

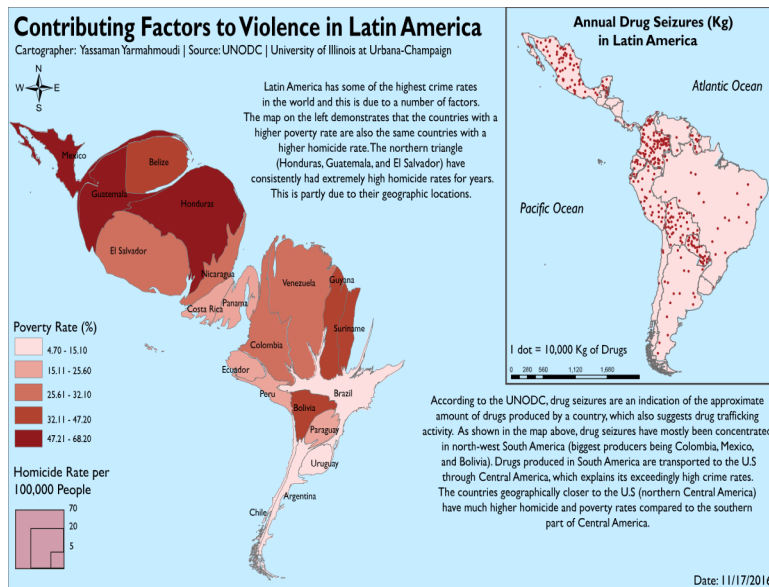
Topic A: Drug Trafficking and Cartels

Introduction

Drug cartels are criminal groups organized to promote the sale of illicit drugs. They range in size and form, from a few members across a region to thousands spanning multiple countries.

Drug cartels have plagued South America for ages, despite large efforts to counter them.

Drug cartels are a main source of crime due to gang violence, drug and human trafficking as well as other activities that threaten the livelihood of citizens across South America. Due to a lack of economic opportunities, cartels typically recruit adolescents living in low-income areas, forwarding the already endangering cycle of poverty.



While South American drug cartels also pose a threat to local communities, they are predominately supported by demands from foreigners typically living in more developed nations. For instance the US market for illicit drugs is worth upwards of \$60 billion annually, enticing

large drug cartels to smuggle across the US-Mexico border. Bearing in mind widespread poverty in Latin and South America, this provides ample economic motivation for cartels to continue smuggling drugs in the long run. Thus, while drug cartels have a clear cause, an effective

solution for them must be quite comprehensive and will require the cooperation of developed and less developed nations, of those providing the supply of drugs and those providing the demand for them.

Most commonly cocaine and marijuana are smuggled. Whereas marijuana can be produced in many parts of the world, Cocaine is obtained from the coca plant, which mainly grows in the Andes Mountain range, particularly in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia. This has led Columbia to be a major source of drug cartels in South America. That said, other nations, such as, Mexico and the Caribbean have contributed by acting as passageways for drug trafficking into final destination countries, such as, the United States.

Past Action

Past attempts by nations to reduce the amount of coca plants (used to produce cocaine) have devastated the environment because of the aggressive measures used. This has significant long term effects on said nations, and any effective solution to this issue must incorporate environmental sustainability. Moreover, since profit from illicit drug trafficking typically supports guerrilla insurgent groups such as the FARC in Colombia or the Shining Path in Peru,



local resources to fight cartels are becoming increasingly limited in many areas. Local corruption further exacerbates issues with law enforcement. Overtime, in both drug production and transit regions, there has been an increase in corruption,

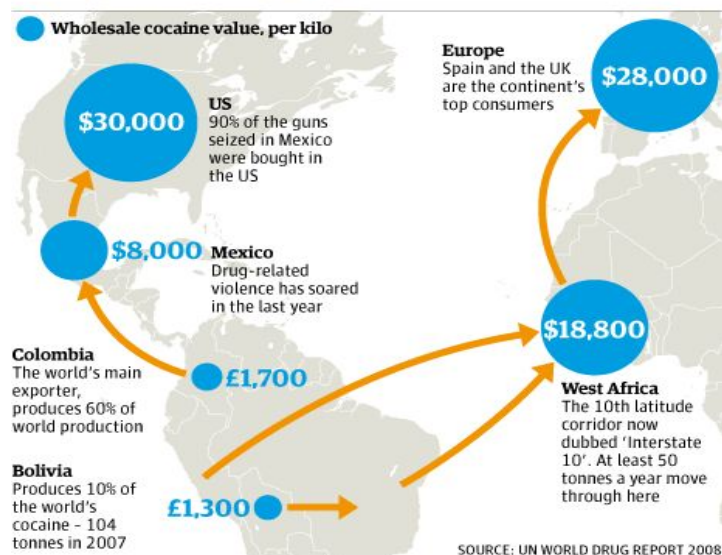
violence, human right violations, impunity, and disregard of the law. This is directly correlated to the expansion of drug cartels.

