

# MUN

## UNODC BACKGROUND GUIDE

AUSMUN 2021



AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF SHARJAH

# DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH WELCOME LETTER

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Dear Delegates and Faculty Advisors,

It is my utmost pleasure to welcome you to the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations (AUSMUN) 2021. As an organization led by the students of AUS, AUSMUN has had the privilege of hosting some of the biggest and most diverse MUN conferences in this region. Our 2020 conference saw over 1000 delegate registrations from more than 45 national and international institutions!

Adapting to a New Normal, Promoting Resilience: given the turbulent year of 2020, there was no other theme which could have fit our present conditions better. A small outbreak in Wuhan exactly a year back has now trickled down into a global catastrophe which has two million dead, leaving a trail of broken lives in its wake. Looking at the severely distorted life that has become our 'new normal', some may question whether it could all have been avoided. Whether we could have been better prepared. And the broader goal of our conference is to do exactly that: teach the upcoming generation to question current policies in the hopes of preventing another similar global catastrophe.

This background guide has been formulated by your chairs along with the research team to provide you with a concise overview of the topics chosen.

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The guide is initially divided into two sections based on the two topics and is further split into logical components. Firstly, the Summary and History section acts as an introduction to the issue. Secondly, the Discourse on the Issue section establishes a link between the issue, its implications, significance, and the United Nations Charter. Lastly, the Past International Organization (IO) Actions and Latest Developments section elaborates on the previous actions that have been taken, which can be used by delegates as a stepping stone to come up with their own solutions to the issues. At the end of each topic, delegates will find sections of questions and suggestions that aim to guide the process of research.

Delegates are greatly encouraged to expand beyond the guide and research about their country and topics in order to construct well founded arguments during debate. The delegate handbook contains a number of tips on how to research and addresses a vast array of common concerns. Finally, let me use this opportunity to extend my gratitude to all those who have helped create the document you are reading right now: Your wonderful moderators, the AUSMUN Research Team, and not to mention the AUSMUN Media team who have done an incredible job in designing and formatting the Background Guides.

I wish you the very best in preparing for the conference. If you have any queries at all, or need any specific help in researching for your topics, do not hesitate to contact [research@ausmun.com](mailto:research@ausmun.com)

Sincerely,  
Julia Jose  
Director of Research  
AUSMUN 2021

# MODERATORS

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Tala Al Kadri

Ajay Sunil



Fareha Khan

Zainab Jamil

# DEAR DELEGATES,

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## Welcome Letter

The chairs of the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) in the American University of Sharjah Model United Nations 2021 (AUSMUN21) are delighted and honored to welcome you to the committee that is going to be overflowed with knowledge, debates, and productivity. This conference is all about letting students grow and providing them the opportunity of making friends and relations with people that share common interests.

The United Nations Office of Drugs and Crimes discusses issues about the drug market, terrorism, corruption among other major global affairs. It was founded in 1997 by merging two sectors of the United Nations, for more efficiency and capability to examine international scale situations. The goal and purpose of this committee is to eliminate drug and crime-related dangers and crises among nations to achieve better and safer living standards worldwide.

As the chairs of this committee, we are looking forward to seeing each one of you, whether virtually or in real life. We expect each one of the delegates to put in their maximum effort to achieve beneficial, entertaining, and memorable experiences as a team.

For any inquiries or concerns about the conference, please do not hesitate to contact us through the following email:  
[UNODC.AUSMUN2021@gmail.com](mailto:UNODC.AUSMUN2021@gmail.com)

AUTHORS OF THE BACKGROUND GUIDES  
SHAMMA, TALA, AND AJAY

# OVERVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was formed in 1997 under the United Nations Secretariat, which is one of the six UN organs. UNODC's purpose is to address global issues that involve drugs, corruption, terrorism, and organized crime. It strives to bring world peace, security, and justice. Besides that, the office is committed to accommodating people with proper health and sustainable well-being necessities. They manage to do all that by offering practical assistance, and they try to take action by encouraging transnational approaches. To elaborate on the issues, UNODC is responsible for the prevention and justice of crime, whether it is physical or cyber, and terrorism. It also handles trafficking issues like human and drug trafficking, smuggling, prevention, and treatment. Moreover, firearms, falsified medical products, money laundering, naval crime and piracy, and wildlife crime are also some of the major issues they tackle. UNODC operates in over 80 countries with 115 field offices and more than 2000 people working with them worldwide. It also works with many governmental and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Furthermore, 40 member states have been elected by the Economic and Social Council which include 12 African states, 9 Asian states, 8 Latin American and Caribbean states, 4 Eastern European states, 7 Western European and other states (UNODC.org, n.d.).

