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THE INTERNATIONAL-LEGAL STANDARDS ON THE QUESTIONS OF APPLICATION OF ABSOLUTE FORMS OF RELIEF OF MINORS FROM THE PUNISHMENT AND ITS SERVING

In the article the author reviews the international legal acts concerning the administration of juvenile justice. Special attention is paid to the standards dedicated to the relief of minors from punishment and its serving. The author points out that the national criminal legislation needs to be reviewed with the following amendments to the Criminal Code in order to fulfil the recommendations made by the international legal community. It is noted that due to the fact that the goal of punishment is, primarily, the prevention national criminal legislation should be more loyal to the minors who have committed crimes of small and medium gravity, based on the recommendations contained in international legal community. In order to the humanization of national criminal law the author proposes to create in Ukraine single legal act which would fully regulate the main provisions about the release of minors from punishment.

Key words: juvenile justice, minors, the relief of minors from punishment, humanization of criminal law

Today on the way to the European integration a primary challenge for our country is to create a legal framework that would meet the requirements of international legal acts, and the criminal law is not an exception.

One time the French philosophers of law Rene David and Camilla Joffre Spinoza pointed out that the international unification of law which regulates the relations of international law without doubt is one of the biggest challenges of our life. During the international unification of law we are not talking about the replacing of the different national legal systems by the same supranational law adopted by the legislator in the global scale. There is no need to go so far. There exist other ways such as conventions, elaboration of principles, typical contracts and notifications that allow achieving some progress with great flexibility in improvement of the relations in the sphere of international law. Definite unification and harmonization of international law has already been achieved even today. They are realised by the EU member states that the Treaty of Rome and many other various derivatives texts speak about. In turn, to achieve it the comparative law is required. Without it you cannot set points of coincidence or discrepancies that exist between the law of different countries that are significant in terms of codification. It is no less necessary than to reconcile the different techniques that are used in different countries, and to make efforts to unify it in order to get the biggest success that can be expected under existing conditions¹.

United Nations Congress on the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders held every five years since 1955 in accordance with the resolution 415 (V) of the General Assembly of 1 December 1950 (Geneva, 1955; London, 1960, Stockholm, 1965, Kyoto, 1970, Geneva, 1975, Caracas, 1980, Milan, 1985, Havana, 1990, Cairo, 1995). These are the great events of universal importance. They lay the basis for legislation by means of the development of standards of the improved national practice and documents for more effective cooperation between the countries; for practical researches, including the world reviews of crimes and analysis of strategies to struggle with it; and for various measures of technical assistance².

Modern international regulations that govern the features of the order of administration of juvenile justice and provide the guarantees of their rights and freedoms ("The Convention on the Rights of the Child" of 20 November 1989 (hereinafter - the UN Convention), "Rules of the United Nations relating to

¹ Давид, Р., Жоффре-Спинози, К. (2009). *Основные правовые системы современности*. Москва: Международные отношения, 18.

² Зелинская Н.А. Организация Объединенных Наций в борьбе с транснациональной организованной преступностью: конгрессы ООН по предупреждению преступности и обращению с правонарушителями. http://inter.criminology.onua.edu.ua/?p=1635>.

juveniles deprived of their liberty" of 12.14.1990 (hereinafter - the Rules of the United Nations), "Standard Minimum Rules of the United Nations concerning the Administration of Juvenile Justice" ("The Beijing Rules") dated 29.11.1985), "UN Standard Minimum Rules on Measures not Related to Imprisonment" ("Tokyo rules") and "Guidelines for the United Nations to Prevent Juvenile Delinquency" ("Er Riyad guidelines") only indirectly illuminate the question of the application of absolute forms of relief of minors from the punishment and its serving.

For example, in p. d of Art. 37 of the UN Convention stated that "Member countries shall ensure that every child deprived of liberty shall have the right to prompt access to legal and other appropriate assistance, as well as the right to litigate the legality of the deprivation of his or her liberty or other competent, independent and impartial authority and to get a prompt decision on any such procedural action"¹.

