

Chepkova K.O.,
Candidate of Juridical Sciences,
Doctoral Student at the Scientific and
Organizational Department
of Military Institute,
Taras Shevchenko National
University of Kyiv
(Kyiv, Ukraine)

THE SYSTEM OF LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING A SECURE ENVIRONMENT FOR CHILDREN DURING ARMED CONFLICT

There are numerous public administration bodies in Ukraine that have a very broad scope of responsibility and must ensure protection against internal and external threats to a wide range of different social relations.

Law enforcement agencies play a primary role in this regard. Therefore, the following is a review of the existing system of law enforcement agencies responsible for ensuring a secure environment for children during armed conflict, the legal basis of their activities and competence.

But first of all, it is necessary to determine which bodies in Ukraine are law enforcement agencies. The answer to this question can be found in the Laws of Ukraine “On State Protection of Judicial and Law Enforcement Officers” [1] (Article 1) and “On National Security of Ukraine” [2].

From the above laws, let us single out those law enforcement agencies whose competence includes the issue of a secure environment for children during armed conflict.

1. Prosecutor's offices. Legal framework: Law of Ukraine “On the Prosecutor's Office” [3], Regulation on the Department for Combating Crimes Committed in the Context of Armed Conflict, approved by Order of the Prosecutor General of November 14, 2023, No. 312 [4], Regulation on the Department for Child Protection and Combating Domestic Violence, approved by Order of the Prosecutor General of September 14, 2023, No. 268 [5].

The Prosecutor General's Office of Ukraine is a unified system that, in accordance with the prescribed procedure, performs the functions established by the Constitution of Ukraine in order to protect human rights and freedoms, the general interests of society and the state.

The structure of the Office of the Prosecutor General includes the following structural units, which are responsible for the protection of children during armed conflict:

- Department for Combating Crimes Committed in Armed Conflict. This department is responsible for organizing and supervising pre-trial investigations, resolving other issues in criminal proceedings in accordance with the law, participating in court proceedings and supporting public prosecution in criminal proceedings on war crimes, which also involve children;

- The Department for Child Protection and Combating Domestic Violence organizes and supervises pre-trial investigations, resolves other issues in criminal proceedings in accordance with the law and maintains public prosecution in criminal proceedings on criminal offenses:

- in respect of a minor, including if criminal proceedings are carried out in respect of several persons, at least one of whom is a minor, in respect of a person under the age of criminal responsibility

2. The National Police. Legal basis The Law of Ukraine “On the National Police” [6], the Instruction on the organization of work of juvenile prevention units of the National Police of Ukraine, approved by the Order of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine of 19.12.2017 No. 1044 [7].

The National Police of Ukraine is a central executive body that serves the public by ensuring the protection of human rights and freedoms, combating crime, and maintaining public safety and order.

Juvenile prevention units have been established within the structure of the National Police, whose main tasks include:

1) preventive activities aimed at preventing children from committing criminal and administrative offenses, identifying the causes and conditions that contribute to this, and taking measures within their competence to eliminate them;

2) maintaining preventive records of children prone to committing offenses and conducting individual prevention measures with them;

3) participate in establishing the whereabouts of a child in case of his/her missing or obtaining data for this purpose within the framework of criminal proceedings initiated on the fact of his/her missing;

4) taking measures to prevent and counteract domestic violence committed by and against children, as well as cruelty to children;

5) taking measures to prevent child neglect, including the exercise of police custody of minors;

6) carrying out activities related to the protection of a child's right to general secondary education.

3. Security Service of Ukraine. Legal basis: The Law of Ukraine “On the Security Service of Ukraine”[8]. The Security Service of Ukraine is a special-purpose state body with law enforcement functions that ensures state security of Ukraine. The tasks of the Security Service of Ukraine also include prevention, detection, suppression and disclosure of criminal offenses against peace and security of mankind, terrorism and other illegal actions that directly threaten the vital interests of Ukraine.

4. The State Border Guard Service of Ukraine. Legal basis: The Law of Ukraine “On the State Border Guard Service of Ukraine”[9]. The State Border Guard Service of Ukraine is a special-purpose law enforcement agency that implements the state policy in the field of protection of the state border of Ukraine.

5. The National Guard of Ukraine. Legal basis: The Law of Ukraine “On the National Guard of Ukraine”[10]. The National Guard of Ukraine is a military formation with law enforcement functions, which is part of the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of Ukraine and is designed to perform tasks on

protection and defense of life, rights, freedoms and legitimate interests of citizens, society and the state from criminal and other unlawful attacks, protection of public safety and order and ensuring public security, as well as in cooperation with law enforcement agencies - to ensure state security and protection of the state border, suppression of terrorist activities, activities of illegal paramilitary or armed formations (groups), terrorist organizations, organized groups and criminal organizations.

The National Guard of Ukraine participates, in accordance with the law, in cooperation with the Armed Forces of Ukraine in repelling armed aggression against Ukraine and eliminating armed conflict by conducting military (combat) operations, as well as in performing territorial defense tasks.

Based on the above, it can be stated that a system of law enforcement agencies has been formed, whose tasks include ensuring a safe environment for children both in peacetime and during armed conflict.

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