



UNODC

PACMUN 2016

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PACIFIC MODEL UNITED NATIONS

UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME

Dear Delegates,

I am thrilled to welcome you to the Pacific Model United Nations 2016's United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime! My name is Megan Munson, and I will be serving as your director. My first conference experience was in the UNODC of PACMUN 2015, and I can only hope that the thrilling topics that this committee is known for will allow you delegates to fall in love with Model UN as I did. Partaking in this committee is an absolute "bucket list" item for any MUN delegate, and I'm extremely pleased to be a part of your experience!

As a dais, we have selected two topics that we perceive as highly relevant and widespread in today's world of current affairs: the illicit opiate trade and migrant smuggling. These topics have continuing effects on countries' economies, politics, and citizens, and are relevant in practically every member state, therefore allowing every delegate to participate in debate.

The illicit opiate trade is a multifaceted issue that has been addressed in a variety of ways. From supervised injection sites to no-tolerance laws, this conflict has been tried and tried again, with minimal progress on a universal solution. As opiates become cheaper and more widespread, this topic becomes even more relevant as delegates must work to keep citizens safe from addiction and illness, while simultaneously maintaining economic stability for countries that are reliant upon the trade and production of opiates.

Similarly, migrant smuggling is a growing issue of human well-being. As violence continues in various places around the planet, more people are displaced. This displacement, combined with the blatant desire to leave warzones in favor of safer homes, results in immigrants paying migrant smugglers to bring them across the border. This trade is a violent one, as the smuggled are often abused or scammed on their ways to safer homes. The underground nature of the trade also makes it difficult for the United Nations to understand the scale of the trade and what needs to be done to counter it.

We have worked as hard as we can to provide as many resources for you as possible. This background guide is a great starting point that will hopefully set you in the right direction for further research. We hope that you find the information you need to structure thoughtful, intense debate - and don't be afraid to reach out via email or Facebook if you need some help finding square one!

It has been an honor to be assigned this position, and I can't wait to see you in committee!

Best regards,

Megan Munson

Director | United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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COMMITTEE INTRO

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is tasked with addressing the issues of international crime and illicit drugs. As a General Assembly subcommittee with more than 150 Member States, UNODC has advisory power, but cannot force actions upon sovereign nations. The UNODC's jurisdiction ranges from the black market organ trade to counterterrorism. In the past, the UNODC has prioritized combating the illicit trade of drugs and firearms, as well as topics such as wildlife crime and corruption. Established in 1997, the UNODC relies on the member states' cooperation in order to discuss and implement legislation to counter these global issues. Ninety percent of funds are appropriated by governments to UNODC voluntarily, providing a large sum of money to enact future programs.

Given member states' diversity and their various objectives, delegates can expect to foster cooperation in the midst of immense controversy. In-depth research and critical thinking will stimulate debate, so delegates will experience exciting, productive committee sessions!

TOPIC 1

THE ILLICIT OPIATE TRADE

TOPIC INTRO

The opiate industry is a steadily-growing field that increases instances of global crime, particularly when it comes to the smuggling and illicit production. Opium is an essential ingredient in the production of highly addictive and dangerous drugs such as morphine, codeine, and heroin. Legally used as pain medication in many states, this illicit trade has caused people all across the world to abuse opiates as narcotics, unbeknownst to the damaging effects drugs can have. Although the production and cultivation of opiates is concentrated in developing countries such as Afghanistan, India and parts of South America, this issue is one of global concern as increasing numbers of people die annually because of opiate-related events. However, seeing as many countries are financially dependent on the opium trade, prohibiting opiates has not provided a solution; delegates must explore alternatives to manage the trade and production of these illicit substances. Alternatives could include required production or trade licenses, or an increase in topic-based education, among other possibilities.

Although the discovery of opium first occurred in Ancient Mesopotamia, the industry as it is known today can be traced back to the Sino-British Opium Wars in the nineteenth century. The drug was first outlawed by China in 1799, and British merchants exploited the hoards of addicts by smuggling the narcotic into port cities, like Canton. The British pressured China into economic capitulations. Thus began the illicit industry, as throughout the nineteenth century, opiates were simultaneously

developed for recreational use and outlawed in various cities and regions across the world. It was not until the early twentieth century that the dangers of heroin and morphine, particularly the drugs' addictive qualities, were recognized. The acceptance of opium as a possibly harmful substance led directly to the ban of opiates in the United States and an overall mass disapproval of its usage. However, the bans on the drugs exposed citizens' addictions further, and black markets were established almost immediately, fueled by countries who had previously benefited from the steady opium market. Since the creation of these markets and their growth to an international scale, the popularity and ease of access to opiates have not yet subsided.

