

should be aimed at addressing the problems associated with the use of technical means of recording, which will enhance the effectiveness of crime investigation in extraordinary conditions.

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## TACTICS OF INTERROGATION OF WITNESSES OF WAR CRIMES

The tactics of interrogating witnesses of war crimes constitute one of the key elements of effective documentation of violations of international humanitarian law and ensuring a proper evidentiary base for national and international judicial institutions. In modern conditions of armed conflicts, particularly in the context of aggression against Ukraine, special importance is attached to the combination of criminalistic approaches with human rights standards, which requires adapting classical interrogation techniques to the conditions of witnesses' traumatic experiences and a complex security environment. Recent scholarly studies emphasize the necessity of applying a

trauma-informed approach, which minimizes the risk of re-victimization and increases the reliability of the information obtained [1, p. 45].

An important aspect of interrogation tactics is establishing psychological contact with the witness, which in cases of war crimes is complicated by deep emotional distress, fear of retaliation, and distrust of law enforcement authorities. Researchers stress that effective communication must be based on principles of voluntariness, confidentiality, and safety, while also considering individual characteristics of the witness, including age, gender, cultural context, and psycho-emotional state [2, p. 112]. In this regard, the involvement of psychologists or specially trained interviewers is advisable, which aligns with international standards, including the practice of the International Criminal Court.

At the same time, the specificity of war crimes necessitates particular attention to documenting details of events that may be decisive for the legal qualification of the act. Tactical methods should be aimed at obtaining максимально complete and accurate information without imposing answers or exerting pressure on the witness.

The use of open-ended questions, gradual clarification of circumstances, and the application of cognitive interviewing techniques contribute to improving the quality of testimony [3, p. 67]. However, it must be taken into account that witnesses' memory may be fragmented or distorted under the influence of stress, which creates risks for the reliability of testimony.

A problematic aspect is also ensuring the safety of witnesses, especially in cases where they remain in temporarily occupied territories or zones of active hostilities. The absence of adequate protection mechanisms can significantly limit individuals' willingness to testify and negatively affect the completeness of investigations. In this regard, there is a need to develop effective witness protection programs adapted to wartime conditions, as well as to use remote interrogation methods through modern technologies [4, p. 203]. However, remote interrogation introduces new challenges related to identity verification, confidentiality, and prevention of external influence.

Particular attention should be paid to the issue of standardizing approaches to the interrogation of witnesses of war crimes. Despite the existence of international recommendations, including the Istanbul Protocol and other documents, their application in national practice remains fragmented. This necessitates the development of unified methodological guidelines that would take into account both international standards and the specifics of the national legal system [5, p. 89].

At the same time, there is a problem of insufficient training of investigators and prosecutors to handle such categories of cases, which requires systematic professional development and the introduction of specialized training programs.

An additional challenge is ensuring the admissibility and relevance of evidence obtained during interrogation. Violations of procedural norms or the rights of the witness may lead to the loss of evidentiary value of testimony, which is critical in war crimes cases where other evidence is often limited. Therefore, interrogation tactics must strictly comply with the requirements of criminal procedural legislation and international standards of fair trial [6, p. 134]. At the same time, it is advisable to consider improving procedural norms to better reflect the specifics of such cases.

Thus, the tactics of interrogating witnesses of war crimes represent a complex multidimensional category that combines criminalistic, psychological, and legal aspects. Its effectiveness depends on the ability of investigative authorities to adapt traditional methods to the conditions of armed conflict, ensure a balance between the interests of justice and the rights of witnesses, and implement innovative approaches to evidence collection. Further research should focus on developing practical recommendations for overcoming the outlined challenges, particularly in the areas of witness protection, increasing the reliability of testimony, and integrating international experience into national practice.

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