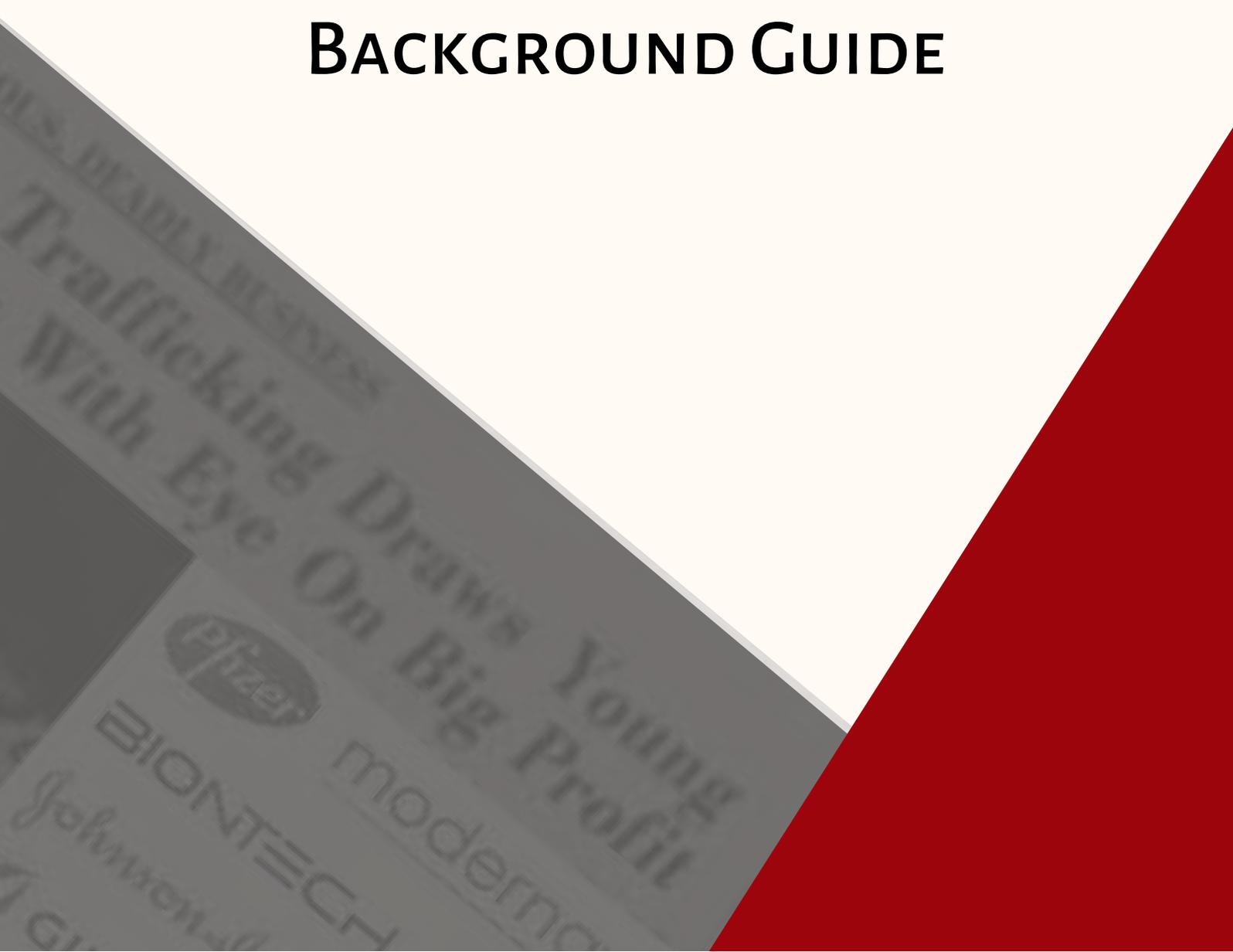




**DEENS MODEL UNITED NATIONS 2022**

# **UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME**

**BACKGROUND GUIDE**



# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**I. Letter from the Executive Board**

**II. Introduction to the Agenda**

**III. Committee Background**

**IV. Historical Analysis**

**V. Current Situation**

**VI. Legalities**

**A. Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961**

**B. United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic  
in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances,  
1988**

**C. Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)**

**D. Controlled Substances Act (CSA)**

**E. United Nations Convention against**

**Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols  
Thereeto**

**F. United Nations Convention against Corruption**

# **TABLE OF CONTENTS**

VII. Government Intervention/UN

Intervention VIII. Case Studies

IX. Portfolio Backgrounds

**A. Cartels**

**B. Countries**

**C. Corporations**

X. Conclusion

XI. QARMA

XII. Research Links

XIII. Bibliography

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# LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD

Greetings Delegates!

We would like to welcome all of you to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Committee for DMUN 2022! It's an absolute pleasure to host all of you. Today you breathe in cocaine, and tomorrow, gunpowder's up your throat.

Welcome to the land of the cartels - where you're loyal or you're dead. We hope you have a good time trying to stay alive on the street. You think you can get a white collar job, and that'll save you? The real killer is a 300 billion dollar industry that has all of us in a chokehold. May it be the hood or our prescriptions, we are all doomed unless our governments fight back. And that's exactly what you're going to do.

This agenda demands research and unbridled enthusiasm and requires you to think quickly and maintain composure. The world of drugs and crime is fascinating, and we hope to experience a glimmer of it over the course of the 2 days we will spend together.

Please note that this Background Guide serves only as an entry to your research. We encourage you to develop a preliminary understanding and deep dive further into the situation. The possibilities are endless with imagination and keen insight.

At the end of the day, make sure you're enjoying the time you spend in committee and research while learning something new. Do so, and you will leave this conference better and happier than you came. We wish you all the best with your preparation and look forward to having you in committee!