For millennia, opium has been one of the most underrepresented yet deadly drugs. It is the most addictive substance known to man, and a bag of heroin, one of its derivatives, is even cheaper than a pack of cigarettes. The adverse economic, social and political effects can be observed today in the prescription-drug abuse industry, where many of the narcotics in circulation are opiates. Due to the massive influence of the industry, traversing through legal, illegal and medicinal markets, the opioid epidemic is immensely widespread, and the accessibility of opiates solidify how vital it is for UNODC to provide a solution.

HISTORY

Opium has been recognized for its stimulating abilities since 3400 B.C., when it was first cultivated in ancient Mesopotamia. First regarded as the 'joy plant,' opium was being used medicinally by 460 B.C. Opiates are pain-relieving medicines containing opium, such as morphine and oxycodone. However, even prior to the recognition of opiates in the pharmaceutical industry, opium was a major ingredient in recreational narcotics. Due to their pain-relieving or sleep-inducing abilities, opiates became widely popular in Asia and Europe.

After the British East India Company established a monopoly on opium in 1793, China was the first nation to outlaw all forms of opium in 1799. By 1805, Americans such as Charles Cabot, John Cushing, and John Jacob Adams began purchasing opium from Britain and smuggling it into China. After its loss in the first Opium War, China legalized opium again. Research and popularity on opiates, particularly morphine, grew substantially. In 1874, heroin was discovered. Smoking opium was partially banned in San Francisco, and between then and 1890, both the United States and the United Kingdom made attempts to mollify citizens' use of opiates as harmful side effects such as morphine addiction became apparent. Heroin was popularized as a means by which citizens could reduce morphine use, but heroin was quickly found to be equally addictive and harmful. By 1910, Britain, China, India, and the United States had made further movements to decrease their involvement in the opium trade, the US having banned imports entirely.

The opium black market, as recognized today, was started in New York City in the 1920s, just over a decade after the United States banned the importation of opium. Opium, particularly in the form of heroin, was purchased from China, who shipped it to the black market dealers working in New York. Since the creation of this black market, trade has become more organized even as countries seize shipments of heroin and other opiates.

Many efforts have been made to counter the spread of opiates, often targeting the poppy plants themselves. In 1978, United States and Mexican governments sprayed fields with an herbicide called Agent Orange. This operation was a success, and the opiate market between Mexico and the United States subsided temporarily. The United States took action again in 1984, as they decided that the crop substitution programs implemented for growers in developing countries were ineffective.

Since its discovery, opium has had massive recognition but with a reputation that only worsened as the substance proves to be harmful. Many countries have moved from the issue of stopping the trade completely to the idea of simply providing aid, in the form of safe injection sites and healthcare, to citizens who have already found themselves addicted to the substance. Despite this recognition, a globally-applicable, successful resolution has not yet been found.

PAST UN ACTION

Due to widespread drug circulation and the vastness of the opiate trade, the UNODC has taken extensive measures regarding its prevention. However, the illicit opioid trade still flourishes due to the advancements in technology and increased connectivity. Many treaties have not been adapted to the dynamic standards required for drug prevention.

There are two major bodies responsible for establishing drug-trafficking measures and the prevention of drug abuse: the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the International Narcotics Board. In 1946, Resolution 9(1) of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) was passed, establishing the CND. The CND developed into a permanent, governing body in 1991 with support from the General Assembly. It is composed of fifty-three Member States, elected every four years by the ECOSOC. There are two primary functions to this commission: the normative and operative. They work separately, with its normative department creating drug-trafficking-based resolutions. The operational section ensures the enforcement of the legislature and initiatives. The CND has control over all drug-related crime involving the UN - this is reaffirmed in the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation Towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem of 2009. The plan covers reducing drug abuse, the supply of illicit drugs and the prevention of money laundering, as the money used for the drug trade is generally illegal.

The secondary governing organ of UN-sponsored drug prevention is the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). It is composed of thirteen members, also elected by the ECOSOC for five years per term. The Board supervises all countries compliant to global drug control treaties. The INCB collects data from the Member States through the Annual Reports Questionnaires (ARQ), a comprehensive review of a Member State's status. Much of the global data about the illicit drug trade comes from the INCB and the ARQs. The annual UNODC World Drug Report serves as a helpful resource for understanding the overall distribution and usage of drugs worldwide. The massive amount of empirical data from regional bodies has been compiled by the Statistics branch of the UNODC, and is available as an online tool and resource used for measuring multiple variables in the illicit opiate trade.

The UNODC has a variety of resources regarding the prevention of substance abuse, in hopes of rendering the global drug trade defunct. Established in 2003, the Paris Pact Initiative (PPI) is the foremost coalition challenged with combatting the global flow of opiates in central Asia. The PPI recognizes both central Asia and southeastern Europe as high priority zones due to their increased production and distribution of illicit drugs. However, the most significant area for opiates is Afghanistan - most opiates today originate from the country - and is also a huge distribution center due to its central geographic position. Also in 2003, the Container Control Programme (CCP) was implemented to combat the smuggling of illicit drugs globally. Project GLO-KO1 was initiated to prevent drug abuse, the transmission of HIV and reduce crime in low-income families worldwide. The program is taught weekly and maintains the same standards globally. It is active in southeastern Europe, central Asia and Latin America. The prevention guides can be accessed on the official website. The UN also provides a plethora of guides to treat and shelter former drug-users. In addition, recently after the Millennium Development Goals were updated to become more modern into the Sustainable Development Goals, the CND released a proposed agenda to support these standards set forth by the UN as a part of their fifty-ninth session.