Most of the foreign countries comply with the provisions of the UN Convention, creating within its criminal and criminal procedural legislation reduced liability for minors, and provide the presence of teachers, psychologists, legal representative, etc. during the investigative (detective) actions involving minors. Thus, the foreign and domestic legislation is trying to meet the standards laid down at the level of the international instruments. Penalty is a measure of last resort, before of which any person, including a minor, may be exempt from criminal liability at all. However, if it does not happen, in certain circumstances, a minor may get relief from punishment, its serving or further serving, using qualified legal professionals if necessary, regardless of their social and financial status.

The Article 40 of the Convention provides that member countries recognise the right of every child that is believed violated the penal law or was found guilty of any breach, to such behaviour, which contributes to the development of the child's sense of dignity and significance, strengthens his or her respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of others and which takes into account the child's age and the desirability of promoting the reintegration and the child's role in the society.

For this purpose, and taking into account the relevant provisions of international documents, member countries in particular ensure that: no child shall be alleged as an inflictor of the criminal law, accused guilty and recognized in his or her violations through activity or inactivity that were not prohibited by national and international law at the time they were committed; every child alleged as an inflictor of the criminal law, perpetrated or accused of violation of the law must have at least the following guarantees: to be presumed innocent until the guilt is proved according to the law; to be informed promptly and directly about the indictment against him or her, and, if it is necessary, through his or her parents or legal guardians, and to have legal or other appropriate assistance in the preparation and presentation of his or her defence; prompt decision on the case by a competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body in a fair hearing according to the law with the presence of legal or other appropriate assistance and, unless it is deemed to be contrary to the interests of the child, particularly taking into consideration its age or the status of the parents or legal guardians; to be free to give testimony or to confess guilt; to review the evidence of the prosecution witnesses, either alone or with the help of the other persons and to ensure equal participation of witnesses and review of evidences; if considered perpetrated to be reviewed by a higher competent, independent and impartial authority or judicial body according to the law of the taken decision and any action in this regard; to have gratuitous assistance of an interpreter if the child cannot understand the language of the criminal proceedings or speak it; to have full respect of his or her privacy at all the stages of the proceedings.

Member countries shall endeavour to promote the creation of laws, procedures, authorities and institutions, which are directly related to children who are believed to have violated the criminal law, accused guilty, and in particular, the establishment of a minimum age below which children shall be presumed unable to violate the criminal law; if necessary and desirable, measures for dealing with such children without resorting to judicial proceedings, providing full respect for human rights and legal safeguards.

It is necessary to have a variety of activities such as maintenance, provision of care and supervision, advice, appointment of upbringing probation, educational programs and professional trainings and other forms of care, that substitute care facilities at the authorities, in order to ensure that treatment of the child, which would correspond to his or her well-being, as well as their circumstances and the offense².

¹ Конвенція про права дитини (прийнята 20 листопада 1989 року, ратифікована Постановою ВР № 789-XII від 27.02.91). < http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_021>.

² Конвенція про права дитини (прийнята 20 листопада 1989 року, ратифікована Постановою ВР № 789-

Thus, the Convention recommends more loyal approach to the implementation of justice in relation to the minors. Based on the fact that the minors are the most vulnerable categories of crime, the international legal community considers it appropriate to create conditions that would allow the offender to get corrected, without applying the extreme measures as punishment.

In general, we believe that the economy of repression as an international standard is present almost at every considered legal act that indicates the global humanization of criminal legislation in general and in particular.

However, we think that the "Standard Minimum Rules of the United Nations concerning the Administration of Juvenile Justice" ("The Beijing Rules")¹ illuminate the position of the international legislator for the release from punishment of minors in the most proper way.

Honoured Lawyer of Russia S. Pashin believes that "Beijing Rules" are optimised for curatorial elements of a legal system for minors. This opinion follows a scientist by virtue of the paragraph 5.1 of the Rules, which states that the system of juvenile justice primarily is aimed to ensure welfare of a minor, paragraph 14.2, which recommends that the trial has to meet the interests of the minor and has to be carried out in an atmosphere of understanding and subparagraph «d» p. 17.1 which governs that in case of a minor the question about his or her welfare should serve as a determining factor.

