

Central American Parliament (Parlamento Centroamericano)

Thomas Jefferson Model United Nations Conference

TechMUN XXVI



High School Specialized Agency

Co-Chair: Otilia Danalache

Co-Chair: Andrew Kim

TechMUN || Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and
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A Word from Your Chairs

Hello Delegates!

We're both excited to see you all in April and we look forward to what you will accomplish over the span of committee. We understand that PARLACEN research may be difficult since many of their sources are in Spanish, and unfortunately there is not abundant information on all nations and their roles within the body. However, we hope the chosen topics will facilitate the process of preparation. We purposefully chose broader topics in order to invite your unique perspectives on the issues and spark meaningful cooperation toward specific solutions. Due to the nature of this committee, do not stress too heavily on your position's past role with PARLACEN, but rather, take your country's overall policies into consideration. We hope to see a weekend filled with innovative ideas and diplomatic discussions, and if you have any further questions- feel free to email us at parlacentechmun2018@gmail.com

Thanks,

Your Chairs- Otilia & Andrew



Topic 1: Drug Trafficking

Over the past decades, drug trafficking has persisted throughout Central America and has left behind devastating effects on the region and its inhabitants. Despite numerous existing efforts, the dangers of drug trafficking continue to threaten PARLACEN'S overall mission. Our body's objective is to be an "effective and democratic leader among the different regional actors that in the course of sustainable development shall contribute to the successive construction of the Central American – Dominican Union, and shape a modern and just society that stands in solidarity and warrants peace and respect for Human Rights." ^[1] It is up to you all as a committee to choose the direction PARLACEN moves in when addressing this topic, and the many problems that rise with it.

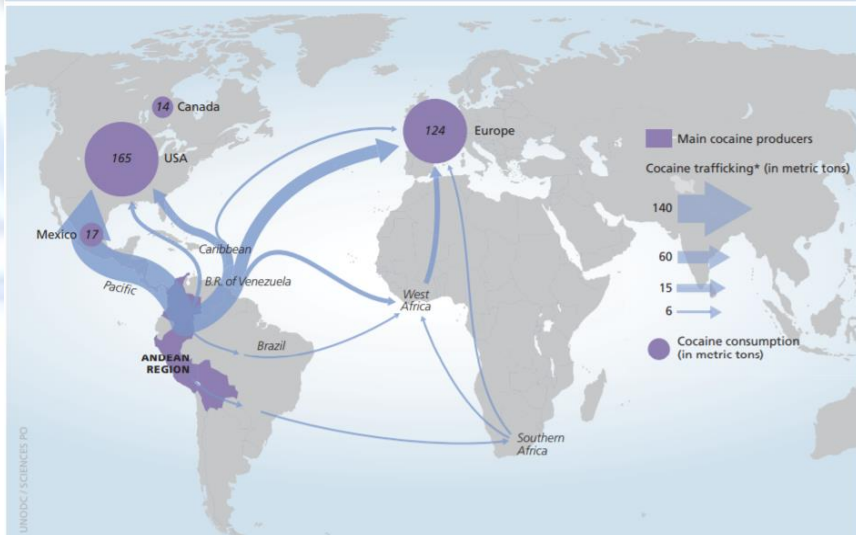
Currently, many Central American countries act as "transit areas" between heavy producers (such as Colombia and Mexico) and their final destinations. ^[2] The primary drug responsible in trade

throughout Central America is cocaine. Around 84% of illegal cocaine is estimated to reach the U.S. through passing Central America. ^[3] Honduras, for example, is geographically in between Venezuela and

Colombia. Boats and planes carrying cocaine shipments to the Mosquito Coast then take land routes through Mexico and end up in the US. Despite imposed legal action and consequences in

Map 6: Main global cocaine flows, 2008

Source: UNODC, World Drug Report 2009, and UNODC calculations, informed by US ONDCP, Cocaine Consumption Estimates Methodology, September 2008 (internal paper).

