
Representatives of Russia's Investigative Committee participated in VI Congress of Children's Ombudsmen in RF subjects

Officials of the Russia's Investigative Committee have participated in VI congress of Children's Ombudsmen in RF subjects which took place in Kazan. The congress is attended by the Children's Rights Commissioner for the President of the Russian Federation, representatives of law enforcement and authority bodies.

The plenary meeting: "Prospects of development and implementation in the Russian federal target program "Russia without orphans" for 2012-2020" was opened today. One more plenary meeting covered implementation of national strategy of actions in the children's interests for 2012-2017 in the subjects of the Russian Federation. The Congress discussed the issues of strategy in state policy in the area of family and childhood protection, prevention of family and children's problems, improvement of efficiency in inter-agency cooperation in protection of lawful rights and interests of minors, proposals on amendments to federal legislation and others.

Below you can see an address of A.I. Bastykin, the Chairman of the Russian Federation Investigative Committee, to the participants and guests of the VI Congress of ombudsmen in RF subjects

Esteemed participants and guests of the Congress!

At present, leadership of the country is implementing ambitious projects in protecting children's rights and lawful interests. The new stage of the national movement in protection of children's rights and interests is National Strategy of Actions in Children's Interests up to 2017 approved on 1 June 2012 by the Decree of the Russian Federation President Vladimir Putin.

This strategy provides main areas and tasks of state policy in children's interests and key mechanisms of its implementation. Among the priority measures is organization of educational work, support of healthy lifestyle, ensuring priority of families for orphans and children without parental care.

Orphanhood is one of the most urgent problems in our society. Support of orphans has become an important element of the Russian social aid model and one of moral norms of national conscience.

At the same time, spread of another form of orphanhood – social orphanhood - poses great danger today. In modern society the number of social orphans is increasing steadily. Each year more than

half a million children of different ages in our country are left without parental care.

The main reasons for increasing number of social orphans are decline of family social prestige, its financial and housing problems, international conflicts, increase of extramarital birth rate, high percentage of parents with asocial lifestyle.

In recent years aggressive or indifferent attitude of parents towards their children have become increasingly widespread.

More and more often there are no such basic conditions for a teenager's personality development as moral atmosphere in the family and parents' personal example. Unfavorable environment forces children to flee their homes, brings about vagrancy and spread of neglect.

The number of minors who commit crimes and have no particular occupation is increasing. About 30% of the minors, who commit crimes, have no occupation or aren't students or schoolchildren, almost half are raised in single-parent families, a little less than 10% are raised outside families.

Unfortunately, today Russia doesn't have a unified statistics of homeless minors and children in the group of social risk, which makes it impossible to evaluate the scale of this social phenomenon on a federal level.

Along with parent the state is also responsible for problems in families provoking social orphanhood. A number of problems caused by social and economic troubles in the first place show among other things that there is a necessity to improve Russian legislation on support of family, motherhood and childhood.

At the same time many people today see the salvation in even stricter responsibility of parents for raising children, in annulment and taking the child away from the family. Very often to justify such approach they refer to experience of foreign countries.

We believe that any decisions concerning family and entailing separation of children and parents should by every means be accompanied by systematic social work with the family.

Without efficient cooperation between constitutive bodies (court, guardianship bodies, Commissions of Juvenile Affairs) and bodies and facilities of social protection, education, public healthcare, placement service, law enforcement and investigating bodies the problem of social orphanhood is impossible to solve.

The annulment should be applied as the extreme measure, only in those cases when preventive measures intended to save the family give no results.

But if the annulment has taken place, it is necessary to make every effort so that organization of life

and upbringing of children left without parental care was the same as with parents.

The experience of investigating criminal cases shows that isolation of children in social institutions, even based on the best intentions, makes it harder for them to integrate in the society, leads to their dysadaptation in adult independent life, which cases these children, when they grow up, to become potential victims of swindlers of all kinds.

All institutions of the society and state have to create comfortable, favorable for children's life environment, to help them and their families through hard time.

At present the Investigative Committee is working on the subject of creating a council helping to wards of orphanages, which would assist them to adapt and support once they leave orphanage, help to eliminate violation of housing, labor and other rights of such children.

Such initiative is explained by the fact that for us protection of socially vulnerable groups of citizens, children in the first place, is of special importance. And we together with civil society institutions have carried out and are carrying out uncompromising struggle with any violence against minors.

Over the past 5 years the Investigative Committee investigated 511 criminal cases over the crimes committed against children without parental care.

More than a half of them (301) are criminal cases over sexual crimes; 46 – over injuries; 59 – over grave injuries and murder of children; 23 – over stealing of minors' property; 3 – over involvement in prostitution. Almost a third of 726 children – victims of the crimes – are underage.

Unfortunately, the analysis of investigation practice of such crimes shows that in most cases the crimes committed against children – orphans and children without parental care – are contributed by irresponsible and indifferent approach to solving the issue on placing a child under guardianship, trusteeship, in foster or adoptive families by the child custody and welfare agencies. The issue of child's settlement is often decided independent of the personality of foster parent, of his or her family members, without evaluation of this person's ability to raise and educate a child. The procedure of giving the child to foster families is also violated in some cases.

It often happens that guardians consider a child as a constant source of income, use the payouts and benefits assigned for the child to their own ends not caring about proper raising or nursing for the child.

The generalization carried out by the Investigative Committee once more highlighted the problem of proper interaction, and first of all – exchange of information on the facts that require interference between bodies and institutions which according to the Federal law of 1999 “On the fundamentals of minor homelessness and crimes preventive system” have to protect children's rights, and a problem of lack of clear duties regulation of employees in different bodies and institutions preventing crimes

against minors.

In general, successful cooperation of the said agencies will make it possible to ensure stable functioning of the minor homelessness and crimes preventive system, to reduce crimes, to render comprehensive help to a child in a troubled life situation.

This is one of the reasons why VI Congress of Children Rights Commissioners dedicated to the implementation of the National Strategy of actions in the children's interests for 2012-2017 in the subjects of the Russian Federation and prospects of development and implementation in Russia of the project of the Federal Target Program "Russia without orphans" for 2013-2020, is especially urgent and timely.

I thank Children's Rights Commissioners for the attention they pay to the problem of children's welfare in the Russian Federation.

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