

# ***Background Guide***



**United Nations  
Office on Drugs and Crime**

***Agenda: "Strengthening criminal justice responses and international cooperation to address violence and exploitation of all forms against children, including crimes facilitated by information and communications technologies."***

**Chair- Pradyumna**

**Vice Chair- Drutil**

**Rapporteur- Jay**

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## **Letter from the Executive Board**

Greetings Delegates!

It is our great honour and pleasure to preside over you as the Executive Board of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at Silver Oaks Model United Nations 2025.

We understand that for a great number of you, this is your first MUN, and so as a result, you may be feeling apprehensive regarding what the experience will be like. This is completely normal and natural, and we assure you that over the course of these three days, you will get a feel for conferences and the dynamics of international politics.

This Background Guide exists to serve as a starting point for your research. Use this to get an idea of your committee and your agenda, and make sure you follow this up by diving further into the topics outlined in this Background Guide along with your own allocation's foreign policy, as well as whatever topics you feel are relevant to discuss in committee.

We look forward to all delegates bringing forth a high quality of debate through detailed research and rhetoric using the background guide.

# Guide to Research:

## About the Committee

The **Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ)** acts as the central United Nations body for creating policy on crime prevention and criminal justice. It was established in 1992 by one of the main organs of the UN, the **Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC)**, through its resolution 1992/1. As a functional commission of ECOSOC, the CCPCJ reports directly to it, playing a key role in the UN's broader social and economic mission. Its core mandate is to guide international action against national and transnational crime. It also has the critical job of monitoring the use and application of UN standards and norms in criminal justice. The Commission works very closely with the **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)**, which serves as the main implementing body for the policies and programs the CCPCJ develops. The work done in this committee will directly influence the priorities and actions of the UNODC on a global scale.

1. **Understand the Committee and Agenda:** In order to even qualify to step foot in the Committee as a delegate, the most basic requirement is for you to understand what your Committee and Agenda are about. This gives you an idea of the kinds of topics and solutions to be discussed in committee. To do this, the sources or information we'd recommend going through would include, but not be limited to:
  - a. The mandate and rules of the committee (usually mentioned in the document establishing the committee; in this case for the CCPCJ, ECOSOC resolution 1992/1 and paragraphs 23-26 of the annex of UNGA resolution 46/152) and the circumstances of its founding: This gives you an idea of what's normally discussed in the committee, so you can stop yourself from straying outside of the committee's mandate.
  - b. The history of the agenda; what problems have happened in recent history, how the Committee (or any other relevant international body) has addressed them, the parties involved, past documents or resolutions, etc.
  - c. The relevant legal instruments (documents, bodies, committees) to the agenda, and what they can or have done about the agenda.
2. **Understand foreign policy, and distinguish it from foreign relations:** In any discussion or solution, seeing as you are representing a certain allocation, it is imperative that everything you say should make sense coming from your allocation's mouth, so to speak. The set of solutions, ideas or principles that your allocation believes in and acts towards is referred to as your *foreign policy*. You are doing a good job as a delegate if you can get the rest of the committee in final solutions to adhere to your foreign policy. *Foreign relations*, however, is a different concept,

referring to the general diplomatic relations between two countries. Two delegates with tense foreign relations can agree on one topic, meaning that their foreign policies are the same on the matter. For example, while India and Pakistan are very well-known to have a great deal of animosity between them, they will readily agree with the majority of the international stage when it comes to climate change and environmental awareness.

3. **Make Solutions:** This is probably the biggest thing that distinguishes a mediocre delegate from a good delegate, and should be the most important part of your presence in committee. Mediocre delegates will spend their time on record talking about what their country believes in, or shading other delegates, essentially giving information anyone can find with a simple Google Search. Good delegates, however, provide substantive, creative solutions that if presented in an actual UN committee could be implemented and bring about change. Solutions are the thing that show good research the best, and you should spend most of your time discussing them, even on days 1 and 2.

**Good solutions are:**

- i. *Creative:* something that hasn't been done before; if it has already been done, why again? Can you improve or modify it instead?
- ii. *Practical:* something that can be done by the committee you're in (taking into account UN resources and the mandate), and something that can reasonably bring about real change
- iii. *Aligned with your Foreign Policy:* Would your allocation actually want this solution to be implemented? Ex: Would North Korea (DPRK) want to send UN Peacekeepers into its territory? Of course not.

4. **Make speeches:** Try to make your speeches solution-oriented, and focus on giving the committee more understanding, particularly of your allocation's point-of-view on the agenda. The end goal should be to be the delegate that shaped the most important and substantive debate on the agenda that leads to solutions.

