

## THE PLACE OF THE SOVEREIGN EQUALITY OF STATES IN THE MODERN SYSTEM OF BASIC PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONAL LAW

Nataliia KYRYLIUK<sup>1</sup>, Nelia SAVCHYN<sup>2</sup>, Volodymyr BOBRYK<sup>3</sup>, Sergii KOROIED<sup>4</sup>, Vitalii MAKHINCHUK<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of European and Comparative Law, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Chernivtsi, Ukraine

<sup>2</sup>Department of Procedural Law, Yuriy Fedkovych Chernivtsi National University, Chernivtsi, Ukraine

<sup>3</sup>Laboratory of Protection of Subjective Rights of the Department of Private Law Problems, Academician F.H. Burchak Scientific Research Institute of Private Law and Entrepreneurship of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine

<sup>4</sup>Department of Law, King Danylo University, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ukraine

<sup>5</sup>Academician F.H. Burchak Scientific Research Institute of Private Law and Entrepreneurship of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine, Kyiv, Ukraine

**Abstract:** *At the present stage of human development, numerous regulations are consolidated and, accordingly, a list of initial principles on which international relations between states are based is defined. The issue of their study and interpretation is extremely relevant today, since every day around the world these principles are violated by the emergence of armed conflicts, the implementation of terrorist acts, as well as military actions between different countries. Of importance among them is the principle of sovereign equality, since it is a solid basis for equality and mutual respect between states and is increasingly becoming the object of arbitrary violation, which requires an in-depth study of this principle and determine its place among other generally established principles of international law. The purpose of this study is to consider the history of the development of sovereign equality, investigate its structure and constituent elements, and most importantly, establish an interrelation with other principles of international law. This paper uses several scientific research methods that allow for an in-depth examination of this subject area, including the method of analysis, the method of synthesis, the method of comparative analysis, the method of deduction, the method of abstraction, the method of generalisation, as well as the method of analysis of scientific literature. The results obtained after the study are theoretical and practical principles for the implementation of sovereign equality by states around the world, determining its role in building international relations, as well as its correlation with other principles developed in international law. The practical value of this study is its use in the development of methodological materials for teaching such an academic discipline as international law, as well as for extracurricular familiarisation of students with this subject. Furthermore, the results and conclusions formed in this study can be used by other researchers to investigate the implementation of the fundamental principles of international law, including the principle of sovereign equality.*

**Keywords:** principles of sovereign equality, international law, international relations, states, armed conflicts.

The principle of sovereign equality is part of the system of generally recognised principles of international law. Importantly, its essence is consolidated in numerous international regulations. In particular, the Charter of the United Nations (UN) (1945), which aims to maintain international peace

and security, states that in their activities the organisation and, accordingly, its members, that is, the countries that entered into this agreement, including Ukraine, are guided by the principle of sovereign equality of all states<sup>1</sup>. Admittedly, this principle is closely connected to the list of other principles consolidated in the Charter of the United Nations (1945), namely the conscientious performance of undertaken obligations under the Charter of the United Nations (1945), the resolution of international disputes by peaceful means in such a way as not to endanger international peace, security, and justice; refraining from the threat of force or its use against both the territorial integrity or political independence of any state and in any other way incompatible with the purposes of the UN; ensuring that non-member states act in accordance with the aforementioned principles, since this may prove necessary for the maintenance of international peace; non-interference of the UN in matters directly within the internal competence of any state<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, the principle of sovereign equality of states is also connected with numerous other international principles that together form a single, integral system, namely the principle of territorial integrity, the principle of peaceful cooperation of states, the principle of conscientious implementation of international obligations, the principle of equality and the right of peoples to self-determination, the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, the principle of respect for human rights and freedoms<sup>3</sup>, the principle of peaceful resolution of international disputes, the principle of inviolability of borders<sup>4</sup>. Their structural elements and essential basis are to a certain extent interrelated, since security and world peace depend on the strict observance of each of them by states<sup>5</sup>. This condition is mandatory because if one principle is violated, others are also violated, which ultimately leads to

---

<sup>1</sup> A. Novikovas, A. Tvaronavičiene, R. Shapoval, “National security maintenance by legal measures: Case study Lithuania/Ukraine”, in *Journal of Security and Sustainability Issues*, 2019, vol. 8, no. 4, p. 737-748; A.V. Kostruba, “Methodological basis of legal personality of the state (civil aspects)”, in *Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues*, 2017, vol. 20, no. Special issue 1. Available at <https://hal.archives-ouvertes.fr/hal-02503145/document>

<sup>2</sup> I.V. Bats, “On the application of the principles of international commercial agreements as generally recognized principles and norms of international law in domestic civil law”, in *Matrix of Scientific Knowledge*, 2021, vol 6, no. 1, p. 277-282; D.V. Lukianov, T. Hoffmann, I.A. Shumilo, “Prospects for recodification of private international law in Ukraine: Do conflict-of-laws rules require a new haven?”, in *Journal of the National Academy of Legal Sciences of Ukraine*, vol. 28, no. 2, p. 198-210.