Warm Regards,

**Yuvika Chauhan - Co-Chairperson +91 7022705940**

**Akshay Arun Prasath - Co-Chairperson, +91 99729 87586**

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# **INTRODUCTION TO THE COMMITTEE**

## **“Discussing the Influence of Pharmaceutical Corporations and Cartels on Drug Trafficking with special emphasis on Latin America”**

Although the link between terrorism and other related crimes, such as drug trafficking, is evident and has been recognized by the United Nations Security Council, a conscientious understanding is needed in order to create effective prevention and disruption methods. UNODC Senior Terrorism Prevention Officer Irka Kuleshnyk once said that "While it is difficult to establish how widely terrorist groups are involved in the illicit drug trade, or the breadth and nature of cooperation between these two criminal groups, the magnitude of the numbers involved make the relationship worrisome."

It is our belief that while it is indeed difficult to distinguish the role of non-state actors in the market for illegal drugs, it is tending towards impossible to clearly identify the role of the pharmaceutical corporate giants. They sit like looming shadow masters, puppeteering this vicious cycle while having to take none of the accountability.

The biotechnological industry has numerous unusual characteristics, both in its organizational structure and in the nature of its business operations, which are little known outside the industry but which materially affects the process of bringing the product to the patient.

The development of a new pharmaceutical is exceedingly time-consuming, very expensive, and risky, with very little chance of a successful outcome. The production and distribution of these drugs are largely controlled by organized groups called drug cartels. They rose to immense power in the mid 1990s and have since developed highly elaborate trafficking routes and systems to ensure that the high demand for drugs in the US and other hubs is met.

Violence and cartel-induced conflict are few of the consequences of having these well-financed groups assume a large stake locally and internationally. The cartels however, simply see a growing need for drugs being met effectively and efficiently. Illicit drug traders and terrorists are not some mysterious entity. Rather they are usually groups and networks that operate in ways that can be understood, identified, tracked and ultimately disrupted.

We need to integrate our work to build up more effective and efficient networks so that we may defeat these illegitimate networks that perpetuate so much destruction throughout the world

# COMMITTEE BACKGROUND

In 1997, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was established as a result of a merger between the United Nations Drug Control Programme and the Center for International Crime Prevention. Currently, it is considered to be the world's leading organization in the fight against illicit drugs and international criminal activity. It has offices spread out across the world. Almost 90% of its budget is funded by voluntary contributions, mostly from governments. UNODC's mandate is to "assist the Member States in their struggle against illicit drugs, crime, terrorism and transitional crime in asking its dimensions" as stated in the Millennium Declaration

The Office's work programs could be divided into three varying types of aid:

- Field-based technical cooperation projects that can help the Member States counteract critical situations
- Research and analysis to better understand all the Office is concerned with
- Normative work to aid national Governments in implementing international treaties and declarations, but also to suggest the development of local legislation.

## **PROGRAMMES LED BY UNODC CAN COVER NUMEROUS DOMAINS, SUCH AS:**

- Organized crime and trafficking of any sort in order to help Member States with the instability caused by these types of crimes, but also with cybercrime of environmental crime;
- Corruption in order to assist in the dismantling of corrupt "empires" or the recovery of assets stolen by corrupt officials by working with the public and private sectors or civil society;
- Crime prevention and criminal justice reform in order to promote the adoption of measures that guarantee a fair criminal justice system that always bears in mind the respect for human rights;
- Drug abuse prevention and health in order to reshape the perception of drug usage at all levels thanks to educational campaigns and scientific researches;
- Terrorism prevention in order to effectively assist entities involved with cases of terrorism.

# HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

The "war on drugs" is not just a metaphor, but a living reality that has devastating consequences for millions of people. The most vulnerable communities bear the brunt of such harms, be it through violent repression or callous abandonment.

Since the drug war and prohibition of drugs have intensified, the illegal drug market has grown enormously, far from creating a "drug-free world."

Sinaloa's Badiraguato highlands are the birthplace of narco culture. A reputation for drug trafficking was first established in the Sierras, or rural highlands before it was solidified once it entered the metropolitan world.

It is believed that Chinese immigration to Sinaloa is the source of Mexican drug trafficking. Poppy seeds were brought to Mexico by Chinese immigrants who worked in railroads and mines. Poppy plants were utilized as decorations and as the basis for various Mexican corridos, or ballads. Cannabis was introduced to Mexico and used for medical purposes

These highly addictive substances fueled the black market's growth, with millions of states and countries creating a sudden demand for a large supply of alcohol, heroin, marijuana, and cocaine

Drug prices increased as a result of the first shortage, and the resulting "super-profits" drew black-market providers to fill the vacuum. Approximately \$18 to \$39 billion in wholesale drug proceeds are generated each year by Mexican and Colombian drug trafficking organizations (cartels).

Currently, Mexican cartels are regarded as the "biggest organized crime hazard." Following the expulsion of Chinese poppy growers from Sinaloa, Mexican farmers began to control the production of narcotics. While narcotic production in Mexico was still small, the disruption of morphine supplies from Europe during the World Wars led to a temporary legalization of narcotics in Mexico.

There have been two factions of the major Mexican cartels since February 2010, one that is composed of the Juárez Cartel, the Tijuana Cartel, Los Zetas, and Beltrán-Leyva Cartel; the other is composed of the Gulf Cartel, Sinaloa Cartel, and La Familia Cartel.

The Colombian Cali cartel and Medellín cartel reigned in the late 1980s and early 1990s prior to the development of the Mexican cartels. As a result of their demise, the Norte del Valle cartel has filled the Colombian vacuum, along with rightwing paramilitaries (e.g. the United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia, United Self-defences of Colombia) and leftwing insurgent groups (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, National Liberation Army).