There are three major international drug treaties currently ensuring the availability of licit narcotics and preventing the accessibility to illicit narcotics. The oldest treaty, established in 1961 and amended in 1972, is the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs; the second is the Convention on Psychotropic Substances, another subtype of drugs unrelated to opiates; the third is the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. The treaties were created to supplement each other accordingly and provide universal standards for the prevention of drug abuse and trafficking.

CURRENT SITUATION

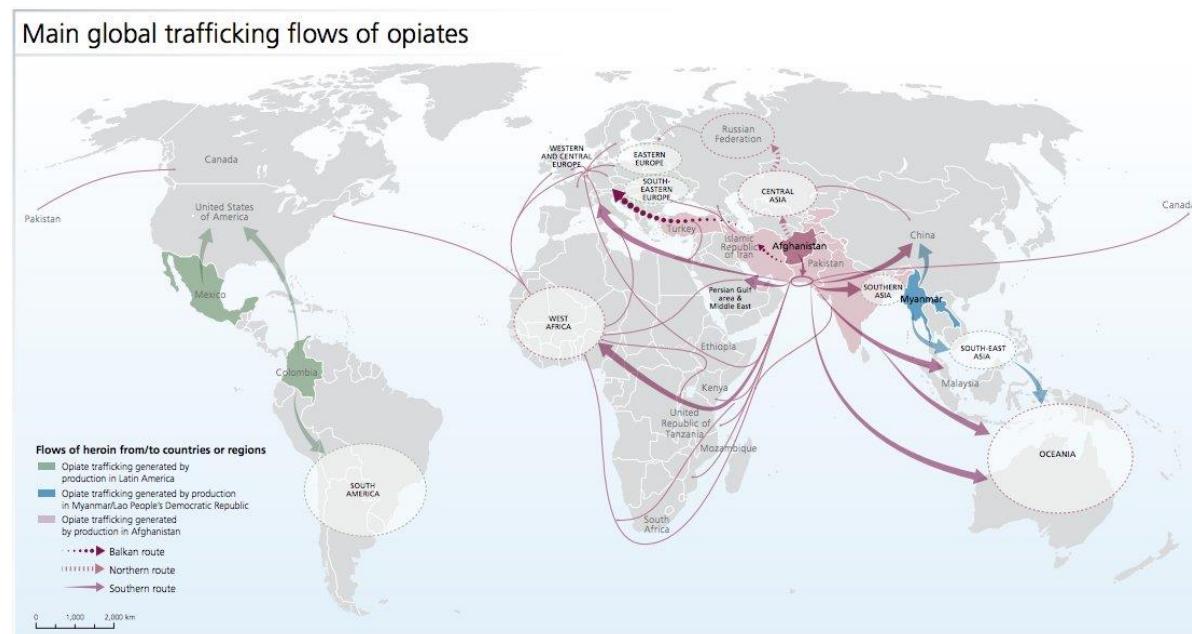
Today, the opiate trade still has a dominant presence in the world. In Afghanistan, a recent spike in opium usage torments its dynamic role in the economy.

However, there has been a thirty-eight percent drop in opium production. Many people are dependent on opium in a variety of ways, either as peddlers, users, or producers. Afghanistan remains a major producer in the world's opium economy.

In North America, users of the drug and its variants tend to be in the upper or high classes, signifying the amount of money required to sustain a long-term addiction. Additionally, heroin users and heroin-related deaths have increased in the past decade. In the United States, the users tend to be younger, 18-25, and generally use illegally obtained prescription drugs. While North America has seen a drop in usage, Europe does not have major long-term inconsistencies in usage.

The availability of opium, however, has become much more widespread in terms of scale; now, a seller in Afghanistan can personally contact potential buyers via the "darknet"—the Internet's black market, chock-full of illicit activity and a true symbol of global connectivity. Resources such as the darknet make it easier for anyone to access these drugs, even without access to the global shipping routes. These routes, most notably in Europe, cross between producers and consumers. For example, the Balkan route, beginning in Afghanistan and running through Turkey, is the most effective way of sending drugs from major producers to all consumers in Europe, in a series of branches across the continent.

Overall, the global opium trade has grown in scale albeit in a non-traditional fashion. Access to multiple markets globally through illegal networks such as dark net has confirmed its position as a prominent drug. Heroin, a derivative of opium, is considered to be one of the most addictive substances in the world.



