



CCPCJ Chair Report

Topic 2: Preventing Transnational Organized Crime (drug and weapon smuggling across countries).



Chair: Connor Henrich
Deputy Chair: Claire Oh

Personal Statements

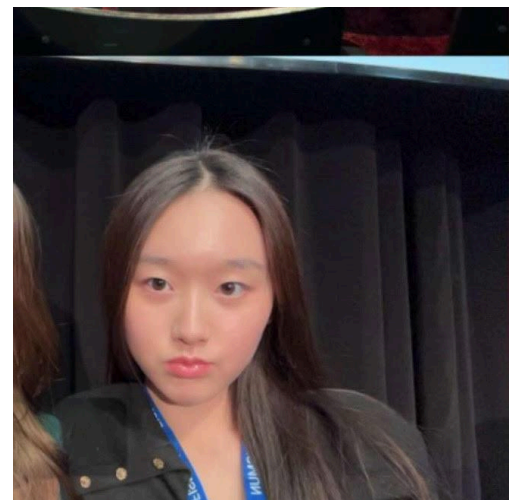
Chair – Connor Henrich

Honorable Delegates, my name is Connor Henrich and I'm 14 years old attending the International School of Stuttgart. This will be my 5th conference and I'm very excited to be the head chair for CCPCJ at this year's MUNISS. I hope to make this an enjoyable experience for all and I look forward to meeting all of you. Hopefully this report will be of good use. If you have any questions or concerns please don't hesitate to reach out connorj.henrich@gmail.com or henric27@issev.de



Deputy Chair - Claire Oh

Honorable Delegates, my name is Claire Oh, and I am a 16-year-old student attending Frankfurt International School. This is my 5th conference, and it is an honor to serve as your chair for CCPCJ at MUNISS 2024! I am eager to meet all of you and excited to engage in insightful debates together. If you have any preliminary questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to chaewon_oh@fis.edu



Introduction

Arms trafficking in the Americas is the illicit trade and sale of contraband such as arms, explosives and ammunition. Drug trafficking is the transnational trade, including the cultivation, manufacturing, distribution and sale of substances that oppose drug prohibition laws. These activities are connected with the numerous organized crime organizations that operate within the Americas. These illicit products are mostly sold for a profit, research suggests that annually these transactions amount to a total of 1 billion USD. Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs) often use violence to address rivalries, influence the behavior of the populace and oppose the government to address their actions. These activities are largely funded by other illegal actions such as corruption, shake downs and “protection” rackets. According to a 2017 report from Global Financial Integrity the network of transnational crime is valued at 1.7 to 2.2 trillion USD annually.

Glossary

Small arms are portable firearms designed for individual use, including handguns, rifles, sub-machine guns, and light machine guns. They are responsible for many injuries and deaths. The term "small arms" mainly refers to firearms made for personal use, excluding antique weapons manufactured before 1899.

A drug cartel is a criminal organization formed by independent drug lords collaborating to enhance profits and control the illegal drug trade. These cartels aim to dominate the supply of drugs and maintain high prices, commonly found in Latin American countries. They have a structured hierarchy including falcons, hitmen, lieutenants, and drug lords, each with specific roles like scouting, carrying out assassinations, and overseeing operations.

Transnational Organized Crime (TOCs) are illegal activities, conducted by groups or networks acting in concert, by engaging in violence, corruption or related activities in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or material benefit.



Issue explanation

Though Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) is considered a global issue the effects it has on local communities can be detrimental. When organized crime takes root in a community it can destabilize and undermine development in those areas. TOC groups often collaborate with local criminals which can increase the rate of corruption, extortion, racketeering and violence putting civilians at risk. In Central Americas 77% of all murders are committed with a firearm, the threat of firearm violence is constantly growing and the police force are being out-gunned by these criminals. In countries that have weak governments officials often allow TOC activity to thrive through bribery and corruption. TOC threatens America's economic stability as well as the global financial system. By disrupting the global supply chain it diminishes economic competitiveness and impacts the American's industry (Carlos.Gomezdelcampo, n.d.).

Drug trafficking has a significant impact on every country related, notably increased drug-related violence. Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) are the most at risk as drug trafficking weakens the rule of law which leads to more trafficking. Despite heavy government efforts most countries within the Americas are somehow involved with drug trafficking whether it's production, transport or importing. High risk drugs are cocaine, heroin and cannabis as well as amphetamine-type substances, specifically methamphetamine. Each type of drug has its own concerns and impacts on violence, street gangs, money laundering, corruption and other types of trafficking.

Drug cartels in South America have origins in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The United states passed heavy laws onto Mexican drug trafficking allowing Southern Americas to meet the demand of marijuana and cocaine. Colombia is capable of growing the coca plant, from which cocaine is made from and took control of this market. The crop was smuggled from Bolivia into Peru and refined and then moved into the United States. (*Rise of South American Drug Cartels*, n.d.) Bolivia produces an estimated 10,000 metric tons of cocaine annually, increasing during the 1990s and 2000s. (Gorman, 2022)



History of the Topic

In the early 1920s-1930s, the US faced an unexpected rise in crime, as the Italian mafia (Costa Nora) began to penetrate the American social fabric (Calcagni). In 1968, the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act defined organized crime as "the unlawful activities of the members of a highly organized, disciplined association engaged in supplying illegal goods and services, including but not limited to gambling, prostitution, loan sharking, narcotics, labor racketeering, and other unlawful activities of members of such organizations" (Office of Justice Programs). During this time organized crime was primarily a domestic concern. Starting in the 1970s, but accelerating in the early 1990s, a new form of organized crime took hold. The combination of a new geopolitical climate, a globalized economy and softer borders, and a revolution in information technology available to crime groups hastened a shift. Crime groups changed from domestic organized crime groups and hierarchically structured to criminal organizations that are global and transnational in nature, increasingly networked with other criminal groups, and often flatter in structure. The U.S. Department of Justice defines transnational organized crime in part as "self-perpetuating associations of individuals that operate internationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, monetary, and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, while protecting their activities through a pattern of corruption and/or violence, or while protecting their illegal activities through an international organizational structure and the exploitation of international commerce or communication mechanisms."

