



International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

MUNUC 33

ONLINE



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CHAIR LETTER

Hi everyone,

Welcome to INTERPOL at MUNUC 33 Online! I am Jack Huguenin and am very much looking forward to serving as your chair at the conference. I certainly hope that your weekend at MUNUC 33 will be well worth it just as much for you as for me. As of writing this background guide, it remains to be seen how in-person MUNUC 33 will play out. I hope that all of you are staying healthy and making the most of high school, regardless of how disappointing it may seem.

I am a second-year majoring in economics and political science at the University of Chicago. Outside of MUNUC, I am on the crew team and am a member of the Pi Kappa Alpha fraternity on campus. I have also been a member of the standup comedy club. Overall, I have very much enjoyed my time at UChicago. If you ever have any questions about the University of Chicago, college life, or the college admissions process, feel free to ask.

I believe that the International Criminal Police Organization (commonly referred to as INTERPOL) is one of the most relevant MUNUC 33 committees. As countries worldwide engage in a national conversation about the role of police and police techniques, the role of a body like INTERPOL is larger than ever. Our topics, pirates and drug trafficking, stand out to me as exciting and engaging topics. Police, drugs, and pirates? Who's not signing up for that? Having worked at a district attorney's office this past summer, I also find police and criminal activity particularly interesting.

I have been involved with Model UN for five years. I attended numerous conferences as a delegate in high school and last year served as the moderator for the Special Political and Decolonization Committee at MUNUC 32. Model UN has certainly improved my public speaking, negotiation, confidence, and leadership skills. More importantly, however, I have great memories from spending weekends at conferences and have made many friends through MUNUC. I hope that by coming to MUNUC 33 Online, you develop these same skills and relationships that have kept me in Model UN for so long.

My email address is listed below. Feel free to reach out with any questions about position papers, the conference, or anything else. I look forward to seeing you all!

Jack Huguenin

Chair of INTERPOL, MUNUC 33 Online

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INTERPOL: ORGANIZATION BACKGROUND

When framed as “an international police organization fighting international crime rings,” INTERPOL sounds pretty exciting. The notion of INTERPOL tracking criminals across the globe has influenced thriller movies like *Now You See Me*, *24 Hours to Live*, and *Red Notice*. Needless to say, more interesting than your average MUN committee. This being said, INTERPOL operates very differently from how movies or the media might portray the organization. This intro is designed to give you a barebones overview of INTERPOL’s goals, abilities, and methods.

This committee will simulate the annual meeting of the General Assembly at the INTERPOL headquarters in Lyon, France. Currently, INTERPOL has 194 member states. The DPRK (North Korea) is notably not a member present, yet to enliven discussions in our committee, North Korea will participate as a voting member.

One of INTERPOL’s main objectives is to facilitate information sharing between police departments in different countries. This objective is largely accomplished through the use of I-24/7, a secure communications system. This system allows countries to update and access secure databases of information on criminals, crime routes, and trafficking networks. I-24/7 can be accessed at every national headquarters, and INTERPOL is working to ensure authorities have access to the databases at airports and other key border access points. “Information” could range from criminal background checks to vital investigative leads on international organized crime syndicates. I-24/7 is constantly updated and constantly being made as accessible as possible.¹

INTERPOL’s operating model consists of 8 tenets:²

- Capacity building and police training

¹ “General Legal Activities INTERPOL Washington,” General Legal Activities INTERPOL Washington § (2018).

² INTERPOL. “What Is INTERPOL?”

- Operating a central command and coordination center (Lyon, France) as well as multiple regional centers around the world
- Fugitive investigative support
- Police data management--1-24/7 and 18 individual police databases
- Forensic support—INTERPOL maintains databases of fingerprints, stolen passports, and leads accessible in real time
- Criminal analysis
- Specialized projects
- Continuously innovating and developing cutting-edge policing practices

Many of these tenets are interrelated. In particular, many “special projects” like the ones you will see described in the background guide involve many of the above tenets. Your actions in response to pirate and drug threats will likely involve many of these facets as well.

INTERPOL quickly notifies police forces worldwide about potential situations and suspects through a system of international notices. These notices are assigned specific colors based on the nature of the threat. For example, a Red Notice indicates a wanted individual, a Blue Notice indicates a person associated with a crime, etc.³ A basic intro to the INTERPOL notice system can be found at <https://www.interpol.int/en/How-we-work/Notices/About-Notices>.

Finally, I wish to clear up some misconceptions about INTERPOL. INTERPOL agents are not “international policemen.” Rather, the organization helps local police to contain and track crime. In this regard, INTERPOL employees do make arrests or engage in “missions” per se. The biggest

³ “About Notices,” INTERPOL, accessed September 7, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/How-we-work/Notices/About-Notices>.

benefit of INTERPOL is that tracking international crime is difficult on a local or even national level; cultural, linguistic, and legal barriers make such a task hard.⁴

I hope this introduction to INTERPOL will help guide you as you read through the two topics and decide how INTERPOL can best tackle them. This being said, the better you understand how INTERPOL's works, the better prepared you will be to articulate your ideas in committee and critique or support those of others.

⁴ Ted Bromund, "What Not To Believe About Interpol-Exploding Five Myths," November 26, 2018, <https://www.justsecurity.org/61599/interpol-exploding-myths/>.

TOPIC A: PIRACY

Statement of the Problem

Piracy has come a long way since the days of Blackbeard, Henry Morgan, and Sir Francis Drake. Modern pirates now don night-vision goggles; carry AK-47s, heavy machine guns, and rocket launchers; navigate with GPS devices; and use sophisticated speedboats mounted with heavy mortars to target ships. Recently, pirates have garnered international attention in East Africa, West Africa, Southeast Asia, the Caribbean, East Asia, and the Indian Ocean. Consequently, despite the terror and hassle that pirates cause to international trade, policing and development practices have not done nearly enough to disincentivize pirates from continuing the practice. Given international organizations' failure (including INTERPOL) to eradicate piracy, INTERPOL convenes to address permanent solutions to piracy.

Root Causes of Piracy

There are three major hotbeds of international piracy: The Gulf of Guinea, East Africa, and the Strait of Malacca.⁵ The Horn of Africa was also a major site of pirate attacks, yet instances of piracy there have been largely quelled in the past five years. These three regions share many economic, political, and social conditions that make piracy an appealing economic choice.

The predominant root cause of piracy is the lack of economic development in piracy-ridden regions. The three regions mentioned above suffer from high populations and low resources, which have caused generational unemployment and economic insecurity. Indonesia (bordering the Strait of Malacca) and Nigeria (bordering the Gulf of Guinea) rank 99th and 133rd respectively in GDP per capita.⁶ Both governmental institutions as well as private ones have done little and can do little to

⁵ "10 Maritime Piracy Affected Areas around the World," Marine Insight, October 7, 2019, <https://www.marineinsight.com/marine-piracy-marine/10-maritime-piracy-affected-areas-around-the-world/>.

⁶ "GDP per Capita," accessed June 21, 2020, <https://www.worldometers.info/gdp/gdp-per-capita/>.

alleviate these problems. Rural communities have been hit hardest, as they are farther away from governmental influence.