In spite of the fact that there are several levels of criminal and gang activity, the tightest clusters are as follows:

**TIER 1:** Transnational Criminal Organizations (Sinaloa Cartel and the Zetas)

**TIER 2:** Regional Criminal Groups or "super empowered street gangs" or "superpandillas" (Independent Cartel of Acapulco)

**TIER 3:** Localized Street Gangs or small time Criminal Opportunists

There have always been frequent and destructive wars between the tiers. Due to the drug wars raging throughout Latin America, the region has been subjected to levels of violence that are almost unimaginable.

Over 27,000 have disappeared. Previously exhumed mass graves pepper the hills. More than 2 million people have died in the last 20 years as cartels have made billions. What was once produced in the back of camp vans is now produced in huge quantities and makes huge profits.

# CURRENT SITUATION

The world's drug problem has grown worse every year and shows no indications of slowing down. Experts found that drug use increased by 30% between 2009 and 2018, with almost 269 million users globally.

The process of growing interconnection between nations and populations around the world, known as globalization, is partially to blame for this rise in drug use. New and emerging trade routes and ways of distribution are made possible by this process.

The financial opportunities produced by the illicit drug trade on a worldwide scale hide the harmful effects on people and communities. Beyond the apparent effects on physical health and wellbeing, the drug trade has an overall negative impact on social, economic, and environmental development.

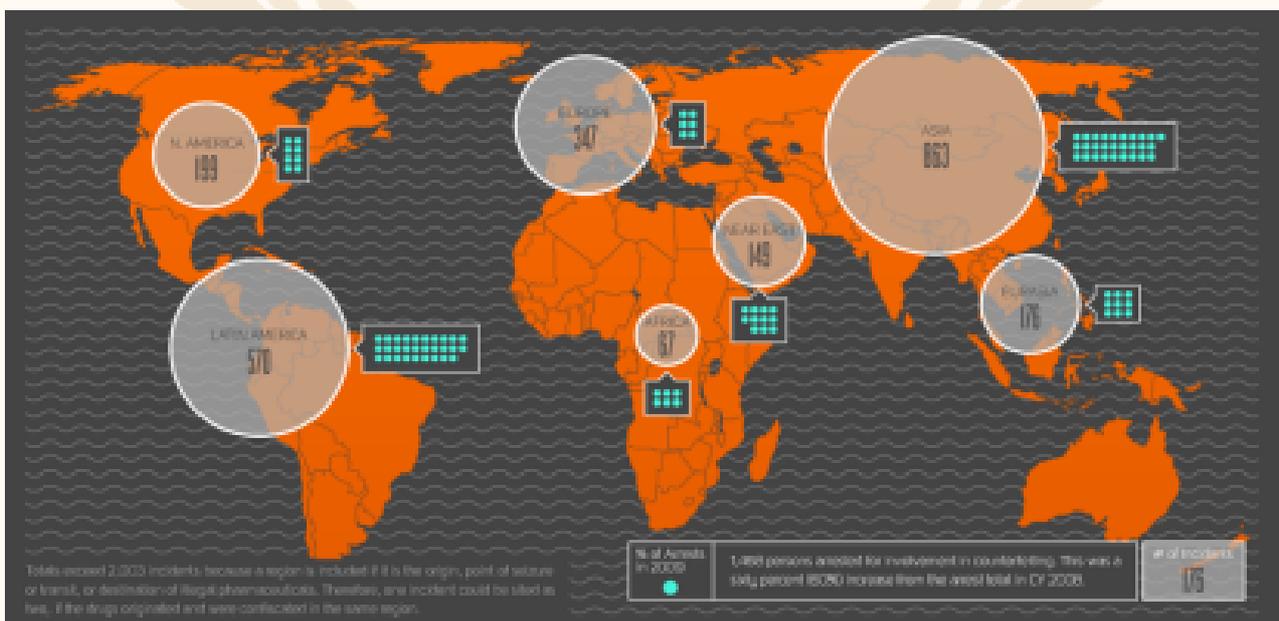


Figure 1: Geographic Distribution of Reported Pharmaceutical Crimes

Given the rapid flow of pharmaceutical products around the world and the interconnectedness of our society, politicians and international players must collaborate to develop an effective plan of action to address the global drug issue.

Despite popular belief, the war on drugs does not only pertain to depressants, stimulants, and hallucinogens. It also focuses on counterfeit medications, an issue that requires much scrutiny. Counterfeit medications are difficult to detect as they are duplicitously designed to appear identical to the genuine product, and often do not cause perilous reactions.

Drug trafficking organizations—also known as transnational criminal organizations—control the importation and distribution of cocaine, fentanyl, heroin, marijuana, and methamphetamine. The majority of heroin and methamphetamine are produced by Mexican suppliers, while the majority of cocaine is made in Colombia and then shipped to the United States by Mexican criminal organizations

Fentanyl, a synthetic opioid that is several times more potent than heroin, is also mostly sourced from Mexico, China, and other Asian countries. Between 2019 and 2020, the amount of fentanyl that Mexican authorities collected virtually quadrupled.

Drug cartels are in a constant state of evolution. Over the decades, they have grown, splintered, established new alliances, and battled one another for territory.

In addition to having a direct impact on the manufacturing and trade of legal drugs, such as pharmaceuticals, trade restrictions and economic closures have also had a substantial impact on the illicit drug market. To disguise its actions, drug trafficking heavily relies on legitimate trade, and individuals selling drugs to customers.

Depending on how various narcotics are distributed and how each country reacts, different government actions to combat the drug trade have different effects. The COVID-19 epidemic has not stemmed the growth or diversification of the illicit drug markets in the Asia-Pacific region.