Current Situation

Presently, the USA is the number one consumer of the drugs produced and trafficked through Mexico and Colombia. The revenue from these sales leads to anywhere between 19 billion and 29 billion USD being smuggled into Mexico annually. Complexity is added when one considers the definite flow of arms from the USA to Mexico. Statistics show that 70% of all firearms found in Mexican criminal activity can be traced back to the US. Additionally, members of two of the largest Mexican drug cartels, Sinaloa and Gulf, are located on either side of the boarder, creating a legal nightmare for law enforcement, especially bearing in mind legal discrepancies between the US and Mexico. This in turn allows the cartels to further threaten and target citizens through their illegal action.

Historically, the United States maintained a firm stance on drugs, including Cannabis. However, recent trends show the legalization of Cannabis for both medicinal and leisure use in an increasing number of states. Should this trend continue going forward, there will be large implications on the demand for illicit Cannabis, likely causing major shifts in drug cartel activities.

The major cocaine smuggling routes



As previously mentioned, Mexico and Columbia are the two most heavily affected Latin American nations by drug cartels. That said, many other Latin American nations are affected heavily as well. For instance, drug related crime rates have skyrocketed in the past decade in Honduras, Uruguay and Nicaragua, causing social, political and economic devastation. Uruguay has experimented with legalizing Cannabis as a means of regulating its use, and ideally reducing drug and gang related crimes.

Other nations in Western Europe and West Africa are seeing increasing volumes of drugs, particularly cocaine being smuggled through their borders. As the demand for such drugs grows in these regions, Latin and South American drug cartels become a more prominent threat to the wellbeing of global communities. Countries across the world have taken varying stances on drug related issues, each with their own merits and flaws. While this gives the UN a good sense of what action is possible, it has led to a general lack of precedent on standard ways to deal with drug cartels. It is thus the job of delegates in this committee to be innovative when incorporating differing viewpoints into a resolution.

Bloc Positions

STRICT CRIMINALIZATION

This group includes nations such as Singapore, the Philippines and Saudi Arabia which maintain extremely harsh punishments for drug related crimes. These nations feel that the most effective way to reduce drug use is through fear of repercussions. While effective in some cultures, it may be difficult to integrate this category of solutions into areas that already see high rates of drug trafficking and related criminal activity.

QUASI-REGULATION

This group includes nations such as Uruguay and soon the USA which hold different standards for different drugs. Namely, some drugs are legalized and heavily regulated by law while others are criminalized. The specifics of regulations and criminalization vary from nation to nation; however, this approach seems to be gaining popularity in the international sphere. That said drawbacks include the lack of a clear international framework that following this approach would provide.

RELAXED REGULATION

These nations include Portugal and the Netherlands which do not generally heavily punish drug use. While not the most common approach, this one does have its merits. For instance, while the amount of drug use and drug related crimes are not significantly higher in these nations than in other nations, cost of drug regulation is significantly less, and tax revenue from sale of legal drugs is higher. Additionally, some believe that criminalization of drugs is inherently unethical, so long as one's use of drugs do not hinder others' lives. Thus, this approach questions the right governments have to regulate private activity.

Conclusion

Drug cartels are becoming increasingly present in the international sphere, creating need for multilateral resolutions taking a stance against them. Seeing as though drug cartels are prominent in developing nations, but operate on the demand of developed nations, any solution will require compromise on account of all parties involved. Furthermore, national stances with respect to drugs vary greatly, and it is only through cooperation that an effective global resolution can be reached and enforced. As the size, threat and power of drug cartels increase, this resolution becomes more vital to reach.

QUARMAS

1. What stance should the international community take regarding drugs and drug cartels?
Do governments have the right to regulate drug use and if so to what extent?
2. How can we address the causes of drug trafficking in nations that supply drugs?
3. How can we address the demand developed nations create for drug trafficking?
4. What long-term measures can be initiated to reduce political corruption and increase law enforcement?
5. How can we implement decided action without adversely affecting local economies, societies and environments?

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Topic B: World Poverty

Introduction

The state of world poverty has been steadily decreasing over the past 30-some years: in 1990, 35% of the world population lived on less than \$1.90 USD per day, which the World Bank constitutes as “extreme poverty.” While extensive efforts have been made by the international community to decrease that figure, still more than 700 million people live on less than \$1.90 a day. This number is unacceptably high and reflects that the world is not on track to end extreme urban and rural poverty by 2030, a goal set in 1990.

While progress has been made, several areas have been left behind in the effort to aid impoverished regions. While progress in East Asia and the Pacific region have been vast, with 71 million fewer impoverished people in 2010 than in 1990, now more than half of the world’s extreme poverty can be found in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the same time that 71 million were alleviated from poverty in East Asia and the Pacific, only 4 million of 393 million escaped poverty in Sub-Saharan Africa.

The majority of the work done thus far has targeted urban poverty, given that these groups are more physically accessible to government and NGO intervention. According to the World Bank, “A vast majority of the global poor live in rural areas and are poorly educated, mostly employed in the agricultural sector, and over half are under 18 years of age.” This challenges our committee to address the primary issues of rural poverty as we move forward. In order to move toward the international goal of ending extreme poverty, we must find accessible means of helping the rural poor, provide infrastructure and implementation for proper education in these

impoverished regions, and—perhaps most difficult—ensure that our work to alleviate the impoverished will not cause economic downturn for fragile economies that depend almost solely on agriculture. With that being said, urban poverty is still alive and well in most world cities, especially in African and South American regions. The challenge of the committee will be to ensure continued relief for the urban poor while challenging ourselves to make similar strides in rural poverty.