BLOC POSITIONS

PRODUCERS: COLOMBIA, GOLDEN CRESCENT, GOLDEN TRIANGLE, MEXICO

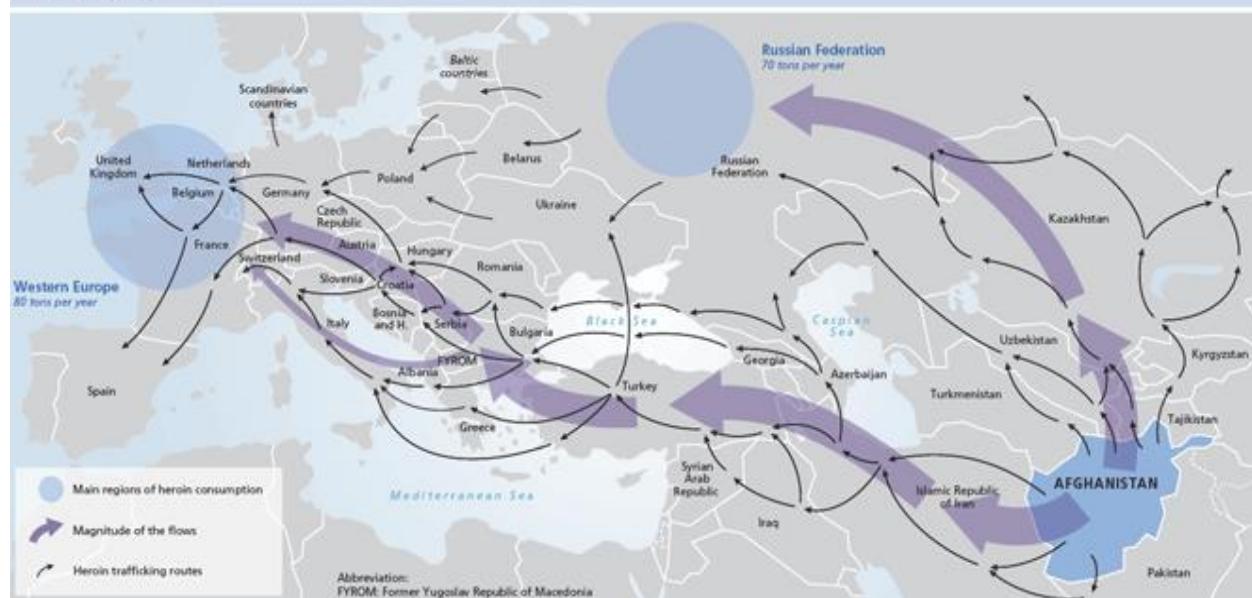
Producers are the manufacturers of opiates that eventually end up in the black market trade; however, producers are rarely directly involved in the distribution of any opiates. Afghanistan, the world's largest opium producer, experiences common repercussions such as addiction due to opium production. Mexico experiences similar issues due to its production. Exceptional production also occurs in Southeast Asia's Golden Triangle: Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand, despite harsh laws on all drug production, transport, and usage.

TRAFFICKERS: AFRICA, ASIA, OCEANIA

Although opiates are often distributed directly from producers to consumers, some countries are caught in between as transporters of opiates. Opiates travel through these countries from producers to consumers. One of these countries, for example, is Poland. Poland, along with many other Central and Western European countries, is on a branch of the Balkan transport route. This route begins in Turkey and divides into three branches, effectively traversing across Europe and spreading opiates across the continent. Most other European countries are stuck in a similar route, effectively ruling most European countries opiate traffickers.

Map 3: The Northern and Balkan routes

Source: UNODC



CONSUMERS: NORTHERN EUROPE, OCEANIA, UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In developed countries, opiates are often used medicinally and sold as prescription drugs, which, through the hands of black market dealers, end up in the international trade. These countries tend to be the most aware of the issue, as they have the opportunities and research to counter the trade. For instance, in the United States, all forms of opiates are illegal - and yet, the US has seen a much more dramatic opiate epidemic than its North American counterparts. This pattern is continued in both West and Central Europe, where 28 billion dollars trafficked annually through the Balkans has hardly reduced despite increased security and seizures.

CASE STUDIES

THE UNITED KINGDOM

The primary importers of opiates tend to be wealthy, developed countries. As the country with the fourth largest wealth per capita in 2015, the United Kingdom is a prime example. Containing almost one percent of the opium in the world, the United Kingdom is one of the biggest purchasers of opiates off of the black market, as reported by UNODC studies on the presence of opiates in various countries.

Heroin in particular has been a notable issue in the UK for many decades. In the 1990s, heroin abuse reached a new high when it was reported that 350,000 people were using it. This misuse occurred despite the strict upkeep of the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971, which defined heroin as a Class A drug: the most dangerous group. Possession of a Class A drug can result in a minimum of seven years in jail, while dispersion grants a lifetime behind bars. Although these laws were in place, the widespread use of heroin in the United Kingdom continued, falling temporarily until another spike in abuse occurred in 2014.

