

HAMUN 44
UNODC
Topic B:
The Evolving Role of
Narcoterrorism



Committee Background:

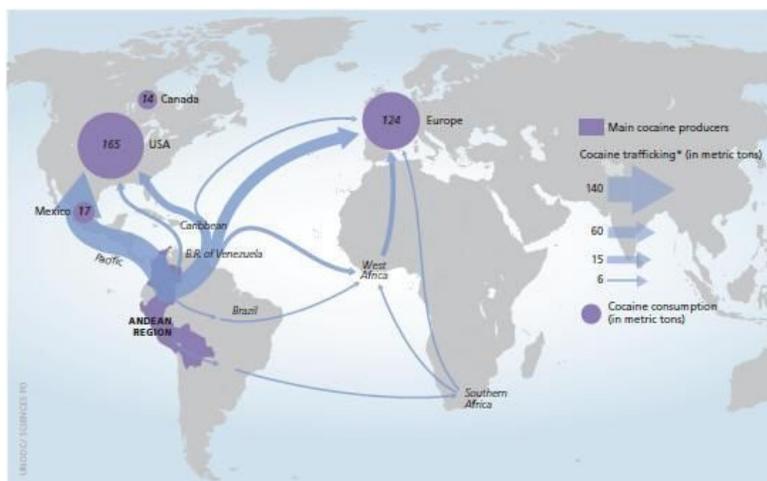
The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime was established in 1997 in hopes to prevent the growth and increase trading, use, and abuse of drugs and crime throughout the world. It does so through many important conventions such as the 'United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC)' and the, 'United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).' It is imperative to understand the binding legal frameworks the UNODC hopes to and already has implemented in order to combat structural drug trades and the rise of terrorism. Both of these issues are directly related to today's topic of The evolving role of narco terrorism throughout the globe.

There have been several significant legally binding frameworks that the UNODC was built off from. Frameworks such as the 1988 Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs led to the rising need of a committee specifically designed to combat these issue which led to the formation of the UNODC.

Statement of the problem:

The phrase Narco-Terrorism was first used by president Fernando Belaúnde Terry of Peru in 1983¹. The Merriam Webster dictionary defines narco-terrorism as “ terrorism financed by profits from illegal drug trafficking”. From the 1980s the word has expanded to encompass much more than just financing of terrorism through illegal drugs.²

Narco-terrorism is a diverse and complex problem throughout the globe. Throughout the world,



not only is drug related deaths increasing but so is terrorist activities. The crux of the issue is not the use of drugs themselves, but stems from the upset brought on by terrorist organizations gaining resources and influence in the area through the drug revenue.³ The increase in drug use and dependency leads to a greater role of terrorist organizations in communities. Furthermore, if the issue of terrorism was to be momentarily ignored, over 100 people

¹ "Narcoterrorism." Wikipedia. December 03, 2018. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Narcoterrorism>.

² "Narco-terrorism." Merriam-Webster. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/narco-terrorism>.

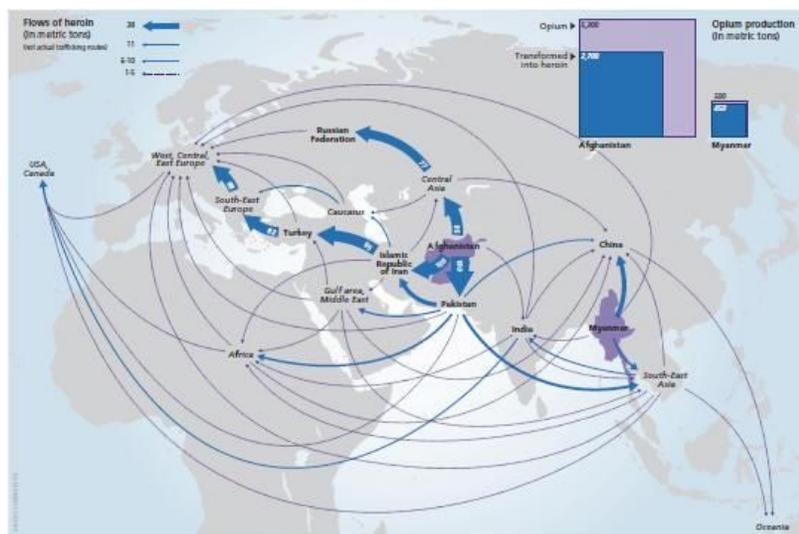
³ Samuels, Richard J. "Drug Cartel." Encyclopædia Britannica. June 08, 2017. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/drug-cartel#ref1232309>.