Rural Poverty

The primary reason that rural poverty has not been tackled as successfully lies in accessibility. While an organization can easily provide food, shelter, and economic reform for



populations just miles from some of the richest urban centers in each city, reaching a farming village that experiences consistent droughts and is located more than 500 miles from any urban center can be far more challenging. Because of this inaccessibility, impoverished rural communities face many structural issues. The lack of infrastructure, physical barriers, trade challenges, and lack of education contribute the nearly-impossible alleviation of the rural poor.

In most agricultural villages, there is a dearth of roadways and load-carrying vehicles that would facilitate trade. Load-carrying vehicles, whether motorized or non-motorized, make trade

between small agricultural villages that may be some 30 miles away possible. Several independent studies conducted in rural areas have indicated that presence of wheelbarrows and handcarts is lacking and would allow trade with nearby villages; beyond this, load-bearing vehicles could allow access to major urban areas. As of now, most of the agricultural resources in poor regions are used by their home village and perhaps neighboring villages. The small subset of resources that are purchased and taken to major urban areas are done by an independent buyer, often setting their own price and ensuring maximum upsale potential for the intermediary. The installation of handcarts and wheelbarrows may allow these poorer agricultural villages establish a trade network and eventually reach major urban areas, which will ensure trade that is more beneficial to impoverished rural areas.

The lack of educational opportunities in rural areas can significantly inhibit the social and financial mobility of its residents. With no education, rural farm hands are condemned to repeat a vicious cycle in which there is no possibility for escape. Their families will face the same challenges that their parents have faced, and the entire village will continue to live in extreme poverty. Furthermore, a lack of education inhibits social globalization and thus allows pre-existing gender discrimination in the workforce to continue. Currently, women in many rural communities are not allowed to work because of cultural norms, which perpetuates the cycle of poverty. Education may give citizens the tools succeed in large urban areas so long as these individuals could successfully migrate to urban areas, and would perhaps alleviate some of the gender discrimination present in rural communities.

Nonetheless, geographic barriers in many rural areas pose significant issues; infrastructure cannot be easily built along the rough terrains of the South American Andes or Asian Himalayas

mountain ranges; the difficult journey in and out of small farming villages must be alleviated if the international community expects education, infrastructure, and trade to improve, and if we expect the vicious cycle of a forced agrarian lifestyle to end.

Urban Poverty

While urban poverty may be less prevalent and less detrimental at this stage in the fight against extreme poverty, the issues that comprise urban poverty are growing in severity. According to the World Bank, “for the first time in history more than half the world’s people live in cities. Over 90 percent of urban growth is occurring in the developing world, adding an estimated 70 million new residents to urban areas each year. During the next two decades, the urban population of the world’s two poorest regions—South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa—is expected to double.” Furthermore, the income inequality that plagues most cities has only increased in recent years. It is the great

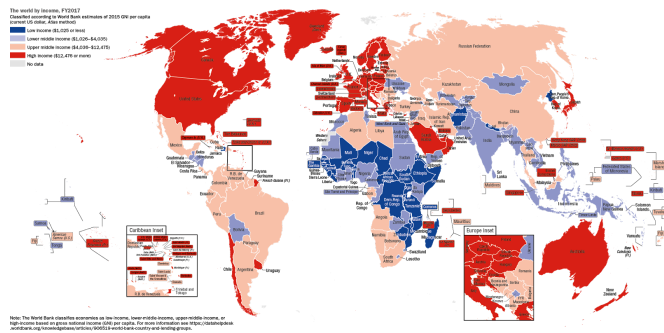


challenge of the 21st century to incentivise the rich, by whichever means necessary, to invest in their local impoverished communities rather than exploit them. Issues of segregation, lack of employment opportunity, inadequate and insecure solutions to humane housing and shelter, violence, and inadequate access to healthcare and education must be considered when exploring solutions to urban poverty. Successful intervention for urban poverty should follow successful

interventions of the past 30 years while taking greater care for the urban centers that have been left behind, namely those in Africa and South America. In order for successful intervention in these regions, cultural norms must be respected and money must come from within the region; the body must, above all, consider how to show wealthy residents of urban communities why they must care about their impoverished counterparts.

Conclusion

Ultimately, in order to end extreme world poverty, the committee must attack two primary



issues: (1) how can we reach rural communities and establish infrastructure for future success, and (2) how can we incentivise wealthy individuals to invest in, rather than take advantage of, their local

communities? In order to properly address these issues and more, the following questions should be addressed:

- How can rural communities be reached?
- What kind of infrastructure is necessary to ensure future success? How much should the international community be involved in implementation of that infrastructure?
- How can we provide proper education to impoverished rural areas?
- How can we incentivise wealthy individuals to invest in the success of impoverished urban communities?
- Where will this aid be coming from?

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