

# United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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**Topic: Drug Trafficking**

**Director: Karina Singh**

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October 10th, 2020

To Delegates of CHSMUN Novice 2020

Dear Delegates,  
Welcome to CHSMUN Novice 2020!

It is our highest honor and pleasure to welcome you all to our 2020 online novice conference here at Cerritos High School. On behalf of the Cerritos High School Model United Nations program, we are proud to host our very first virtual novice conference, where you will become more knowledgeable on international issues, participate in intellectually stimulating discussions, and create new and everlasting friendships.

The CHSMUN program continues to compete around the world as a nationally ranked MUN program. Our delegates utilize diplomacy in order to create complex solutions towards multilateral issues in the global community. Our head chairs are selected from only the best seniors of our program, undergoing a rigorous training process to ensure the highest quality of moderating and grading of debate. Furthermore, all the topic synopses have been reviewed and edited numerous times. We strongly believe that by providing each and every delegate with the necessary tools and understanding, he or she will have everything they need to thrive in all aspects of the committee. We thoroughly encourage each delegate to engage in all of the facets of their topic, in order to grow in their skills as a delegate and develop a greater knowledge of the world around them.

Although this wasn't what we expected, our advisors and staff have put in countless hours to ensure delegates have an amazing experience at the online conference. Our greatest hope is that from attending CHSMUN 2020, students are encouraged to continue on in Model United Nations and nevertheless, inspired to spark change in their surrounding communities. CHSMUN Novice 2020 will provide a quality experience for beginner delegates to develop their speaking and delegating skills.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns, please contact us! We look forward to seeing you at CHSMUN Novice 2020!

Sincerely,

Anjali Mani and Karishma Patel

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Secretary-Generals

## **A Note From The Director**

Delegates,

My name is Karina Singh, and I am looking forward to being your head chair for UNODC. As a senior, I've been in MUN for around six years, since middle school, and it has shaped my life in drastic ways. In my personal experience, MUN has pushed me by broadening my world view and pushing me to work collaboratively with many, even those whom I don't agree with, along with making my life more interesting with conferences like Nationals at New York and DMUNC at UC Davis. On campus, I'm involved in the Journalism Club and CPU Club, and I spend my time outside of school relaxing with my dog, reading books, and napping after major tests. Even with COVID-19 making this conference an online one, I genuinely hope that you all still put effort into preparing for the conference and stay active during committee because the skills made during MUN, like collaboration, leadership and great research skills, while not tangible, are essential throughout life. I understand that these times are difficult for many of you, so please feel free to contact me to ask about any questions or concerns you have. I can't wait to see you all in committee!

Sincerely,

Karina Singh

Director, UNODC

## **Committee Introduction**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was established in 1997 by merging the United Nations International Drug Control Programme and the United Nations Centre for International Crime Prevention. The UNODC primarily focuses on terrorism, criminal justice systems, corruption, drugs (prevention, treatment, trafficking), transnational organized crime, human trafficking, migrant smuggling, violent crimes, and wildlife trafficking. The office launches campaigns to raise awareness on the issues it tackles to raise awareness about these problems, guides international action against its primary issues, holds international conferences on prevalent problems, and collects data on its issues. As an international organization, UNODC particularly helps with facilitating cooperation between states as well on its primary issues of drugs and crime through establishing suggestions like the UNODC Model Law against Trafficking in Persons.