Nowadays Organized crime is no longer a domestic concern – it is an international problem. Today, crime groups manifest themselves in multiple countries simultaneously in order to leverage global criminal markets. Transnational organized crime is big business, and in 2009 it was estimated to generate \$870 billion - an amount equal to 1.5 percent of global GDP ("Transnational Organized Crime: Let's Put Them out of Business"). The forms of transnational organized crime range from money-laundering, counterfeiting, fraud, trafficking humans, weapons, drugs, and cyber crime. The groups and networks involved are fluid, and channels for trafficking one commodity are often used for others ("Transnational Organized Crime: A Threat to Global Public Goods.")



Involved Parties

Mexico

Mexican drug cartels, such as the Sinaloa Cartel, the Jalisco New Generation Cartel, and the Zetas, are major players in the drug trade. Mexico is a significant transit and production country for various drugs, including marijuana, cocaine, and methamphetamine. Mexican authorities have been handling a battle against drug cartels for more than a decade, but with limited success. There are both domestic and international forces that led to the cartel's growth; the cartels use a portion of their vast profits to pay off judges, officers, and politicians, and coerce officials into cooperating ("Mexico's Long War: Drugs, Crime, and the Cartels").

Colombia

Colombia has long been associated with cocaine production and trafficking. Various criminal groups, including the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN), have been involved in the drug trade. These groups were founded in the 1960s after a decade of political violence known as la Violencia (1948–58). Excluded from a power-sharing agreement that ended the fighting, communist guerrillas took up arms against the government ("Colombia's Civil Conflict"). The FARC was composed of militant communists and peasant self-defense groups, while the ELN's ranks were dominated by students, Catholic radicals, and left-wing intellectuals who hoped to replicate Fidel Castro's communist revolution ("Colombia's Civil Conflict"). The U.S. State Department has designated both groups as foreign terrorist organizations, but in 2016 the FARC officially transitioned from being an armed guerrilla group to a political party. These criminal groups have international importance as their criminal activities have contributed to the global drug trade and affected countries beyond Colombia's borders.



Any Previous Attempts

Transnational Criminal Organizations pose serious threats to public and national security across the Americas. The United States works with several federal agencies and partners to fight this web of organized crime. The United States Department of Defense (DoD) aims to counter transnational crime that threatens the stability of regions with the The Strategy to Combat Transnational Organized Crime was signed in the White House in 2011. This complements the U.S. Strategy for Central America, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) and Merida Initiative. Strengthening the security of Central America by detecting and monitoring illicit activities through United States Southern Command. (U.S. Southern Command, n.d.)

The United States Strategy for Central Americas is a bipartisan and multi year plan to promote reforms and acknowledge developing challenges. This strategy's mission is to protect citizens by addressing security, governance and economic motivations of illicit trafficking. By promoting economic growth, workforce development, education and training and regional integration for Central Americans hope to increase overall prosperity. By enhancing security to combat transnational criminal organizations fostering substance trafficking, gang violence and weapon smuggling. (*U.S. Strategy For Central America - United States Department of State, 2020*)

The Caribbean Security Initiative (CBSI) is a United States cooperation partner with 13 Caribbean countries including, Antigua, Barbuda, The Bahamas, Barbados, Dominica, the Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, Saint Lucia, Saint Kitts, Nevis, Saint Vincent, Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago. With CBSI the aim is to prevent illicit trafficking through transnational crime. (*Caribbean Basin Security Initiative - United States Department of State, 2023*)

Passed in 2008 the Merida Initiative is a partnership between the United States and Mexico to fight organized crime and violence while acknowledging human rights and the rule of law. The mission of this initiative is to support democratic institutions and to further efforts beyond the control of contraband but legitimate trade and transport. Courses for Mexican law enforcement to improve crime investigation and providing over 400 canine units to detect illicit substances, weapons, ammunition, explosives and currency to Mexican Federal agencies. (*Merida Initiative, n.d.*)



Media Contribution

Transnational Organized Crimes have captured the attention of both the national and international media, including newspapers and magazines to radio, television and the web. The coverage of violence partly depicts public safety and the challenges it faces in different countries. However, the media often report violence in a disproportionate manner, giving the impression that a certain country is violent to a larger extent. For example, during the past five years, the media in Mexico focused on covering public security news and stories, and among the events with the highest media impact in the period, most are related to the violence of the drug cartels (Gómez). Extensive media coverage can have effects such as instilling fear and paranoia among the people. The efficacy of media coverage in revealing details about transnational organizations depends on the legitimacy of the news sources.

Some media outlets prioritize sensationalism to attract attention, focusing on dramatic aspects of criminal activities. However, in-depth reporting will provide a more comprehensive understanding of the root causes, impacts, and responses to transnational organized crimes. This is important for nations as transnational crime threatens the state's national and regional security and rule of law, impedes its political and economic development, and limits the social and cultural development of its society (Bellamy). Transnational crime also results in economic harm not only to the nations but directly to the people. This harm is caused through decreased taxation revenues for the state and decreased rates of employment (Bellamy).



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