Methamphetamine production keeps breaking records while costs in East Asia, Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand reach record lows. For instance, officials in Thailand reported that despite lockdowns, the amount of drugs being sold online has increased. In contrast, stricter travel restrictions in Europe have led to supply issues and an upsurge in drug prices.

For example, there have been fresh instances of people breaking COVID-19 quarantine in the quest of narcotics in a number of Italian cities where it is considerably more difficult to access illegal substances. Additionally, because recreational drug use often takes place in crowded spaces and in large groups, the implementation of physical barriers to stop the transmission of COVID-19 has altered drug use patterns.

Social alienation has made using street drugs less common and encouraged users to look for illegal drugs from other places, such as the dark web and online messaging services. The epidemic has altered both drug consumption and where they can be purchased. Millions of individuals have been forced into solitude as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic's spread.

According to experts, the usage of psychotropic medicines, which change the way one's nervous system works and their ability to think, may escalate. Since there is currently no information on the alteration in drug use patterns, additional research will be necessary.

Because they are often used in solitude, they vary from other recreational drugs that are more popular in crowded settings. The surge in solitary psychotropic drug usage is a result of the restrictions put in place by governments to stop the spread of the virus.

Long-term information on the shift in drug use patterns is not yet available, thus more research is necessary. Countries will need to constantly monitor new patterns in drug use since COVID-19 has the potential to impact drug use and distribution patterns globally

Trends in substance misuse are being further facilitated by the advent of new psychotropic drugs. A website tool named NPSfinder was utilized to locate and classify new psychoactive compounds between January and August 2020.

While this was going on, around 229 psychotropic drugs were found in the databases of the European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addictions (EMCDDA) and the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) during this time period. NPSfinder found 18 entirely new substances—chemicals that had never been reported in the aforementioned databases—out of the total 229 substances.

Opioids and cathinones were the two main categories for the novel synthetic medicines that were found. Opioids are a group of medicines used as painkillers that are notorious for having a higher risk of overdose and drug dependence. As an effective stimulant, cathinones can be used in place of other stimulant substances like cocaine.

The actions taken to stop the pandemic have also had conflicting effects on the medicine supply chain. As an illustration, the epidemic has impacted accessibility to control. Retailers all throughout the world have reported a widespread shortage in the kinds of medications they stock, price rises, and declines in medication quality.

The supply and trafficking of illegal opioids continue to fuel the pandemic, which was initially sparked by pharmaceutical corporations' aggressive marketing of prescription opioids.

The term "Big Pharma" refers to the global pharmaceutical industry. It also includes the Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America trade association (PhRMA).

Every year, Big Pharma and medical device companies make billions of dollars. They've also spent tens of billions of dollars on fines, settlements, and jury verdicts.

Big Pharma is one of the world's most powerful industries. The global pharmaceutical revenue exceeded \$1 trillion. However, no other country's pharmaceutical and medical device industries wield as much power or make as much money as the United States. According to the consumer watchdog group Public Citizen, Big Pharma is also the largest defrauder of the federal government under the False Claims Act.

Fraud, bribery, lawsuits, and scandals are common in the industry. Despite criminal charges and fines, Big Pharma firms continue to operate.



### **SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS, 1961**

The Convention entered into force in 1964 after being adopted on March 30, 1961. As of the date of the convention, there were 185 parties present. In 1961, the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was adopted with the aim of coordinating international efforts to combat drug abuse. This convention focuses on limiting the possession, use, trade in, distribution, import, export, manufacture, and production of drugs exclusively for medicinal and scientific purposes. Furthermore, it strives to deter and discourage drug traffickers through international cooperation.

## The Four Schedules:

- Schedule I: Drugs that are susceptible to abuse and produce negative effects, but also have therapeutic value (e.g. cocaine, heroin, marijuana, morphine, fentanyl)
- Schedule II: Drugs with lower abuse liability (Codeine, Dextropropoxyphene)
- Schedule III: Exempts the preparation of drugs listed in Schedules I and II
- Schedule IV: Reformulated Schedule I drugs that may be abused to cause bodily harm (e.g., etorphine, cannabis).

Chemicals under the schedules of this convention are under the "Yellow List".

(The Yellow List is a list of the internationally controlled narcotics that comes under the 1961 UN Convention. It also contains the trade names of these substances)

## **UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, 1988**

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs was adopted in 1988. There were 183 present Parties for this convention when it was introduced. This convention aims to provide comprehensive measures against drug trafficking, including provisions against money laundering and the diversion of precursor chemicals. A mechanism for controlling the manufacture and distribution of these chemicals was put in place by the party states.

Extradition, controlled deliveries, and transfer of proceedings are among the aspects of the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs. With the help of country governments, this convention is efficiently put into practice. The targeted chemicals on the lookout under this convention are mostly placed under the “Red List

(The Red List is a list of chemicals often used in the illegal manufacture of narcotics and psychotropic substances)

### **COMMISSION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS (CND)**

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) was established by the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946 to assist in the supervision of major drug treaties. The CND reviews and analyzes the global drug situation, considering supply and demand fluctuations of drugs.

There are currently 53 member States elected by ECOSOC in the CND. This commission strives to accelerate the implementation of joint commitments to counter and bring into light the world of drug predicaments. The 5 subsidiary bodies under the CND are namely:

Heads of National Drug Law Enforcement Agencies in Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific and Africa, as well as the Subcommittee in the Near and Middle East.

## **CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES ACT (CSA)**

The Controlled Substances Act is a US drug policy that regulates the manufacture, importation, possession, use, and distribution of certain narcotics, stimulants, depressants, hallucinogens, and anabolic steroids.

