply to paragraph 10 (a) of the list of issues

69. In the DPRK, all persons with disabilities including women with disabilities are recognized as equal as others in every step of legal proceedings. In case persons with speech or hearing impairments institute civil actions or are related to criminal actions as witnesses, sign language interpreters translate their sign language.

70. The DPRK endows rights to every citizen to be recognized equal before the law on the basis of equity and to be protected by the law without any discrimination regardless of sex or age according to the principles of the Socialist Constitution and sector laws which stipulate equal right of women and men in all areas of the DPRK and social life. All laws and regulations are equally applied to every citizen with exception for provisions for the special protection for women and persons with disabilities and for provisions applied only for men on the basis of non-discrimination.

71. Detailed texts of the laws are contained in the report submitted already.

Reply to paragraph 10 (b) of the list of issues

72. In the DPRK, the justice sector as well as other sectors employs persons with disabilities without any discrimination and the employees with disabilities have equal rights with other employees without disabilities.

73. As of April 2023, 12 persons with different types of disabilities perform different duties such as judge, arbitrator and court reporter, etc., at different courts throughout the country.

Reply to paragraph 10 (c) of the list of issues

74. In the DPRK, 6-month and 1-month training courses are organized for the law enforcement officials including judges and prosecutors in which the disability related articles of UN CRPD and standards are introduced.

Reply to paragraph 10 (d) of the list of issues

75. In the DPRK, the right to complaints and petition is one of political rights of citizens stipulated by the Socialist Constitution and this right is specified in detail by the Law of Complaints and Petition.

76. The Law of Complaints and Petition stipulates its main principle to ensure principle, scientific, objective and just and fair investigation and management of grievance and petitions, since the complaints and petitions are the voice of popular masses and the reflection of the popular sentiments.

Liberty and security of the person (art. 14)

Reply to paragraph 11 (a) of the list of issues

77. All citizens including those with disabilities in the DPRK have the equal rights in all spheres of the DPRK and social life as stipulated by the Socialist Constitution. Article 4 of LPPRPD stipulates that the DPRK shall ensure the participation of persons with disabilities in social life on the basis of equality, regardless of the severity and types of disability, sex, position and merits, existence of parents or caretakers, etc. Therefore, in no case can exist any law which allows deprivation of freedom on the basis of physical impairments as well as intellectual and psychosocial disabilities and even before the adoption of the Socialist Constitution there was no such law.

Reply to paragraph 11 (b) of the list of issues

78. In the DPRK, hospitals, institutions, or schools are not and cannot be a place for deprivation of liberty of citizen with and without disabilities.

79. In the DPRK, persons with psychosocial and intellectual disabilities are exempted from penal responsibilities for their socially dangerous acts according to the relevant laws and regulations. Moreover, in case where persons with disabilities commit crimes, the principle in dealing with such cases is to exempt them from or mitigate punishments.

Reply to paragraph 11 (c) of the list of issues

80. Till now, there is no data about reformation of persons with physical disabilities at reformatories till now, and in particular, those with psychosocial disabilities and with intellectual disabilities are not the objects to be dealt with for criminal cases.

Reply to paragraph 11 (d) of the list of issues

81. From the outset of its foundation, the DPRK has made steady efforts to make its citizens regard it as their duty to help the persons with disabilities well as their kinsmen and thus to build a society of a large harmonious family.

82. LPPRPD stipulates in the Article 6 that the DPRK shall encourage the public to establish a social trait of treating and helping kindly the persons with disabilities and to give preferential treatment to the honoured soldiers with disabilities, honoured workers with disabilities and honoured war wounded veterans who devoted themselves to the motherland and people.

83. Hence, there are a large number of reports on noble virtues of treating kindly and taking good care of and helping persons with disabilities including those with intellectual disability and psychosocial disabilities.

Freedom from torture or cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment (art. 15)

Reply to paragraph 12 (a) of the list of issues

84. In the DPRK, to ensure scientific accuracy, objectiveness, justice and prudence in law enforcement is the most important needs of policy and laws to thoroughly protect and promote human rights of people. Therefore, no violence, torture, cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment of persons with disabilities can be made and till now there is no such case reported.

85. Popular masses are the masters of the country and it is the consistent DPRK policy not to allow violation of their rights and interests for any account.

86. For instance, the DPRK ensures that in case a law officer illegally interrogates a person or violates human rights, he or she be punished severely by being committed to reformation through labour of up to ten years.

Reply to paragraph 12 (b) of the list of issues

87. In the DPRK, there is only labor reformatory known as “Rongdong Kyohwaso” which is DPRK institution to execute punishments. It isolates and reforms, through labor, those criminals who were convicted of crimes before the DPRK and people.

88. “Kwanliso” is the thing unilaterally fabricated by the hostile forces in order to defame the image of the DPRK.

Reply to paragraph 12 (c) of the list of issues

89. There is no such thing as “Kwanliso” in the DPRK.

Freedom from exploitation, violence, and abuse (art. 16)

Reply to paragraph 13 (a) of the list of issues

90. The DPRK will not tolerate any practices violating the rights, interests, dignity, character and human rights of all citizens including the persons with disabilities, which is regarded as the consistent policy of the DPRK.

91. The DPRK strictly prohibits all kinds of exploitation, violation and abuse at persons with disabilities. In case this happens, the criminal violating the human rights of persons with disabilities will be punished more severely than others in accordance with the appropriate articles of Criminal Law and Civil Law.

92. However, it is not recorded the case that violating the rights of persons with disabilities on purpose led to crimes or brought on public criticism.

Reply to paragraph 13 (b) of the list of issues

93. In case the crime is committed at the persons with disabilities in the DPRK, the criminals are severely punished at law-courts so that this gives warning to the society not to repeat again. The victims are thoroughly kept secret upon their demands and indemnified losses according to the Law on Compensation for Damage. Following the Article 41 of the

Law on Compensation for Damage, the one who injures the other has to compensate treatment fee or the loss of income due to the absence of work.

Reply to paragraph 13 (c) of the list of issues

94. It is not regarded as a social problem in the country the violence, abuse and exploitation against women and girls including those with disabilities. Particularly, the sexual abuse or sexual violence to the women and girls with disabilities are not conceivable.

95. Article 39 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women stipulates that No one shall commit an act of abducting, trafficking, raping or gang raping a woman. And Article 319 of the Criminal Law stipulates that a man who rapes a woman by using violence, threats or by taking advantage of her helpless situation shall be committed to reform through labour of less than 4 years.