## Summary and History of issue

According to the UNODC, the act of drug trafficking is defined as “a global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution, and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition laws” (para.1).

Based on Booklet 2 of the World Drug Report (WDR) (2020), extensive research done by the UNODC, drug trafficking is an important issue to address as it is the reason for drugs being widely spread, consumed by a quarter of a billion people of the world’s population, and making over 35 million people suffer from drug use disorders (p.10). It also causes numerous health and security concerns. Starting with health, drugs can have a negative impact on an individual’s social development, mental health disorders, hepatitis-related liver cancer, overdose, and premature death (p.35). As for security concerns, the UNODC confirmed that drug trafficking poses a major international security and peace threat, such as political and social instability, to the point where the security council had to intervene.

Focusing on Latin or South America, drug trafficking is one of the largest and one of the most concerning organized crimes there. In addition, since drugs are mostly trafficked by international criminal organizations (ICOs), it is normally associated with violent crimes and other illegal activities. One of the most famous ICOs in Latin America is Medellin Cartel, a criminal organization that was founded by the infamous drug lord, Pablo Escobar. Statistics by the WDR prove that annual consumption of drugs in Latin America is extremely high, mostly amongst young adults. It is reported that cannabis, amphetamine and opium, ecstasy, cocaine, and mostly heroin are most common in Latin America. (p.11). Moreover, Booklet 3 of the WDR (2020) shows that 55% of the world count for cocaine was seized mid-trafficking in Latin American countries to be

supplied to consumers across the world (p.26). Moreover, the United States has been the largest consumer market and has the highest demand for illicit drugs. Bagley (2013) says this demand is the reason why drug ICOs in Latin America are able to provide such a large supply of drugs such as cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. Bagley states an estimate by the UNODC reports almost \$150 billion is spent on drugs and \$37 billion is spent on cocaine in the United States alone (para.2).

Recent and past developments by the UNODC have taken place regarding the issue of drug trafficking. In the past, three major international drug control treaties have been created to provide a legal framework for drug trafficking. Those of which are the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961/ amended 1972), the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971), and the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988). The office has formed many partnerships with organizations and other UN councils. For example, partnering with the UN Security council, Interpol, and Transparency International. They have also started initiatives, like the Youth Initiative and Crimjust.

### **Discourse on the issue**

The drug trafficking network set up in South America has a devastating impact on several communities, economies, and governments' political structures. The skyrocketing murders and crimes in Latin America, corruption among government officials – based upon drug-trafficking and smuggling charges, the power struggles between the various drug cartels in the regions, the blooming drug market in the US, the vast amounts of immigrants flooding from South America to the US and so much more are just some of the various ways this network has affected our society. All this shows that the problems run deeper than we thought, and merely trying to eliminate the cartels and banning drug consumption will not lead to a solution.

The 1980 US-led "War on Drugs" was a pivotal moment for drug trafficking, where the US pushed for restrictive international drug treaties and eradicated the production of coca plants and the sale of cocaine abroad. The US provided military, financial, and political support to the Latin American governments to aid them in the eradication of coca and to crack down on urban drug businesses. However, these policies had an adverse effect on the marginalized members of society, leading to increased violence within these communities, and the formation of youth gangs, made up of youth influenced by the high levels of social, political, economic, and personal violence. The cartels are able to move operations between countries effortlessly, as seen in the mid 1990s when coca production shifted to Colombia as Peru's security situation improved, and then again back to Peru upon the success of Plan Colombia (a US drug-combating initiative) in the 2000s.

Until now, the global drug policy was primarily based upon strict prohibition and the criminalization of drug production, cultivation, possession, use, and trade – to create a drug-free world. However, these efforts have failed and have also undermined the measures taken in order to tackle poverty, improve access to health, protect the environment, reduce violence, and defend the human rights of the marginalized communities worldwide. Policies need to be made and reformed in order to achieve sustainable development and fully achieve the SDGs.

