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*“Implementation of the Concept of the Russian Correctional System Reform until*  
*2020. Social Adaptation of Convicted Persons to Imprisonment”*  
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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

Current situation in the Russian correctional system is largely driven by the fact that the Russian Federation participates in international agreements. Russia has ratified “Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms”, “European Convention for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment”. Legal reference point for the Russian correctional system is the European Penitentiary Rules approved by the Cabinet of Ministers of the European Council.

Subsequently, securing of human rights, legitimate interest of prisoners, correctional opportunities for prisoners and their preparation to liberation as well as implementation of integrated measures for resocialization of prisoners are now priorities in Russian correctional facilities everyday activities.

Positive dynamics of the Russian correctional system were remarked in Intermediary Resolution #35 adopted by the Cabinet of Ministers of the European last year.

We understand that this is just an intermediary appraisal of the European community and implemented measures have not solved all issues. Planning future activities on the correctional system reform, the Russian government has targeted on widely accepted international standards and European rules, on one hand, and the current situation with the correctional system, on another hand.

What is the Russian penitentiary system today?

780,000 people are in correctional facilities of Russia including 3,500 minors and 61,000 women. Besides, around 500,000 convicted persons are registered with the correctional system but are not isolated from a society.

The major part of of the convicted (over 70%) have been imprisoned for commitment of grave and especially grave crimes like murder, robbery, drug crimes. Over 60% do not have families, 20% lose their families during serving punishments. 75% have been educated but 5% could not manage to make through elementary schools. 4% cannot read and write. And these figures perfectly describe their intellectual level. 60% have never been employed, 25% have not had any profession at all. 44.8% are ill with socially significant diseases like tuberculosis, AIDS, psychological disorder, alcoholism, drug addiction. 10% are tend towards suicide acts. 20% is tend towards destructive behavior demonstrating weak will power, increased suggestibility and aggressiveness. Over 50% of crimes have been committed under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We have to admit that over 50% of prisoners in Russia are persistent offenders.

Structure of the Russian Federal Penal Service includes 230 pre-trial centres plus 165 of them working in penal colonies; 760 penal colonies; 150 penal settlements; 87 prisons; 5 penal colonies for life imprisonment; 46 juvenile penal colonies.

It is worth mentioning that penal colonies are slightly modified variety of correctional camp with its lifestyle. Collective detention system also does not meet current standards and requires reforms.

In order to implement required reforms in 2010 the Russian Government adopted the Concept of Russia's Penal System Development until 2020. Main goals of the Concept are improving efficiency of the Russian penal system by the level of European standards and reduction of repetition of crimes. Penal facilities of a new type will be established instead of colonies. This would be camp-prison settlement with general and enhanced supervisions as well as prisons with general, high and maximum security level of detention. Juvenile colonies will be rebuilt into detention centers for juvenile offenders. And security hospitals and health care centers will keep working to meet inmates' special medical needs and requirements.

As we change architecture of the penal system its substance also needs to be changed. And this is where new approaches to active influence on an inmate's personality have to be implemented. It is important that reduction of crime repetition is planned to be achieved through effective social and psychological work with inmates as well as provision of post-penitentiary help to those who gets free from imprisonment.

How is this work organized today? What key issues have to be resolved in order to increase its efficiency?

First of all, it is worth mentioning that an inmate starts preparation for liberation starting from the very first days of imprisonment. During the first weeks new inmates are at induction center and get trained by its staff on studying legal requirements. The staff also makes analysis on psychological abilities, level of education and professional training of inmates.

This data is included in a dedicated database system which we call "electronic diary". It reflects results of questionnaire and psychological test, as well as social, criminal, individual and psychological background of an inmate. This is necessary for in-depth analysis of an inmate's personality. According to the results of this work every inmate gets personal correctional program for preparation to his/her life after liberation. And he/she has to have a strong motivation in order to get through this program.

I want to mention that the Concept provides a basis for creation of a fair and effective system of incentives for law-abiding behavior of inmates. We have implemented this system which is called "Social Lifts" and built on the basis of key standards of the European Penitentiary Rules.

The goal of the Social Lifts program is to form a sense of responsibility and skills in order to facilitate their reintegration into society. In order to achieve this we have formulated several key tasks that you can see on the screen.

First of all, we have identified basic and realistic indicators that allow prisons administrations to make fair and objective judgment about achieved results of inmates' correction and possible ways for their further improvement.

Evaluation of an inmate's behavior is subject to three criteria.

The first criterion is compliance with the requirements of penal legislation and internal regulations of a correctional facility. This criterion hardly needs any further comments because the law is for everyone and compliance with its requirement is an absolute. Internal regulations

are not a formal code of requirements but rules that allow guaranteeing security for inmates, their rights and interests as well as indemnity rights of victims.

The second criterion is a will of inmate for the psychological correction of personality and measures for resocialization.

If an inmate is losing or have already lost a link with society and family then it is obvious that he is very likely get under the influence of criminal society soon. Even after liberation this person is not striving to live in a society according to the rules and laws and in fact this person is an antisocial element. Therefore we actively incentivize inmates' efforts to restore their social links and take this into account evaluating behavior.

We also take into account an inmate's will to fulfill a personal program of personality correction, participate in psychological tests and trainings, doing collective tasks, practice self-education and take part in sports and cultural activities.

All conditions for them it possible are in place. Correctional institutions have sports facilities and gyms. Team sports competitions are conducted regularly. In recent years competitions between inmates and prisons' staff have gained a huge popularity. This actually helps establishing a good moral and psychological climate.