Because development, education, and capital are scarce, fishing remains the primary industry in rural coastal regions. However, fishing is becoming a decreasingly viable economic option. Local fishermen must compete with fishing giants primarily from Europe, Thailand, Japan, China, and Russia. These trawlers pollute the waters, deplete the fishing supply, and can push out local fishermen. Other oil tankers and drillers further pollute and deplete fish stocks. A depleted fish stock means decreased revenues for already poor regions. Although some of the foreign trawlers' activity is legal, much of the illegal fishing that is done goes unpunished. Many local fishermen find that there is no legal, profitable alternative to piracy. Additionally, in countries ravaged by terrorism and/or civil war (like Somalia and Nigeria), it is very easy to obtain the small arms and light weapons necessary for piracy. Fishing boats called dhows are also easily converted into pirate motherships by arming the boat and seamen with guns.⁷

Government corruption is a second cause of piracy, both directly and indirectly. As mentioned above, foreign companies fish in the same waters as local fishermen. These companies frequently land fishing contracts by bribing national officials or offering them a share in the profits. In the Gulf of Guinea, officials give similar contracts to petroleum and gasoline companies for the rights to drill. In 2019, INTERPOL agents aided the capture of Mohamed Aboke, Nigeria's attorney general, for money laundering and awarding the rights to Nigerian oil fields to Shell.⁸ Incidents like this are commonplace. Similarly, officials often turn a blind eye to piracy when money exchanges hands. During the height of Somali piracy from 2008-2013, numerous Somali officials were expected to be on pirates' payrolls.⁹ Despite the numerous officials that are sentenced for corruption charges every year, corruption still aids and abets the root causes of piracy and its continued existence. Any

⁷ James Kraska, *Contemporary Maritime Piracy: International Law, Strategy, and Diplomacy at Sea* (Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger, 2011), 45.

⁸ Shi Yinglun, ed., "Former Nigerian Attorney General Arrested, to Face Corruption Charges," accessed June 21, 2020, http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2019-12/20/c_138646834.htm.

⁹ James Caponiti, "Piracy Against U.S.-Flag Vessels," US Department of Transportation, April 27, 2017, <https://www.transportation.gov/testimony/piracy-against-us-flag-vessels>.

comprehensive solution to piracy will need to include solutions to combat corruption, both on the surface level and at the source.

Moreover, governments running on tight budgets have limited oversight over pirates in their country. Due to data collection challenges by these governments, the total number of pirate attacks may be underreported by 50-60%.¹⁰ In some cases, governments might turn a blind eye if piracy causes economic growth in the poorest parts of a country. These governments frequently lack the resources and training to effectively pursue pirates, discouraging any anti-piracy action.¹¹

Finally, legal and political constraints also hinder anti-piracy efforts. For example, it can be difficult to distinguish fishing boats from pirate vessels, especially since many motherships are converted fishing boats. Firing on a pirate mothership that turns out to be an innocent fishing boat can result in terrible consequences: if the boat is domestic, the act furthers distrust of the government (a common cause of piracy). If the boat is international, the act heightens tensions between the two countries.¹² Bureaucracy furthers the problem: because countries, especially those near the Gulf of Guinea, value the sovereignty of their waterspace, current rules require navies to notify a bordering country if they pursue pirates into foreign waters. By the time calls are approved, pirates have frequently escaped into their bases in the Niger River deltas, which are complex, shallow, and largely unnavigable by large ships.¹³ Although this practice maintains sovereignty and prevents countries from scaring others with their military presence, it hampers the ability to effectively pursue pirates.

Pirate Attacks

There are two types of piracy: small-scale operations that tend to take small amounts of cash and assets from a ship, and criminal rings that hold hostages for ransom and sometimes attempt to resell the ships' cargo, whether it be foodstuffs, oil, or manufactured goods.¹⁴ Much of the international

¹⁰ Noah Lombardo, "Underreporting of Crimes at Sea: Reasons, Consequences, and Potential Solutions," Oceans Beyond Piracy, November 21, 2014, <http://oceansbeyondpiracy.org/publications/underreporting-crimes-sea-reasons-consequences-and-potential-solutions>.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Reuters, "Somali Pirates Hijack Dhow to Use as 'Mothership'," gCaptain, March 24, 2017, <https://gcaptain.com/somali-pirates-hijack-dhow-to-use-as-mothership/>.

¹³ Lombardo, "Underreporting of Crimes at Sea,"

¹⁴ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "Transnational Organized Crime Threat Assessment." UNODC: Vienna, March 26, 2010.

concern about piracy has to do with the latter. In a typical attack, a pirate mothership serves as a launching pad for fast skiffs, which can approach and board large ships and tankers. Motherships allow pirates to carry out attacks at ever-increasing distances from their borders. Once the pirates board a ship, they frequently take any cash assets, hostages, and any relevant equipment.

Dealing with these attacks comes with costs. Both civilians and pirates could be killed, especially hostages. Pirates can use hostages' welfare as a bargaining chip against governments and navies, knowing that governments will face political repercussions if a citizen dies. Indeed, governments with citizens held hostage by pirates may not want to take military action for fear that their hostages will be killed. Additionally, attacking pirates invokes increased costs of security and naval missions to locate, attack, and permanently destroy pirate bases. Finally, western governments may note that attacking pirates may lead to the rise of Islamist extremism and anti-Western sentiment, especially in Somalia and West Africa. Boko Haram, for example, funds many pirate operations in Nigeria. The terrorism these groups carry out and the potential rise of radical governments is often a much larger concern for INTERPOL and the UN.¹⁵

Piracy's Threat to Navigation and Commerce

Maritime shipping is vital to the world economy. Oil, rice, coal, cars, and ores are a small selection of the goods that are transported to different markets via ship every year. Piracy hinders this important part of world trade, and the threat of an attack prevents some companies from undertaking trade voyages. It is vital that ships can pass through the Gulf of Aden, the Strait of Malacca, and the Gulf of Guinea unharmed, because these waters are critical points on global trade routes. For example, pirate attacks have already forced some companies to spend extra money going around Africa rather than risk a pirate attack in the Gulf of Aden while trying to reach Egypt's Suez Canal.¹⁶ In order to keep the price of consumer goods reasonable, shipping must be facilitated in these regions. With current piracy problems it has been difficult to limit the costs of commerce.

¹⁵ Kyung Lah and Kathleen Johnston, "Kidnapped Captain Told Ransoms May Go to Boko Haram," CNN (Cable News Network, June 25, 2014), <https://www.cnn.com/2014/06/24/world/africa/nigeria-kidnapped-captain/index.html>.

¹⁶ Bowden, Anna, Kaija Hurlburt, Eamon Aloyo, Charles Marts, and Andrew Lee. "The Economic Cost of Maritime Piracy." Oceans Beyond Piracy, December 2010.

Additionally, piracy forces governments to spend scarce resources on naval patrols and law enforcement to ensure safe passage of ships. These costs leave fewer resources for federal investment in the economy, exacerbating the root causes of piracy.

Financial Losses

In 2010, the Cost of Piracy Project determined that piracy costs the global economy anywhere between 7 and 12 billion dollars every year.¹⁷ Three years later, the World Bank and the UN Office for Drugs and Crime (UNODC) determined that piracy cost around \$18 billion every year. These costs come in the form of ransom payments, insurance premiums, naval patrols, and others. Moreover, piracy's effects reverberate throughout economies. Since ships transport a variety of goods around the world every year, consumer prices for many products rise worldwide during years with high pirate activity. Ultimately, both developing and developed countries experience the effects of piracy, including countries who see zero instances of piracy on their own ships every year. These numbers may not even tell the whole story; the International Maritime Bureau estimates that 50% of piracy incidents go unreported every year.¹⁸

The Human Cost of Piracy

Economic costs are not everything. Hostages report horrific treatment at the hands of pirates, such as being forced to eat rats and grass, living in horrific conditions, being used as human shields in Somali civil wars, and torture.¹⁹ Additionally, treatment of hostages has become increasingly violent as pirates attempt to obtain larger ransoms more quickly. Pirates often contact families with threatening messages, creating stress and pressure to pay ransoms. These human costs make eliminating piracy all the more pressing. Additionally, stories like these may have a strong impact on voters, so current leaders may find it advantageous to act against piracy.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ The Maritime Executive. "IMB: Gulf of Guinea Led the World for Piracy in 2018." <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/imb-gulf-of-guinea-led-the-world-for-piracy-in-2018>.