The scientist believes that the authors of "Beijing Rules" think that the minor is an object of care of the state and society, the actor in the process, that is cleared of deadening formalities if possible; well being of a teenager, even if that one is subjected to the punishment is the cornerstone².

In turn, N.L. Berezovska, researching the issues of international cooperation in the sphere of the punishment of minors indicates that the Standard Minimum Rules were the first post-war document entitled as the Principles for the Treatment of juvenile offenders. The scientist points out that the Rules identify the responsibilities of the minors based on the offense, are for the appropriate use of measures of influence on the minors, protection of the rights and freedoms of this category of persons, even when committing socially dangerous acts, careful application of punishments that involve placing in correctional authorities.

The rules generally precede on the basis that many adverse consequences for the individual, that are almost inevitable in any placement in correctional authorities, cannot be adequately compensated, that is especially true for minors who are under development and can become susceptible to the negative impact.

The scientist believes that the Rules are also based on the fact that the negative consequences associated with isolation from society, more affect a minor than an adult as they relate to humans in the early stages of development³. The last, we believe, reaffirms that the international legal acts are focused on the ensuring the minimum punishment applied to minors.

In the comments to p. 1, "Beijing Rules" states that the main objectives of the Rules relate to comprehensive social policy in general and aim at maximizing the promotion of the welfare of minors, that will minimize the necessity of intervention by the justice system against them and, in turn, it will reduce the damage that can be caused by any intervention at all.

These measures concern to young people, who accepted the persistent violations, are the main content of policies aimed at eliminating the need for application of these rules⁴.

The Section 5.1 states that the juvenile justice system is aimed primarily at ensuring the welfare of the minor and at ensuring of the fact that any sanctions for juvenile offenders were always commensurate with both the personality of the offender and the circumstances of the offense⁵.

² Пашин С. Пекинские правила и некоторые положения российского уголовного законодательства (Сопоставление моделей кураторской и карательной юстиции). <http://index.org.ru/others/398pash.html>.

XII від 27.02.91). < http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_021>.

Мінімальні стандартні правила Організації Об'єднаних Націй, що стосуються правосуддя щодо неповнолітніх («Пекінські правила») (прийняті 29.11.1985).

http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_211>.

³ Березовська, Н.Л. (2012). Міжнародне співробітництво у сфері покарання неповнолітніх. *Актуальні проблеми держави і права, 2,* 559 – 567.

⁴ Мінімальні стандартні правила Організації Об'єднаних Націй, що стосуються правосуддя щодо неповнолітніх («Пекінські правила») (прийняті 29.11.1985):

http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_211>.

⁵ Мінімальні стандартні правила Організації Об'єднаних Націй, що стосуються правосуддя щодо неповнолітніх («Пекінські правила») (прийняті 29.11.1985):

Generally, the main purpose of punishment is special prevention and correction of the convict, so if the minor, who committed the minor or moderate crime for the first time, before the sentencing or while serving his punishment proved his correction, he may be released from punishment, it serving or may be served out. Regulation "Beijing Rules" originally indicate that, taking into account the circumstances and the personality of the minor, the court may affect him or her in another way without resorting to punishment.

The comments to p. 17 of Beijing Rules emphasizes that we should fully exploit the whole range of the existing alternative measures and develop new alternative measures that meet the requirements of public safety¹.

Thus, the basic standard of the Minimum rules is the proportion between public danger of a minor offense and the punishment that he or she is assigned. The rules are focused on the fact that minors who have committed crimes of minor or moderate severity for the first time should be exempt from punishment and serving it.

Next we have reviewed the legal act called "The Rules of the United Nations concerning juveniles deprived of their liberty".

Thus, p. 17 of the Rules of the United Nations suggests that the minors who are under arrest or awaiting the trial (case which was not considered) are considered innocent and should have appropriate treatment. It should be avoided as far as possible, detention in court and resort to it only in exceptional cases. In this regard, it should be strongly endeavour to alternative measures. In cases where such a measure as preventive detention is nevertheless used, juvenile courts and investigative bodies shall give priority to proceedings as quickly as possible, so that the period of detention was the shortest time-consuming. Minors whose cases have not been considered in court must be held separately from those already convicted juveniles².