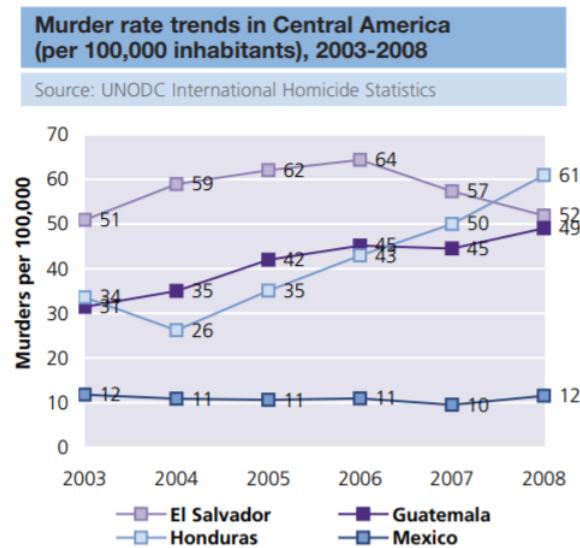




these regions, traffickers maintain control over their routes and have been known to bribe officials for protection. ^[4]

Ever since the decline of the US cocaine market, a rise in the European market has contributed to an increase of violence in the Caribbean. These changes in trafficking can destabilize existing drug-networks and ultimately result in wide-spread violence.

The UNODC cites the Northern Triangle (Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador) to be the most heavily affected by the market shift. Not only does this region have extremely high murder rates due to gang and drug related crimes, but also inflamed



violence across organized crime groups. Many drug cartels in neighboring regions are tied to Central American violence, which poses an additional difficulty when attempting to dismantle the groups. ^[5]

For decades, Central America has been a popular target for international drug trafficking organizations, and flow has continued to increase in the region. The Northern Triangle is still suffering from the civil wars in El Salvador (1980-1992) and Guatemala (1960-1996), seeing continued instability and unequal distribution of incomes. The threat of conflict grows as we begin to see an overall increase in violence throughout the uneasy nations. Not all of Central America, however, is equally affected by traffickers, as southern countries tend to experience significantly less direct violence. The issue is still of urgent concern for PARLACEN, as it is in our best interest to work cooperatively and collectively minimize the causes and impacts of drug

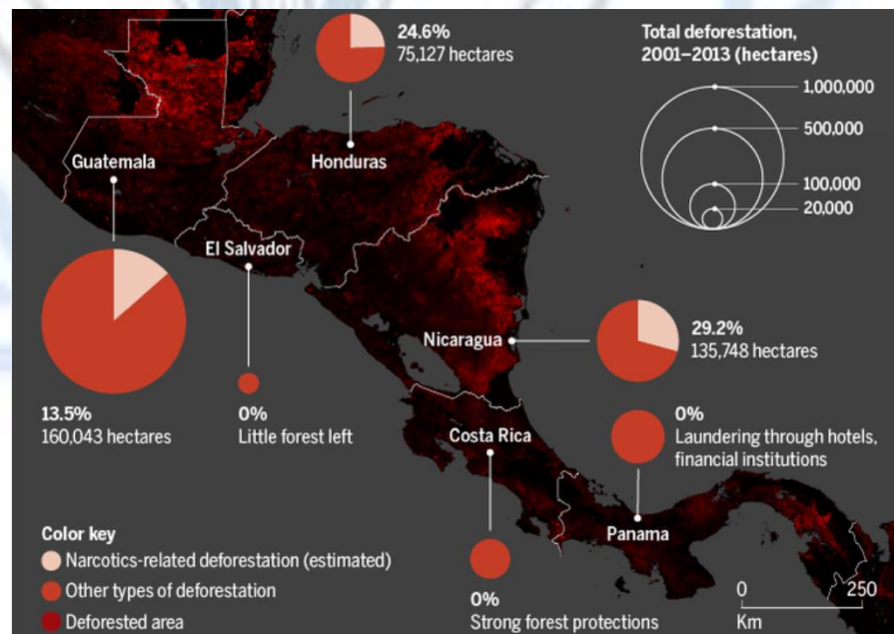


trafficking.^[5]

In addition to transferring shipments, production in Central America has also been surfacing in recent years, and corruption related to drug trafficking has gradually infiltrated Central American governments and businesses. Not only is the problem persisting, but it has also become extremely costly for law enforcement to enforce. The World Bank estimates that “dealing with crime and violence costs Central America around 8% of its GDP”, a heavy toll on our economies.^[3] It is essential that these factors are taken into consideration when moving forward with any solutions.