96. But in order to prevent the practices of the violation of women such as the prostitution and the rape, the DPRK regularly explains to the citizens the Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Women and the Criminal Law. In addition, the video clips and explanatory writings on the harmfulness of those activities are used for educating the broad masses.

Protecting the integrity of the person (art. 17)

Reply to paragraph 14 (a) of the list of issues

97. Social system of the DPRK is the man-centred system in which the working people are the masters of everything and everything serves them, and is the socialist system in which human rights are respected and protected.

98. In the DPRK, forced or coerced medical treatment for persons with disabilities including those with intellectual disabilities and with psychosocial disabilities are not conceivable. Instead, in order to prevent the practices of the illegal medical treatment, it is provided in Article 26 of Medical Treatment Law that medical establishments shall inform a patient of expected manipulation for treatment and in case a surgery is expected, consent by patient shall be essential, but if the patient is comatose, consent by his or her caretaker shall be needed.

99. However, in case that such a case occurs, the responsible person shall be seriously punished as an inflicting deliberate serious injury under the criminal law. Article 310 stipulates that a person who deliberately inflicts serious injury shall be committed to reform through labour of less than three years.

Reply to paragraph 14 (b) of the list of issues

100. Please refer to the answers to (a) of Art. 17.

101. The Criminal Law of the DPRK stipulates about the illegal restriction of one's liberty. It is provided in article 279 of Criminal Law that an officer who illegally arrests, detains or confines an individual, searches his or her body or house, or seizes or confiscates his or her property shall be committed to disciplining through labour and, in case where he or she commits the above-mentioned act or causes serious consequences, he or she shall be committed to reform through labour of less than five years. Article 316 of this law stipulates that a person who illegally restricts the freedom of another shall be committed to disciplining through labour.

Liberty of movement and nationality (art. 18)

Reply to paragraph 15 (a) of the list of issues

102. Issues such as birth of a citizen and its registration procedure are provided in the Law on Citizens' Registration. It is provided in this law that all citizens including those with disabilities are registered immediately after their births. Even in case of birth of a child with inherent deformity, his or her parents have the duty to register the birth of their child within

15 days after the birth, while the registration organ concerned has the legal duty to register birth of every citizen and to issue the certificate of birth.

103. Regarding relevant data in urban and rural areas, please refer to the report on National Census of the DPRK 2019.

Reply to paragraph 15 (b) of the list of issues

104. In the DPRK, all citizens with and without disabilities are provided with freedom for travelling and movement by the socialist constitution and other sector laws concerned including the emigration and immigration law. So-called “restrictions on movement of persons with disabilities” never exist.

Reply to paragraph 15 (c) of the list of issues

105. In the DPRK, deportation or removal of persons with disabilities from population and care centres in detriment to their personal safety and well-being and eliminate special conditions for persons with disabilities has never been done and such a case has never been reported.

106. There is no special provision on residence of persons with disabilities in Pyongyang City. In the DPRK, all citizens with and without disabilities have the right to reside in wherever they like to according to article 75 of the socialist constitution which stipulated freedom of citizens on residence and travel. Further, Article 55 of the LPPRPD shall have freedom of residence in and travel to areas favourable for health care and life environment as they want. Thus, persons with disabilities are endowed with freedom of residence and travel on an easier and more convenient basis accounting for the convenience of persons with disabilities.

Living independently and being included in the community (art. 19)

Reply to paragraph 16 (a) of the list of issues

107. In the DPRK, there are no special and institutional facilities which restrict freedom of citizens including persons with disabilities regardless of their willing.

108. Therefore, there are only legal provisions to ensure that citizens with disabilities live independently to the full choosing their places of residence and effectively take part in social life.

109. The LPPRPD provides in article 49 that institutions for public health, population administration, social security and other institutions concerned shall ensure persons with disabilities the personal and property rights as well as right of independent activities to perfection, in order to lead them happy life under the social protection and care. Same Law also provides in article 55 that persons with disabilities shall have freedom of residence in and travel to areas favourable for health care and life environment as they want. Institutions for public health, population administration, social security and other institution concerned shall provide favourable conditions for persons with disabilities to reside and travel wherever they want to.

Reply to paragraph 16 (b) of the list of issues

110. In the DPRK, there are no special and institutional facilities which the present questionnaire means.

111. Please refer to the answers to (a) of Art. 19.

Reply to paragraph 16 (c) of the list of issues

112. In the DPRK, there are no orphanages, and any other institutions which the present questionnaire means.

Reply to paragraph 16 (d) of the list of issues

113. In the DPRK, according to the legal provisions and state policies concerned, all social services and public service facilities are provided for all citizens with and without disabilities on the basis of equality throughout the country including rural and remote areas. Specifically, regarding medical and welfare services, the government took steps to serve persons with disabilities on a preferential and convenient basis.

114. For instance, Ministry of Public Health took steps to provide persons with disabilities with preferential and convenient medical service at medical establishments and sanatoria, aiming to protect and promote health as well as to prevent worsening of disabilities. KFPD progressed social rehabilitation of persons with disabilities focusing on preparing persons with disabilities to possess mental and physical abilities for independent participation in social life as early as possible.

115. Furthermore, establishments for public catering service, welfare service, transportation service and communication service ensured that persons with disabilities are given preferentiality and convenience using various types of services including provision of seats and passages tailored to their needs, while strengthening education and control to prevent refusal of services for persons with disabilities or inconveniencing them.

Reply to paragraph 16 (e) of the list of issues

116. There is no special institution where orphans with disabilities or displaced children with disabilities are deprived of freedom in the DPRK.

117. Please refer to the answers to (a) of Art. 19.

Reply to paragraph 16 (f) of the list of issues

118. Persons with disabilities, particularly, those with mental disorder are legally protected from discrimination in the DPRK. the DPRK has adopted the Law on the Protection of Mental Health to prohibit the discrimination of persons with mental disorders and take well care of their works, life and health.

119. Community based Rehabilitation for persons with mental disorders is provided at workshops, family and people's unit level. Most of persons with light mental disorders are empowered to work on an equal basis with others while those with profound mental disorders are concerned by family members, people's units, community offices and mental rehabilitation institutes.

Personal mobility (art. 20)**Reply to paragraph 17 (a) of the list of issues**

120. In the DPRK, the persons with disabilities registered throughout the country including rural and remote areas are provided prosthesis and mobility devices such as wheelchairs and crutches free of charge as per their wish while motor bikes, motor wheelchairs and tricycles at low prices.

121. Please refer to answer to (b) of Art. 28. in regard of process and methodology of provision of assistive devices and prosthesis.

