Report on the application of the 1960 Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education

The right to education is viewed as a constitutional, fundamental and natural human right. Under Article 43 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, everyone has the right to education and the state guarantees universal and free access to pre-school, basic general education and secondary vocational education in state or municipal educational institutes.

Russian legislation contains no discriminatory provisions. For instance, under Article 5 of the Russian Federation's Law of Education (hereinafter "the Law") citizens are guaranteed the right to education regardless of sex, race, nationality, language, origins, place of residence, religious attitude, convictions, membership of public organizations or associations, age, health, social position, property ownership or public duties. The State guarantees universal and free pre-school education, primary and basic general education, secondary (complete) general education and initial vocational education. On a competitive basis, it also provides free secondary vocational, higher vocational and post-graduate vocational education at state and municipal educational institutions within the limits of federal state educational standards and requirements.

A network of pre-school educational institutions assists families with the upbringing of preschool-age children. The functioning of pre-school educational institutions is defined in the Standard Regulation on pre-school educational institutions set out in the Decree of the Russian Ministry of Education and Science dated 27 October 2011.

General education comprises three levels corresponding to the levels of educational curricula: primary, basic and secondary (complete) general education. It is dispensed as regulated by Article 19 of the Law, and is compulsory.

Under Article 14.5 of the Law, the content of education at any particular educational institution is determined by the basic educational curriculum that the school itself draws up in compliance with the Federal state requirements for the

structure of a basic education curriculum and the terms on which it is provided, and on the basis of a model basic curriculum. Consequently, educational services in application of the basic general curriculum in state and municipal educational institutes are provided free of charge.

At the same time, in pursuit of the objectives and purposes defined in its charter, an educational institution may provide supplementary educational programmes or services over and above those required under its charter, in the light of the families' wishes and on the basis of an agreement between the pre-school educational institution and the parents (or their lawful representatives).

Chargeable educational services may not be offered to replace or as part of the basic educational activity funded by the provider.

Here payment in state and municipal educational institutes is required for additional educational services under an agreement reached between the institution and the parents. Further, the parents choose for themselves whether or not their child needs one or another chargeable additional service.

With regard to admission to general educational institutions, we can report that the overall requirements for admission to educational institutions are determined by the Law and by other Federal laws and, for admission to state and municipal educational institutions, additionally by standard provisions for educational institutions of the appropriate type and nature. The regulations for admission to any specific educational institution are determined by the institution itself in compliance with Russian Federation legislation and are enshrined in the institution's charter.

At present, in compliance with Federal Law No. 310-FL3 of 8 November 2011, amendments have been introduced to Articles 16 and 31 of the Russian Federation's Law "On Education" with regard to securing the territorial accessibility of municipal educational institutions.

Under Article 16 of the Law, the rules for admission to municipal educational institutions for study under the basic general educational curricula for primary, basic and secondary (complete) general education must guarantee admission to

those institutions for citizens who reside within the boundaries of a municipal or city district defined by the appropriate local authority for the specific municipal institution and who are entitled to receive general education.

A priority objective of the modernization of the system of vocational education is to improve access to educational services.

Under Federal Laws No 232-FL3 of 24 October 2007 and No. 309 FL4 of 1 December 2007, as of 1 September 2011 a transition has been made to the Federal State Educational Standards (hereinafter "FSES") and standardized higher vocational education.

FSES lays down the principle of extensive academic freedom. Under Article 14.5 of the Law, the content of education at a specific educational institution is determined by the educational curriculum or curricula adopted and implemented by the institution itself.

Educational institutions are given maximal freedom to draw up their curricula and teaching plans, to determine the content of modules and to select the forms and methods of their class activities. For instance, the standards for first degrees allocate 50% of the total tuition volume to locally-determined content, and those for post-graduate degrees allocate up to 70% of the total of volume to locally-determined content, and this enables where appropriate over half of the total tuition volume to be allocated to studying matters relating to regionally-specific issues or specific requirements for the graduate's future professional activity.

Consequently, depending on the needs of the labour market or the employer, within the locally-determined part of FSES the institution may provide training for graduates capable of carrying out various types of vocational activity within FSES requirements.

Under Article 16.3 of the Law, admission to educational institutions for secondary, higher or post-graduate vocational education funded through the Russian Federation's budgetary system is obtained on a competitive basis.

Admission to secondary and higher vocational education institutions for study under the curricula for secondary vocational education (on the basis of secondary

[complete] general education), curricula for the first degree or curricula for specialist education is dependent on results in the unified state examinations.

For citizens with limited health resources, i.e. those with inadequacies in their physical and/or psychological development, the State provides conditions in which they can obtain education and correction of their developmental flaws and social adaptation on the basis of special teaching approaches.

Under Federal Law No. 125-FL of 22 August 1996, "On Higher and Post-Graduate Vocational Education", each year the higher educational institutions supervised by the Federal executive authorities establish appropriate admission quotas in agreement with the Federal executive authority responsible for drawing up state policy and for standards and legal control in education.

Admitted to the State-accredited higher educational institutions, for study funded by the Russian Federation budgetary system, on a non-competitive basis, on condition that they pass the entrance examinations, are:

- orphans and children left without parental guardianship, and also persons aged up to 23 years who are orphans or without parental guardianship;
- children with category I and II disabilities, for whom study in the appropriate higher educational institutes is not inadvisable in the opinion of a specialist Federal medical and social institute;
- citizens aged up to 20 years having a single parent with a category I disability;
- citizens discharged from military service and entering a higher educational institution providing vocational military curricula (military academies) where recommended by military unit commanders, and also those who have taken part in military operations.