Morphine is another prevalent drug in the UK. Although, similarly to heroin, it is a Class A drug, it can be used medicinally. Morphine can be obtained with a permit, but the sentences for owning and supplying morphine without doctoral permissions are identical to the sentences for owning and supplying heroin.

Despite its laws against these substances, the United Kingdom continues to struggle with the drugs illegally present in its country. This may be due to the continuing use of opiates medicinally. Opiates such as morphine are used as painkillers in extreme situations, and they're especially effective and inexpensive. When taken as doctors instruct, in minimal, prescribed amounts, morphine addiction can be avoided. However, addiction is quite common with excessive use, and withdrawal tends to be an issue when morphine use is stopped too suddenly. Despite these dangerous side effects, British doctors continue to prescribe the drugs, and

opium fields have been established in English countrysides in order to grow the production of these drugs.

Although the pharmaceutical industry is, no doubt, a source of some opiates, between 2007 and 2012, 60% of drug-related deaths involved people who hadn't been treated with opiates. Because the only way for opiates to be legally obtained is with medical permission, it becomes clear that some sort of black market is an issue in the UK. With the knowledge of the limited production of opium in the United Kingdom, the involvement of an internationally-scaled drug trade seems the only explanation.

The presence of opiates in medicine is a cheap, effective way to provide painkillers, but, as shown in the United Kingdom, it may be leading directly to the abuse of these drugs or their existence in the black market. In countries that can afford to import opiates, this is particularly prevalent; no degree of financial stability alone can completely diminish the presence of opiates in a country.

AFGHANISTAN

As one of the primary producers of opiates, it must be emphasized how singlehandedly Afghanistan maintains the majority of the world's supply of opiates. A heady 85% of the global market for opiates such as heroin originates in Afghanistan. Therefore, it is of utmost importance for local authorities, rather than foreign establishments, to recognize the enormity of opiate production.

Afghanistan is a unique country to profile. World organizations monitor the region rigorously, and while some critics say it is past the point of no return, the UNODC thinks otherwise. The UN believes by providing alternative methods of income to poverty-stricken agriculturists and, literally, nipping opium production at the bud, drastic results will be observed. Mainly due to the lack of control over the multitude of poppy growers and the economic benefits from poppy-farming, the trade has been flourishing since the Soviet reign of Afghanistan.

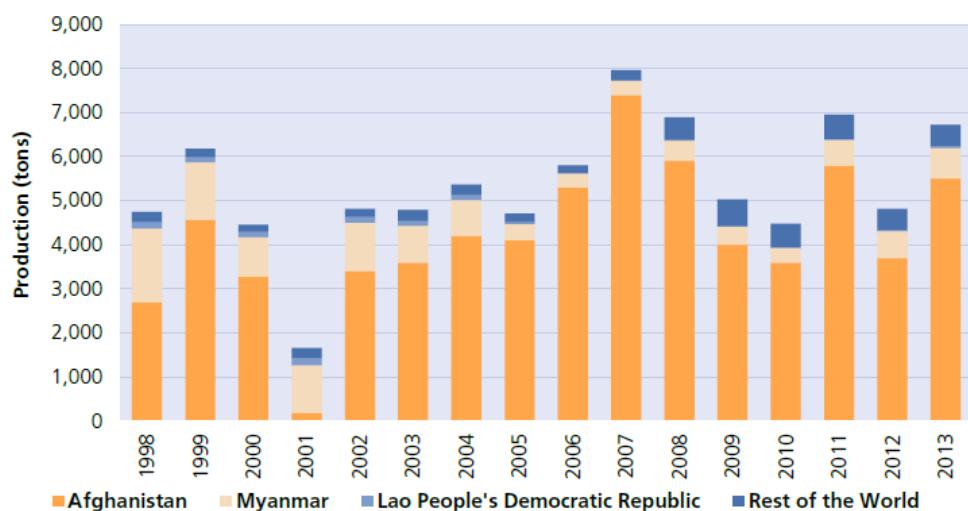
While the opiate trade economically benefits the Afghan community, there are many risks as well. The major health-related issues are becoming a growing concern for individuals and families. The market fluctuations do not allow the trade to be a healthy source of income for any farmer, and the deals are done on a case-by-case business. This is also ignoring the risk of possible addiction or prison time if caught. Farmers involved in the trade generally do not have an alternate source of income, and the lack of opportunity in post-Taliban Afghanistan has led to a regressive economy. Repeatedly, the United Nations has promoted alternate crops in Afghanistan, however the overall profitability of the drug trade has stunted any progress.

The consequences of the opiate trade, however, cannot be absorbed by the country. Creating a cycle of drug-dependant farmers is the country's worst nightmare. There has been a significant drop in opium production. Since the Afghan royal family supported opium production and reaped the economic benefits, there was substantial

amount of land allotted to poppy-farming. However, the land was mainly under the control of the royal family. Additionally, due to negligence and corruption, local religious authorities turn a blind eye to poppy-farmers once they have paid their taxes or ushr.