**One more note:** Try to use UN sources for as much of your research as possible. If not UN sources, use either reputable NGO sources or government sources. If necessary, use news sources (credible ones would include Reuters or Al-Jazeera), but just know that in the UN, official UN, government, or UN-recognized NGO sources would hold the most merit.

## Introduction to the Agenda

The international community has recognized on several occasions that when it comes to any form of crime, children are by far the most vulnerable group. In a world that is now greatly dominated by the internet, young people have unprecedented access to this new frontier. While this brings immense benefits, it also gives rise to grave concerns. The existence of a nearly boundless communication space means that children can be incredibly vulnerable to harm from bad actors operating with anonymity and across borders. Cybercrime is a rapidly developing area of concern for all nations, and the fact that children are increasingly susceptible to this form of exploitation provides the international forum with a compelling reason to discuss and negotiate further advancements in tackling these challenges.

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## Background and Historical Context

The international effort to protect children from online harm has grown and adapted alongside the internet itself, beginning even before the digital age with the **1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC)**, which established the foundation for global child protection. Since then, the framework has expanded through key instruments such as the **UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/73/173 on “Strengthening international cooperation to combat sexual exploitation of children and child pornography”**, which emphasizes cross-border coordination and victim-centered approaches, and the **UNODC’s 2015 Model Law on Child Sexual Abuse Material**, which offers states a legislative template to criminalize offenses and harmonize national responses. Together, these initiatives reflect the international community’s ongoing efforts to adapt legal and policy tools to the evolving risks children face in the digital environment.

As the internet expanded through the 1990s, the new dangers it presented became clear. This led to the adoption in 2000 of the **Optional Protocol to the CRC (OPSC)**, which specifically targeted the sale of children, child prostitution, and child pornography. This was the first major international instrument designed to address the kind of exploitation that was starting to grow online. It was followed shortly after by the **2001 Budapest Convention**, the first international treaty on crimes committed via the internet, which created a much-needed framework for cooperation between law enforcement agencies across borders.

The rise of social media and smartphones in the mid-2000s changed everything, introducing new and widespread risks. Recognizing that existing laws weren’t enough, the Council of Europe again took a leading role and opened the **Lanzarote Convention** for signature in 2007. This was a groundbreaking treaty, as it was the first to require countries to specifically criminalize the online grooming of children.

In the years since, as technology has grown more complex with encrypted apps and the dark web, the international community’s focus has shifted toward strengthening partnerships.

Initiatives like the **WeProtect Global Alliance**, launched in 2014, have brought governments, tech companies, and civil society together to find shared solutions. This timeline shows a clear pattern: as technology creates new risks, the international community responds by developing new legal tools and cooperative frameworks. The work of this committee is the next chapter in this ongoing effort.

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## Key Areas of Debate

### The Effectiveness of Legal Frameworks

A significant number of legal treaties concerning child protection have been signed and put into force, with many member states having ratified them. The most important of these are the 1989 UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and its Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography (OPSC). Despite this, serious questions remain about the practical implementation of these international agreements. A central issue for the committee to address is the harmonization between domestic laws and international legal standards. Member states often face challenges in translating international commitments into effective national legislation, and this discussion is complicated by the fundamental question of national sovereignty, as states balance the need for international cooperation with the desire to maintain control over their own legal systems.

### Technological Advancements and Their Implications

Advancements in technology present a complex challenge, acting as a double-edged sword. On one hand, greater access to technology exposes children to evolving dangers such as AI-generated abuse material, exploitation in digital spaces like the metaverse, and disturbing trends on the dark web. Platforms such as “*Kidflix*” have circulated child sexual abuse material, while cases in the Philippines revealed live-streamed abuse of children for paying foreign audiences—showing how global demand and digital anonymity fuel exploitation. On the other hand, innovation in areas like artificial intelligence and data analysis also offers powerful tools for law enforcement to detect and combat cybercrime. The committee must therefore consider how to regulate and guide technological development to minimize risks for children while harnessing its benefits for their protection.

### Victim Support and Preventative Measures

A great deal of the international forum considers a victim-centered approach to be of paramount importance. However, the effectiveness of victim support systems varies greatly between nations. Many countries face significant barriers, including economic constraints and a lack of trained personnel, which create capacity-building issues. Beyond supporting those who have already been harmed, effective preventative measures are crucial. For instance, Europol’s “Stop Child Abuse – Trace an Object” campaign engages the public in identifying locations and objects from abuse material, while INTERPOL’s International Child Sexual Exploitation (ICSE) database helps investigators worldwide identify victims and offenders more quickly. Similarly, UNICEF runs digital literacy and child online protection programs in multiple regions, raising awareness among children, parents, and educators. Yet

even with such initiatives, issues of capacity and national sovereignty remain major barriers to effective implementation.