¹⁹ "Somali Pirates' Hostages 'Ate Rats' to Survive," BBC News (BBC, October 24, 2016), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-37748237>.

Effects on Humanitarian Aid

One of piracy's most ironic problems is that humanitarian aid, generally geared towards alleviating the root causes of piracy, is hindered by pirate vessels. UN and non-governmental organization (NGO) boats frequently cannot reach coastlines for fear of being intercepted. Like any other organization, humanitarian organizations and the UN face increased costs of conducting missions when piracy is rampant. As a key example, in 2011, vital food shipments to Somalia were reduced due to pirate activity in the midst of a drought.²⁰ Therefore, combating piracy is fundamentally a humanitarian problem that plays a larger role in international development and aid delivery.

UN Definition of Piracy and How International Cooperation can be Compromised

The UN defines piracy as follows.²¹ Although the definition is long, consider each intricacy when drafting working papers. While the definition might appear tedious, it gives insight as to why fostering international cooperation on piracy is often difficult.

(1) "Piracy consists of any of the following acts:

(a) any illegal acts of violence or detention, or any act of depredation, committed for private ends by the crew or the passengers of a private ship or a private aircraft, and directed:

(i) on the high seas, against another ship or aircraft, or against persons or property on board such ship or aircraft;

(ii) against a ship, aircraft, persons or property in a place outside the jurisdiction of any State

(b) any act of voluntary participation in the operation of a ship or of an aircraft with knowledge of facts making it a pirate ship or aircraft

(c) any act of inciting or of intentionally facilitating an act described in a) or b).

²⁰ From Robyn Curnow, "Piracy 'Delaying Vital Food Aid from Reaching Somalia'," CNN (Cable News Network, November 3, 2011), <https://www.cnn.com/2011/11/03/business/mpa-piracy/index.html>.

²¹ "Piracy Under International Law," United Nations (United Nations), accessed June 15, 2020, <https://www.un.org/Depts/los/piracy/piracy.htm>

Let's examine this a bit. First, piracy must be done for private gain--piracy does not include actions led by state-funded ships. Secondly, piracy must be conducted in international space or waters. This second tenet is important—as I will discuss later, the inability to coordinate police responses within national borders makes it difficult to effectively eliminate piracy.²²

²² Henri Fouche and Jacques Meyer, "Investigating Sea Piracy: Crime Scene Challenges," *WMU Journal of Maritime Affairs* 11, no. 1 (February 2012): pp. 33-50, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13437-012-0020-7>.

History of the Problem

Modern piracy first became a problem in the 1980s. Soon after, pirate attacks surged: from 1993 to 2003 piracy cases more than tripled, and cases peaked in 2011, when Somali piracy was at its height. Although international bodies have taken action and reduced pirate attacks since then, piracy remains an issue that significantly hinders potential international trade.

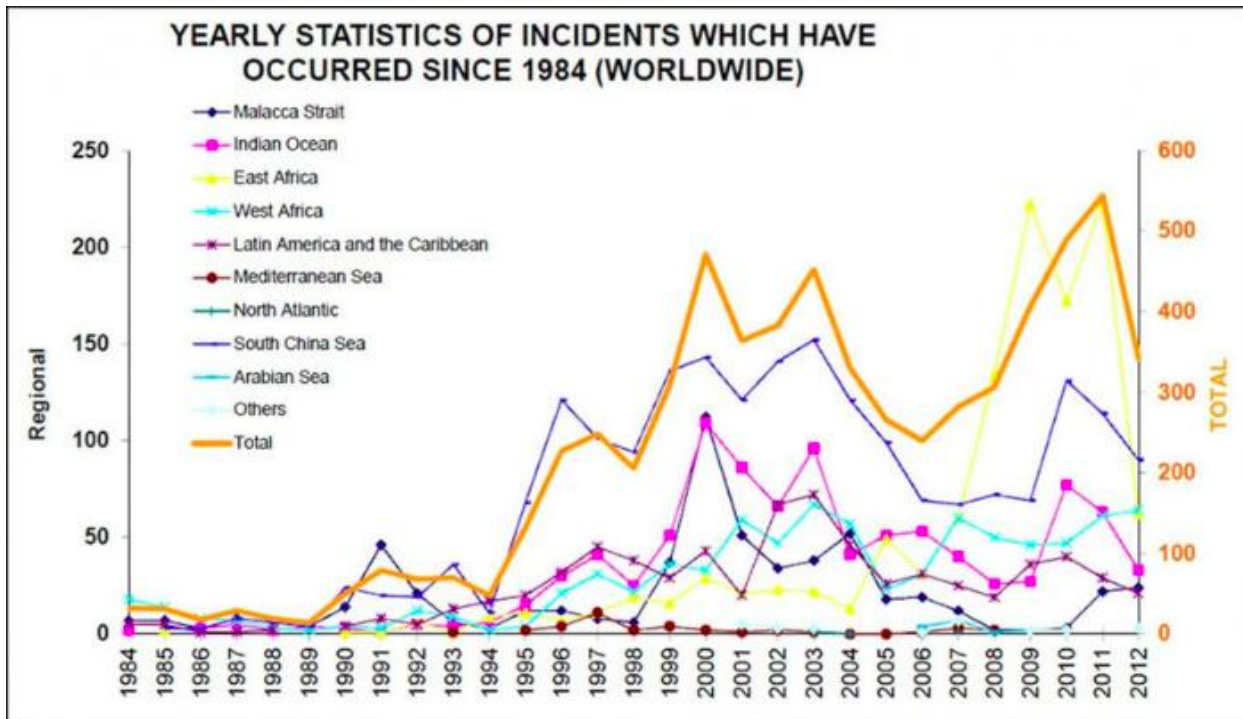


Figure 1: Piracy from 1984-2012. Source: Le Quoc Tien²³

²³ Le Quoc Tien, "Impact Of Piracy on Maritime Transport and Technical Solutions for Prevention," *International Journal of Civil Engineering and Technology*, n.d., pp. 958-959.

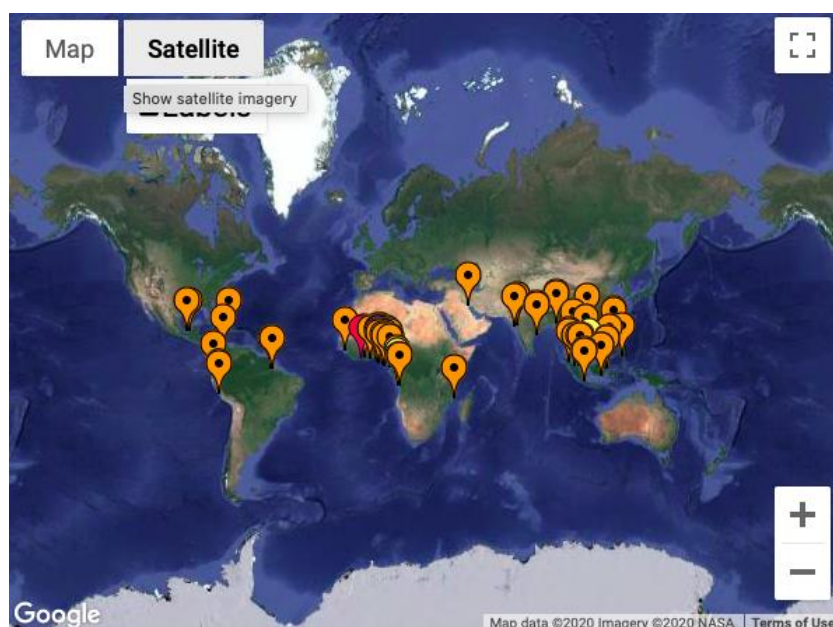


Figure 2: Pirate attacks in 2020. Source--International Chamber of Commerce²⁴

Somalia and the Gulf of Aden

In the 1980s, the Somali Civil War began as a rebellion against the military junta led by Siad Barre. Although Barre was overthrown in 1991, Somalia was unable to form a stable, internationally recognized government. Two decades of separatist movements, warlordism, and state collapse ensued. Although a transitional government (the Federal Government of Somalia) was formed in 2012, it still has little effective jurisdiction outside of Mogadishu, the capital. Terrorist groups like Al-Shabaab and independence movements in Somaliland (a de facto autonomous region in the north of Somalia) continue to threaten political stability and hinder chances for economic growth.²⁵