### **Past Actions by UN, International Organizations (IO) and NGOs**

Latin America is known to be overpowered by illegal drug organizations that are the main supply to the United States which consumes drugs in billions of USD per year. Although this issue is still ongoing, the matter was tackled in different ways to resolve or at least keep it as limited as possible. (SMART) a "Synthetics Monitoring: Analyses, Reporting and Trends" global program launched in 2008 to support the fight against illegal drug usage was and still is one of

the strategies used to monitor the spread of illicit drugs. In 2011, SMART was implemented in Latin America alongside the Inter-American Drug Abuse Control Commission (CICAD). The benefits of this embedment are first, it provides a more authentic and detailed generation and analysis of data about drug amount consumption and spending. It also uses those data analytics to perform workshops that give more details and specifications on how to deal and handle the different types of drugs (The Global Smart Programme, 2018). Another tactic was by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and World Health Organization (WHO), they joined forces to discuss global illegal usage of drugs to mention those specific countries in Latin America came up with Early Warning Systems (EWSs) and infused new strategies to handle NPS (World Health Organization, 2018). NPS stands for New psychoactive substances which simulates the same feelings a person gets while consuming drugs such as cocaine and heroin. To perform and tackle tasks more efficiently Vienna and New York's NGOs committee on drugs VNGOC and NYNGOC have combined forces to work hand in hand with the UNODC civil team for a while now in different regions including Latin America. It has been a great help in eliminating drug organization and maintaining damage control (Civil Society Task Force, 2016).

Despite all the great efforts coming from huge organizations that obtain other issues with equal importance, it is crucial that the GOs in Latin America provide emphasized attention and concern on such a circulated, obvious, and dangerous problem.

## **Questions The Discussion and The Resolution Should Address**

1. Should there be a strict ban on the production and consumption of drugs, or should there be reforms for the legalization of particular drugs – with the ultimate aim to create a legal market for said drug?
2. How far-reaching are the effects of drug trafficking and how best do we tackle said issues?
3. Would reforms to immigration and providing well-run temporary work programs for marginalized civilians and migrants assist in the elimination of drug trafficking?

## **Suggestions for further research**

- Balloon effect – drug cartels
- US “War on Drugs” and the aftermath
- Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961/ amended 1972)
- Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971)
- UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988)
- Expansion of Latin American cartels into other regions
- Countries that legalize certain recreational drugs

### Summary and History of issue

The issue of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and organ cartels pose a serious threat to society's future sustainable development and will result in many consequences. According to the UNODC, human trafficking is the illegal act of exploiting people through improper means such as using deception, fraud, force, or a combination of these (para.1). Human trafficking is done with the goal of sexual exploitation, forced labor purposes, kidnapping children for the sake of selling them to infertile couples, and more. Ironically, many are not aware of the fact that human trafficking has been around for centuries, but it had a different reference, which is slavery. Next, migrant smuggling as described by the UNODC, 'involves the procurement for financial or other material benefits of illegal entry of a person into a State of which that person is not a national or resident' (para.2). Migrants that are smuggled into a state or country are undocumented people who seek refuge and are searching for better opportunities, however, the consequence here is that they are illegally entering into another country's borders. If caught, they would either end up in prison and most likely be deported out of the country. The smuggler will also be facing legal charges if caught. As for organ cartels, they are groups of criminals or even ICOs that work in the business of trafficking organs and selling them on the black market.

All these three issues mentioned above are similar to one another in terms of the targeted victims. These traffickers, smugglers, and cartels all prey on people who are facing desperate situations, financially unstable, and minorities; they also specifically target children, young males, and women. They are able to deceive these people by promising them a better life and opportunities. However, according to the UNODC, there are differences between trafficking and smuggling. Smuggling requires consent, does not involve physical exploitation, it is always transnational,

and profits are made through payments from the migrant to the smuggler. As for Human trafficking, consent is not taken and it is often done through deception and abuse, ongoing exploitation in every sort of way could be done in the same country or transnational, profits are earned when the trafficker delivers to the requesting party (humanrightsfirst.org, 2014).

The UNODC has been coming up with many preventions, protection, and healing campaigns to help address the issue of human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and organ cartels. They have partnered with NGOs on projects and initiatives such as community-led activities and community vigilance projects. They have also established the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2003), the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air (2004), and the Convention and Trafficking in Persons Protocol in combating trafficking in persons for organ removal (2011).