Imposing sentence, the court must take into account the psychological features of the juvenile offender, the severity of the offense committed by him or her and behaviour during the preliminary investigation and prosecution. That is, the desire to avoid, if possible, a minors' detention in custody until the trial is ongoing, is a legislative position on the need to provide opportunities to correct a minor outside of special penal and correctional institutions, that means, hypothetically, that the legislator does not preclude the possibility to release of minors who have committed crimes of small and moderate severity for the first time from the punishment and its serving.

According to the p. 2 of the Rules of the United Nations "Minors should be deprived of their liberty in accordance with the principles and procedures set out in these Rules and the Standard Minimum Rules of the United Nations concerning the implementation of the Administration of Juvenile Justice ("The Beijing Rules"). Deprivation of liberty of a minor should be used as a last resort and for the impact of the minimum required period of time. It should be limited to exceptional cases for execution of the sentence of the court after conviction for the most dangerous types of offenses and with proper concerning of the related terms and conditions. The sentence shall be determined by a judicial authority, without exclusion of the possibility of his or her parole³".

The rules are focused on the use for a minor of the most loyal criminal law measures of influence that to some extent may indicate that an international act recommends avoiding certain penalties for minors, if you can replace them with alternative measures by nominating certain requirements that juvenile offenders shall comply within a specified period or for a certain conduct while serving his sentence.

Consequently, the UN Standard Rules of Juvenile Justice consider the selection of alternative punishment measures. These, in our opinion, can be considered coercive educational measures, which are successfully applied in most countries, including Ukraine.

¹ Мінімальні стандартні правила Організації Об'єднаних Націй, що стосуються правосуддя щодо неповнолітніх («Пекінські правила») (прийняті 29.11.1985):

³ Правила ООН, що стосуються неповнолітніх, позбавлених волі (прийняті резолюцією 45/113 Генеральної Асамблеї від 14 грудня 1990 року).

<http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995 211>.

http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_211>.

² Правила ООН, що стосуються неповнолітніх, позбавлених волі (прийняті резолюцією 45/113 Генеральної Асамблеї від 14 грудня 1990 року).

http://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl_conv/conventions/juveniles_libert.shtml>.

http://www.un.org/ru/documents/decl conv/conventions/juveniles libert.shtml>.

Specific provisions for the relief of minors from serving his sentence are contained in the "Standard Minimum Rules for UN activities not related to imprisonment" ("Tokyo Rules").

This international legal document has an overall character, it does not apply only to juvenile offenders, but the implementation of its provisions on minors may be the most appropriate in comparison with other categories of offenders¹.

Thus, the p. 8.2 states that the bodies that adjudicate may provide the following unconditional (added by us) sanctions: verbal sanctions such as admonition, condemnation and prevention; oppression in civil rights; forfeiture or ordinance of deprivation of property; referral to a correctional institution with a mandatory daily presence; house arrest; any other type of treatment that is not associated with imprisonment; some combination of the above measures 2 .

Thus, the Rules has a wide range of measures alternative to punishment, suggesting that a minor may be exempted from punishment, and it is possible to reach the goal of correcting with the help of use of other measures which impose certain obligations on him or limit his rights and freedoms.

Another point 9.2 states that the provisions that work after the verdict may include the following sanctions: vacation and placement in correctional institutions almost like prison; dismissal due to work or study; various forms of release on parole; commutation; free pardon.

It is interesting, in our opinion, that a minor may be released due to work or study. Ukrainian criminal law has no such provision and the majority of countries (Azerbaijan, the Republic of Armenia, Bulgaria, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Russia, Turkmenistan, Switzerland) give to a minor possibility to continue learning, serving a sentence or being exempt from.

The p. 5 of "The Guidelines for the United Nations to prevent juvenile delinquency" indicates that it is necessary to recognize the need and importance of progressive policies to prevent juvenile delinquency and the necessity and importance of systematic study and creation tools. It is necessary to avoid the criminalization and punishment of the child's because of the behaviour that did not cause serious damage for the development of the child or harm to others³.