During the civil war, foreign fishing companies began to fish illegally in the Gulf of Aden, knowing that the Somali government lacked the resources to effectively police its waters. These large trawlers severely depleted fish stocks, disrupted traditional fish migration patterns, and caused

²⁴ "IMB Piracy & Armed Robbery Map 2020," ICC Commercial Crime Services, 2020, <https://www.icc-ccs.org/piracy-reporting-centre/live-piracy-map>.

²⁵ Somalia (Special Case). (2015). Retrieved July 05, 2020, from <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/countries/2015/243530.htm>

significant damage to the water's ecosystem.²⁶ There were also reports of companies chasing local fishermen out of the water. Given the economic hardships these boats caused, as well as the relative ease of acquiring guns, Somali coastal fishing communities began to conduct pirate attacks. Piracy and hostage-taking grew from a small industry into an extremely lucrative one, and Somali pirates began to attack cruise ships and commercial vessels as well as fishing boats. Oil tankers are particularly at risk given the value of their cargoes. Not only is the cargo valuable, but ransom payments for captured sailors are also high; Maran Tankers Management holds the record for the largest ransom paid to Somali pirates at \$9 million.²⁷ Former UN Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon hypothesized that "some of these [pirate] groups now rival established Somali authorities in terms of their military capabilities and resource bases."²⁸ This may be the case especially for pirates operating under Al-Shabaab in southern Somalia.²⁹

Since 2013, three major international naval task forces have entered the Gulf of Aden to counter pirate attacks. Combined Task Force 150, Combined Task Force 151 and the EU-led Operation Atalanta have deterred many Somali pirates since their inceptions. Although these patrols have been largely successful in eliminating Somali piracy, a UN Security Council resolution in 2017 continued to stress the need for free passage of ships in one of the world's most important waterways.³⁰ More on the international response to piracy will be discussed in the next section.

West Africa/Gulf of Guinea

Unlike Somali piracy which has been on the decline in the past decade, the Gulf of Guinea became the world's most pirate-infested sea in 2018 and has remained that way through 2020. Pirate attacks

²⁶ Raunek. "Causes of Maritime Piracy in Somalia Waters," October 13, 2019. <https://www.marineinsight.com/marine-piracy-marine/causes-of-piracy-in-somalia-waters/>.

²⁷ "Record Ransom Paid to Somali Pirates: DW: 19.01.2010," DW.COM (Deutsche Welle), accessed July 6, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/record-ransom-paid-to-somali-pirates/a-5142358>.

²⁸ "UN Claims Somali Government Part of the Piracy Problem," accessed July 7, 2020, <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/un-claims-somali-government-part-piracy-problem>.

²⁹ Sarah Childress, "Somali Militants Try Piracy to Fund Attacks," The Wall Street Journal (Dow Jones & Company, September 10, 2010), <https://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052748703720004575477491009472882>.

³⁰ "UN Security Council Urges 'Comprehensive Response' to Piracy off Somali Coast | UN News," United Nations (United Nations), accessed July 7, 2020, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2017/11/570172-un-security-council-urges-comprehensive-response-piracy-somali-coast>.

have largely been launched from Nigeria yet have expanded into neighboring countries, as shown in the figure below.³¹

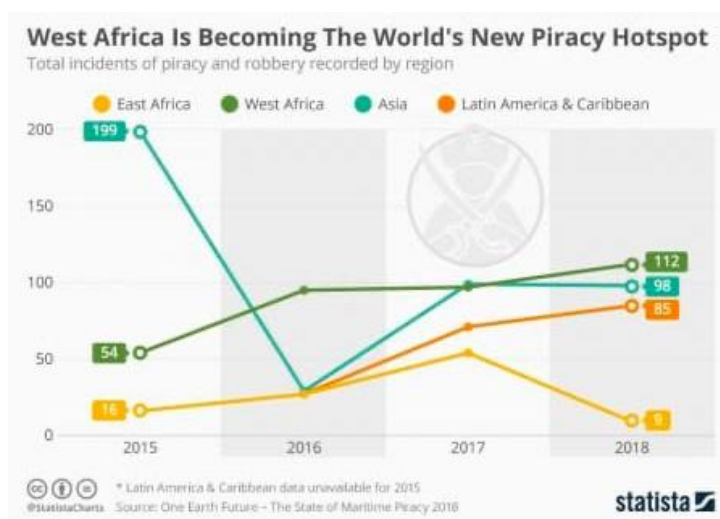


Figure 3: Piracy since 2015. Source: Statista

The Nigerian political and economic scene has provided fertile ground for piracy. Although oil production has boosted an already struggling economy, pollution has harmed Nigerian fish stocks. Fishing communities on the coast, much like in Somalia, have been devastated by the loss of fish as well as the increased competition from foreign fishing boats.³² The Nigerian government has been ineffective at enforcing fishing laws, and has come under scrutiny for corruption in granting licenses to certain companies.³³ Other corruption scandals including around prosecuting criminals have further reduced confidence in state actors to ameliorate the situation. Moreover, much of Nigeria is rife with terrorism, youth unemployment, smuggling, and ethnic and religious conflicts. The situation has made economic growth difficult, much like in Somalia.³⁴ With ships transporting up to

³¹ "The Gulf of Guinea Is Now the World's Worst Piracy Hotspot." *The Economist*, June 29, 2019.

<https://www.economist.com/international/2019/06/29/the-gulf-of-guinea-is-now-the-worlds-worst-piracy-hotspot>.

³² "Who Will Help Solve Africa's Piracy Problem in the Gulf of Guinea?: DW: 14.02.2020," DW.COM (Deutsche Welle), accessed July 7, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/who-will-help-solve-africas-piracy-problem-in-the-gulf-of-guinea/a-52367209>.

³³ Damir Kaletovic, "Shell May Finally Get Rid Of Disputed Nigerian Licenses," OilPrice.com, July 20, 2018, <https://oilprice.com/Latest-Energy-News/World-News/Shell-May-Finally-Get-Rid-Of-Disputed-Nigerian-Licenses.html>.

³⁴ Idowu Johnson, "(PDF) Piracy as Threat to Africa's Security and Economic Development," December 1, 2018, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/332111559_Piracy_as_Threat_to_Africa's_Security_and_Economic_Development.