# Topic A: Drug Trafficking

## Background:

The global illicit drug industry's turnover is estimated to be equivalent to about 8 percent of total international trade, and, as the important link between the production of drugs and their consumers, drug trafficking plays an imperative role in this industry. Simply put, drug trafficking is the global illicit trading and transportation of substances. Drug cartels move drugs in a variety of methods, from simply hiding drugs in car seats to using self-propelled semi-submersibles that cost up to \$1m. In Guatemala, some traffickers are even using jets, loading them with cocaine and landing them in the dead of night without lights, guided by drones. The jets land by Guatemala's northern border in a wildlife preserve, with each jet carrying more than \$100 million worth of cocaine that will then be ferried out of the jungle and taken through Mexico to the United States. Drug trafficking is driven by the demand for illicit drugs, just like any other industry, which is why many countries have looked towards lessening the demand for illicit drugs to shut down the whole network, including drug trafficking. This demand allows for high profits, so many organised crime groups that traffick drugs are also involved in financing terrorism, money laundering, and the buying of illegal firearms. Vulnerable people are often recruited as mules for the chance to pay off debts or even just make enough money to provide for themselves and their family since they often don't have many options for legal, decently-paid employment. The 4.5 million farmers who depend on profits from illicit drug crops often have similar circumstances as well. Others dependent on the money coming from the industry include corrupt employees at ports and borders from those at the top to those at the bottom of the chain of command who allow the trafficking to continue. Corruption can even reach the legal system, with criminals being able to escape proper prosecution and punishments through their connections made from their drug money. The consequences of drug trafficking are immense. The literal economic cost of drug trafficking and abuse has been estimated at nearly \$215 billion within the United States. In fact, based on studies in the mid-1990s, the United States Department of Labor estimated \$75 - \$100 billion is lost by American business annually because workers use drugs at the job, showing drugs' effects on productivity. The unquantifiable effects drugs have on communities can't be understated, shown by how, according to a country study by UNRISD and the United Nations University on Mexico, illicit drug abuse correlates more with the break up of a family than poverty. Drugs have also been shown to hurt school children's cognitive efficiency by impairing short-term memory for example, resulting in poor academic performance that causes the individual to lose confidence in themselves and turn back to drugs. In terms of health for the individual drug users, as of 2019, 35 million people worldwide have drug use disorders. Despite these large numbers, only one in seven people who suffer from these disorders receive treatment, which reflects the significant lack of treatment when it comes to these types of disorders. The U.S. and Canada have experienced huge upticks in opioid overdose deaths, with the U.S. going up 13% from 2018 and Canada going up 33% from 2016, which also shows the result of countries failing to provide treatment for those with drug disorders. Drug

users aren't the only ones dying because of the illicit drug industry since drug cartels are often involved in other activities funded by the drugs they sell that lead to many deaths, like terrorism, while cartels themselves are deadly. After all, according to the Mexican government, drug-related violence resulted in the deaths of 12,903 in 2011's first nine months. Looking past the human impact, drug trafficking even hurts the environment because the production of drugs has hurt many habitats. Some suspect cocoa cultivation could have caused 700,000 hectares in the Amazon region in Peru to be cleared of the tropical rainforest.

## United Nations Involvement:

The United Nations has been very proactive in dealing with drug trafficking, with there being three major international drug control treaties. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1954 (amended in 1972) and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, the first two treaties, had general suggestions regarding illicit drug trafficking and drug abuse. Becoming more specific and targeted, the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances put into place measures to not only prevent illegal drug trafficking, but also tackle related money laundering. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs deals primarily in making policies regarding drugs after close analysis of global illicit drug trafficking and abuse trends to adopt said policies or recommend them for adoption. The International Narcotics Control Board collects data and information on illicit drug trafficking, along with observing and giving recommendations about the implementation of conventions. Along with the resolutions, commissions, and boards mentioned, the UN takes other actions regarding drug trafficking. The UN has seen the importance of fair, effective criminal justice systems in preventing drug trafficking and has addressed this issue through launching the CRIMJUST global program. CRIMJUST's goal is to deal with drug trafficking and transnational organized crime cases along drug trafficking routes in Latin America, West Africa, and the Caribbean through enhancing cooperation between countries involved and improving the capacities, along with the integrity, of these criminal justice institutions. Acknowledging that planes are also used for drug trafficking, the UNODC has made the project AIRCOP, from 2010 to 2022, with the World Customs Organization, INTERPOL, and UNODC being the implementing partners. AIRCOP strengthens the ability of international airports to detect illicit drugs, along with other illicit goods and high-risk passengers, with the goals of the project being global real-time information exchange, cooperation between agencies through Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces, and activities to improve detection of illicit items. AIRCOP has led to the training of 6,050 people, the participation in 32 international joint operations, and the interception of 9 potential Foreign Terrorist Fighters. Also, Joint Airport Interdiction Task Forces have had 2,400 arrests and 3,100 seizures since 2012, with the seizures including over 19 tons of illicit drugs.

## Bloc Positions:

**Western:** The western region serves mostly as a consumer base for drugs, meaning that, for most drug trafficking routes, the countries in this region are usually the destination for the drugs.

Therefore, the primary issues present in this region are drug users and preventing drugs from coming into these countries, along with a focus on rehabilitation, prevention, and treatment. In Europe, for instance, over 17 million people have used cocaine, around 12 million have used amphetamines, and 1.3 million are problem opioid users. However, different countries in the bloc have taken on vastly different approaches. Countries like the United States focus heavily on a more strict drug policy, using severe border control and strict laws, whereas, on the other side of the spectrum, several countries in Europe, like Portugal, have been experimenting with decriminalization of all drugs entirely.

**Latin America and Caribbean:** This region has been one of - if not the hardest - harder hit by drug trafficking because it is used frequently for both production and trafficking, leaving countries in this region vulnerable to drug trafficking organizations. For example, Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia produce most of the world's cocaine, which is then transported through Central America, Mexico, and the Caribbean to send the drugs to the United States and Europe. The main problems for Latin America currently lie in the power the organized crime groups have within the region because these groups cause much violence within Latin America, along with corrupting the government. From 2006 to 2018, about 150,000 people have been intentionally killed because of drug cartels in Mexico. Pushed by the United States, Mexico specifically has used overly militarized counter-drug effort.