<sup>3</sup> V.I. Borysova, K.Y. Ivanova, I.V. Iurevych, O.M. Ovcharenko, “Judicial protection of civil rights in Ukraine: National experience through the prism of European standards”, in *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 2019, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 66-84.

<sup>4</sup> I.V. Boiko, Y.V. Mekh, O.M. Soloviova, V.A. Somina, O.B. Cherviakova, “Universal human rights and state sovereignty”, in *International Journal of Criminology and Sociology*, 2020, vol. 9, p. 3014-3022.

<sup>5</sup> M. Hurkovskiyi, M. Sydor, “The concept of national security as an administrative and legal category”, in *Social and Legal Studies*, 2021. no. 2, p. 26-32.

armed conflicts and wars on the planet<sup>6</sup>. As for the interpretation of the term “sovereign equality” of states, the Charter of the United Nations (1945), which is a multilateral universal international treaty, according to which the absolute majority of states, subjects of international law, currently take part, states that it covers a critical element of relations between states, namely their legal equality. Thus, all countries are legally equal, and this equality proceeds from sovereignty<sup>7</sup>.

In turn, sovereignty is a defining element in the process of considering and interpreting the legal equality of countries and, accordingly, the principle of sovereign equality. Furthermore, sovereignty is one of the essential features of any state, since it implies its supremacy in a certain territory and corresponding independence in international relations. This concept, as a property of countries, has developed together in the process of their emergence and development, which accordingly reflects to a certain extent the traditions and certain practices of states that affect the legal consciousness of peoples both at the national and international levels<sup>8</sup>. Despite numerous studies on this subject, certain gaps still require investigation, namely to establish the reasons for violating the principle of sovereign equality of states, considering the present-day conditions. Thus, the purpose of this study is to establish the priority of countries' compliance with the principle of sovereign equality, identify the main factors influencing this process, as well as consolidate methods for eliminating cases of its violation. Accordingly, the objectives of this study are to establish the theoretical basis of the above-mentioned principle and determine the algorithm for its development, consider the process of its practical use and, accordingly, analyse its structural elements related to other principles of international law<sup>9</sup>.

The purpose of this study is to consider the history of the development of sovereign equality, investigate its structure and constituent elements, and most importantly, establish an interrelation with other principles of international law.

---

<sup>6</sup> M.L. Khabachirov, “Modification of the basic classical concept and terminological apparatus: special principles in the sphere of ensuring international security”, in *Legal Bulletin of Dagestan State University*, 2020, vol. 34, no. 2, p. 100-107.

<sup>7</sup> G.P. Ermolovich, “The basic principles of international law and their reflection in interstate relations”, in *Law. Right. State*, 2020, vol. 1, no. 25, p. 218-229.

<sup>8</sup> N.N. Lipkina, 2020, “The principle of state sovereignty in cyberspace: Approaches to determining the legal nature in modern international law”, in *Bulletin of the Saratov State Law Academy*, vol. 5, no. 136, p. 108-113; A.V. Kostruba, V.A. Vasylyeva, “International regulation of termination of rights in the field of civil and intersubjective state relations”, in *Astra Salvensis*, 2020, no. 1, p. 131-153.

<sup>9</sup> K.L. Chaika, “Role of common values of the Eurasian economic union in the formation and development of the right of integration union”, in *Journal of Russian Law*, 2020, vol. 5, p. 148-157.

## **Materials and methods**

To thoroughly investigate this issue, namely the current place of the principle of sovereign equality of states in the system of basic principles of international law, several methods of scientific research were used, which helped consider each of its elements. First, based on the analysis method, the authors decomposed the concept of the principle of sovereign equality of states into structural parts to establish its structure and investigate its essence. The synthesis method was used for the reverse action, namely the cooperation of all the elements under study into a single system, thus establishing the logical structure of the above-mentioned principle and, accordingly, the features in its content. The method of comparative analysis was used to compare the principle of sovereign equality with other generally established principles of international law, namely to identify common and distinctive features, as well as to establish a link between them. Furthermore, it was used to determine the role of this principle for international law in general, and upon establishing international relations between individual countries.