40% of Europe's oil needs through the Gulf of Guinea, piracy seems an appealing way for some to earn cash.³⁵

West African piracy reached the regional radar in 2005 with isolated and highly localized hijackings near the Niger delta. According to Ghanaian Commander Ali Kamal-Deen, these attacks were largely "opportunistic" and took place when ships wandered too close to shore. Farmers angered by the presence of oil and fish trawlers undertook these attacks, especially with access to small arms.³⁶

Nigerian piracy became more serious in 2009, when insurgents began to involve themselves in pirate attacks. These groups included Boko Haram, the Islamic State Greater Sahara, and parts of Al Qaeda. The resources these insurgents provided allowed newly converted pirates to expand their attacks to Benin, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Togo, and the waters off of the Ivory Coast. Attacks also became more violent, involving grenades and small arms. Similar to Somalia, pirates began to plan attacks often months in advance, following them and then attacking them violently when they were in a weak position.³⁷ Although any ship is vulnerable, oil tankers and fishing vessels tend to be the most lucrative targets. Oil tankers are especially valuable, as the Gulf of Guinea is oil-rich, and the oil can be siphoned off and sold.³⁸

One danger of Gulf of Guinea piracy is that traditional notions of ship safety have been turned on their heels. For instance, it is commonly assumed that ships are safe at port. However, in 2011, Niger Delta pirates traveled to Benin ports, sailed the *Aristophanes* out to sea, and then transferred its cargo to their mothership. Additionally, the idea that pirates run domestic operations has also been proven false. For example, in the 2012 hijackings of the *Duzgit Venture* and *Orfeas*, pirates sailed the ship across the national waters of five different countries to reunite with a base hundreds of miles away.³⁹ These two developments imply that pirate attacks are becoming increasingly planned, larger-scale, and international.

³⁵ Maisie Pigeon and Kelly Moss, "Why Piracy Is a Growing Threat in West Africa's Gulf of Guinea," *World Politics Review*, June 9, 2020, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/28824/in-west-africa-s-gulf-of-guinea-piracy-is-a-growing-threat>.

³⁶ Ali Kamal-Deen, "Anatomy of Gulf of Guinea Piracy," *Naval War College Review* 68, no. 1 (2015).

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ *Ibid.*

Although international efforts have made progress, pirate efforts continue to be a threat to trade and seafarer welfare. According to the IMB Piracy Reporting Centre, the Gulf of Guinea led the world in pirate attacks in 2018. These attacks occur over a vast geographic region stemming from Guinea to Cabinda, as shown in the map below. Although only 162 instances were reported in 2019, crewmember kidnappings jumped from 78 to 121 from 2018 to 2019.⁴⁰ Lengthened hostage stays, increased ransoms, and violent attacks are rising occurrences in the Gulf of Guinea, as shown in the map below.

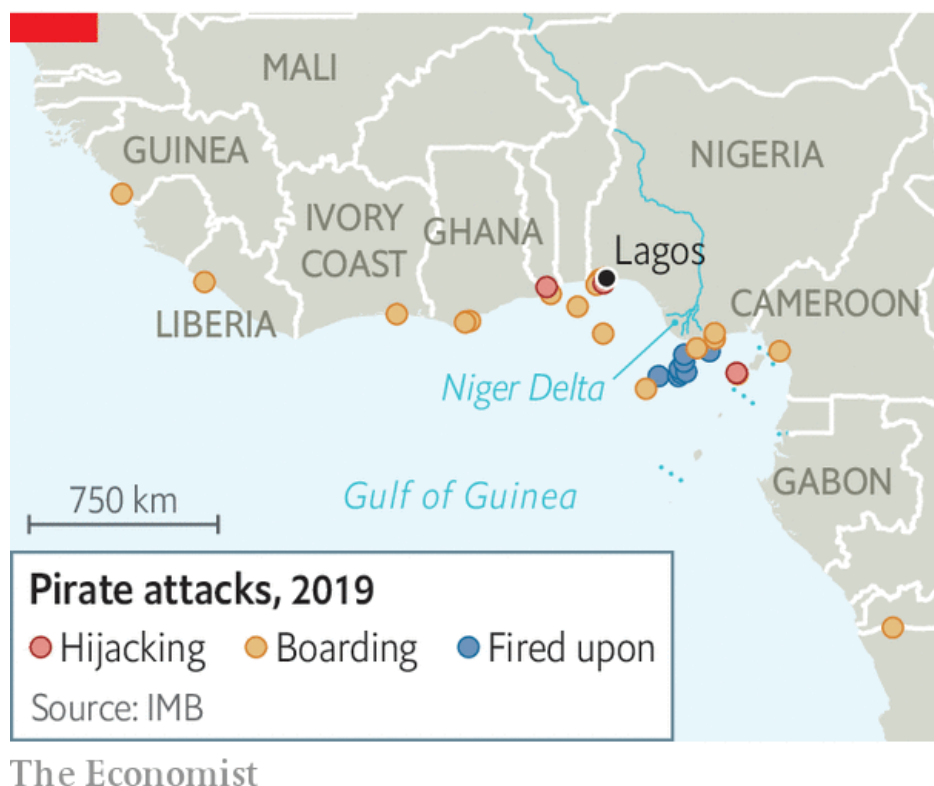


Figure 4: Pirate attacks in 2019. Source: The Economist

Indonesia and the Strait of Malacca

Piracy has grown in the Strait of Malacca region for similar reasons as in the Gulf of Guinea. The Strait of Malacca is a major connector between India and China, and 80% of Chinese oil is brought to

⁴⁰Josh Lamorena, "Unprecedented Number of Crew Kidnappings in the Gulf of Guinea despite Drop in Overall Global Numbers," ICC Commercial Crime Services, January 13, 2020, <https://www.icc-ccs.org/index.php/1286-unprecedented-number-of-crew-kidnappings-in-the-gulf-of-guinea-despite-drop-in-overall-global-numbers>.

the country via these straits.⁴¹ Lucrative cargo may attract Indonesian pirates who live in a country with the fourth largest population yet with only the sixteenth highest nominal GDP.⁴² Indonesia's 1,700-plus islands also make it easy for pirates to retreat from international patrols and hide money, resources, and weapons on small islets. It's not only the rich tankers that get affected: locals' fishing boats are also vulnerable. Combine that with Indonesia's insufficient action to limit piracy and the Indonesia/Malaysia/Strait of Malacca region has become a major pirate hotspot.⁴³

Piracy was largely stimulated by the 1997 Asian financial crisis, which led to major political and economic turmoil. The Indonesian rupiah saw massive inflation and real wages plummeted, and President Suharto, who had ruled the country for 31 years, was forced to resign following the ensuing riots. Similarly to other pirate hotspots, the Straits of Malacca saw a rapid growth of piracy due to lack of economic opportunities, weak governmental oversight, and overfishing. Some unemployed or struggling fishermen either turned to small-scale piracy to supplement their incomes or were recruited by organized crime gangs to help board and/or hijack major vessels. The frequency of these attacks grew to the point where in 2004, Indonesia accounted for 93 out of 329 attacks recorded worldwide.⁴⁴

Outside of economic and political factors, UN regulations may also be to blame. In 1994, The United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) designated four zones of waters: the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the EEZ, and the high seas. More about UNCLOS will be discussed later; what's important to note with relation to Indonesian (and other regional) piracy is that previously international waters came under the jurisdiction of individual countries. The theory was that UNCLOS would ensure greater security because countries would be incentivized to patrol their own waters. However, some fishermen found themselves locked out of certain fishing zones—regions that they used to be able to fish in were now off-limits unless they could acquire special licenses from

⁴¹ Adam McCauley, "Pirates in Southeast Asia: The World's Most Dangerous Waters," *Time* (Time, 2015), <https://time.com/piracy-southeast-asia-malacca-strait/>.

⁴² Worldpopulationreview.com. "GDP Ranked by Country 2020." <https://worldpopulationreview.com/countries/countries-by-gdp>.