122. Transportation service for persons with disabilities by taxies bearing the KFPD logo which was started on a trial basis from May 2016 in Pyongyang was expanded throughout the whole country. If the persons with disabilities including those in rural and remote areas book the service, it will make it possible for them to move freely within a given areas. These taxis do not charge fares to persons with severe disabilities or those who cannot afford to pay fares, and charge reduced fares to other persons with disabilities.

123. In regard of the mobility of persons with disabilities by information and communication technology, please refer to answer to (a) of Art. 9.

Reply to paragraph 17 (b) of the list of issues

124. Recognizing the importance of prosthesis and assistive devices in rehabilitation of persons with disabilities, the DPRK has taken a lot of measures to provide fashionable and convenient devices to persons with disabilities.

125. For instance, Myohyangsan Medical Equipment Factory was remodeled in 2020 as a model of medical appliance factory and based on the experiences, renovations were expanded throughout the factories of medical appliance and prosthesis and orthotics including Hamhung P&O Factory.

126. The Ministry of Public Health sets its long-term goal and makes a perspective program to satisfy the needs on medical equipment and tools and develop and produce the world up-to-date medical appliances. Included in this program are the plans to produce artificial limbs, orthotic shoes with the latest assistive technology, to introduce the world advanced techniques into practice, and to increase the number of technicians to enrol at long-distance education, retraining and other education course.

Reply to paragraph 17 (c) of the list of issues

127. In order to train the rehabilitation professionals including mobility drills for persons with disabilities, the DPRK has taken measures to train competent rehabilitation professionals by improving the education curriculum and methodologies of rehabilitation medicine at medical universities in collaboration with Ministry of Public Health and Ministry of Education.

128. The Ministry of Public Health gives further study to make a scientific rehabilitation method at special hospitals, research institutions and physical rehabilitation centers and to develop recent prosthesis and assistive devices so that persons with disabilities can access to them conveniently.

Freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (art. 21)

Reply to paragraph 18 (a) of the list of issues

129. In the DPRK, all citizens with and without disabilities are guaranteed freedom of speech and the press according to the fundamental rights stipulated by the Socialist Constitution. Article 6 of the Press Law provides that citizens can do writing or creative activities with freedom and the state shall promote active participation of broad masses in writing or creative activities and perfect the copyright protection system so that the broad masses are guaranteed of their rights and interests. Article 14 of LPPRPD stipulates that persons with disabilities shall have the right to publicize their opinions contributable to promote not only the development of the state and society but also raise their own social status and roles through speech or writing, publications or works of arts.

130. According to the above-mentioned laws, all citizens including those with disabilities and disability rights activists freely publicize their views and opinions through different publications, presentations, radios, TV, etc.

131. To cite some examples of representative publications of persons with disabilities, there are trimestral newsletter and annual report of KFPD. And all persons with disabilities are free to express their views and opinions through the homepage “Huimang” which is exclusive to persons with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 18 (b) of the list of issues

132. Article 58 of LPPRPD provides that press organs and establishments concerned shall study and develop sign language in a unified way and publicize Braille booklets on a regular basis, while introducing subtitles and sign language captions to various types of videos, so to let persons with disabilities access to different types of information to the full.

133. According to these provisions, Braille booklets are publicized and distributed to persons with visual impairments on a regular basis and subtitles and sign language captions are introduced to various types of video programs such as scientific and educational films

and art films for persons with hearing impairments and are broadcasted through cable network, mobile network and one of the TV channels, Manbang.

134. It is provided in article 59 of LPPRPD that central IT industry leading organ and other relevant organ shall develop different exclusive informatics technologies and applications for persons with all types of disabilities to effectively access to and use through cable and mobile network and other system to the full.

135. According to this provision, the central IT industry leading organ, IT development enterprises and the KFPD closely cooperated to take steps for persons with disabilities to access to various types of information more easily using data communication network (cable and mobile network).

Reply to paragraph 18 (c) of the list of issues

136. Programme for Converting Korean Written Language into Korean Braille Letters which was under development at the very time of submission of the Initial Report of the DPRK, have been successfully developed and introduced by common efforts of the Blind Association and the Pyongyang IT Development Company in 2019.

137. This programme is used for automatic conversion of Korean text into Braille text and for printing the Braille book. This programme is distributed to and used by persons with visual impairments and Braille publishing houses for them free of charge. In particular, persons with visual impairments benefit a lot from this programme in their daily life since they can print Korean electronic documents easily using personal Braille printer even at home.

138. The Programme for Converting Korean letters into Korean speech has been upgraded to be very popular among persons with visual impairments. This programme can be run by computers and smart phones and is characterized by its ability to convert any Korean electronic documents into Korean speech so that persons with visual impairments can access to new information depending on their hearing abilities.

Reply to paragraph 18 (d) of the list of issues

139. With the rapid development of IT, technical measures are being taken to ensure more convenient access to various types of information by persons with disabilities, especially those with visual impairments and with hearing impairments in the DPRK.

140. Please refer to the answers to (b) and (c) of Art. 21.

141. Disability related technologies are developed in a planned way with the state investments and all technologies are offered to persons with disabilities free of charge.

142. For instance, Korean Sign Language Dictionary and Speech Conversion Programme, embedded in computers and smart phones were developed by the cooperation between the Blind Association, Deaf Association and Pyongyang Computer Technology College under the deep concern of the National Committee for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities. These programmes were distributed to persons with visual impairments and with hearing impairments free of charge.

Reply to paragraph 18 (e) of the list of issues

143. In the DPRK, Korean sign language is recognized as a formal language. Since the organization of the Non-standing Committee for the Deliberation of the Korean Sign Language in 2016, new historical terms are translated into sign language and are deliberated and permitted by the Deliberation Committee to be disseminated on a nationwide scale. Till now, the Deliberation Committee has met 11 times and deliberated and permitted over 5,000 new sign language words. Furthermore, Korean sign language is a formal language of the persons with hearing impairments to do legal actions.

144. Sign Language Interpreter Association of Korea (SLIAK) plays an important role in promoting use of the Korean sign language. Since its foundation in March, 2014, SLIAK trained more than 30 sign language interpreters per year and sent its excellent interpreters to various sectors of society, such as education, labour, press and mass media, etc.

Respect for privacy (art. 22)

Reply to paragraph 19 of the list of issues

145. In the DPRK, all persons with disabilities particularly, women and girls with disabilities are effectively guaranteed inviolability of the person and any unlawful interference or violations thereof are liable to punishment by law.