The expanse of opiate abuse is greater than ever in Afghanistan. More farmers are dependent on its success for sustenance and many Afghans are becoming more addicted to opium. The global market for opium depends on Afghanistan as its primary producer. As depicted in the graph below, if opium production ceases in Afghanistan, it becomes much more manageable to eradicate. While the refineries are generally in Eastern Europe, the drug still rampages the country.

Fig. 16. Global potential opium production, 1998-2013



Source: 1997-2002: UNODC; since 2003: National Illicit Crop Monitoring System supported by UNODC.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How might the cessation of opium production impact the countries dependent on it?
- In what ways could UNODC aid current opiate addicts?
- What factors continue to dominate the opiate trade throughout its history?
- How does the UN effectively combat drugs around the world?
- Does eradicating one element of the opiate trade, such as production, successfully resolve all opiate-related issues?

FURTHER READING

- The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's official website, outlining its purposes and programs.
<http://www.unodc.org/>
- Provides an overview of UNODC's relationship with drug trafficking and provides maps that summarize the global flow of illicit drugs.
<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/index.html?ref=menuaside>
- Explains the process that occurs between the growth and harvest of poppy and the distribution of opiates.
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heroin/transform/>

TOPIC 2

MIGRANT SMUGGLING

TOPIC INTRO

Migrant smuggling is an international enterprise. As contrasted with human trafficking, smugglers are paid by the asylees, refugees and laborers to take them across the borders. Simply, migrants are willingly crossing international borders. This is caused by a growing demand for work and a low supply of jobs in each migrant's respective country. It is far easier to smuggle migrants over land and water barriers, so smugglers tend to be based in border or coastal towns. Due to the underground nature of the crime, it is difficult to determine exact numbers when it comes to persons smuggled; however, it is estimated that most countries are involved. As the business becomes more profitable, not only do more people become involved, but an increase in the organization of the crime becomes more evident. Many migrant smugglers mistreat their passengers after payment, and utilize complex, advanced systems, therefore exploiting weak border security. Delegates are urged to consider the involvement of identification or visas and alternatives, along with the overarching security of countries' governments and borders, to counter document fraud, which is a major constituent in migrant smuggling. Although it is difficult to determine exactly when migrant smuggling became such a popular, lucrative trade, it is clear that the smuggling is rapidly growing.

Seeing as migrants opt into the business of migrant smuggling, the issue may not stem simply from the abusive smugglers; in fact, delegates are urged to explore why migrants would be willing to enter such a painful process in order to leave their countries. Be it corrupt systems or officials, lack of basic human rights, or the overarching inability to survive under a government's regime, all migrants have reason to illegally leave their countries, and addressing these reasons is the only way to cut off the business at its source.

HISTORY

Migration has been a consistent variable throughout human history. Historically, when population density rose or land became scarce, individuals would relocate. Six thousand years ago, the spread of developed agriculture led to more rigid systems of ownership and social hierarchies. As early societies transitioned into nation-states, the phenomenon of migration was restricted. State authorities policed the newly-fixed frontiers, securing their claims of sovereignty on the basis of national systems of law. During the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the state system consolidated. Regardless, large masses of people continued to relocate in the search of improvement and opportunity: from Ireland and Central Europe to North America, from Italy and Eastern Europe to South America, from Britain's colonial states in Asia to Southern and Eastern Africa. The allure of migration has been present throughout history, inevitably leading to the unlawful smuggling of migrants.

Migrant smuggling is not a new event on the world stage. It is virtually impossible to pinpoint an exact date of origin of this epidemic, as it has been an ongoing phenomenon throughout history. Old traditions of colonialism and capitalism have defined humans as interchangeable goods, inevitably paving the way for exploitation of migrants. Because of the illicit nature of migrant smuggling, there is a lack of data regarding the historic numbers of migrants who have been smuggled. Throughout history, however, the overall trends, methods, and perceptions of migrant smuggling have shifted. The prominence of this issue has become more pronounced in the past two decades, as a result of increased media and political attention. The criminal networks of migrant smuggling have also grown in complexity and ability, thanks to improved technology.

Perceptions of migrant smuggling have shifted alongside contemporary global cultures. The formal conceptualization of smuggling as a migration business was originally developed by John Salt and Jeremy Stein in 1997. That being said, references to this theory can be found in earlier literature. This conceptual model has dominated contemporary views of migrant smuggling as a lucrative business operation. Recently, academic views of migrant smuggling have begun to incorporate the role of family members and social networks. These perceptions place a greater emphasis on the altruistic smugglers, in addition to the profit-seeking smugglers.

PAST UN ACTION

As migrant smuggling is a relatively new manifestation of human trafficking, it has taken a few years to recognize this as a separate problem. Currently, the UN has established The Global Action Against Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants (GLO) Act to take place from 2015 to 2019. The act calls upon countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Morocco, Pakistan and eleven others to effectively deal with counter-trafficking and counter-smuggling. The GLO Act also works with officials to make sure that their responses to these actions meet international standards.