The CSA established a classification system with five schedules to identify drugs based on their potential for abuse, their applications in medicine, and their likelihood of producing dependence. The CSA also established a mechanism that allows substances to be added or transferred between schedules (controlled) or removed from control (decontrolled)

- Schedule I includes substances with no legitimate medical use. (LSD, heroin, cannabis)
- Schedule II substances have legitimate medical uses but are considered to have a high potential for abuse. (Cocaine, Opium, Morphine)
- Schedule III, IV, V drugs have legitimate uses but do not suffer the potential for abuse (Tranquilizers, Barbiturates)

The CSA also established a mechanism that allows substances to be added or transferred between schedules (controlled) or removed from control (decontrolled).

## **UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME AND THE PROTOCOLS THERETO**

The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC, also known as the Palermo Convention) is a multilateral treaty sponsored by the United Nations that was signed in 2000. The United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime is a legally binding instrument in which States Parties commit to a series of anti-transnational organized crime measures. To combat the problem, new domestic offenses are being created, as well as new, broad frameworks for mutual legal assistance, extradition, law enforcement cooperation and technical assistance, and training

## **UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION**

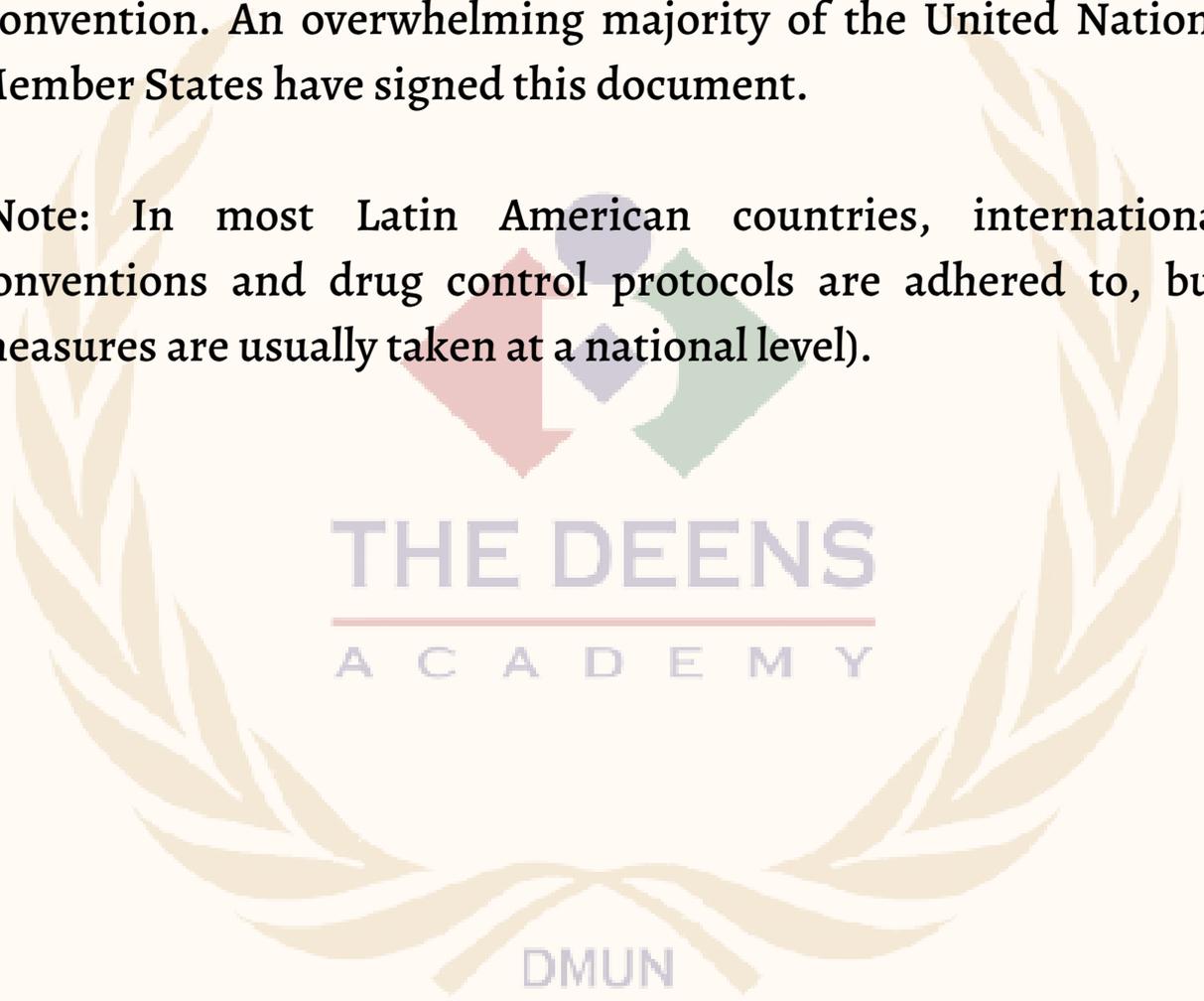
The United Nations Convention Against Corruption is the only legally binding universal anti-corruption implement. The far-reaching approach of the Convention, as well as the mandatory nature of many of its provisions, make it a unique tool for developing a comprehensive response to a global problem.

The Convention is divided into five sections: preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation, asset recovery, technical assistance, and information exchange.

The Convention addresses many different types of corruption, including bribery, influence trading, abuse of functions, and various acts of corruption in the private sector.

The inclusion of a specific chapter on asset recovery, aimed at returning assets to their rightful owners, including countries from which they had been taken illegally, is a highlight of the Convention. An overwhelming majority of the United Nations Member States have signed this document.

(Note: In most Latin American countries, international conventions and drug control protocols are adhered to, but measures are usually taken at a national level).