For the study to be structured and concise, the method of deduction was employed, which allowed establishing the course of research from the general concept of principles of international law to the particular concept of the principle of sovereign equality of states and its place among them. Using the method of abstraction, the study established certain properties and features of the principle of sovereign equality, without considering its connection with other principles, using only the history of its development. Due to the use of the generalisation method, the authors formed clear and logical conclusions based on the information obtained during the study. Admittedly, the method of analysis of scientific literature is important, since this study was developed on its basis, namely its theoretical basis, by investigating and examining various scientific sources, such as dissertations, monographs, articles, theses of various scientists and researchers, both Ukrainian and foreign. Furthermore, this method allows getting acquainted with the established opinions of scientists on this matter, as well as analysing them for compliance with modern-day conditions and develop relevant conclusions on their basis.

This study was performed in three stages. The first stage considered the theoretical significance of the term “the principle of sovereign equality”, established its internal structure, as well as defined its features and individual properties, with a correspondingly developed study plan incorporating its main goals and objectives. The second stage analysed the place and role of the principle of sovereign equality in the system of basic principles of international law and investigated the relationship between them. Furthermore, this stage considered cases of violation of the above-mentioned principle, identified the main causes and factors that influenced their occurrence, and proposed mechanisms for stopping such a process. At the third and final stage, the

results obtained during the study of this issue were combined into concise and structured conclusions that can serve as ascending materials for future research on this subject.

## Results

The current world map includes over 250 countries, which in turn interact with each other on political, economic, cultural, and other issues, as well as form a global international environment with heterogenic properties. In present-day circumstances, the main regulator that accordingly establishes and maintains balance in relations between countries is the principle of sovereign equality of countries<sup>10</sup>. As for the theoretical basis and, accordingly, the content of the above-mentioned principle, it is consolidated in the Declaration on the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation between states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970), and proclaims that all states have sovereign equality. They have the same rights and obligations and are equal members of the international community, regardless of economic, social, political, or other differences. Furthermore, the above-mentioned international regulations contain a list of elements that constitute the principle of sovereign equality of states, which are as follows: states are legally equal; each state has rights inherent in full sovereignty; each state must respect the legal personality of other states; the territorial integrity and political independence of the state are inviolable; each state has the right to freely choose and develop its political, social, economic, and cultural systems; each state is obliged to perform its international obligations fully and in good faith and live in peace with other states<sup>11</sup>. That is, this concept can be described as the duty of countries to respect the sovereign equality and originality of each other, the rights inherent in sovereignty, as well as to respect the legal personality of other states.

The study of the above-mentioned regulations allowed tracing a somewhat interesting feature. Thus, in the Declaration on the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation between states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970), the principle of sovereign equality in the general system of principles was consolidated in the penultimate place, and in the Final act of the Conference on security and

---

<sup>10</sup> D.D. Belan, "Implementation of the principle of sovereign equality on the example of relations between Iran and the United States", in *Bulletin of the Komi Republican Academy of Public Service and Management. Management Theory and Practice*, 2021, vol. 1, no. 31, p. 13-18.

<sup>11</sup> Declaration on the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation between states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, 1970. Available at [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995\\_569#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/995_569#Text).

cooperation in Europe (1975)<sup>12</sup>, this principle is placed in the first place. This feature can be interpreted in different ways, but it is indisputable that the political situation in different times still had a considerable impact on the arrangement of principles<sup>13</sup>. Furthermore, there is another special fact in these acts, which can be highlighted during the analysis of the content of the above-mentioned documents, namely the Charter of the United Nations (1945), which formed a contradiction between the statutory provisions of this document and, accordingly, the principle of sovereign equality of states. Thus, the five permanent members of the Security Council, such as the United Kingdom, China, Russia, the United States of America, and France, were initially granted more rights than other UN Member States, which certainly contradicts the principle of sovereign equality of countries. In particular, during the establishment of the UN, this was explained by the direct contribution of the above-mentioned states to the elimination of fascism, but after some time this factor lost its relevance and, accordingly, this issue regarding this contradiction still worries the international community<sup>14</sup>.