Resolution 54/212 was passed by the General Assembly in 1999. This urged UN member states to assess the reasons for migrant smuggling, particularly poverty, in order to recognize why the business exists at all. It also called heavily for cooperation between all member states on the issue. Although this resolution acknowledged the presence of the issue, it didn't necessarily provide plans to solve the problem as a whole.

In 2000, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime recognized the issue of migrant smuggling in the Protocol of the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air. This resolution calls for the criminalization of anyone involved in the conflict, migrants and smugglers alike. The resolution also provides a focus on keeping migrants safe, as the business tends to be extremely unsafe and smugglers often prove to be abusive. Under the protocol, UNODC has two major areas of focus: encouraging member states to adopt new legislation in order to work with the protocol, and helping them establish criminal justice systems in order to prevent the continuation of migrant smuggling.

UNODC has also made attempts to research and understand the process of migrant smuggling. A notable example of this research is the Toolkit to Combat Smuggling of Migrants. The Toolkit essentially summarizes migrant smuggling and the issues that Member States may encounter when attempting to counter the issue. It aims to help nations implement the Protocol of the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air by explaining various aspects of the issue's resolution, such as law enforcement and prevention. It also provides basic definitions of migration, in order to provide a deeper understanding of the topic as a whole.

Although UNODC has offered some solutions on the topic of migrant smuggling, it is clear that the issue has not yet been resolved. Delegates will need to call on more innovative solutions, recognizing that retribution has already been addressed to a certain degree, in order to effectively resolve this conflict.

CURRENT SITUATION

As a newer illicit activity, there are multiple perspectives on migrant smuggling. In the United States, South Americans have been illegally crossing the border for

better prospects. Many of these migrants have become naturalized citizens and have led relatively normal lives. Illegal migrants in America occupy unsavory jobs as fast-food workers and blue-collar workers. In Europe, the dilemma stems from violence in bordering Asian countries, such as Syria, Afghanistan, and Ukraine. Due to the United Kingdom's recent exit from the European Union (EU), or Brexit as it is more commonly known, the EU struggles to accommodate more than a million displaced migrants. The journey is perilous and does not guarantee asylum, yet millions have made the voyage to escape political or religious persecution. The border European countries, like Hungary, are more likely to receive migrants. However due to the EU's laws about migrants, they may be dispersed as seen fit. Finally, many South Asians migrate to Middle Eastern countries for work. Generally, foreign-born workers in the United Arab Emirates serve often undesirable positions as peons, janitors or construction workers, yet compose of 85% of the population. The issue of migrant smuggling stems from the need of many people for new economically reliable and safe beginnings, making the difficulty of migrant smuggling multifaceted, as the reasons for migration themselves need to be addressed.

BLOC POSITIONS

MIGRANTS: SOUTH AMERICA, CENTRAL AMERICA

Most notably in the cases of Central and South America, migrants flee from wars and drug cartels within their nation of origin. These issues can make living in these countries dangerous, and migrants often seek safer, wealthier countries to move to in their state of desperation. High poverty levels are also a catalysts for this issue. For example, Latin Americans leave their countries because the gap between poverty and wealth is nearly impossible to bridge. Due to the lack of economic opportunities, and possibly dangerous conditions, migrants often leave these regions in search of safer, more prosperous destinations.

EXPORTERS: MIDDLE EAST, AFRICA

Countries don't typically admit to having groups of migrant smugglers working within them. However, exporters are found where they are needed: anywhere migrants have a desire to flee from. The Middle East is a relevant example of this, as so many migrants wish to leave due to the violence around them. Migrant smugglers in the region capitalize on this. Migrant smugglers are often also found in North African countries, possibly due to the European Union's projection of border controls onto North African countries lining the Mediterranean.

ABSORBERS: NORTH AMERICA, EUROPE

Absorbers are typically wealthy, stable countries in which migrants can live safely. The United States absorbs significant amounts of immigrants from Mexico, Central America, and South America due to its economic opportunities and relatively safe environment. Wealthy countries of the European Union are in similar situations as they absorb migrants as well, particularly from the Middle East. The acceptance of illegal immigrants varies from country to country, and the allowance of migrants into these wealthy countries is a highly-debated topic.

CASE STUDIES

TURKEY AND GREECE/EU

According to a recent Europol report, migrant smuggling became the fastest-growing criminal market in Europe last year. The lucrative business is estimated to yield profits anywhere from 3 billion euros to 6 billion euros annually. This phenomenon has been exacerbated by Middle Eastern conflicts such as the Syrian Civil War.

Recent Middle Eastern unrest has prompted a mass migration movement comparable in magnitude to the widespread immigration following World War II. European nations have struggled to receive the sudden influx of refugees, commonly citing strained resources as a reason to close their borders. As a result, many Middle Eastern immigrants are caught in flux, stranded in layover nations such as Turkey and Greece. In the midst of desperation, these immigrants are commonly willing to pay fortunes in exchange for illegal passage into northern European nations.