**African:** The African region primarily has worries in regards to transportation of drugs, with 87% of pharmaceutical opioids seized globally coming from this region. Two-thirds of the cocaine transported between South America and Europe goes through West Africa, especially Benin, Cape Verde, and Guinea-Bissau. There are plenty of users too though, as there are 1.8 million cocaine users and 34 million cannabis users in west and central Africa. Drug trafficking in the region has given terrorist organizations options for revenue, shown by how Al Qaeda, the Movement for Oneness, and Jihad in West Africa deal with cannabis and cocaine trafficking in the Sahel, while Boko Haram has been involved in cocaine and heroin smuggling in West Africa. To counter drug trafficking, the West African Coast Initiative was established in 2009, and WACI strengthens law enforcement, enhances justice institutions, and controls transnational crime units for cases at borders. WACI resulted in large seizures of cocaine dropping, going from 18 tons of cocaine being moved in 2010 to 47 tons in 2007.

**Asian-Pacific:** This region deals in both production and trafficking, with the primary issues shifting in different areas of the region. Afghanistan, for example, made up about two thirds of the area used for illicit opium poppy cultivation in 2015, with the Balkan route through Iran, Turkey, and South Eastern Europe being used to supply most of Europe. Due to the prevalence of drug trafficking, South-West Asia in particular has many opiate users and many people with HIV due to them injecting drugs, as shown by Afghanistan having 2-2.5 million people using drugs. Meanwhile, the South Pacific islands have been more and more frequently used as a narcotics hub, with cocaine and methamphetamines that are packed into sailing boats in the US and Latin America being moved through the South Pacific Islands to Australia. As a result, many of the larger Pacific nations are having to deal with gang violence, crime, police corruption, and much of their population being addicted to cocaine and methamphetamine. To counter this, the region has the Triangular Initiative which allows for cooperation between Afghanistan, Pakistan,

and Iran; the Afghanistan-Kyrgyzstan-Tajikistan Initiative to focus on another route coming from Afghanistan; the Regional Working Groups, which involves law enforcement training, forensics, and precursors; and the CASH (Central Asia and Southern Hub) to focus on money laundering in the overall region.

## Basic Solutions:

Rather than focusing on treatment and therapy to drugs, delegates should be sure to focus on drug trafficking itself. One essential problem involving drug trafficking, for example, is corruption. Delegates should focus on looking towards anti-corruption methods and measures, along with ways to ensure elections are fair, so the local government can't be controlled by the drug trafficking organizations, especially in blocs like Latin America and Africa. Perhaps delegates could look at previous examples, like the Participatory Anti-Corruption Initiative made by the Dominican Republic which gave public officials, civil society, private sector leaders, and other committed citizens the ability to take on powerful interest groups. By 2014, reforms in this area had lowered drug prices, improved medication quality and reduced public spending by 64 percent, so a similar, yet modified initiative could possibly be used to fight back against corruption by drug cartels. Another factor delegates should look at is money laundering. Money laundering is the disguising of the origin of money earned illegally. To be able to use the money they make from selling drugs, drug trafficking organizations need to employ money laundering tactics in order to make their money seem like it comes from a legitimate source. If a citizen of the United States, for example, is suddenly able to buy real estate, but they have no company or job on record that would allow for them to afford that real estate, the government will be suspicious, so criminals often create companies in order to make their earnings seem like they come from a legitimate source. Improving anti-money laundering efforts, then, could help with tracking down drug trafficking organizations by finding out which individuals are using money that doesn't seem to come from legitimate sources. Thought should also be given to the criminal justice aspect of the issue, and find methods actually prosecuting and holding drug traffickers responsible. Delegates should try to explore the different aspects and subtopics to the main overall topic that are mentioned and not mentioned to present a variety of solutions, tackling the issue at different sides.

## Questions to Consider:

1. How does drug trafficking affect your country? Are there many powerful drug trafficking organizations that deal in transporting? Is your country a major market for drugs? What has your country done to counter drug trafficking?
2. What type of border security can actually reduce trafficking rather than just make traffickers find another route that works just as fine as previous ones?
3. In what ways can countries cooperate together on this issue effectively? What has worked in the past in terms of partnerships?

4. How can countries make the drug trafficking business less profitable so as to disincentivize traffickers?
5. What can be done to ensure solutions are implemented properly without the solutions being corrupted and allowing drug trafficking to thrive?

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