still die every day due to drug overdose.⁴

History of the problem:

A large majority of cocaine production and distribution is done through South America. The cocaine cartel first became a serious threat in the mid 1970s with the, 'Medellin Cartel' headed by the infamous Pablo Escobar. At its peak, the Medellin Cartel was estimated to bring in over \$60 million per day in drug profits. After the Columbian police seized over 600 tons of cocaine from a plane, the Medellin Cartel reacted by killing over 40 innocent civilians which led to years of violent conflict between the government and the Medellin Cartel. The conflict only escalated when Panamanian General, Manuel Noriega, allowed Pablo Escobar to use Panama as a trading ground to further distribute drugs throughout the world. After the rise and fall of the Medellin Cartel, several others rose in its place such as, The Cali Cartel, El Chapo, Los Zetas and Mexican Drug Cartels, Los Zetas, and the Gulf Cartel in South America alone.⁵

Similarly, the heroin trade has a prominent presence throughout The Middle East and Africa. Up until 2004, most of the heroin supplied to Asia was done through 'The Golden Triangle'.



The Golden Triangle was a drug ring that spanned three countries, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar but just after three years, Afghanistan became the world's leading exporter of heroin, exporting over 94% of the heroin used today. Since heroin is a drug which requires a small dose for a very high price, it is considered to be preferable by drug dealers to trade and move throughout Asia, Africa, and parts of Europe.⁶

In the past, many important conventions have been held in order to combat the rising use of drugs and drug related crimes. Some of the most noteworthy of these would be: The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs 1953 which was an update to the Paris convention of 1931. The Single Convention laid out a multipart schedule and goals for countries to meet by certain deadlines in order to reduce the use of illegal drugs. The treaty was limited in its scope and resulted in many different drugs being excluded from within its definitions. Furthermore, the convention itself wasn't self executing and required two more

⁴ "Addiction Statistics - Facts on Drug and Alcohol Addiction." AddictionCenter. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://www.addictioncenter.com/addiction/addiction-statistics/>.

⁵ "History of Drug Trafficking." History.com. May 21, 2017. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://www.history.com/topics/crime/history-of-drug-trafficking>.

⁶ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/index.html>

conventions to help expedite its influence on countries, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In union, all three of these conventions worked together to help promote the establishment of drug related legislation and the reinforcement of local drug combating agencies. Even though these according provided some success, they were limited in their ability to make countries uphold the convention's standards and drug use and related crimes are still on the rise.

Current Situation:

The increase in narco terrorism is the most prominent in areas with:

- 1) High economic disparities correlates to increase in drug use and a greater instability in regions. Over all, a majority of drug use is carried out by those approaching or under the poverty line which is also the same group of people which are most likely to join or aid terrorist organizations.
- 2) Large intensive labour areas have a much greater proportion of illegal drug production and use. In order to cope with the strenuous labour and difficult work, the working people turn towards narcotics for relief. Furthermore, areas with more people to perform labour are often where plant based narcotics are grown and cultivated as it offers economic opportunities to the workers and cheap labour for terrorist organizations.
- 3) High levels of organized crime leads to a greater need for relief and protection from these organizations. This relief is traded between terrorist organizations and people in turn for work that they must provide such as selling, trading, and even distributing drugs.
- 4) Low government response to areas with high and uncontrolled drug trade. A large presence of drugs and crime correlates to a government with higher levels of corruptions as narco terrorist use methods such as threats, bribes, and political influence to either avoid or change laws in their favor.⁷

With both terrorism and the abuse of narcotics on the rise, it is imperative that countries take a stand to prevent the growth of either of these issues. Al-Qaeda, a prominent terrorist organization within the Middle East controls a part of the heroin production in Afghanistan.⁸ Beyond selling and producing these drugs, the organization has caused major upset throughout Asia by attacking cities and villages, starting wars, and empowering local lords which further the cycle of violence, to name a few. A majority of the funds that Al-Qaeda are from local leaders whom they have arrangements with and the mass drug trade which they run. The drugs finance things such as weapons, defence, infrastructure, and richer members who profit off of the trade. Statistically speaking, the greater the violence and civil unrest in an area, the more drugs are used in order to provide relief to people in desperate situations.