## **Case Studies:**

### **Operation Cumberland**

In February 2025, Europol launched Operation Cumberland, a major international crackdown on an online network distributing AI-generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM). Danish police led the investigation with support from agencies across Europe, the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, ultimately arresting 25 individuals. The network operated a subscription-style platform where users paid small fees to access content that was entirely produced using artificial intelligence.

Although no real children were directly involved in creating these images, the case exposed a dangerous legal gap. In many countries, child sexual abuse laws only cover photographs or recordings of actual minors. AI-generated or synthetic material often falls outside these definitions, creating a grey zone that criminals can exploit. As AI technology becomes more advanced and accessible, offenders can create convincing content that looks real but avoids prosecution under existing statutes.

This operation highlights several urgent challenges for governments and international organizations. Legislators must close legal loopholes to criminalize synthetic CSAM, while law-enforcement agencies need stronger AI tools to detect and track such content across borders. Platforms and servers often operate in multiple jurisdictions, complicating investigations and takedowns. At the same time, technology companies face growing pressure to rapidly identify and remove abusive AI content, making public-private cooperation essential in combating this emerging threat.

### **NCMEC CyberTipline and AI-generated Material**

In 2024, the National Center for Missing & Exploited Children (NCMEC) reported a sharp surge in AI-generated child exploitation content, with tips to its CyberTipline linked to generative AI rising over 1,300% from the previous year. This increase was driven largely by new reporting rules requiring tech companies to flag more cases of online enticement and abuse, revealing both the scale of the problem and the unpreparedness of existing criminal justice systems.

Law enforcement struggled to keep up with the volume and technical complexity of cases, causing delays in victim identification, rescues, and notifications. Meanwhile, the use of privacy-enhancing tools like end-to-end encryption complicated monitoring, raising debates over privacy versus child safety.



Families, advocacy groups, and rights organizations have expressed frustration, criticizing governments and corporations for inadequate transparency, disclosure, and victim support, particularly in cross-border cases. The rapid rise of AI-enabled exploitation has exposed significant gaps in law enforcement capacity, regulatory frameworks, and international coordination.

## **Operation Kidflix**

In 2025 April EUROPOL had led a multinational operation that dismantled 'Kidflix,' one of the largest global paedophile networks. The investigation was supported by Europol and led by the State Criminal Police of Bavaria and the Bavarian Central Office for the Prosecution of Cybercrime (ZCB). The network, active between April 2022 and March 2025, attracted over 1.8 million registered users and hosted around 72,000 illicit videos on its server, which was seized by German and Dutch authorities on 11 March 2025.

The operation led to the identification of nearly 1,400 suspects, 79 arrests, and the safeguarding of 39 children. The global response has been overwhelmingly supportive, with no credible reports of significant criticism or controversy.

This case represents a major milestone in the fight against online child sexual exploitation. It demonstrates how broad international coordination, combined with targeted cybercrime expertise, can dismantle massive networks operating across jurisdictions. The success of Operation Kidflix also sets a strong precedent for future multinational law enforcement operations aimed at tackling large-scale online abuse.

## **Operation Vibora**

An operation initiated by Spain in late 2024, when specialized officers carried out online patrols to identify instant messaging groups specifically about the circulation of child sexual exploitation images. In December 2024, INTERPOL invited Spanish investigators to Chile to attend the Latin America Victim Identification Task Force meeting. There, they presented Operation Vibora to specialized officers from across Latin America, allowing them to exchange cases, provide concrete leads and launch coordinated actions. The intelligence gathered during these exchanges laid the groundwork for follow-up investigations in early 2025, directly contributing to the arrests that followed.

In the span of 3 months from March to May of 2025 Spanish authorities arrested 7 suspects, including a healthcare worker and a teacher. The healthcare worker allegedly paid minors from Eastern Europe for explicit images, while the teacher is accused of possessing and sharing child sexual abuse material via various online platforms. To date, 68 additional suspects have been identified and further investigations are underway globally. Information gathered during the operation has been shared with law enforcement authorities in 28 countries in the Americas, Europe, Asia and Oceania.

Operation Vibora highlights both the growing use of instant messaging platforms for child exploitation and the importance of international cooperation in combating it. The operation has already led to arrests by the sharing of information with 28 countries. By combining early detection with coordinated global action, authorities can both safeguard children and prevent such networks from re-emerging.

**Note-** Another emerging area of concern is the use of children as “money mules” in crypto-related money laundering schemes, where minors are exploited to move illicit funds through digital assets. A recent article included in the bibliography offers a starting point for further research on this growing issue.

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