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# **GOVERNMENT INTERVENTION/ UN INTERVENTION**

The conflict between government bodies and cartels/traffickers is one of the key factors to consider while navigating the hostile environment of the situation. The US Government has certainly been on the frontline of the drug war, spending huge amounts of money hoping to make strides; the Merida Initiative of 2008 was established to try to end trafficking and organized crime in the region.

Funding for systems that curb cartel secrecy, helicopters, law enforcement, etc. was ensured but the effectiveness of the policy is routinely questioned. It however led to cooperation between the Mexican and American forces.

A case could also be made for the lack of effectiveness displayed by the DEA (Drug Enforcement Administration) in this war. Simply put – the market for drugs is too humongous and the sheer number of distributors is too large to combat effectively.

Cartel violence is rampant in Mexico, to the point where it is highly desensitized. Their funding is ensured and the power dynamic prevalent allows them to operate effectively. The Mexican government began to attempt to cut down operations in 2006, but the expected challenge has taken a toll on the people and the different facets of society.

he UN's policy treats the usage of drugs as an issue concerned with health, and has firmly called upon all states to consider human rights while formulating drug laws. The system put in place by the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and The UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances regulates the production and trade of narcotics, while also seeking to combat the global network for illicit drug trade that has evolved owing to increased usage and demand.

## **CASE STUDIES**

**To better understand the link between cartels, countries and corporations, the following case studies are helpful in nature.**

### **CASE STUDY 1:**

On September 17, 2004, the Colombian government, supported by 4,000 police officers, took control of the biggest pharmacy chain in the country, claiming that cocaine trafficking had been used to fuel its creation and expansion

In Colombia's largest-ever seizure of assets linked to narcotics traffickers, police and prosecutors seized more than 400 establishments in 28 cities under the moniker Drogas La Rebaja, which translates from Spanish as Discount Drugs

Late on Thursday, officials entered some of the stores, but the operation picked up steam on Friday. Police predicted that by Saturday, the government will have control over every store. "This is the most important seizure of assets belonging to the mafia in Colombia's history." The value of the seized properties was estimated at \$216 million, authorities said.

Since President Alvaro Uribe's administration shortened the confiscation process more than a year ago, the agency has taken possession of more than 1,000 additional properties. The majority of the chain's 4,200 employees, according to Plazas, do not need to worry about their jobs, but roughly 50 of them will be replaced because they have intentionally "been supporting the interests of the Cali cartel."

After the rival Medellin cartel was defeated in the 1990s, the Cali cartel took control of the world's cocaine trade and shipped hundreds of tonnes of the drug to the United States and other countries. For many years, the family has owned Drogas Rebaja

## **CASE STUDY 2:**

### **The Sylmar California Cocaine Bust of 1989**

In the San Fernando Valley of Los Angeles lies a peaceful suburban neighborhood called Sylmar. On September 28, 1989, local authorities received a tip about suspicious activity at an unremarkable storage facility in the heart of a residential area from a "concerned citizen."

The tipper claimed that numerous deliveries to the storage place had been made by a number of large tractor-trailers. The informant stated that the trucks were "as big as two school buses."

Remember that both the American crack epidemic and the dominion of Colombian drug cartels were at their height at the time. As a result, DEA agents at the time were searching for this specific type of suspicious behaviour

Agents tracked a car that departed the storage unit the following day after getting the tip. The driver of the car noticed the tail and swerved as it travelled 30 miles to Baldwin Park in the southeast. When the car was eventually stopped by the police, 20 kg of cocaine were discovered in the trunk. That provided sufficient justification to get a search warrant for the storage unit.

Two days after getting the initial information, DEA agents moved in with a search warrant and a squad of policemen. It turned out, nevertheless, that they did not require a horde of cops to solve this case. On the day of the raid, DEA officers broke a \$6 padlock on the unattended storage facility using a straightforward bolt cutter. The agents eventually removed approximately 20 tonnes of cocaine and \$10 million in cash from inside.

It's street value:

**13.3 Billion**

Decades later, this incident continues to hold the record for the biggest narcotics bust ever. The substances were combined into blocks, wrapped in plastic, and packed into numerous cardboard boxes. Ironically, the cardboard boxes would have been about the size of two school buses if they had been piled together.

More cocaine was discovered in this single bust than had been seized in Los Angeles throughout the course of the whole prior year. The amount of cocaine required the DEA to reconsider how it was being destroyed. Drugs confiscated by the DEA were often burned in a nearby lab. The incinerators couldn't handle twenty tonnes of waste.

At the time, the LA district attorney asserted that the quantity of cocaine found could have been used to create an estimated 1.4 billion crystals of crack, of which a significant portion would have been sent towards Rick James' recording studio

The drugs were made in Colombia at first, according to notebooks uncovered during the searches, by the Medellin (Pablo Escobar) and Cali Cartels. The cocaine was driven by truck to Juarez, Mexico, El Paso, Texas, and finally Los Angeles

Later that day in a Beverly Hills hotel, six Mexican nationals who had been renting the storage space for more than two years were detained. James Romero McTague, the manager of the storage facility, was the seventh guy to be detained shortly after. The brains behind the entire enterprise and the key link to the Colombian drug lords was McTague's father-in-law, a Mexican citizen. The eight defendants were all given a life without parole sentence.

# PORTFOLIO BACKGROUNDS

## CARTELS:

### **Sinaloa Cartel:**

Based in Culiacan, Mexico, the Sinaloa Cartel is without a doubt, one of the biggest cartels and a major player in the perennial conflict. They emerged as a group after splitting off from the Guadalajara Cartel, and are very smart with their ruthless operation. Being a major supplier of opium, marijuana, cocaine, and other high-demand narcotics, the cartel serves a huge market and serves it well. Ismael Zambada Garcia (El Mayo), their facinorous leader is in control of the established stronghold, and alliances with the Liberation Army in Colombia and Clan del Golfo (to name a few) cement their position and ensure their power in the region.

