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THE PROBLEMS OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN THE
DECISIONS OF THE 13TH UNITED NATIONS CONGRESS
ON CRIME PREVENTION AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE»

The Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held in Doha, Qatar, from 12th to 19th April 2015. Its main theme was «Integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation».

One of the substantive items of this Congress was concerned with public participation in strengthening crime prevention and criminal justice, including prevention of juvenile delinquency.

It is very important to prevent juvenile delinquency and protect all children who are in contact with the justice system from violence. Deprivation of liberty has very negative consequences for the child's harmonious development and is to be a «measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time». Children deprived of liberty are exposed to increased risks of abuse, violence, acute social discrimination and denial of their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights; certain disadvantaged groups are more affected than others; and society is affected at large as deprivation of liberty tends to increase social exclusion, recidivism rates, and public expenditure.

The United Nations declared a lot of norms and standards in the field of juvenile justice, including the Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners, the United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Administration of Juvenile Justice (the «Beijing Rules»), the Basic Principles for the Treatment of Prisoners, the Body of Principles for the Protection of All Persons under Any Form of Detention or Imprisonment, the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (the «Riyadh Guidelines»), the United Nations Rules for the Protection of

Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (the «Havana Rules»), the Guidelines for Action on Children in the Criminal Justice System (the «Vienna Guidelines»), the Guidelines on Justice in Matters involving Child Victims and Witnesses of Crime, the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, the United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (the «Bangkok Rules»), the United Nations Principles and Guidelines on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, as well as the United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice.

The Thirteenth United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice adopted resolution «Doha Declaration on integrating crime prevention and criminal justice into the wider United Nations agenda to address social and economic challenges and to promote the rule of law at the national and international levels, and public participation».

The participants of Congress emphasized that education for all children and youth, including the eradication of illiteracy, is fundamental to the prevention of crime and corruption and to the promotion of a culture of lawfulness that supports the rule of law and human rights while respecting cultural identities. In this regard, they also stressed the fundamental role of youth participation in crime prevention efforts. Therefore, it is necessary to:

(a) To create a safe, positive and secure learning environment in schools, supported by the community, including by protecting children from all forms of violence, harassment, bullying, sexual abuse and drug abuse, in accordance with domestic laws;

(b) To integrate crime prevention, criminal justice and other rule-of-law aspects into our domestic educational systems;

(c) To integrate crime prevention and criminal justice strategies into all relevant social and economic policies and programs, in particular those affecting youth, with a special emphasis on programs focused on increasing educational and employment opportunities for youth and young adults;

(d) To provide access to education for all, including technical and professional skills, as well as to promote lifelong learning skills for all.

To prevent juvenile delinquency the member States of the Congress declared the main items:

- to integrate child and youth-related issues into criminal justice reform efforts, recognizing the importance of protecting children from all forms of violence, exploitation and abuse, consistent with the obligations of parties under relevant international instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child⁴ and its two Optional Protocols, and taking into consideration the relevant provisions of the United Nations Model Strategies and Practical Measures on the Elimination of Violence against Children in the Field of Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice, as well as to develop and apply comprehensive child-sensitive justice policies focused on the best interests of the child, consistent with the principle that the deprivation of liberty of children should be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time, so as to protect children who are in contact with the criminal justice system, as well as children who are in any other situation requiring legal proceedings, particularly in relation to their treatment and social reintegration;

- to implement and enhance policies for prison inmates that focus on education, work, medical care, rehabilitation, social reintegration and the prevention of recidivism, and to consider the development and strengthening of policies to support the families of inmates, as well as to promote and encourage the use of alternatives to imprisonment, where appropriate, and to review or reform our restorative justice and other processes in support of successful reintegration;

- to strengthen the development and use of tools and methods aimed at increasing the availability and quality of statistical information and analytical studies on crime and criminal justice at the international level, in order to better measure and evaluate the impact of responses to crime and to enhance the effectiveness of crime prevention and criminal justice programs at the national, regional and international levels.

For implementation declared principles it is important to establish a juvenile justice system, which takes into account the child's age, alternatives to imprisonment, release from punishment, provides a restorative and educational approach for effective social rehabilitation and reintegration, preventing the recurrence of the behavior and to establish alternatives to judicial proceedings.