Delegation
Russian Federation

Position Paper for the Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural)

The issues before the Third Committee are: Combating manifestations of xenophobia, Protecting human rights of indigenous people and Improving access to healthcare in African LEDCs. Fully aware of the importance of these issues, the Russian Federation is ready to support a fruitful debate and cooperate with other Member States to solve these global issues.

I. Combatting manifestations of xenophobia

The Russian Federation is aware that xenophobia is a huge problem in various countries including the Russian Federation. Since people of 160 different nationalities reside in the Russian Federation, she is the largest multinational state in the world. Moreover 20% of the population is not Russian, which is why the Russian Federation also faces manifestations of xenophobia.

The Russian Federation recognizes that xenophobia commonly takes an ethnic or religious form and in its most extreme forms manifestations may contribute to the situations as in the 20th century with Germany (Hitler), when six million European Jews were killed during World War II. The Russian Federation is also aware that industrialized countries are facing social, moral, educational and economic consequences due to xenophobia. "A total of 19 people died and 168 were injured during the acts of racially motivated violence, and nine people were threatened with death in 2013. We recorded racially motivated attacks in 32 regions of Russia," the Sova Human Rights Center said.

Therefore, the Russian Federation believes that all countries should unite their efforts and she will contribute to solve this global issue. The Russian Federation is further aware that xenophobia contributes to human rights violation, because the Russian Constitution states that:

1. In the Russian Federation recognition and guarantees shall be provided for the rights and freedoms of man and citizen according to the universally recognized principles and norms of international law and according to the present Constitution. (article 17)

2. Everyone shall have the right to freedom and personal immunity. (article 22)

Research made in 2014 in the Russian Federation showed that there are 3.5 million illegal immigrants, because of which the number of nationalists and xenophobes between Russians increased a lot.
The Russian Federation is making an effort to improve the situation. The Federal Migration Service (FMS) has already started working on this issue. The Ex-Human Rights Commissioner of the Russian Federation Vladimir Lukin held a meeting where FMS Chief Konstantin Romodanosky said that "Unfortunately, more cases of intolerance and xenophobia can be observed, which eventually leads to an escalation of inter-ethnic disputes". Moreover, our beloved president of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin, said that: “We should not create any xenophobia in society on any principle against anyone whatsoever, including against people of non-traditional sexual orientation”. The Russian Federation is currently working on this issue and actions that must be taken are already being discussed by the government.

The Russian Federation strongly believes that every Member State should participate in the process of solving this problem. Firstly, the Russian Federation urges all Member States to participate in the fight against terroristic organizations, because the new migration waves in Europe, which contributed to the rise of xenophobia, are closely connected to the Islamist terror attacks. Secondly, the Russian Federation offers all Member States to raise awareness of the issue and educate people on the territory of their state. Finally, The Russian Federation is ready to work and entrusts all Member States to cooperate with UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) to improve cultural exchange between all nations.

II. Protecting human rights of Indigenous People

Because of being a polyethnic country, the Russian Federation recognizes the problem of protecting human rights of indigenous people. There are 97 Indigenous nations living in Russian Federation including nations such as Tatars (3.87%), Ukrainians (1.40%), Bashkirs (1.15%), Chuvashes (1.05%), Chechens (1.04%), Armenians (0.86%), Avars (0.66), Mordva (0.54%) and others. The Russian Federation is aware that Indigenous People maintain their own traditions, have their own culture, language and territory and that rights of Indigenous People sometimes are not observed. Indigenous people are suffering of the erosion of linguistic and cultural traditions, face discrimination in their everyday life and rank highest in illiteracy and unemployment rates.

The Russian Federation has already been working on this issue and made some reforms to protect human rights of Indigenous People. The Russian Federation provides the opportunity to have education in their own language. Article 26 of Constitution of the Russian Federation states that:

1. Everyone shall have the right to use his or her native language, to a free choice of the language of communication, upbringing, education and creative work.

Article 69 further states that:
2. The Russian Federation shall guarantee the rights of the indigenous small peoples according to the universally recognized principles and norms of international law and international treaties and agreements of the Russian Federation.

Moreover, there are more than 2300 socio-territorial organizations or obschinas in the Russian Federation, which already have some more privileges such as control over hunting resources, reindeer herding and control over land. According to the Constitution, the Russian Federation contains 85 federal subjects, 22 of which are called "republics", and most of which represent areas of non-Russian population. Republics have the opportunity to have their own constitution and official language, and this contributes to protecting human rights of indigenous people.

Article 68 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation states that:

1. The Republics shall have the right to establish their own state languages. In the bodies of state authority and local self-government, state institutions of the Republics they shall be used together with the state language of the Russian Federation.

The Russian Federation is ready to discuss possible solutions of the issue and is ready to cooperate with other Member States. The first step should be a tighter cooperation with the ILO (International Labor Organization), which has already been working on this issue. The Russian Federation further believes that all countries should reconsider their national law to protect human rights of Indigenous peoples in the territory of their state.

III. Improving access to healthcare in African LEDCs

The Russian Federation is aware of healthcare problems in African LEDCs, especially in villages and rural areas, where it is much more difficult to find medical help because of a deficiency of health workers and basic equipment. The widespread diseases such as malaria, measles, sexually transmitted diseases, trypanosomiasis and others are killing people every day, especially children under 5 years old, in such countries as Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, South Sudan, Sudan, Tanzania and Togo. The Russian Federation realizes the importance of this issue, because the Constitution of the Russian Federation states that

1. Everyone shall have the right to health protection and medical aid. Medical aid in state and municipal health establishments shall be rendered to individuals gratis, at the expense of the corresponding budget, insurance contributions, and other proceeds. (article 41)

The Russian Federation is also aware that the issue was previously discussed in 1978 in Alma Ata, where it was decided that:

“All countries should cooperate in a spirit of partnership and service to ensure primary health care for all people since the attainment of health by people in any one country directly concerns and benefits every other country. In this context, the joint WHO/UNICEF report on primary health
care constitutes a solid basis for the further development and operation of primary health care throughout the world”.

The Russian Federation is ready to cooperate with other states and the WHO (World Health Organization) to improve access to healthcare in African LEDCs, because the Russian Federation is interested in developing trade and economic relations with African countries. The Russian Federation is also interested in import from Africa, especially coffee, tea and mineral resources.

The Russian Federation already provides humanitarian aid in countries as Zimbabwe and Somalia. Moreover, the Russian Federation already cancelled more than 20 billion US dollars debt to the African LEDCs and the Russian Federation is also considering writing off about 688 million US dollars owed by Africa’s poorest countries. To improve access to healthcare in African LEDCs, the Russian Federation is going to continue providing humanitarian aid (medical assistance and equipment) also in other African states. The Russian Federation urges all Member States to cooperate with the WHO (World Health Organization) and MSF (Doctors Without Borders) and to provide humanitarian aid in African LEDCs.