In addition to harming Central American economies, unity, and overall prosperity, drug trafficking is also having detrimental affects on Central American environments. Steven Sensie, an ecologist and researcher for the US Fish and Wildlife Service, has investigated the negative impacts of drug trade on biodiverse forests in Central America, and the people that live near them. The term “narco-

deforestation” refers to the over 1 million acres of forest, over the past decade, that has been destroyed because of drug money laundering through illegal agricultural enterprises.^[6] Recent



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findings suggest that cocaine trafficking accounts for between 15% and 30% of annual forest lost in Honduras, Guatemala, and Nicaragua, over the past decade. This decreases biodiversity



and displaces entire communities.^[7] Money from illegal drug trade, however, is not always neative for these indigenous communities. At times, traffickers can provide employment, resources, health benefits - or invest money into hotels and ecotourism. Some industries grow dependent on these illegal profits, making the issue increasingly challenge to tackle. ^[6]

Drug trafficking has become deeply rooted in many aspects of Central American economy and society, and it is time to reconsider past approaches and look toward new solutions for the war on drugs. It is necessary that we move forward with tangible action for the security of our nations, our people, and our legacy. It is our resonsibility to ensure that civillians across Central America no longer have to pay the price for previously weak policies. Heightened cooperation between members of PARLACEN, its obsevers, and other involved nations, is essential when combatting the multi-dimensional issue. It is our resonsibility, as a body, to protect our citizens and ensure a sustainable future for Central America, ultimately upholding the core values of PARLACEN.

Questions to Consider

1. How can we reduce Central America's role in the transit of drugs between producers and consumers?
2. How will we support local industries that are unknowingly dependent on drug money after we stop this inflow of profit?
3. What role does corruption play, and how can we minimize its presence at our borders?

Helpful Links

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/mexico-central-america-and-the-caribbean.html>

<http://www.coha.org/drug-trafficking-central-americas-dark-shadow/>

<http://www.parlacen.int/Portals/0/Language/English2016-18.pdf>

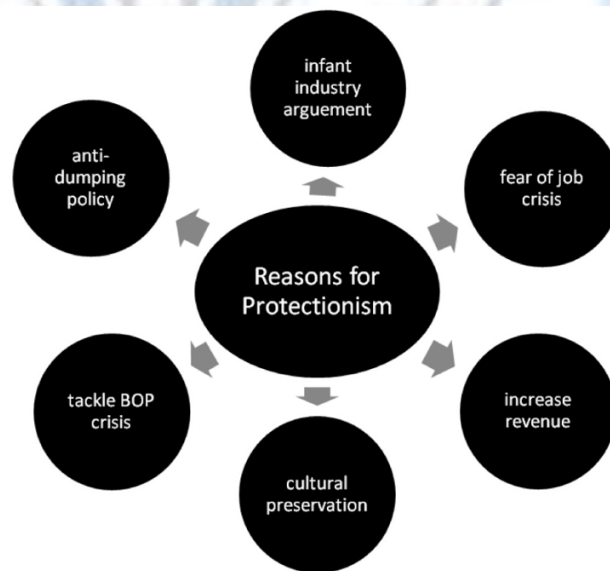


Topic 2: Economic Protectionism

Economic protectionism is the policy of protecting domestic industries against foreign competition by means of tariffs, subsidies, import quotas, or other restrictions or handicaps placed on the imports of foreign competitors.^[8] Historically, there have been five main reasons for implementing economic protectionism in a nation.^[9] The first is to protect domestic industry to give sectors time to learn and develop competitiveness with the international community.^[9] The second is for employment growth to prevent local job crises.^[9] This is often achieved by restricting foreign labor flow or creating multilateral agreements to compel industries to hire local labor.^[9] The third reason for economic protectionism is to counter unethical practices such as subsidizing export to finish competition and hostile takeovers.^[9] The fourth is to increase the internal revenue of a country where it may be difficult to collect international corporation taxes.^[9] The final reason is to preserve the native culture of the country, restricting foreign competition to limit the reach into a set of cultural commodities.^[9]