⁴³ Melania Scerra, "Indonesia - Number of Piracy Attacks 2019," Statista, June 8, 2020, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/250866/number-of-actual-and-attempted-piracy-attacks-in-indonesia/>.

⁴⁴ "The Roots of Piracy in Southeast Asia," Nautilus Institute for Security and Sustainability, May 21, 2013, <https://nautilus.org/apsnet/the-roots-of-piracy-in-southeast-asia/>.

governments. Small business fishermen rarely obtained these licenses and if they did, only their government would allow them to fish. For example, Malaysia did not hand out these licenses to local Indonesian fishermen, nor did Indonesia hand out licenses to Malaysian fishermen. Rather, large companies got these contracts and “pushed out” many local fishermen. Additionally, when local fishermen near the Straits of Malacca venture into illegal areas and are attacked by pirates, they may not report the attack for fear of being prosecuted themselves.⁴⁵ A conservative estimate suggests that pirate attacks are undercounted by 50%, meaning that pirate attacks are estimated to be twice as many as those that are reported.⁴⁶

A twelve-year graph of pirate attacks in Indonesia from 2008 to 2019 is shown below. Pirate attacks in Indonesia include those in the Straits of Malacca as well as in other parts of Indonesia. The progress that has been made since the 2015 peak will be detailed in the next section. Despite this progress, an inherent problem with piracy is that it can easily recommence once international action disappears. Fishing boats can be turned into pirate motherships, fishermen can easily obtain weapons, and tracking pirates is difficult. Consequently, INTERPOL resolutions should consider mitigating and eradicating piracy long-term, as well as adapting to the effects of piracy that can spring up year to year.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

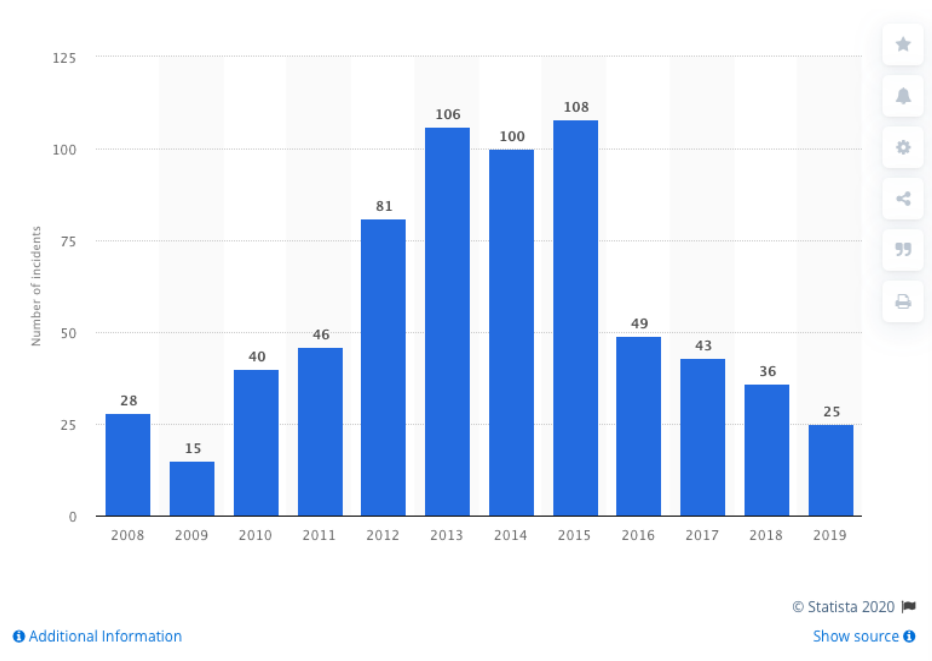


Figure 5: Piracy Incidents in Indonesia 2008-2019. Source: Statista

Other Piracy Hotspots

While the three regions detailed above have the most prominent cases of piracy, they are not the only regions where piracy is a concern. A few regions that are also affected are listed below and briefly described. Delegations from the countries below should conduct further research on their regions, although that should go without saying.

- *The South China Sea: Major trading lane between East, South, and Southeast Asia. Piracy as well as a territorial dispute hinders economic trade and shipping. Pirates here hail primarily from Malaysia and Indonesia.*⁴⁷

⁴⁷ "10 Maritime Piracy Affected Areas around the World," Marine Insight, October 7, 2019, <https://www.marineinsight.com/marine-piracy-marine/10-maritime-piracy-affected-areas-around-the-world/>.

- *Gulf of Oman/Arabian Sea: The Gulf of Oman is frequently targeted by sea pirates. However, international organizations and local authorities have downplayed the need for security cover, emphasizing the need for more serious piracy near the coast of Somalia.*⁴⁸
- *Indian Ocean: As pirates from Somalia and South Asia have become more advanced, they have been able to conduct attacks further and further out from their bases. In particular, Somali and Asian pirates have been able to conduct attacks further out into the Indian Ocean.*⁴⁹
- *Caribbean Sea and coast of Ecuador: Some piracy has occurred off of the coast of Ecuador and Venezuela. A notable, planned attack in April 2020 at the major port of Guayaquil suggests that piracy may be growing. Piracy here is likely a result of similar causes to the regions described in detail: poor economic conditions, foreign competition, and little or ineffective governmental oversight.*⁵⁰

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

Past Action

Domestic and international action has been successful in some regions significantly affected by piracy. Patrols in Somalia have been especially effective at reducing piracy incidents, and naval forces have also had success in the Gulf of Guinea, Southeast Asia, and the Indian Ocean. The international community has attempted to respond to piracy around the world through means such as armed patrols and navigation. Their actions will be detailed below.

United Nations Action

The United Nations framework agreement on maritime law is the General Assembly's UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), established in 1982. Notably, it claims that "all states shall cooperate to the fullest possible extent in the repression of piracy on the high seas or in any other place outside the jurisdiction of any state."⁵¹ Most importantly, UNCLOS compels nations to combine their forces and make a concerted effort to fight piracy. After all, piracy is a global issue; countries the supply shipping tankers are adversely affected just as much as the countries that are host to the pirates. Additionally, UNCLOS provides that any state has universal jurisdiction on the "high seas" to capture pirate vessels, seize any stolen property, and prosecute the pirates themselves.⁵² To comply with UNCLOS, many nations have provided either funding or warships to one of many international task forces patrolling international waters.

However, UNCLOS is far from a perfect agreement and in fact hinders the capture of pirates in many ways. UNCLOS was implemented primarily because nations were worried about over-exploitation of sea resources. Countries with large coasts and significant maritime industries were especially vulnerable because they did not have legal and economic authority over certain sea regions. Consequently, UNCLOS divided the sea into five categories to give countries more jurisdiction over maritime space. As previously explained, these zones include internal waters, the territorial sea, the contiguous zone, the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ), and the high seas. For the most part, international patrols are not allowed to cross into a country's internal waters or territorial sea

⁵¹ UNCLOS and Agreement on Part XI - Preamble and Frame Index," United Nations (United Nations), accessed June 15, 2020, https://www.un.org/Depts/los/convention_agreements/texts/unclos/closindx.htm

⁵² Ibid.

without express permission from the government.⁵³ Therefore, UNCLOS inhibits the war against piracy because many attacks occur within these zones. For countries that need international patrols and assistance to adequately fight piracy, UNCLOS poses challenges. Finally, while universal jurisdiction may be convenient, capturing, trying, and incarcerating pirates puts a heavy strain on a country's judicial system and economic resources. Some countries as well as shipping companies may find the burden of pursuing and preventing pirate attacks not worth the time and cost.⁵⁴ Ultimately, while UNCLOS has been successful in combating piracy on the high seas, sea zoning and other factors are roadblocks to this goal.