P. 46 states that the placement of young people in correctional institutions should be carried out as a measure of a last resort and for the shortest necessary time, considering the interests of teenager as paramount. It is necessary to define the criteria that will allow formal intervention of this type, and limit the following situations: when a child or teenager got the physical damage caused by intentional actions of parents or guardians; when a child or teenager became the object of sexual, physical or mental abuse by parents or guardians; when a child or young person is left unattended, delivered or subjected to exploitation by parents or guardians; when a child or young person is in danger of physical or moral character as a result of actions of a parent or guardian; when the behaviour of the child or young person has created a serious physical or psychological threat to him, and the parents of either the minor, as well as community-based services that are outside of his place of residence, cannot eliminate the danger without placing the minor in correctional educational institution⁴.

The Rules recommend the use the punishment to minors only in rare cases; in all other cases it is possible to release him or her from the punishment using alternative means.

Therefore, the considered regulations have overall character and we can only have them in mind during the relief of a minor from penalty.

International standards about relief of minors from punishment and serving it by regulations of the international legal community, in our opinion, must include: the desire to create the sense bearing conditions that allow a teenager to live in a society at a period of life when he or she is the most prone to

¹ Мінімальні стандартні правила ООН щодо заходів, не пов'язаних з тюремним ув'язненням («Токійські правила») (прийняті 14.12.1990) Резолюцією 45/110 Генеральної Асамблеї ООН). <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/ 995 907>.

² Мінімальні стандартні правила ООН щодо заходів, не пов'язаних з тюремним ув'язненням («Токійські правила») (прийняті 14.12.1990 Резолюцією 45/110 Генеральної Асамблеї ООН). <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/ 995 907>.

³ Керівні принципи Організації об'єднаних Націй для попередження злочинності серед неповнолітніх («Ер-Ріядські керівні принципи») (прийняті та проголошені резолюцією 45/112 Генеральної Асамблеї від 14 грудня 1990 року). <http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995 861>.

⁴ Керівні принципи Організації об'єднаних Націй для попередження злочинності серед неповнолітніх («Ер-Ріядські керівні принципи») (прийняті та проголошені резолюцією 45/112 Генеральної Асамблеї від 14 грудня 1990 року). < http://zakon4.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995 861>.

misuse that will facilitate the process of personal development and education; to ensure that any sanctions for juvenile offenders were always commensurate with both the personality of the offender and the circumstances of the offense; the decision to limit personal freedom of a minor only must be taken only after careful consideration and the restrictions should be minimized; juvenile offender should not be deprived of his or her personal liberty, unless he has been convicted of committing a serious act of violence against another person or repeated committing serious offenses and in case of absence of other suitable measure of influence; restrictions of placing in the correctional institutions in two ways: quantity ("last resort") and time ("minimum period")¹; juvenile justice system should protect their rights and safety and promote good physical and mental state².

However, despite the fact that some provisions of international law in some way affect the relief from punishment of minors, the international community needs a single legal act that will regulate the basic principles and procedure for relief from punishment of minors and their serving and will include the following aspects:

• the right of a minor to be released from punishment, his serving or serve out;

• the rights and responsibilities of a minor after his relief from punishment, his serving or serve out of conviction to maturity;

• procedures to ensure proper living conditions of the minor exempted from punishment and his serving;

• control over minors who were released from punishment and its execution, and the relevant authorities that will carry out their functional responsibilities;

• a single system of the types of impunity and its serving.

Also, we think that it is appropriate to consider the issue at the international level of restorative justice in cases involving juvenile offenders' relief from punishment, as one type of release from punishment and its serving.

Whereas that the main purpose of punishment is correction of a prisoner, and not the punishment itself, reconciliation with the victim may have positive consequences for a minor or become a factor that will influence the court's decision to release a minor from the punishment.

Thus, in view of the fact that Ukraine considers as a priority to get one of the leading position in the world stage and seeks to comply with the international standards, the law of the country should have a well-defined techniques and procedures for the release of minors from punishment and its execution, as well as the existence of general international act that will provide the opportunity to have unity with international standards on the administration of justice for minors.

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