An in-depth study of the structure of the principle of sovereign equality of states and, accordingly, the analysis of its structure, requires distinguishing two sub-principles that are directly its elements and make up a single system, namely the sub-principle of sovereignty and the sub-principle of equality of states. The basis of the first sub-principle is directly sovereignty, which should be described as the sovereignty of the state within the country and its independence from the outside. According to most prominent researchers, such as J. Locke, T. Hobbes, J.J. Rousseau, sovereignty is a secondary phenomenon. Thus, sovereignty directly belongs to the people and meets the criteria of primacy. In turn, citizens who express common interests, through deputies elected by them in general elections or referendums, and accordingly, as a result of such actions, transfer to the state part of their rights inherent in sovereignty. Proceeding from this fact, it can be argued that the sovereignty of the state remains a secondary, derived phenomenon<sup>15</sup>.

As for the second element of the principle of sovereign equality of states, namely the sub-principle of equality, its essential content is that each state

---

<sup>12</sup> V.A. Litvinova on security and cooperation in Europe, 1975. Available at [https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994\\_055#Text](https://zakon.rada.gov.ua/laws/show/994_055#Text).

<sup>13</sup> N.N. Lipkina, 2020, "The principle of state sovereignty in cyberspace: Approaches to determining the legal nature in modern international law", in *Bulletin of the Saratov State Law Academy*, vol. 5, no. 136, p. 108-113; A.A. Guskov, I.S. Sichinava, "Role of the basic principles of private international law", in *Student Forum*, 2021, vol. 24, no. 160, p. 25-29.

<sup>14</sup> A.A. Poletaeva, "Securing the principle of sovereign equality of states in international acts", in *Problems and Prospects for the development of Modern Legislation*, 2020, vol. 1, p. 23-25.

<sup>15</sup> I.O. Anisimov, "Evolution and content of the principle of peaceful settlement of international disputes in international law", in *Electronic Network Publication "International Legal Courier"*, 2021, vol. 1, p. 19-28.

constitutes an independent subject of international legal relations. In this context, legal equality, which is extremely widespread and consolidated in numerous international acts, occupies an indisputable place<sup>16</sup>. Despite this, there are insufficient grounds and conditions to simplify or ignore the issue of equality. This is conditioned upon the fact that the history of the establishment and development of international relations at each time stage recorded the appearance of confrontations between countries for dominance and the spread of influence and, accordingly, power. Proceeding from this, the principle of equality is, factually, a legal fiction. This statement is explained by the fact that the principle of equality is a permanent object that is subject to violations by various states, respectively, from the moment it enters into legal force in a certain territory. Despite this, no steps are being taken to reduce the level of the currently existing inequality, which is why this study is aimed at developing mechanisms that will help stop this phenomenon or at least reduce the number of manifestations of such violations<sup>17</sup>.

Given the above, it is appropriate to establish that violations of the principle of sovereign equality of states can only be prevented through the institution of individual responsibility. This mechanism is as effective as possible, as it will increase the level of international legal responsibility in general, as well as contribute to the development and consolidation of appropriate conditions for the due development of multipolarity, namely upon consideration and solution of world-level issues. Admittedly, for the successful implementation of the principle of sovereign equality, it is necessary to combine the joint efforts and capabilities of all states, for the main purpose, namely the development of humanity, and not a single state<sup>18</sup>. Furthermore, assessing the current level of cultural development of humanity, the above-mentioned trend towards world development is illusory, since the world clearly reflects countries that are extremely different, both in social and cultural situation, which may indicate the lack of a common approach and appropriate mutual improvement of humanity. In this regard, it is necessary that the violation of the principle of equality of countries by an individual state provokes the onset of responsibility directly for the offending country, and in

---

<sup>16</sup> E.B. Abdrasulov, M.G. Gubaidullin, "Legal contracts and legal customs in the history of the law of the kazakh society", in *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 2019, vol. 10, no. 7, p. 1951-1955.

<sup>17</sup> N.A. Chernyadeva, Yu.V. Vasilyeva, "Influence of the yalta conference on the development of modern international law", in *Perm University Bulletin. Legal Sciences*, 2021, vol. 52, p. 394-423.

<sup>18</sup> A. Kagramanov, O. Kagraman, "The principle of equality and self-determination of peoples in the system of basic principles of international law", in *International Law*, 2021, no. 1, p. 39-53.

this case, humanity will be capable of achieving universal and strict compliance with this principle in the near future<sup>19</sup>.