International Action

The worldwide, adverse effects of piracy have brought about unprecedented military cooperation. The response to Somali piracy marked the first time since World War II that all 5 permanent members of the UN Security Council have deployed forces on the same side.⁵⁵ These powerhouses and many other countries provide warships, sailors, and equipment to one of three major naval task forces: Combined Task Force 150, Combined Task Force 151 and/or the EU-led Operation Atalanta.⁵⁶ While an armed presence has successfully deterred piracy in East Africa, these task forces are expensive and draw resources away from other, arguably more important and pressing problems. This being said, moving ships from Somalia to other regions might encourage piracy to return to previously high levels.

Other countries, like India, China, Iran, Japan, and Russia, have sent their naval forces separately to ensure the safe passage of their own ships. These countries may be trying to establish a stronger geopolitical position, safeguard their own personal economic interests, or cooperate within the

⁵³ Ahmad, Mazyar. "Maritime Piracy Operations: Some Legal Issues." *Journal of International Maritime Safety, Environmental Affairs, and Shipping* 4, no. 3 (July 2, 2020): 62–69. <https://doi.org/10.1080/25725084.2020.1788200>.

⁵⁴ "Why Is It so Hard to Stop the Pirate Problem?" Why is it so Hard to Stop the Pirate Problem? | Blank Rome LLP, accessed July 25, 2020, <https://www.blankrome.com/publications/why-it-so-hard-stop-pirate-problem>.

⁵⁵ "The Ungoverned Seas." *The Economist*, November 27, 2014. <https://www.economist.com/middle-east-and-africa/2014/11/27/the-ungoverned-seas>.

⁵⁶ "New Counter-Piracy Task Force Established," New Counter-Piracy Task Force Established, January 8, 2009, http://www.navy.mil/search/display.asp?story_id=41687.

international community without being tied to the regulations and structures of an international task force.⁵⁷

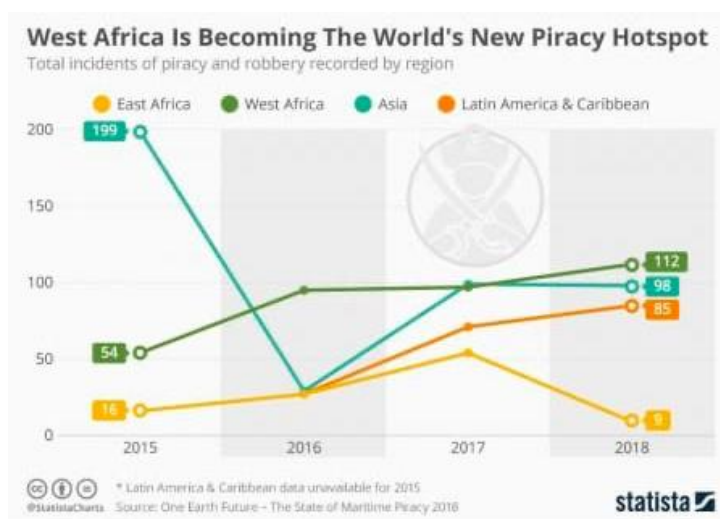


Figure 3: Piracy 2015-2018. Source: Statista

The international armed presence in other piracy-hit regions pales in comparison to the billions of dollars spent on Somali initiatives. In the Gulf of Guinea, for example, the European Union has carried out a limited training program since 2013, and the United States conducts an annual counter-piracy military exercise called the “Obangame Express.”⁵⁸ In the Strait of Malacca and Southeast Asia, the military response has largely been left to Indonesia, Malaysia, and Singapore. A small agreement between 16 countries to share information about pirate attacks called the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) notably excludes both Indonesia and Malaysia.⁵⁹ According to Indonesian authorities, ReCAAP is a “threat to national sovereignty.” Additionally, Indonesia claims that ReCAAP directly competes with its own national security and encourages victims to report incidents to groups other than Indonesian authorities.⁶⁰ In order for Indonesia and Malaysia to better cooperate with international players, ReCAAP will possibly need to be revised or scrapped. Delegates should keep in mind that not all

⁵⁷ Anne K Patterson, “China’s Role in Anti-Piracy Operations,” *Naval Postgraduate School*, 2015.

⁵⁸ “Who Will Help Solve Africa’s Piracy Problem in the Gulf of Guinea?,” DW.

⁵⁹ Bibi Van Ginkel and Frans-Paul Van Der Putten, “1. Introduction: The International Response To Somali Piracy,” *The International Response to Somali Piracy*, January 2010, pp. 1-11, <https://doi.org/10.1163/ej.9789004183056.i-202.9>, 8.

⁶⁰ Giacomo Morabito, “The Decline of the Pirates,” August 16, 2017, <https://russiancouncil.ru/en/analytics-and-comments/analytics/the-decline-of-the-pirates/>.

countries may want armed forces in or near their waters and may treat armed task forces as threats rather than support.

Other international action has attempted to solve the root causes of piracy, although this is easier said than done. The United States, for instance, has provided more than \$5 billion in humanitarian aid to Somalia since 2005.⁶¹ Other countries have followed suit (albeit in smaller amounts), knowing that much-needed funds can alleviate poverty, reestablish fishing as a sustainable source of income, and keep pirates out of the seas. Nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have also played a significant role in establishing, funding, and running these programs. Similar funding has gone toward fighting other pirate havens, and delegates should familiarize themselves with the countries and humanitarian programs their nation supports.⁶²

Local Action

Although many countries that play host to pirate bases lack the resources to effectively stop the issue, certain blocs have come together to fight pirates. The Yaounde Process agreement of 2013 established zones where navies could call governments to assist in pursuing pirates. This agreement includes members of Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) and the Gulf of Guinea Commission (GGC).⁶³ In the Strait of Malacca, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Singapore have used their superior financial resources to deploy naval and coast guard patrols. In Somalia and other regions affected by piracy, governments remain either too weak to enact stringent anti-piracy policies without international aid or find that piracy is too infrequent of an occurrence to merit anti-piracy spending.

INTERPOL Action

INTERPOL has played an important role in helping governments improve their piracy-fighting capabilities. Past projects have emphasized training law enforcement, collecting data and adding it

⁶¹ "U.S. Foreign Aid by Country: Somalia," FAE: Dashboard, accessed July 15, 2020, https://explorer.usaid.gov/cd/SOM?fiscal_year=2019.

⁶² Joon Num Mak, "NGOs, Piracy and Maritime Crime in Southeast Asia," Asia Pacific Bulletin, September 4, 2013, <https://www.eastwestcenter.org/sites/default/files/private/apb228.pdf>.

⁶³ "EU Maritime Security Factsheet: The Gulf of Guinea," EEAS, October 29, 2018, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/maritime-security/52490/eu-maritime-security-factsheet-gulf-guinea_en.

to the I-27 database to facilitate international cooperation in tracking pirate activity and increasing port security.