### **Discourse on the Issue**

Human trafficking, migrant smuggling, and organ cartels have several implications for the SDGs, specifically SDG 5, 8, 16. The most direct goal focusing on the issue of human trafficking is target 8.7, which calls for nations to "Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labor in all its forms." (UNICEF USA, 2016).

When discussing the issue of human trafficking and migrant smuggling, we must understand the difference between the two, as mentioned in the prior section. What often occurs is that trafficking victims may not receive the services, legal redress, or protection they are entitled to and may be vulnerable to being re-exploited. It is vital that current policies and laws show this difference and provide for the individual in either case. Under normal circumstances, human trafficking and migrant smuggling are complex activities difficult to detect; however, the effect of COVID-19 has pushed these operations even further into the dark and its victims away from any detection and assistance.

These operations are active worldwide, from Central America to North America, the Horn of Africa to South Africa, and Europe. In the US alone, there are approx. 22,000 trafficking victims and survivors, 11,000 situations of human trafficking, 4,000 traffickers, and 2,000 suspicious businesses (POLARIS, 2019). Despite the border closures and lockdowns placed by the countries, migrants have still not been discouraged from reaching or attempting to reach these destinations.

On the other hand, the illegal organ trade is a relatively smaller operation; yet it has been slowly expanding over the past decade. In 2017, Global Financial Integrity reported that the estimated annual worth of organ trafficking is 840 million - 1.7 billion dollars. The international community has set up several declarations and policies condemning organ trade, including the Council of Europe's Convention on Human Rights and Biomedicine (1997), the Optional Protocol Concerning Transplantation of Organs and Tissues of Human Origin (2002), and the Declaration of Istanbul (2008).

### **Past Actions by UN, International Organizations (IO) and NGOs**

One of the most recent acts done against human trafficking and migrant smuggling by UNODC hand in hand with European Union (EU) and International Organization of Migration (IOM) is the (GLO.ACT Asia and the Middle East) which is a four-year plan starting in 2018 and intended to end in 2022. It has a capital of 12 million euros fully funded by the EU to be implemented in the 'Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, Islamic Republic of Iran, Republic of Iraq and Islamic Republic of Pakistan'. This project was influenced by the effectiveness of (GLO.ACT) throughout 2015 to 2019 and its purpose is to aid law forces in the specified countries through strategy and policy development, harmonization, and corporation, as well as supported direct sufferers of human trafficking and defenseless migrants through emphasizing the documentation of identification, and providing protection (UNODC on trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants, 2018).

As the World Health Organization (WHO) and The Transplantation Society (TTS) involved themselves in the issue of organ trafficking with the help of Commercial Living Donors (CLD) of the Coalition for Organ-Failure Solutions (COFS) for field research, they have come up with conferences to raise awareness on the issue in regions that have increased and concentrated organ cartelizing, for example in February 2007 one of the Philippines newspapers announced over 3000 kidney sales have been issued which cause the WHO to hold a discussion in Manilla (Budiani-Saberi, D. A., & Delmonico, F.L).

A major role comes from the health sector where the professional members work in honesty and ensure patients do not resort to the path of organ trafficking. Those primary factors resulted in the Resolution “WHA57/18 adopted by the Fifty-seventh World Health Assembly” occurred on May the 22nd, 2004, WHO encouraged the members present in the discussion to protect and assist the most vulnerable in the state since they are the most exposed to the issue (Trafficking in persons for organ removal, 2008).

## **Questions The Discussion and The Resolution Should Address**

1. What new reforms or policies should be introduced to tackle human trafficking and migrant smuggling during the COVID pandemic?
2. How do we recognize the difference between human trafficking and migrant smuggling in laws and policies, and how do we provide protection for victims of each?
3. What focuses, other than sustainable development, should be integrated in educational systems? Should organ sales be legalized? And if so, what regulations must be kept in place? Is there any country where sales are legalized, and if so, what lessons can be learned from them?

### **Suggestions for further research**

- Legalizing organ trade
- Effect of COVID 19 on human trafficking and migrant smuggling
- United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto
- Declaration of Istanbul (2008)
- GLO.ACT

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