### **Discussion**

To consider the practical basis of the principle of sovereign equality, it is necessary to compare it with other basic principles of international law, since in their cooperation they form a single system, and it is in this way that their essence and functions can be established. Thus, it is advisable to first describe the concept of generally established principles of international law, in particular, these are expressly developed and generally recognised consolidated norms of behaviour of subjects between which international relations are established, specifically those concerning the most priority aspects of international life. Their main tasks are to promote the normalisation of the entire system of international relations, in particular by limiting this object to the established regulatory framework, as well as governing all new phenomena that directly arise in the exercise of their rights by subjects of international law, admittedly within the framework of international relations, and thus contribute to their development. Furthermore, it is important to describe the features of this system to establish and explain the interconnectedness of its elements, that is, the general principles of international law. Thus, they are universal foundations of international law; they are described by such properties as irrefutability and universal binding; they are described by a mandatory nature regarding all countries universally, regardless of whether they are UN members or other international organisations and associations. It is important to emphasise that what determines them is that they have the first place among all other norms and acts of the entire system of international law.

Moreover, they are not subject to the general rule of international regulations regarding their effect in time, since they are retroactive, which means that they can extend their effect to any act or norm that arose earlier than the principle itself<sup>20</sup>. By the way, the limits of authority are expanded up to the ability to cancel them and, accordingly, cancel the consequences that arose as a result of its actions. Notably, only an action or inaction, which violates the generally established principles of international law, can be interpreted as international crimes, respectively. The defining feature of all the main interrelated principles is their ability to act in the context of the legal basis

---

<sup>19</sup> O.I. Leiko, "To the question of the concept of sovereign equality of states in the context of development of international organizations in the xxi century", in *Cute Problems of Legal, Economic and Human Sciences*, 2021, vol. 2, p. 13-15.

<sup>20</sup> V. Kopcha, "Modern rule of law and basic approaches to understanding", in *Law Journal of the National Academy of Internal Affairs*, 2021, vol. 11, no. 2, p. 7-12.



for normalising interstate relations, provided that there is no direct control<sup>21</sup>. Having established the general purpose of the principles of international law, it is advisable to develop the practical significance of the principle of sovereign equality, namely it is ensuring the involvement of countries in international relations based on legal equality, regardless of the elements, economic, social, political, or other nature that may differ for each of them. This principle implies that each country should be equal and, accordingly, endowed with the same rights and obligations in relation to other states.

Special attention should be paid to international organisations, since when joining them, the transfer of part of the powers by the state to their favour is to be in place, which can certainly be mistakenly considered illegal and unacceptable for not violating the integrity of the state sovereignty of the country entering into relations<sup>22</sup>. This process was extremely dynamic directly in the post-war period, as humanity was faced with a list of global problems that needed to be solved collectively and with joint efforts. Despite the passage of time, international organisations remain relevant today, as there is a constant increase in the objects of international regulation, as well as there are general issues that are systematically controlled by states. Therefore, it is worth refuting the opinion that due to the transfer of certain powers by a state in favour of an international organisation, its sovereignty and, accordingly, the principle of sovereign equality are restricted, especially in the process of building international relations. On the contrary, this process involves the state's use of its right, namely to conclude agreements, and accordingly contributes to its active involvement in international relations and the development of humanity in general<sup>23</sup>.

It is advisable to consider each principle separately, to establish its features and, accordingly, find common and distinctive features with the principle of sovereign equality. Thus, the principle of non-use of force or the threat of force, its appearance is directly related to the democratisation of society, as well as the desire of humanity for a peaceful life. It lies in prohibiting the conduct of military operations, occupation, violence, the use of repression against prisoners, incitement to organise public wars and the

---

<sup>21</sup> L.V. Terentyeva, "Extraterritoriality in private international law", in *Actual Problems of Russian Law*, 2021, vol. 5, no. 126, p. 183-194.

<sup>22</sup> E.B. Abdrasulov, S.R. Shalabaev, A.I. Mugauova, "The concept of the triad of branches of state power and issues of its modernization", in *European Research Studies Journal*, 2015, vol. 18, no. 4, p. 75-82.