146. The DPRK compensates the loss according to the related provisions of the Civil Law, Criminal Law and Law on Compensation for Damage to protect the privacy, dignity and honor of all citizens including those with disabilities. In case that he/she injures indelibly the character of a person by defaming the dignity and reputation, he/she is obliged to make compensation to the victim regardless of prescription.

Respect for home and the family (art. 23)

Reply to paragraph 20 (a) of the list of issues

147. In the DPRK, protection of freedom, family and personality of all citizens with and without disabilities is provided in the Socialist Constitution. Article 78 of the Socialist Constitution stipulates that marriage and the family shall be protected by the State and the State shall pay great attention to consolidating the family, the basic unit of social life. And article 79 stipulates that citizens shall be guaranteed inviolability of the person, the home, and privacy of correspondence and no citizen shall be placed under control or arrest nor can a citizen's home be searched without a legal warrant.

148. In addition to this, different laws including LPPRPD, Family Law, Law on the Population Administration, Law on Social Insurance and Social Security, Law on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights and Law on the Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights, contain detailed articles about provision of entire freedom to persons with disabilities and their rights regarding home, marriage, family members, caretakers, guardians, representatives.

149. Therefore, any discriminatory law which denies rights of persons with disabilities on privacy including home and marriage cannot be expected in the DPRK.

Reply to paragraph 20 (b) of the list of issues

150. In the DPRK, there is no institutional facility to separate and isolate persons with disabilities from their families and, rather, there are only laws and regulations to enhance the role of parents to provide children with disabilities with special care and to provide children with their universal rights. The DPRK took detailed steps to enforce these laws and regulations.

151. It is provided in article 50 of LPPRPD that children with disabilities shall have the right to live under the protection of the law by the State as equal as others after birth.

152. In addition, it is provided in article 38 of the Law on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights that family is an important base of children's life. Parents shall create good environment for the growth and development of children and pay close attention to their intellectual and moral education and article 39 stipulates that children shall have the rights to be brought up and educated by parents. Parents shall be role models for children and bring up and educate them to be the pillars of the country, who are knowledgeable, virtuous and healthy.

153. Article 27 of the Family Law provides that parents shall bring up and educate their children to be healthy both physically and morally and article 258 of the Criminal Law stipulates that a person who, in duty bound to protect children, causes a serious consequence by refraining prosecution of his or her duty shall be disciplining through labour of less than one year.

154. In accordance with these provisions, the DPRK defined school education, home education and social education as three requisites for education and edification of children

and took a lot of steps to respect and promote rights, responsibilities and role of parents to ensure health and education of children as well as to provide them with excellent home environment.

155. For instance, various types of publications, multimedia, films including “Helping Children with Disabilities”, “Home and Mother” and “Education and Talents” were made and widely disseminated, while exemplary parents in the education of children are broadcasted through radio and TV.

156. And letters informing excellent students and their records are sent to the establishments, enterprises and organizations where the students’ parents work on a monthly basis. At the establishments, enterprises and organizations the informing letters are open to the employees, which is very helpful to inspire the parents to pay due attention to the children’s education.

Reply to paragraph 20 (c) of the list of issues

157. In the DPRK, there is neither institutional facility nor legal provision to separate and isolate persons with and without disabilities from their families and society. Hence, it cannot be imagined that children with or without disabilities are forced to be removed and placed in institutions.

158. Please refer to the answers to (b) of Art. 23.

Education (art. 24)

Reply to paragraph 21 (a) of the list of issues

159. In the DPRK, the rights to education of all citizens including those with disabilities are stipulated in detail in various specific laws which are the Socialist Constitution, Education Law, Law on General Education, Law on Tertiary Education, Law on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and Law on the Upbringing and Nursing of Children. On an equal basis with peers without disabilities, the persons with disabilities enjoy their rights on education at schools, learning institutions and universities at different level as they wish.

160. In particular, the newly adopted LPPRPD has reflected the practical issues on ensuring the full rights on education of persons with disabilities from article 18-26. The articles stipulated in detail on principles of education of persons with disabilities, the issues on ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities on primary and secondary education, higher education and vocational training as well as the material and technical measures to support schools for the deaf and blind, provide teaching equipment and resources and train teaching professionals for education of children with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 21 (b) of the list of issues

161. In the DPRK, it is regarded as the important requisite of education of children with disabilities to train the teaching professionals, establish educational institutions and develop teaching materials and means and modes of communication.

162. Particularly, the Ministry of Education is taking measures to establish the teacher training system to train the skilled teachers in a planned way for the schools of deaf and blind and classes of children with disabilities at universities of education and institutions of re-education. KFPD in collaboration with the Ministry of Education puts their efforts to study Braille and sign language and disseminate them at national level while organizing sign language training for the teachers in close relationship with Deaf Association of Korea and Sign Language Interpreters’ Association of Korea so that they can give quality education of sign language. At the same time they try to develop an automatic sign language interpretation program and equipment with the technical assistance of competent professionals from Kim Il Sung University, Kim Chaek University of Technology so as to be used for the education of children with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 21 (c) of the list of issues

163. The entire children with disabilities aged from 9-16 in the DRPK are identified and registered to ensure their school attendance, not to exclude from compulsory secondary education. It is provided in article 19 of the LPPRPD that local people's authorities and educational institutions shall register children with disabilities at school age without any exception and the educational institutions concerned and the parents and guardians of children with disabilities shall ensure the child concerned attend school and is not excluded from the general compulsory education system.

164. Education departments at provincial, municipal and county People's Committees registered all children with disabilities in the area under their charge during February and March, before the start of a new school year- April and ensure that they attend mainstreaming schools together with peers without disabilities.

165. And in case that person with severe disability is hard to access to regular education at educational institutions, it is arranged to follow up the curriculum at home.

Reply to paragraph 21 (d) of the list of issues

166. The KFPD and the Central Bureau of Statistics discuss and plan to collect statistical data on all levels of schooling for school age children with disabilities by conducting a joint survey on persons with disabilities during 2023-2024.

Reply to paragraph 21 (e) of the list of issues

167. In the DPRK, the relevant measures are taken to ensure the full rights on 12-year compulsory free education of all children with disabilities at kindergarten and school level. It is provided in article 18 of LPPRPD that medical and other institution shall bring up and educate children with disabilities at preschool age at kindergartens or professional rehabilitation institutions in order for them to adapt school life. The article also says that the local people's committees shall register children with disabilities in their region without any exception and take measures to bring up and educate at kindergartens. It may organize a class for children with disabilities at kindergartens in different parts of the country.