### **Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG):**

The CJNG is known for its extremely violent methods and unforgiving nature. They supply Cocaine and methamphetamine among other narcotics and appeal to the public with the help of effective propaganda. They are on the radar of every organization that combats illicit drug operations and their spearhead, Nemesio Cervantes (El Mencho) is one of the most wanted men in the US and Mexico. Both the Sinaloa Cartel and CJNG have clear intentions, leading to dangerous conflict among the giants.

### **The United Self-Defense Forces of Colombia:**

The United Self-Defense Forces or AUC were a drug trafficking and paramilitary force that sought to fight right-wing rebels in the region. Their funding was reliant on drug trade and the group were accused of murdering said left-wing operatives.

### **Juarez Cartel :**

The Juarez Cartel is an old and powerful organization in Mexico, known also for its brutal means and methods. They rose to massive power under Carrillo Fuentes, who employed an effective means of air and land transport to distribute cocaine into the US. The cartel has seen its fair share of internal struggle and deceit but has held on to its stake in the drug trade. Its rivalry with the Sinaloa Cartel has intensified hostility and violence in the region.

### **Gulf Cartel :**

The Gulf Cartel is another key player responsible for drug trafficking, money laundering, and human trafficking. Initially based in Mexico, their reach is far greater, extending to Asian and European groups. They seek to keep the population in line through fear and violence and smuggle large quantities of narcotics like cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine into the United States.

# COUNTRIES:

## **Mexico:**

Mexico has long been used as a staging and transshipment point for narcotics and contraband between Latin American and US markets due to its location. Throughout Prohibition in the United States, Mexican bootleggers supplied alcohol to American gangsters, and the start of the illegal drug trade with the United States began when prohibition ended in 1933. Mexican narcotic smugglers began to smuggle drugs on a large scale toward the end of the 1960s.

Enrique Peña Nieto who served as President from 2012 to 2018, carried on President Felipe Calderon's fight against drug cartels and violence. The arrest of Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman, the leader of one of Mexico's most powerful drug trafficking organizations, the Sinaloa cartel, in 2014 was a huge victory for his administration. Mexican drug cartels earn between \$19 billion and \$29 billion per year from drug sales in the United States.

## **China:**

Initially, China was the sole source of fentanyl to the United States. More than 5,000 companies make up China's politically powerful pharmaceutical industry, which is the world's largest in terms of basic chemical ingredient and precursor exports and the world's second-largest in terms of annual revenue. The industry produces over 2,000 products with an annual output of over 2 million tonnes.

China, the world's leading chemical exporter by value, also has between 160,000 and 400,000 chemical manufacturers and distributors; many operate illegally, others hide behind shell companies, and the majority are capable of producing fentanyl and concealing it among massive output. In addition, China is the leading supplier of precursor chemicals for methamphetamine production in East Asia and Mexico.

Meth was produced in southern China between the 1990s and the mid-2010s for both domestic consumption and export to Australia and other parts of East Asia. Beijing was initially defensive and dismissive of any claims that China was the source of Australia's meth epidemic. However, as time passed, it became more willing to work with Canberra.

**United States :**

Drug abuse is a substantial concern in the United States, and consumers usually do not have trouble finding them. Prescribed and non-prescribed opioid abuse is still a public health crisis in our time. One of the consequences of widespread prescription opioid abuse has been an increase in new heroin users. The increase reflects, at least in part, an increasing number of people who are transitioning from prescription opioids in search of a cheaper, more readily available alternative in heroin.

A major threat to public health safety comes from the neighboring country of Mexico. Illicit opium poppy cultivation is on the rise. Mexican drug trafficking organizations, according to the DEA, are also the largest international suppliers of all cocaine, marijuana, and methamphetamine that crosses the border into the United States.

## **Colombia:**

Despite widespread violence fuelled by guerrilla insurgencies and drug trafficking, Colombia's economy has expanded. As the National Front era came to an end, a new problem arose in Colombia: narcotics. Following the major interdiction efforts launched by Mexican officials in 1975, the country's role as a supplier in the international drug market grew rapidly. Colombia soon supplied up to seven-tenths of the marijuana imported into the United States.

Using marijuana profits, drug lords particularly those from Medellin diversified into cocaine trafficking, and shipments grew from individuals carrying small amounts to large quantities on boats and low-flying planes. This illegal, lucrative trade gave rise to two major Mafia-like organizations known as drug cartels: the first in Medellin, led by Pablo Escobar, and the second in Cali.

## **Brazil:**

Brazil is one of the world's most violent countries, with a national homicide rate of 27.1 per 100,000 people. A large portion of this violence and criminality can be traced back to organized crime groups' arms and drug trafficking operations. In recent years, Brazil's increased domestic drug consumption has influenced the domestic drug market and altered the structure, profile, and modes of operation of organized crime groups.

Drug smuggling is still the most pervasive crime committed in Brazil's national port system. Large amounts of cocaine intercepted from shipping containers throughout 2021 indicate that this method remains the top logistical choice for smugglers to move large amounts of the drug around. However, several bulk carriers were contaminated with the illegal substance while loading cargo in Brazil last year, often with disastrous consequences for shipowners and crews.

## **CORPORATIONS**

### **Merck:**

Merck & Co., Inc. is an American multinational pharmaceutical corporation headquartered in New Jersey, USA. A wide range of well-known pharmaceutical medicines, vaccines, and animal health items are produced by Merck & Co. They produced the first smallpox vaccine for commercial use in the U.S.