Prisoners have opportunities to develop their creative abilities through participation in theatre, arts and writers' societies. Nationwide arts contests are conducted annually for singers, movie makers, theatres of young offenders and so on. Concert halls of big Russian cities host gala-concerts of inmates regularly where NGOs and mass media representatives as well as inmates' relatives are invited. As our experience shows, inmates participating in arts contests usually continue doing this after liberation and never return to a criminal world.

So we are trying to do our best to bring valuable citizens back to society. And famous saying of the great Russian writer and philosopher Fyodor Dostoyevsky – ‘Beauty will save the world’ – is still very actual for everyone including prisoners.

The third evaluation criterion takes into account an inmate's desire to break with a criminal subculture and give up participation in non-formal criminal groups. We think that this is developed through educational activities together with other prisoners and make amends to victims, for example, by writing a letter or compensate damage.

“Social Lift” program implies a direct link between confinement conditions with an inmate's behavior as well as with remission or substitution of imprisonment by a more lenient punishment. If an inmate does not comply with the requirements then he/she can be sent to a correctional facility with stricter regime.

There is a special commission in every correctional facility which deals with evaluation of inmates' behavior. Besides administration staff of a facility, NGOs, regional and municipal authorities' representatives are also essential part of these commissions. This makes “Social Lifts” a more transparent and open system.

Commission has a right to evaluate behavior of prisoners and make recommendations on switching confinement conditions. A commission meets regularly but at least once a month and its work is open to everyone

Last year we implemented the “Social Lifts” program as a pilot and starting from April, 1, 2011 all correctional facilities in Russia have implemented it

Dear Colleagues!

A special place in assisting inmates to prepare to liberation is reserved for general and professional training.

Over 89,000 inmates study in correctional facilities today.

As stated above, many students in prison lack pedagogy influence. Therefore many different techniques are implemented in order to increase interest of inmates to self-study and self-education. Educational process in prisons is not limited with traditional frameworks. Teachers greatly influence inmates delivering a lot of additional classes on literature, history, mathematics et.

School libraries have wide choice of learning materials, literature, scientific books, magazines and newspapers. There are also computer classes where inmates can study IT literacy.

As you know, young people are more acquisitive comparing to older persons and they have all opportunities to study which are virtually the same as in general Russian schools. We conduct annual “Best Student” contest among young inmates and winners get prizes and financial support. All schools are connected to the Internet which even more enriched a learning experience for inmates granting access to the most up to date learning materials. Upon successful completion of studies inmates get a state diploma.

Around 90,000 prisoners get vocational training in more than 200 demanded professions. The Concept contains measures for further development of conditions encouraging inmates to get education through distance education technologies. I would like to mention that currently over 2,000 inmates get distance education and one of the main partners for us in this sphere is the Modern University for the Humanities (MUH). Mr Alexander Ozerov from MUH participates in the conference and would be ready to answer your questions. Also it is planned that you will be able to watch a presentation video of MUH during the first coffee break today.

Dear Colleagues!

One of the most effective tool for resocialization of prisoners is a psychological work. Over 2,500 professional psychologists work in Russian correctional facilities today. Psychological programs are aimed at correction of criminal aspects of personality and regeneration of valuable social functions. The Concept gives grounds for development of psychological therapy for prisoners including special aid to those who are addicted to alcohol and drugs. Recently we have launched a pilot initiative of implementation of personal psychological correction programs and hope that it will contribute to our activities a lot.

We very much involve representatives of different religious confessions to work with prisoners. 523 religion facilities and over 700 prayer rooms work in prisons today. Over 86,000 inmates are a part of religion communities. We started an experiment in 2010 on involvement of priests in correctional facilities work on a full-time basis. They help in building a right environment in prisons and actively support prisoners after liberation.

Since 2005 in Kostenki village (Voronezh Region) an Orthodox community has worked in order to provide social rehabilitation for ex-prisoners. They have an Orthodox church there, a

dormitory that can accommodate up to 100 persons and 20 hectare land parcel for agricultural works. There is a certain scheme in place for those who wish to become a member – every new member should provide an application supported by administration of his prison and a priest. The community guarantees a job opportunity and provides with accommodation. It is forbidden to have alcohol in this community. Its members work on reconstruction of temples in Voronezh Region and in agricultural sphere. Many ex-members of this community have already left it because they have bought their own houses or flats and have a normal lifestyle. Currently there are 50 members of the colony. Since 2008 over 800 ex-prisoners participated in this community and only 14 of them returned to prisons. And there a lot of similar examples!

Federal Penal Service of the Russian Federation acts in 68 regions of Russia and its activities are regulated by over 200 legislative acts including regulation of social adaptation, job placement, accommodation issues, and healthcare for liberated prisoners. In Tyumen Region the Federal Service in cooperation with local authorities created a database which is called “Unified Database of Citizens Liberated from Prisons and Citizens Convicted without Isolation Measures”. So the information on this type of citizens gets there 6 months before an inmate’s liberation and is available to all agencies dealing with preventive measures. It also used for running records on liberated citizens that require social rehabilitation. This system allows different agencies to work together in order to deliver a social rehabilitation services.

Finalizing my speech presentation I would like to say that we plan to establish a probation services in Russia. It will become one of the key elements of our policy aimed at post-penitentiary adaptation. Currently we design legislative basis for this and the European experience is what we take into account in the first instance.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen!

This speech should be considered by you as an invitation to cooperation. We are ready to start joint search for further forms and methods of active influence on prisoner’s personality, of securing a law-abiding lifestyle in prisons and after liberation.

Thank you for your attention!