168. Following this Law, the Ministry of Education has made an analysis on the national situation on education of children with disabilities at school age and has taken measures to organize a class for children with disabilities at kindergartens and increase them at school level based on the education programs revised and experiences gained.

Reply to paragraph 21 (f) of the list of issues

169. The KFPD and the Central Bureau of Statistics discuss and plan to conduct a joint survey on persons with disabilities during 2023-2024 to collect statistical data on living condition, employment and school level of persons with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 21 (g) of the list of issues

170. In the DPRK, the entire citizens including persons with disabilities enroll at higher educational institutions including universities and colleges according to their wishes and aptitudes to enjoy their rights on learning.

171. The LPPRPD provides in Article 21 that persons with disabilities shall receive vocational training as per their wishes and capacities, while providing in Article 22 that persons with disabilities are encouraged to proceed to universities and other tertiary educational facilities (including distance learning institutions) if they wish; educational institutions and other institutions concerned shall not hinder the recommendation and their admission into the higher educational institutions or stop their studies for disability reasons.

172. Persons with different kinds of disabilities including girls with disabilities enjoy higher education system while enrolling at universities and vocational training schools and other well-arranged on-the-job educational system.

173. In particular, the Ministry of Education has taken measures to make the persons with disabilities be accessible to higher education at home irrespective of the location by improving the distance learning system and quality of distance education.

Health (art. 25)

Reply to paragraph 22 (a) of the list of issues

174. On March 14, 2023, the DPRK has revised the Public Health Law and Medical Service Law and amended some detailed provisions, aiming to ensure that all citizens with and without disabilities benefit from the proper effectuation of the people-oriented policy of the state on public health and that all medical establishments are provided with favourable environment and full conditions for medical service, while enterprises concerned produce and supply medical consumables and equipments in a planned way.

175. In accordance with these provisions, the DPRK firstly stepped up the modernization of the curative and preventive institutions to create favourable environment for the physical rehabilitation of persons with disabilities and for the medical care of patients. In particular, Kangwon Provincial General Hospital and Jonchon County Hospital, Jagang Province have been renovated to be the model standard for the modernization of the curative and preventive institutions at local level, and the technical preparatory work for modernization of provincial, municipal, county-level hospitals was undertaken on a nationwide scale.

176. For the sake of the population with and without disabilities in rural areas, pharmacies were newly set up in every ri and powerful and practical measures were taken so to ensure regularization of medicine supply.

177. Thereupon, all pharmacies, including those in rural areas, across the country started 24-hour service so that every farming population can purchase medicine nearby at any time they want.

Reply to paragraph 22 (b) of the list of issues

178. In 2017, Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) updated the Women's Health Care Guideline and Guideline for Health Care of Pregnant Women and Nursing Mothers, the contents of which are for all women with and without disabilities, and supplemented these guidelines in household doctors' in-service training curriculum. The MoPH has also added information about adolescence health care and publicized and distributed the newly edited household doctors' in-service training plan, thus contributed to improve health care of all girls and women with and without disabilities. Further, the MoPH organized to develop distance in-service training system for household doctors and to add information on health care of women, especially pregnant women and nursing mothers, to the curriculum in accordance with disaster and public health crisis, so to improve the service skill of household doctors.

179. In case a woman with disability becomes pregnant, she is defined to be specially protected and, terminal curative and preventive institutions concerned carries out health check-up on a regular basis keeping close connection with obstetrical and gynaecological departments of municipal- and county-level hospitals to firmly ensure easy delivery. The obstetrical and gynaecological departments of municipal- and county-level hospitals carry out general examinations to scientifically assess her possibility for continuing with pregnancy, and if the assessments result in that easy delivery is impossible, the obstetrical and gynaecological departments of municipal- and county-level hospitals take measures to terminate her pregnancy, depending on her subjective demand and the assessment results.

Reply to paragraph 22 (c) of the list of issues

180. The DPRK anticipated the rapid worldwide spread of the malignant epidemic, COVID-19 and blockaded the borderline on January 8, 2020 and started the national emergency anti-epidemic system on January 24. This was followed by full and rigid detection of suspicious objects, entrants and contacts and isolation of them for 30 days.

181. Then, adopted were various guidelines, reference materials, different rules and regulations including guideline for fight against epidemic, guideline for the prevention and fight against COVID-19 infections, different preventive guidelines such as antiseptics, isolation, use of masks, manuals of hand wash, and guideline for diagnosis and treatment of after effects of the COVID-19 infections as well as the detailed enforcement regulations of the Law on Emergency Prevention of Infectious Diseases. At the same time, above-mentioned guidelines and regulations were publicized through mass media including TV, newspapers, radio, intranet, etc., thus protecting and promoting health of all citizens with and without disabilities.

182. Moreover, during national COVID-19 infection examination and vaccination covering all dong and people's neighbourhood units, elderly people and persons with disabilities were given priority for the sake of their convenience and, depending on the demands of persons with disabilities, examination and vaccination were done at their houses.

Reply to paragraph 22 (d) of the list of issues

183. During the third quarter 2022, MoPH carried out facility investigation covering all public health establishments throughout the country to get data on their real situation, aiming to promote health of the whole population including those with disabilities, while elaborated a long-term project for the modernization of all curative and preventive institutions in the country with Kangwon Provincial General Hospital and Jonchon County Hospital, Jagang Province as the model of the project, and has been making a great deal of efforts.

184. By 2025, the order of technical assignment for the modernization of all curative and preventive institutions including ri-level hospitals will be completed and some central-level hospitals and special hospitals will be renovated.

185. The State puts forward a magnificent objective to supply all ri-level people's hospitals in the country with 4 sorts of medical equipment including high-pressure steam disinfectant and to supply all provincial-, municipal- and county-level people's hospitals with 4 sorts of diagnosis equipment as well as to lay necessary material and technical bases to access to intranet by terminal curative and preventive institutions and entered in the implementation stage. In the year of 2022, hundreds of first aid equipment and devices of 3 sorts were supplied to provincial-, municipal- and county-level people's hospitals.

Reply to paragraph 22 (e) of the list of issues

186. In the DPRK, it is provided in the Socialist Constitution that all citizens with and without disabilities shall enjoy the rights to receive medical services free of charge. The fundamental contents of free medical service include all medicines provided by medical establishments to the patients including the outpatients, all services for patients such as diagnosis, tests, treatment, operations, sick calls, treatment and meals at hospitals, medical services at recuperation places, assistance in delivery, health checkups, health consultations, preventive vaccinations and other prophylactic medical services.