Admitted to State-accredited higher educational institution without entrance examination, for study funded by the appropriate budgets of the Russian Federation budgetary system, are:

- winners and prize-winners in the finals of the All-Russian School Olympiad, and members of the Russian Federation teams participating in international Olympiads in general educational subjects;
- champions and prize-winners at Olympic Games, Paralympic Games and Deaflympic Games.

Priority admission to State-accredited higher educational institutes for study funded by the appropriate budgets of the Russian Federation budgetary system is accorded to:

- citizens discharged from military service, the children of military personnel fallen while performing their military duties or as a result of a war wound or illness, and the children of persons who fell or died as a result of a war wound or illness stemming from their participation in counter-terrorist operations and/or other action to combat terrorism.

- citizens awarded the title of Candidate Master of Sport, the First Sports Distinction or a sports distinction in a sport with military applications, and also citizens having undergone training in military-patriotic youth or children's associations, enjoy priority admission to higher educational institutions providing vocational military curricula (military academies).

Citizens who have served at least three years' contractual military service in the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation or in other military units or formations or in bodies performing military duties liable to replace soldiers, seamen, sergeants or NCOs, and discharged from military service, are admitted to State-accredited higher educational institutes, for study funded by the appropriate budgets of the Russian Federation budgetary system, on a non-competitive basis provided they pass the entrance examinations.

Service personnel (except officers) undertaking contractual military service of continuous duration of at least three years, provided they pass the entrance examinations, are entitled to admission on a non-competitive basis to State-accredited higher educational establishments, and also to the preparatory

departments of Federal state higher educational institutions for study funded by the Federal budget under part-time (evening) or external curricula.

With a view to furthering the employment of discharged military personnel and their adaptation to their new social conditions and preparation for new work functions by offering them opportunities to gain knowledge and vocational or other skills from supplementary vocational curricula, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science has drafted a decree of the Government of the Russian Federation "On conducting in 2012-2014 an experiment in granting State personal education certificates to discharged service personnel".

This draft decree puts forward the methodology for the experiment in granting personnel discharged from military service certificates s to pay for study in state educational institutions of higher, secondary and supplementary vocational education in additional vocational curricula.

Under this experiment it is proposed to offer two types of certificate: one to pay for supplementary vocational curricula on the basis of secondary vocational education, and one on the basis of higher vocational education.

The State also assists citizens who have demonstrated outstanding ability to obtain an education, in part by granting them special State scholarships.

Under Federal Law No. 105-FL of 1 June 2011, "Amendments to the Federal Law 'On the Federal Budget for 2011 and the 2012-2013 plan period'", and with the Russian Federal Government's Decree No. 945 of 18 November 2011 "On improving the supply of scholarships for those studying at Federal state institutions of vocational education", the Russian Ministry of Education and Science has allocated budgetary provision of 2,100 million roubles to a further increase in the scholarships available at institutions of vocational education.

Under the aforesaid decree of 2011, enhanced State academic scholarships are designated for students with achievements in academic, research, social, culturally creative or sporting activities, etc., on the basis of set criteria.

In 2011 the Russian Ministry of Education and Science took steps to provide scholarships in support of students following curricula in the engineering and

technological disciplines, and formulated the appropriate standards and legal foundation in the terms of which, as of 2012:

- 3,000 scholarships of the President of the Russian Federation are established, including:

2,700 scholarships of 7,000 roubles per month for full-time students at higher institutions of vocational education in a State-accredited discipline or specialization relevant to the priority areas of the modernization and technological development of the Russian economy;

300 scholarships of 14,000 roubles per month for full-time post-graduates at institutions of higher or further vocational education and scientific organizations in a State-accredited scientific specialization relevant to the priority areas of the modernization and technological development of the Russian economy;

- 5,000 scholarships of the Government of the Russian Federation are established, including:

4,500 scholarships of 5,000 roubles per month for full-time students in higher institutions of vocational education under State-accredited curricula relevant to the priority areas of the modernization and technological development of the Russian economy;

500 scholarships of 10,000 roubles per month for full-time post-graduate students at institutions of higher or further vocational education and scientific organizations in State-accredited curricula relevant to the priority areas of the modernization and technological development of the Russian economy.

At present with a view to further improving the provision of scholarships for students in higher educational institutions, the Russian Ministry of Education and Science is drawing up a number of draft standard-setting legal documents to govern the allocation of personal scholarships to students in higher education.

For purposes of increasing admissions to higher vocational education, an experiment has since 2009 been underway in State support for providing educational loans to students at State-accredited institutes of higher vocational

education. In 2011 the Russian Ministry of Education and Science simplified the criteria for the granting of educational loan finance.

A list has been established of institutions selected to take part, in the 2011-2012 academic year, in the experiment in State support for granting educational credits to students at State-accredited institutions of higher vocational education. Selected to take part in the experiment were 112 institutions including 109 State institutions (including six Federal universities and 14 national research universities) and 3 non-state institutes.

Currently 595 students at 34 institutes of higher vocational education are taking part in the experiment.

From 2007 to 2011 there was an overall increase in admissions to higher vocational education: the number of places budgeted per 1,000 school-leavers shows a positive dynamic, having risen from 301 in 2007 to 438 in 2011.