Since the late 19th century and post-independence years, the ratio of Central America's to developed countries' income,

including the United States, China, and Russia, per capita had declined from that of 40% of the countries' income to 16% in recent years. ^[10] In the 1930s, the head of the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (CEPAL), Raul Prebisch of Argentina, pushed for





increasingly protectionist policies as a way to encourage industrialization, leading to the “low degree of openness to international competition” Central American countries retain today.^[10] However, these policies, in particular the substitution of imports of consumer goods using high import tariffs, succeeded in invigorating the industrialization of these nations in a rapid and effective way.^[10] For the import substitution strategy to continue to be beneficial, modern economists argue that two conditions must be met: first, that the protectionist measures must be temporary and be reduced over time, and second, that only selected industries should be protected. To clarify, trade restrictions should be used to protect and encourage sectors with “strong forward and backward linkages” where the expansion of these industries would not only feed other economic sectors, but also force the industrialization of other industries by demanding large amounts of inputs and materials from them.^[10] Moreover, the industrialization directly fueled the growth of cities with the existence of high-paying jobs in the modern sector encouraging massive waves of migration of families from the countryside.^[10]

However, in today’s globalized economy it may not be viable to continue the use of protectionism ideology as it has been claimed to be an uncooperative model for diplomacy. Protectionism resembles the actions of businesses in their business interests and this “private - sector diplomacy” is not a sustainable or effective model in today’s connection-based society. However, completely open fair trade influences the political scene by increasing emigration from developing nations to developed nations. This makes developing nations dependent on finished goods from developed countries and gives no incentive to increase their own economic stability. The system that ensues has greatly hindered developing nations in the past while supporting the stability of established industry. This issue affects more the entire international community and needs immediate attention.



There are two major trade agreement coalitions in Central America, CAFTA and CACM.

CAFTA, or the Central American Free-Trade Agreement, is a partnership of Central America

with NAFTA, the North American Free-Trade Agreement. CACM, the Central American

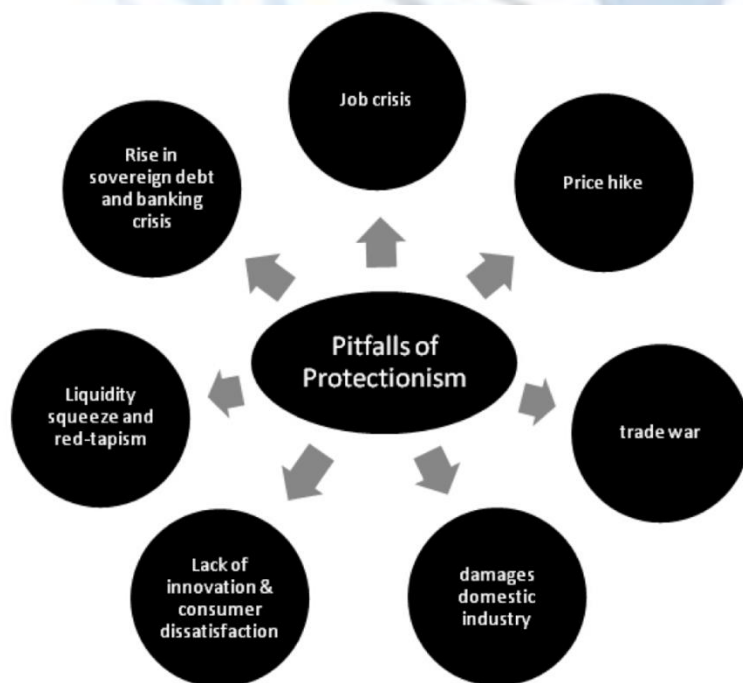
Common Market, is an independent market of trade between Central American countries.

Because of the economic differential within the CAFTA and other such trade agreements that

do not take financial and developmental status into consideration, the nations differing in

developmental statuses have suffered immense repercussions.