<sup>23</sup> D.P. Okolota, "Sovereign state as a basic actor of international relations in the theory of international relations", in *Student Science Issues*, 2020, vol. 9, no. 49, p. 209-220; A.V. Kostruba, "The notion and attributes of right – terminating legal facts", in *Journal of Advanced Research in Law and Economics*, 2019, vol. 10, no. 1, p. 254-262.

implementation of terrorist acts<sup>24</sup>. Upon establishing the connection of this principle with the principle of sovereign equality of states, it should be noted that according to the Declaration on the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation between states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970), the element of the latter is the obligation to live in peace with other states, which directly echoes the essence of the principle of non-use of force or threat of force. That is why it can be established that these principles are interrelated and complement each other<sup>25</sup>.

The following is the principle of territorial integrity of states, which is based on the prohibition to commit actions of any nature by one country against the territorial integrity or inviolability of another country. As for the scope of relations that it covers, it prevails over the principle of non-use of force or the threat of force, since it lies in protecting the territory of the state from any arbitrary actions, regardless of their goals or methods. Notably, the connection of this principle with the principle of sovereign equality of states is absolutely connected, which is explained by the component composition of sovereignty, to which the territory directly belongs. Furthermore, turning to the regulations, the Final act of the Conference on security and cooperation in Europe (1975) stipulates that the member countries are endowed with rights that are inherent in sovereignty and, accordingly, the right to territorial integrity. Thus, the direct connection between these two principles can certainly be traced, both in theory and in practice, but it should be remembered that the principle of territorial integrity of states is not inherent in absolute nature, which is explained by the presence in international law of the ability to violate one country's sovereignty of another, provided that the latter puts the world order in jeopardy<sup>26</sup>.

As for the principle of peaceful resolution of international disputes, its essence concerns the implementation of the peaceful international community and, accordingly, the regulation of the process of resolving conflicts that arise between countries. The connection of this principle with the principle of sovereign equality is directly prescribed in the Final act of the Conference on security and cooperation in Europe<sup>27</sup>. In particular, it stipulates that international disputes are resolved based on the sovereign equality of states.

---

<sup>24</sup> B.M. Kaariye, "Democracy and state formation nexus: Experiences in Somaliland", in *Democracy and Security*, 2021, vol. 17, no. 2, p. 210-223.

<sup>25</sup> N.V. Kyrlyuk, "Establishment and development of the principle of sovereign equality of states during the transition from classical to modern international (1919)", in *Legal Bulletin*, 2020, vol. 13, p. 25-29.

<sup>26</sup> N. Kyrlyuk, S. Zadorozhna, S. Manyk, "History of the development of the principle of sovereign equality of states during the period of classical international law", in *International Law*, 2020, vol. 9, p. 248-253.

<sup>27</sup> V.O. Pankratova, "General principles of law as a source of European Union law", in *Legal Horizons*, 2021, vol. 14, no. 2, p. 111-117.

The application of a dispute settlement procedure or consent to such a procedure, freely agreed between states regarding existing or future disputes wherein they are parties, should not be considered incompatible with the principle of sovereign equality. Thus, since there is a direct connection between these principles, and accordingly, when one is violated, the other is violated, which determines the obligation to strictly observe both of them. The next is the principle of non-interference in internal affairs, which plays a crucial role in the establishment of international relations. Its essence is to prohibit one state or international organisation from interfering in the internal affairs of both states and peoples, regardless of the form in which this happens. As for the statutory consolidation of their connection, it is prescribed in the Declaration on the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation between states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970). Furthermore, theory quite frequently interprets the principle of sovereign equality of a country precisely through the lens of the non-interference in its internal affairs, which also indicates the indissoluble connection between them<sup>28</sup>.

Admittedly, the principle of respect for human rights is central, since it is constantly relevant, moreover, every year the international community raises this issue increasingly more often, since every society must be democratic, and in case of violation of this principle, violators must be punished<sup>29</sup>. It is in the dimension of establishing responsibility and monitoring the observance of human rights and freedoms that this principle is connected with the principle of sovereign equality. This is stipulated by the fact that states are equally endowed with certain rights and obligations to collectively help prevent the occurrence of violations of rights or encroachments on them. In addition, in the modern-day world, sovereignty is determined directly by the level of legitimisation and protection of human rights in the state. Thus, their connection is definitely direct and absolute because without following one of these principles, it is impossible to follow the other<sup>30</sup>. Another extremely relevant principle is the principle of equality and self-determination of peoples and nations. To a certain extent, it echoes the previous principle, which is why the problem of its implementation is on the agenda in many international organisations. The difference from the previous principles is that the relationship between it and the principle of sovereign equality is not explicitly prescribed in international regulations. However, despite this, these principles

---

<sup>28</sup> N.V. Koloshinskaya, *Problems of implementation of the principle of equality in law: From discussion to practice*, 2021. Available at <https://cyberleninka.ru/article/n/problemy-realizatsii-printsiparavenstva-v-prave-ot-diskussii-k-praktike/viewer>.