Habilitation and rehabilitation (art. 26)

Reply to paragraph 23 (a) of the list of issues

187. The DPRK has regarded the habilitation, and rehabilitation, and reintegration services for the persons with disabilities to participate in social activities with the enough physical abilities as a work of vital importance and taken necessary measurements for its implementation.

188. The DPRK provides mobility devices such as wheelchairs, crutches, canes and prosthesis free of charge to the registered persons with disabilities throughout the country including rural and remote areas while motor bikes, motor wheelchairs and motor tricycles at low prices.

189. Please refer to answer to (b) of Art. 28. in regard of process and methodology of provision of assistive devices and prosthesis.

190. In regard of the mobility of the persons with disabilities through information and communication technology, please refer to answer to (a) of Art 9.

Reply to paragraph 23 (b) of the list of issues

191. Recognizing the importance of community-based rehabilitation services in ensuring the rights of persons with disabilities, the DPRK has taken measures to ensure the CBR services cover all parts of the country.

192. In particular, the DPRK avails the mass media to change the attitude and raise the awareness on the persons with disabilities. Please refer to answer to (a) of Art 8 on the detailed measures to change the attitude on the persons with disabilities.

193. The DPRK has taken appropriate measures to make the environment be accessible for the persons with disabilities which can be referred to answer to (a), (b) of Art 9.

Work and employment (art. 27)

Reply to paragraph 24 (a) of the list of issues

194. In the DPRK, employment of the working people with and without disabilities who have ability to work is done in the form of distribution of manpower by labour administration offices, and therefore, women with disabilities are provided with secure jobs by the State according to their wishes.

195. Persons with disabilities including women with disabilities are assigned to units which can ensure them favourable labour conditions and environments. Workshops for light workers are typical of these units. These workshops are run mainly by persons with disabilities and their family members and employees with disabilities work to the degree necessary for improving or maintaining their health, which are organized in most of the municipal cities and counties in the country. These workshops are set up with simple equipment in accordance with physical conditions of persons with disabilities and thus its production scale is comparatively small and persons with disabilities take part in the productive labour for 4 to 5 hours a day.

196. According to the 2016 periodical statistical data, 58.4% of persons with disabilities appeared to take part in labour activities. Among them, women accounted for 54.7%, while workers, officers, farmers amounted to 45.7%, 28.9%, 25.4%, respectively.

Reply to paragraph 24 (b) of the list of issues

197. In the DPRK, to ensure the provision of safety and reasonable accommodation to employees with and without disabilities in the workplace is provided mainly in the Socialist Labour Law and Labour Safety Law, In particular, LPPRPD stipulated about the provision of safety and reasonable accommodation to employees with disabilities in detail.

198. Article 33 (Conditions and environments of labour) of LPPRPD stipulates that institutions, enterprises and organizations shall equip with labour conditions and environments favourable for persons with disabilities in consideration of their physical conditions and convenience and that every place where persons with disabilities work shall be equipped with facilities for labour safety and convenience so that the employees with disabilities can work safely without inconvenience. In particular, paragraph 6, article 73 of this law clearly stipulates that in case of improper assignment of persons with disabilities or provision of unfavourable labour condition to him, the responsible person shall be punished by warning, solemn warning, unpaid work for less than 3 months or reformatory labour and in case such an act is recognized as a factum, that responsible person shall be called to account under the provisions of the criminal law concerned.

Reply to paragraph 24 (c) of the list of issues

199. In the DPRK, a remarkable advance has been achieved in the protection and promotion of rights of persons with disabilities during the period of 5-year (2016-2020). Particularly, different disability-related committees, ministries and central organs including

State Planning Commission, Ministry of Education, State Emergency Disaster Commission, Ministries of Labour, Public Health, Culture, Sports and Physical Culture, General Bureau of Designing, as well as People's Committees at all levels included disability issue directly in their own development plans and implemented the plans.

200. For instance, during this period, Ministry of Labour, General Designing Bureau, People's Committees of Pyongyang City, North and South Phyongan Provinces, South Hwanghae Province, Ryanggang Province, Jagang Province set some units as model of their own areas based on investigation into all enterprises and units in the areas where persons with disabilities work, keeping close contacts. On this basis, they drew model designs and carried out modernization and renovation.

201. Thanks to these efforts, Light Labour Workshops of Kim Jong Suk Pyongyang Textile Mill, Tokchon Colliery, South Phyongan Province, and Haeju Chemical Factory, South Hwanghae Province, as well as Light Labour Workshops of Ryongchon County, North Phyongan Province, Pochon Country, Ryanggang Province and Sokhyon, Kanggye City, Jagang Province were modernized with barrier-free environments.

202. Further, Ministry of Education focussed on improvement of contents and methods of education in institutes for students with visual impairments and with hearing impairments, while revising curriculum and newly editing and printing textbooks directing to raise the proportion of practical skill training in accordance with the 2nd programme for the universal 12-year compulsory education so that all the students with disabilities can effectively use their skill in social life.

203. Ministry of Education also took steps to ensure persons with disabilities receive tertiary education at universities, trade schools and vocational training schools, as well as on-the-job colleges, after secondary liberal education, regardless of sex and according to their wishes. As a result, overall higher education level for students with disabilities has been improved, while experiences and basis to introduce integrated education have been gained and prepared.

Reply to paragraph 24 (d) of the list of issues

204. In the DPRK, all kinds of workplace harassment are strictly forbidden by the law.

205. The DPRK clearly stipulated the legal demand with regard to provide all working people including men and women with disabilities with safe, modern and convenient working environment. The Law on the Labour Protection stipulated the principle of provision of safe working environment, enactment and observance of labour safety rules, set up of labour safety devices, supply of labor protection materials, rest and vacation, legal sanctions on violation of labour safety rules generally and in detail.

Reply to paragraph 24 (e) of the list of issues

206. Article 73 of the Socialist Labour Law provides that the State grants subsidies to those working people who are temporarily disabled by labour accidents, disease or injury under the State social insurance system and, if the period of disability extends beyond six months, gives them disability pensions under the State social security system.

207. Subsidy under the State social insurance system is given to a working person with disability who is temporarily disabled during work or during his or her stay in the guest house of a prosthetic and orthopaedic factory for fitness of prosthesis such as artificial limb for certain period of time. The time for payment of this subsidy is 12 months and the amount is 50 % of his or her fixed salary.

208. Disability pensions under the state and social security system are given to welfare recipients. These welfare recipients include people who lost their labour abilities due to ageing, diseases or physical disabilities, as well as old persons and children without means of support, and all the welfare recipients receive subsidies fixed by certain regulations concerned.