Merck is one of the world's largest pharmaceutical conglomerates. It generated almost \$40 billion in revenue in 2017. Merck has faced its fair share of controversies and legal issues despite all of its achievements. Multiple lawsuits against Merck have been brought by individuals who claim that the company's products caused them harm.

The Big Pharma corporation has also been the target of criminal allegations for unlawful marketing and price-gouging, as well as patent litigation. The Vioxx scandal is arguably the reason Merck is so well-known.

**Novartis :**

Novartis is a Swiss multinational pharmaceutical corporation headquartered in Basel, Switzerland. Novartis is well-known for producing a variety of well-known drugs, including Clozaril, Voltaren, Diovan, and many others.

Diovan, a hypertension medication, and Glivec, an oncology leukemia medication, are both top sellers in the global market for Novartis, accounting for a sizable portion of the company's pharmaceutical sales. In addition to its stellar sales figures, Novartis is one of the world's largest pharmaceutical companies by market capitalization.

**Pfizer :**

Headquartered in New York, Pfizer Inc. is a Big Pharma firm. It is recognized for its Advil, Viagra, Xanax, and Zoloft drugs. In terms of revenue, it was the second-largest pharmaceutical company in 2020. It's been more than 150 years since Pfizer first launched. From being a "one-stop-shop" to becoming a global organization, it has come a long way.

Pfizer has achieved a lot. They discovered citric acid. Penicillin and vitamin C are both mass-produced by them. The business has over the years been the target of consumer lawsuits alleging that it supplied substandard pharmaceuticals, and the US government has accused it of health care fraud.

## **Johnson & Johnson :**

Johnson & Johnson is the world's largest health-care corporation. In addition, it is the world's highest-paid pharmaceutical corporation. With more than \$82 billion in projected sales for 2020, J&J will continue to be at the top of the Big Pharma list of influential companies. However, J&J has been the subject of numerous scandals and government investigations over the years, and the health-care behemoth has been the subject of numerous lawsuits.

According to a Huffington Post investigation, J&J is "America's most admired lawbreaker." It has issued recalls for some of its drugs and devices, and consumers who have been harmed by J&J products are suing the company. J&J announced in 2021 that it would split into two publicly traded companies: a consumer products division that sells products such as Band-Aid bandages and a pharmaceutical and medical device division. The company hopes to complete the process by 2023.

## **Roche**

F. Hoffmann-La Roche AG, popularly known as Roche, is a Swiss multinational healthcare company with two divisions: pharmaceuticals and diagnostics. Roche is among the world's largest biotech companies, offering truly unique medicines in oncology, immunology, infectious diseases, ophthalmology, and central nervous system diseases. Roche is also a world leader in in-vitro diagnostics and tissue-based cancer diagnostics, as well as a diabetes management pioneer.

In 1973, Stanley Adams, Roche's World Product Manager in Basel, contacted the European Economic Community with evidence that Roche had violated antitrust laws by price fixing and market sharing for vitamins with its competitors. Roche was fined accordingly, but due to an oversight on the part of the EEC, the company discovered that Adams had blown the whistle. He was arrested and imprisoned for unauthorized disclosure, a Swiss law violation. In 1999, the company pleaded guilty to participating in a global conspiracy to raise and fix the prices of vitamins sold in the United States and around the world. Hoffmann-La Roche paid a \$500 million criminal fine to the US

## **CONCLUSION**

Drug trafficking is an issue of major relevance in the international forum and has geopolitical, economic and cultural ramifications. The augmentation of drug consumption has resulted in a vast and elaborate system of production and distribution that stretches across all borders. Pharmaceutical corporations and drug cartels are key players in the global system, each with their motivations, playing their part to serve the ever-growing market for narcotics.

As delegates, your job is simple: Represent your side with passion and bravery, and seek to take yourself, your organization and confidants to the greatest of heights.

# **QARMA (QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER)**

1. Is the legalization of specific narcotics a viable solution for the benefit of all parties involved?
2. What are feasible solutions to the prevalent organized crime in the region?
3. What measures could be taken to regulate drug flow in and out of the countries in the region?
4. What steps could be taken to regulate drug flow internal to the countries?
5. What are ways to combat the overarching problems caused by the influence and power drug cartels possess over local authorities and international distribution of illegal substances?

# RESEARCH LINKS

- [A History of the Drug War | Drug Policy Alliance](#)
- <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/mexicos-long-war-drugs-crime-and-cartels>
- [Drug Trafficking - United Nations and the Rule of Law](#)
- [Timeline: America's War on Drugs : NPR](#)
- [Overview: Decriminalisation vs legalisation - Alcohol and Drug Foundation](#)
- [The UN Drug Control Conventions | Transnational Institute](#)

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961](#)
- [UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST ILLICIT TRAFFIC IN NARCOTIC DRUGS AND PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES, 1988](#)
- [The Commission on Narcotic Drugs](#)
- [The Controlled Substances Act.](#)
- [united nations convention against transnational organized crime and the protocols thereto | unodc](#)
- [UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION AGAINST CORRUPTION](#)
- [Drug trafficking and the financing of terrorism](#)
- [The Pharmaceutical Industry and the Future of Drug Development](#)

# BIBLIOGRAPHY

- [Mexico's Long War: Drugs, Crime, and the Cartels | Council on Foreign Relations](#)
- [The Real Truth On Counterfeit Drugs](#)
- [How the United States Fueled a Global Drug War, and Why It Must End - Open Society Foundations](#)
- [China and synthetic drugs: Geopolitics trumps counter narcotics cooperation](#)
- [Sinaloa cartel: Shootout in Mexico City raises fears of more narco violence | International | EL PAÍS English Edition](#)