Increased demand has allowed smugglers to extend their networks and raise their prices. Smugglers commonly work through middlemen, thus making it difficult to disrupt the convoluted web of transporters. Smuggling operations have become commonplace in centers like the Greek port of Piraeus; Greek and Turkish authorities have been overwhelmed by the refugee crisis, and thus have been unable to substantially eradicate illegal migrant smuggling.

Although migrant smuggling may seem to behold a benevolent nature in some cases, typically the migrants are overcharged and exploited by the smugglers. NATO and other joint agencies have worked to patrol popular routes, including the territorial waters of Greece and Turkey. In an effort to diminish the reach of smuggler networks, NATO has taken steps to improve information exchanges between Turkey and Greece and Frontex, Europe's border agency.

Not only are migrants moving from Greece and Turkey into other EU member states, they are moving between the two countries as well. Syrian migrants traverse through Turkey in order to settle in Greece, and they come in such quantities that Greece's economy, particularly in terms of tourism, is jeopardized. In early 2016, the

European Union stepped in as a deal was implemented: for each Syrian refugee sent back to Turkey from Greece, another Syrian refugee already living in Turkey would be settled with aid from the EU. The EU allotted three billion euros for the purpose of implementing the deal and settling refugees. It also determined that any migrant moving from Turkey to Greece after the 20th of March, 2016, would be removed from the country.

However, the plan encountered an issue soon after its implementation. A bottleneck of about 8,500 refugees formed in Greece. People lived in overcrowded camps and facilities, essentially being trapped on these Greek islands until their request to leave had been processed and accepted - a task that was massively slow due to the high population of these facilities.

As proved by the EU's deportation deal, the issue of migrant smuggling has not only to do with crime rings and illicit businesses, but is due in part to the inability of the global community to address illegal migration as a whole. The lack of proper protocol and border security caused a panic and a need for a sudden, ineffective, dangerous deportation deal in Greece. That being said, migrant smuggling is not solely an underground, untrackable business- it also stems from a lack of protocol and global responsibility for migrants.

MEXICO/THE UNITED STATES

The issue of migrant smuggling from Mexico into the United States is a highly relevant and widely-debated issue. While some Americans are empathetic towards Mexican immigrants and enjoy the outsourcing of work, others are concerned about losing American jobs or a possibility of increased crime. Although the discussion is expansive when it comes to Mexican immigrants living in the US, UNODC provides a narrower focus on how many of these Mexican immigrants got there in the first place: through the illicit business of migrant smuggling across the US/Mexican border.

Migrant smuggling from Mexico into the United States usually happens through smuggling groups residing in Mexico. These groups also transport migrants from Central and South America. These migrants are brought over to the United States in trucks or, less frequently, by foot. In order to get across the border, smugglers pretend to be irregular migrants, which generally allows the entry into a country without meeting all immigration standards, perhaps for the purposes of work or vacation. Migrants pay an estimated \$2,000 to cross the border between Mexico and the United States with aid from a migrant smuggling group.

Migrant smuggling between Mexico and the United States can be extremely dangerous when travelling on foot, as much of the southern US border consists of sweltering, dangerous stretches of barren land. Without water, many Mexican immigrants can die on this voyage. Additionally, in some states, citizens form "search

parties" to hunt down these illegal immigrants and turn them into police departments.

In 2000, 29.5% of all immigrants living in the United States were Mexican. However, in 2014, this number fell to 27.6%. The drop in migrants from Mexico to the United States may have been due to a decrease in American job opportunities, and these jobs may have served as the primary reason for many migrants to leave in the first place - to seek out more economically prosperous living situations. However, this drop in no way stopped the migration process fully, and it is assumed that many Mexican immigrants arrive in the US through migrant smuggling.

Despite the creation of the Smuggling of Migrants Protocol, the trade continues to occur across the US/Mexican border. This is most likely due to the underground nature of the migrant smuggling business, as well as the relaxed US border security when it comes to allowing irregular migrants into the country. Although the amount of migrants moving into the United States has decreased in the past decade, it has been mostly due to losses in American economics, rather than actual successes in United Nations movements to address the situation.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

- How would changing immigration policies benefit or detract from migrant smuggling?
- How might UNODC improve their surveys on migrant smuggling?
- How would changing the border policies affect the amount of migrants smuggled into countries?
- To what extent is the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants an applicable document, or will UNODC need to take more effective actions in order to address
- How would increased control of migrant smuggling affect the issue of civilians caught in a war zone?

FURTHER READING

- Provides an overview on UNODC's past actions relating to migrant smuggling, with summaries of the programs established.

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/index.html?ref=menuaside>

- Allows understanding on why migrant smuggling occurs through a nonfictional story about one migrant's experiences.

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