Adequate standard of living and social protection (art. 28)

Reply to paragraph 25 (a) of the list of issues

209. The DPRK exerted a lot of efforts to raise the living standards of persons with disabilities including women and children, focusing on the full guarantee of their rights to work. First of all, to ensure rational distribution of manpower of persons with disabilities, Ministry of Labour and labour administration organs at provincial, municipal and county levels provided jobs to persons with disabilities who are at the working age and are able to work, based on the investigation of the real situation of overall labour allocation and plan for reasonable labour distribution on a yearly basis. In particular, considering health of women with disabilities, they took necessary steps to choose appropriate occupation and kinds of work and were especially interested in mandatory employment of persons with visual impairments and with hearing impairments regardless of labour planning.

210. Then, they made progress in provision of favourable conditions for persons with disabilities to actively take part in labour activities in different fields of work. They widely organized home industry work teams, side-line work teams, etc. so that persons with disabilities can produce daily requisites, process foodstuffs, embroider, produce knitwear's, repair shoes, clothes and furniture, etc., while revising and amending regulations of stand service to set up stands run by women including those with disabilities in many different places, thus contributing to ensure the protection and promotion of their rights to labour as well as the offering of convenience in people's daily life.

211. Moreover, Ministry of Labour and labour administration organs at provincial, municipal and county levels took sanctions against institutions and enterprises which refuse the assigned persons with disabilities for no justifiable reason or do not provide labour and living conditions to employees with disabilities. Such sanctions include the stop of labour allocation to above-mentioned units.

212. The DPRK took steps to improve living standards of persons with disabilities by remuneration and subsidies. All workshops of light workers in the country pay employees with disabilities who work 4 to 6 hours every day the same salary paid to the others who work for 8 hours, while giving subsidies and disability benefits to persons who lost working ability due to diseases or physical disabilities. Please refer to answers to (e) of Art. 27.

Reply to paragraph 25 (b) of the list of issues

213. Prosthesis provision and repair services for persons with disabilities are all free of charge in the DPRK. Law on the Social Insurance and Social Security stipulates in article 67 (fundamental demand of production and supply of assistive devices) that assistive devices are assistive means essential for persons with disabilities and that institutions and enterprises concerned shall produce and supply with assistive devices needed by persons with disabilities in time. Assistive devices include prostheses such as artificial limbs and other essential devices necessary for daily life of persons with disabilities, including wheelchairs, glasses, hearing aids, etc. A person with disability who wants an assistive device submits a written application to the local people's committee concerned and the latter reviews the application and issues a notice to supply of assistive device. According to this notice, the local people's committee supplies the person with disability with the assistive device in stock. Regarding prostheses, the person with disability makes an application with certificates issued by the people's committee to the local prosthetic factory or repair shops to newly produce or repair prosthesis. All these services are free of charge.

Reply to paragraph 25 (c) of the list of issues

214. LPPRPD stipulates in article 69 that medical institutions shall periodically find out the persons with disabilities in the area under the disability definition standard and register them in city (district) or county-level people's committee.

215. According to this, terminal medical establishments (county-level people's hospital or clinics) of the local areas concerned register persons with disabilities or assess the severity of disability based on the results of regular health checkups, and, if necessary, they make

medical test reports. If a person with disability or his or her representative submits such report made by medical establishments to people's committee of the local area concerned, a certificate to identify a person with disability is issued.

216. Regular health checkup, registration of persons with disabilities, assessment of grade, report-making of medical test and issue of certificate of identifying persons with disabilities are all done free of charge.

Reply to paragraph 25 (d) of the list of issues

217. In the DPRK, people who are disabled during military services or social life and all persons with disabilities including those living in rural and urban areas benefits from the state policy for the social protection of persons with disabilities on an equal basis. LPPRPD stipulates in article 4 that the DPRK shall ensure that persons with disabilities have the same rights with others and take part in social life on the basis of equality, regardless of the degree or type of disability, sex, position and merits, parents or caretaker.

218. Thus, every citizen registered as person with disability in the DPRK receives benefits and favourable treatment for persons with disabilities in all spheres of social life and domestic life such as politics, economy, culture, etc. according to the fundamental rights of a citizen and relevant regulations on preferential treatment of persons with disabilities provided in the DPRK Socialist Constitution and all sector laws including LPPRPD, Socialist Labour Law, Public Health Law, Law on the Higher Education, Law on the General Education, Law on the Social Insurance and Social Security, Law on the Labour Protection, Law on the Protection and Promotion of Children's Rights, Law on the Protection and Promotion of Women's Rights, etc.

Participation in political and public life (art. 29)

Reply to paragraph 26 (a) of the list of issues

219. In the DPRK, all citizens with and without disabilities who have reached the age of seventeen take part in elections to People's Assembly at different levels including the Supreme People's Assembly with the right to vote and to be elected without distinction of any kind on the basis of equality. It is provided in article 6 of the Law on the Election of Deputies to People's Assemblies at Different Levels that the State shall provide with every citizen appropriate conditions necessary for the effective exercise of right to vote. Expenses for public management of election shall be borne by the State. According to the law, election committees at different levels select and refurbish polling stations before election for ensuring convenience of all citizens with and without disabilities.

220. Another important measure for the convenience of voters with disabilities is for the voters who are unable to come to the polling station. It is provided in Article 67 of the Law on the Election of Deputies to People's Assemblies at Different Levels that in case a voter is unable to come to the polling station because of serious illness, old age or physical disability, a member of the election committee concerned may visit him/her with his/her ballot paper and sealed ballot box for his/her convenience. According to this provision, in case a person with disability requests, the election committee sends one member to his/her house with the sealed ballot box and ballot paper for his/her convenience.

Reply to paragraph 26 (b) of the list of issues

221. In the DPRK, the all citizens including the persons with disabilities are equal in their rights to participate in a socio- political life. There is no stipulation that limits the socio-political rights and positions of persons with disabilities.

222. The persons with disabilities exercise their rights to the full to vote and to be voted empowered by the Socialist Constitution, Law on Election of Deputies to People's Assemblies at Different Levels and LPPRPD. It is provided in the Article 11 of LPPRPD that a person with disability has the right to vote and to be voted at the election of deputies to people's assemblies at all levels. Following this, the persons with disabilities are fully empowered to vote and to be voted at the elections of organs of state power at all levels from

county people's assemblies to Supreme People's Assembly and a lot of persons with disabilities are working as deputy to the Supreme People's Assembly and to people's assemblies at all levels.