Moreover, economic protectionism has dangerous consequences with its prolonged usage. Protectionist legislation raises tariffs on imported goods and impose quotas on the amount of goods permitted to enter a country, raising the prices of these goods.^[11] Examples of this can be seen in the US where consumers pay six times the average international price for sugar due to trade restrictions.^[9] This itself could ironically create job crises that the legislation is fighting against as a result due to the reduction of purchasing power of money which leads to a



decrease of consumer spending

power.^[9] Economic

protectionism also makes it more

difficult for both citizens and

foreigners to travel across the

countries' borders because of

increased scrutiny for migration.^[9]

Another possible consequence is

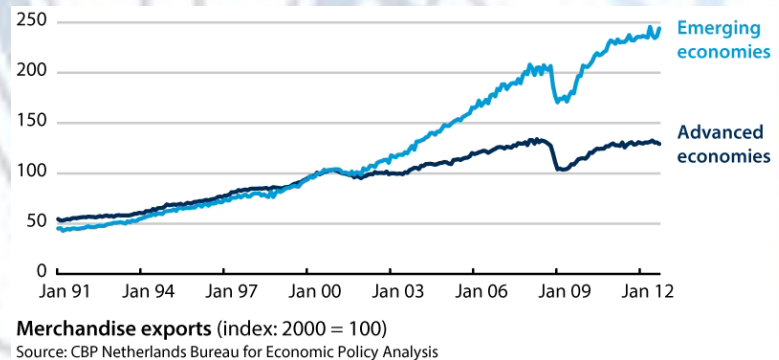
the increase of sovereign debt and

the collapse of the world banking



system. This can be caused with the lack of repayment of Eastern European and Developmental Banks to Western Bank.^[9]

Recently, international talks of “global protectionism” has surfaced to the replace the economic protectionism currently in place around the world.^[12] Moving beyond traditional trade protection, the international community claims that it will “encompass other forms of international business activity, such as foreign direct investment and offshore sourcing”.^[12] Furthermore, it is asserted that global protectionism’s geographical reach is broader than that of trade protectionism, manifesting in cross-border activity, and it will seek to reduce the pitfalls of economic protectionism by creating “selective policy interventions” targeted at international businesses to promote national welfare.^[12] Whether this is truly a step in the right direction or yet another rebranding of economic protectionism cannot be established at this time; however, it is up to the PARLACEN committee to further research and develop solutions that will be able to improve or solve the topic of economic protectionism.



Questions to Consider

1. How can we help Central America industrialize further without encountering the “pitfalls” of economic protectionism?
2. Can economic protectionism be revised to be a better option for implementation in the international community?
3. Is global protectionism a viable option for implementation?



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Position Paper Requirements

Overview

The Position Paper that delegates will be writing is a culmination of the most important pre-conference research that they have done, acting as a summary of research and the representative view of their state on the issues presented to their respective organ. Position Papers are due, in hard-copy format, before the first committee session on Friday. Any delegate without a Position Paper will be deemed ineligible for awards, so remember to bring a copy for collection, and a copy for personal use! Remember to not plagiarize any aspect of the paper -



our chairs and directors will be checking every paper for plagiarism and we expect a full MLA works cited for each. Failure to do so might result in delegate or school delegation disqualification!

Basic Structure

- Times New Roman, 12pt font, single spaced
- A cover page with delegate name, nation, council, school
 - Delegates can add additional details, including national flags, seals, or any symbolic edits to Model United Nations, to demonstrate thoughtful presentation and attention to details.
- One page per topic with titled sections: background, country policy and possible solutions
 - Background: This section should include an overview of the topic. What is the current situation, and what are the main nations affected? This should be the shortest section on the paper.
 - Country Policy: What past actions has your country taken to address the issue at hand? What does your nation think about the topic? This section should take up a majority of your paper, as delegates should remain representative of their country's view throughout committee
 - Possible Solutions: This should be the most interesting part of a delegate's position paper. Solutions should incorporate both research and creativity, with a focus on improving past actions conducted by their respective council. Feel free to come up with unique solutions to the dilemmas at hand which you plan to bring up during committee



- Complete MLA bibliography and in-text citations for all statistics and sources used

Helpful Hints

- Remember to avoid first person pronouns! Staying in character is always important at Model United Nations conferences!
- Always use the active voice!
- Avoid fancy language which can distract your chairs from the true meaning of your paper!
- Remember to remain formal when writing your position paper and try to show all the research that you have done for committee, as this is the first impression that your chairs will have of you!