<sup>29</sup> V. Tatsiy, S. Serohina, "Bicameralism: European Tendencies and Perspectives for Ukraine", in *Baltic Journal of European Studies*, 2018, vol. 8, no. 1, p. 101-122.

<sup>30</sup> O.V. Klimova, "State sovereignty in the sphere of action of the global factor", in *Trends in the Development of the Legislation of the Russian Federation*, 2020, vol. 1, p. 90-105

are certainly related, since the principle of sovereign equality of states to a certain extent acts as a guarantor for preventing discrimination against peoples and nations, as well as preventing the implementation of pressure on them from other states.

As for the principle of international cooperation, it in turn makes provision for the development and consolidation of the duty of states to cooperate with each other on equal terms, without considering the specific features of each in the political, economic, or social spheres<sup>31</sup>. Proceeding from this fact, it can be established that this process makes provision for mandatory conditions for its implementation, namely, equality and independence of participants in such cooperation, which is ensured by the principle of sovereign equality. Furthermore, it is possible to establish a link between these two principles by analysing their nature, since sovereign equality is the main basis on which states form relations with each other, and international cooperation is the main goal of such relations. And ultimately, the principle of conscientious performance of international obligations is the final one in this study, since it is interdependent with the principle of sovereign equality of states. This is explained by the fact that based on the latter, certain relations arise, which find their manifestation in agreements or acts that prescribe the consolidation of mutual obligations, while the former principle allows implementing the provided obligations and, accordingly, is a guarantor of compliance with them. Moreover, their connection is established in statutory documents, namely in the Declaration on the principles of international law concerning friendly relations and cooperation between states in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations (1970), which states that the content of the principle of sovereign equality directly includes the duty of states to perform their international obligations fully and in good faith<sup>32</sup>.

Thus, the main factor influencing the violation of the principle of sovereign equality of a state is the violation by another country of the basic principles of international law. Since the study traces the direct connection of this principle with all others, and to a certain extent even their interdependence, it is strict compliance with the generally established principles that will allow states to efficiently implement their principle of sovereign equality; additionally, this will positively impact all of humanity.

---

<sup>31</sup> M. Romanov, "Concept, essence and significance of the activity of the units of knowledge", in *Scientific Journal of the National Academy of Internal Affairs*, 2021, vol. 119, no. 2, p. 102-106.

<sup>32</sup> L.P. Anufrieva, "Differentiation of basic principles and norms as cognates as concepts of theory and practice of modern international law", in *Journal of the O.E. Kutafin University*, 2020, vol. 12, no. 76, p. 53-67.

## **Conclusions**

As a result of this paper, the theoretical and practical component of the issue under study was uncovered, namely the place of the principle of sovereign equality in the system of international law. Thus, the concept of sovereign equality should be interpreted as the fact that in international relations all subjects, that is, countries, are equal in their rights and obligations and, accordingly, are equal members of the international community. This principle comprises two elements, namely the sub-principle of sovereignty and equality, which are interrelated and, accordingly, form an integral system. As for the first element, its essence lies in the fact that the supremacy of the state fully extends to its entire territory and, accordingly, describes its independence in international relations. In turn, the principle of equality can be described in such a way that all states in mutual relations are members of international organisations, engaging in active international policies, and are endowed with the same rights and, accordingly, obligations that they must strictly observe.

Furthermore, the paper analysed all the basic principles of international law, covered their essence and, accordingly, established a connection with the principle of sovereign equality. This connection was highlighted both thanks to theoretical materials and researchers' opinions, and, accordingly, based on international regulations. Thus, it was proved that all the principles are interrelated with the above-mentioned principle and, accordingly, even depend on each other to a certain extent. That is why it can be argued that the principle of sovereign equality is at the central place in this system. Proceeding from this fact, it should be established that a violation of one of the elements of the above-mentioned system provokes a violation of the other. Accordingly, the only effective solution to respect the principle of sovereign equality in international relations is the observance of peace, mutual respect and the conscientious implementation of obligations arising between states.