223. Article 13 of LPPRPD stipulates that persons with disabilities shall have freedom of carrying out official duties as he or she is admitted full qualification. According to this Law, the persons with disabilities are working as public servants at many ministries and central institutions and moreover, most of them are working as heads of department at ministries or institutions at ministry level.

224. It is planned that the detailed information on the ratio of employees with disabilities including women with disabilities in a responsible position will be collected through the survey on employment of persons with disabilities.

Participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (art. 30)

Reply to paragraph 27 of the list of issues

225. The DPRK organized non-permanent National Paralympic Committee in October 2011 and acquired the full membership of the International Paralympic Committee in November 2013. Since then, they sent delegations and sports teams to international disability sporting events including the London Paralympic Games 2012, Incheon Asian Para Games 2014, Rio Paralympic Games 2016, and Pyeongchang Winter Paralympic Games 2018, etc., and making good achievements. This positively contributed to rapidly raise social awareness on disability sports and to inspire persons with disabilities to actively participate in sports and recreation activities, thus to let them fully display their self-confidence and existence and promote their health and finally take part in social life.

226. The DPRK organizes comprehensive disability sports games and events on a regular basis in the country for the development of disability sports. In 2010, National Table Tennis Tournament of persons with and without disabilities for the first time in the DPRK and now they host nationwide disability sports games two times a year, in spring and autumn. Further, the event in 2010 was only table tennis with some 50 players, but now around 400 players compete in 5 events (table tennis, tennis, swimming, shooting, archery).

227. Korean Sports Association of the Disabled (KSAD) plays an important role to ensure rapid development of disability sports and effective participation of persons with disabilities in sporting activities. KSAD has different event associations and local branch offices under its control. KSAD also actively and effectively cooperates with the National Paralympic Committee to make an important contribution to policy making and planning for the development of disability sports.

III. Specific obligations (arts. 31–33)

Statistics and data collection (art. 31)

Reply to paragraph 28 of the list of issues

228. In the DPRK, Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS) is in charge of all statistics and data collection. The CBS collect statistics and conduct census, sample survey, and irregular sector survey by experts on real situation of persons with disabilities throughout the country, including urban, rural and remote areas.

229. Regarding the disability survey, the CBS consult with the KFPD to confirm the clusters and mode of survey and the KFPD cooperates with the CBS by sending its experts to the target areas in case technical consultation with experts are needed such as in sample survey on disability.

230. In 2023, the KFPD and the CBS plan to jointly conduct disability sample survey in 20 counties of 5 provinces introducing questions developed by the Washington group.

International cooperation (art. 32)

Reply to paragraph 29 of the list of issues

231. Article 8 of LPPRPD stipulates that the DPRK shall promote exchange and cooperation with international organizations, foreign governmental and non-governmental organizations, overseas Korean nationals' organizations and individuals in protecting and promoting the rights of persons with disabilities. The DPRK has paid attention to strengthen the exchange and cooperation with other countries, international organizations and individuals in promoting and protecting the rights of persons with disabilities.

232. During last years, the DPRK has made a positive achievement in collaborating in such various fields as rehabilitation, education, employment, cultural life of persons with disabilities and etc. with the diplomatic missions and international organizations in the country.

233. However, recently due to the unilateral sanctions by US and the unjust sanctions by the UN Security Council, the cooperative projects with the UN and other international organizations and individuals are cancelled or dwindled drastically and great obstacles were laid to the implementation of strategy related to the international cooperation.

National implementation and monitoring (art. 33)

Reply to paragraph 30 (a) of the list of issues

234. National coordination of implementation of the CRPD in the DPRK is the responsibility of Committee for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities at central and local levels, National Committee for the Implementation of International Human Rights Instruments, People's Committees at all levels, KFPD and its local branch offices.

235. Central Committee for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities is chaired by the vice-Premier of the Cabinet, with vice-chairs being the ministers of Education, Public Health and Labour, and members consisting of deputy leaders of the commissions, ministries and national institutions concerned, including the State Planning Commission, State Emergency Disaster Commission, Ministries of Finance, Public Security, State Construction Control, Urban Management, External Economic Relations, Light Industry, Sports and Physical Culture, Culture, General Bureau of Designing, Central Bureau of Statistics, as well as chairpersons of the Korean Federation for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities and the heads of other agencies of persons with disabilities, including the Associations of the Blind, Deaf and Women with Disabilities.

236. Provincial, municipal and county committees for the protection of persons with disabilities are chaired by the chairpersons of the People's Committees in the area concerned, with members being the heads of departments of education, public health, social security, culture, justice, etc., as well as the chairpersons of the KFPD at provincial, municipal and county levels and the representatives of the Associations of the Blind, Deaf and Women with Disabilities.

237. Central and local committees for the Protection of Persons with Disabilities meet regularly to take inclusive steps for the protection and promotion of the rights of persons with disabilities and for the implementation of the Convention.

238. With regard to the monitoring of the implementation of the Convention, the KFPD plays the role of the independent monitoring institution (Paris Principles) upon the authorization of the government. The KFPD investigate the situations of persons with disabilities with regard to enjoyment of their rights, through committees for the protection of persons with disabilities at provincial, municipal and county levels as well as through different associations such as associations of blind, deaf, etc., on a regular basis. The KFPD makes reports and inclusive recommendations reflecting opinions of persons with disabilities and practical issues and counterplans for the protection and promotion of rights of persons with disabilities to the central and local committees for the protection of the Persons with disabilities.

Reply to paragraph 30 (b) of the list of issues

239. Central committee for the protection of persons with disabilities, under the unified command of the Cabinet, covering different committees, ministries, national institutions, each provincial (municipal) people's committees and the central committee of the KFPD, review the implementation of the national policy for the protection of persons with disabilities on a nationwide scale and take appropriate measures.

240. Provincial, municipal and county committees for the protection of persons with disabilities are in charge of the protection and promotion of persons with disabilities in the areas concerned and organize planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring for the implementation of the national disability policy including education, public health, sports and physical culture, arts, labour, statistics, barrier-free environment, etc.

241. Central committee has the KFPD president, chairpersons of Blind Association of Korea, Deaf Association of Korea and Korean Association of Women with Disabilities as its members to directly participate in the operation and decision-making. And the local committees have representatives of organizations of persons with disabilities as its members to ensure the involvement of persons with disabilities in planning, implementation, evaluation and monitoring for the implementation of policy for the protection of persons with disabilities.

242. Central and local committees for the protection of persons with disabilities meet regularly since December 2010.