Throughout Africa, countries like Nigeria aren't known for producing large quantities of drugs, but play a key role in the migration of drugs throughout the world. Cocaine produced in South America is

⁷ Felbab-Brown, Vanda. "Narcoterrorism and the Long Reach of U.S. Law Enforcement." Brookings.edu. May 10, 2017. Accessed December 10, 2018. <https://www.brookings.edu/testimonies/narcoterrorism-and-the-long-reach-of-u-s-law-enforcement/>.

⁸ "United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime." Integrity in the Criminal Justice System. Accessed December 10, 2018. http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/bulletin/bulletin_1954-01-01_1_page002.html

primarily displaced to Europe and Asia through Africa. The lack of stable government control and prominence of terrorist organizations such as Boko Haram and Hamas lead to easy access and then further distribution to the rest of the world. It is important to note that, not only does a majority of drug trade depends on African countries but many African countries also depend on the drug trade. The drug trade brings in economic opportunity for citizens to benefit off of and allows for an increase in disposable wealth. For example, drug trade in Guinea-Bissau accounts for twice the countries official GDP.

In South America, among countries such as Mexico and Columbia which are infamous for their drug production and distribution, Venezuela is rising among the ranks as a hub the drug dealers to prosper. With the rising civil unrest in Venezuela, it has led to a decrease in government control and intervention allowing for a flourishing in crime and drugs. In recent years, Venezuela dropped from the third largest cocaine seizing country to the sixth which suggest an increase in market supply and distribution. While organizations such as Al-Qaeda adopted drug trade to help support their agenda, organizations such as the FAC in Columbia and The Shining Path in Peru are organization solely dedicated to drug production and distribution among other things. Both of these organization have long and tangled histories with their respective nations and have had monumental effects throughout the world through their drug trade and control.

Blocs:

South American Bloc:

A majority of the countries in the South Americas will call for a greater control on the drug trade. An increase in drug presence has also led to an increase in narcoterrorism and many of the South American governments are publicly at odds with these terrorist organizations. Legislation will be key to improving the situation in countries with very lax laws that allow for drug related crimes to slip through the net.

North American Bloc:

Most of the North American drugs are being smuggled from countries such as South America. The main goal for countries in this block will be to increase border control to prevent drugs from entering your countries as they have historically been a grave issue in the United States coupled with the war on drugs and increasing use of drugs in the North Americas.

African Bloc:

This bloc will aim toward preventing trafficking while combating terrorist organizations from gaining influence and catalyzing the drug empire. This bloc will focus towards the prevention of drug use and reclaiming influence lost to organizations which are part of drug trafficking.

Asian Bloc:

A primary goal for this bloc will be to halt the production of such drugs and prevent terrorist organizations from managing and increasing drug trade. Another issue delegates will have to tackle is the destabilization of many governments in Asia and how to work with such governments to increase their control without a greater international upset.

European bloc:

A majority of drug trade enters into Europe as it is a large consumer. The greater affluency of the general population allows for a larger market for drug traders to cater to and allows for them to tempt younger generations. Preventing access to these drugs will be a large concern for European countries. An interesting development for European countries to consider is how some countries legalized all drugs turning the black market into a white market greatly decreasing drug abuse in their respective nations.

Discussion Questions:

- 1) To what extent does legalizing drugs decrease drug abuse?
- 2) What are effective ways to combat drug related crimes and attacks?
- 3) Is greater border control the best way to combat drug trading?
- 4) What methods were employed in the past and why have they not worked? Can they be altered to be more effective?
- 5) Will combating terrorism decrease drug production and distribution? If so, how?

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