In Southeast Asia, INTERPOL undertook Project MAST, a capacity-building initiative in Southeast Asia with a focus on drug trafficking, terrorism, and robbery at sea.⁶⁴ Law enforcement from Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, and Vietnam were trained on how to better monitor port security and ensure ships were safe from pirates and traffickers. These trainings culminated in Operation Anchor, a field exercise designed to locate and intercept individuals and groups responsible for cross-border crimes. Ultimately, Operation Anchor resulted in the capture of 14 illegal vessels and 18 suspects of transnational maritime crime in Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines. A similar program, Project AGWE, was conducted in West Africa with similar results.⁶⁵

INTERPOL has also conducted two major programs in East Africa and the Indian Ocean. The first, the Maritime Security Programme, increased law enforcement's ability to track criminals using the I-27 database and provided support to tackle maritime piracy and related crimes, including trafficking and money laundering.⁶⁶ Money laundering is an important focus for piracy: once funds are obtained from ransoms or theft, the money needs to be laundered into the "legitimate" economy. Tracking financial flows, as INTERPOL has helped do with the Maritime Security Programme, has produced arrests and other notable results. The second program, the Port Security Project, aided countries in securing their ports from smuggling, trafficking, and illegal trade and pirate activity. To do this, law enforcement participating in the Port Security Project received increased access to INTERPOL databases, received training on installation surveillance and checkpoint practices to best detect narcotics, and developed a network of port security experts.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ "Project MAST, Southeast Asia," accessed July 12, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Maritime-crime/Project-MAST-Southeast-Asia>.

⁶⁵ Project AGWE, West Africa," INTERPOL, accessed June 15, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Maritime-crime/Project-AGWE-West-Africa>

⁶⁶ "The Maritime Security Programme," INTERPOL, accessed July 15, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Maritime-crime/The-Maritime-Security-Programme>.

⁶⁷ "Port Security Project," INTERPOL, accessed July 15, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Maritime-crime/Port-Security-Project>.

Possible Solutions

Although piracy varies from country to country, this background guide has identified many ways in which countries and regions that suffer are related. Notably, these countries tend to be developing, at the crossroads of key shipping lanes, and in many cases undergoing political turmoil. These conditions prime the scene for piracy. However, piracy can and has been checked in the past. Here are some possible solutions, each with a set of pros and cons, that will be discussed.

Increase International Naval Oversight and Improve the Policing Capacity of Individual Countries

Naval patrols are largely the current status quo, especially in Somalia and Southeast Asia. As mentioned in the Past Action section, these patrols include warships from the United States, Great Britain, Russia, South Korea, Japan, China, Turkey, and many other countries.⁶⁸ These countries send ships to both foster sustainable trade and development in the region as well as to promote their geopolitical and economic goals. Additionally, countries in pirate havens, such as Indonesia, Nigeria, and Ghana, have increased their naval presence as their capacity to fight pirates has increased. These naval patrols can and have decreased piracy instances. Consequently, one solution would be to provide naval support and provide more training to local law enforcement to handle piracy themselves.

Increasing naval capacity invites problems as well, however. Firstly, pirates can easily hide in the vast ocean, making it difficult and incredibly expensive to eradicate the possibility of an attack. Somali pirates, for instance, have conducted attacks as far south as Mauritius, and Nigerian pirates as far west as Guinea and as far south as Angola.⁶⁹ Secondly, Due to barriers inhibiting international navies from entering countries' waterspace as per UNCLOS regulations, it is difficult to pursue pirates once they are found. Thirdly, there are also complications with firing on suspected pirate motherships, as many may be converted fishing dhows with innocent fishermen onboard.⁷⁰ Finally, naval patrols serve only as an adaptation measure, meaning a measure that attempts to respond to the

⁶⁸ Melvin, Dr Neil. "The Foreign Military Presence in the Horn of Africa Region." *Stockholm International Peace Research Institute*, April 2019, 32.

⁶⁹ Kamal-Deen, Ali. "Anatomy of Gulf of Guinea Piracy." *Naval War College Review* 68, no. 1 (2015).

⁷⁰ Ken Menkhaus, "The Seven Ways to Stop Piracy," *Foreign Policy*, April 17, 2009, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/04/17/the-seven-ways-to-stop-piracy/>.

consequences of piracy. Additionally, these patrols are costly and divert resources of other important maritime concerns. In order to fully eliminate the threat of piracy, measures that address the root causes of piracy and increase local police efficacy must be taken. These factors decrease the effectiveness and viability of naval patrols as a complete solution.

Arm cargo ships

Another possibility is to arm the tankers themselves. Such a policy would make attacking ships much harder, as the tankers are much larger than the skiffs usually used to attack ships.

Again, the problems come down to liability. Arming boats incurs significantly more security risks, insurance costs, material costs, and training costs. It increases the fear surrounding sea voyages and makes it harder to hire sailors.⁷¹ Companies fear the legal liability associated with mistaking a pirate skiff or boat for a civilian one. These companies may rather risk the unlikely event of paying a ransom than incur these increased costs.

Track Money Flows and Halt Pirate Investments

The pirates that carry out boardings and hijackings are not the only ones involved in major attacks. Major hijackings especially could not succeed without significant funds from many investors. These financiers often get most of ransom payments, leaving the pirates themselves still in need of funds and forced to continue their piratical exploits.⁷² This solution is a good one for INTERPOL, because INTERPOL has succeeded in the past at tracking criminal financial flows. Essentially, INTERPOL would and should find ways to track money laundering, the process of integrating money obtained illegally into the legal economy.

How would this work? INTERPOL could examine how money is spent in pirate-rich countries and determine if money used to buy high-end homes, cars, goods, and services is coming from pirate

⁷¹ Friedman, Darren, and Lauren Smith. "Fighting Fire With Fire: The Debate Over Arming Merchant Vessels." *The Maritime Executive*, December 18, 2012. <https://www.maritime-executive.com/article/fighting-fire-with-fire-the-debate-over-arming-merchant-vessels>.

⁷² Tristan McConnell, "Do You Earn More Money than a Somali Pirate?," *The World from PRI*, 2013, <https://www.pri.org/stories/2013-11-06/do-you-earn-more-money-somali-pirate>.

activities. Tracking these financial flows would lead back to pirates and prevent funds from being reinvested into pirate operations.

Money laundering is a complex topic that is discussed in more detail in the background for Topic B, Drug Trafficking. Read that section and consider how it could apply to piracy. After all, because any illegal profits must be laundered, tracing pirate money flows could be an effective solution. However, it may not be easy to track these funds, especially in countries with larger illicit banking and financial systems.

Increase the reach of INTERPOL

This idea is worth debate at MUNUC 33, yet delegates should carefully consider its implications. At the moment INTERPOL's abilities are largely capacity-building, data collection, and data sharing. Delegates could choose to expand INTERPOL programs, like Project MAST and the Port Security Project, to other regions. More countries could benefit from programs that have been enacted elsewhere. That being said, these programs are costly, and larger countries who provide the bulk of the funding may prefer to spend their international development dollars elsewhere (a note here: as a delegate, do consider how much your country might have to fund a project. It is tempting to leave financial concerns out when you only engage in one committee for a weekend, but know that such thinking is not how international leaders see issues). Moreover, some countries on the receiving end may not want to divulge national information regarding national ports, police departments, and security. Finally, piracy is an ever-evolving issue. By the time certain projects are completed, they may not be effective piracy stoppers.

Bloc Positions

By and large, the international community opposes piracy's proliferation. However, the ways in which countries agree to solve this problem, and which stakeholders should be most privileged in a solution, vary.

North America

The United States is arguably the world's leader in the fight against piracy. They formed the first major Somali anti-piracy task force and brought the actions of pirates to the international debate. Canada similarly sends warships to Somalia and the Gulf of Guinea to ensure safe passage of ships. Canada also funds many INTERPOL programs, including Operation MAST.⁷³ These two North American countries have a large financial incentive to stop piracy given the globalized nature of their economies and the need to keep shipping safe.

These two countries are not the only ones with an incentive toward fighting piracy. Mexico's focus on drug trafficking has allowed recent maritime piracy in the Gulf of Mexico to slowly increase.⁷⁴ Other Central American and Caribbean countries are likely to welcome aid in fighting maritime crime and will attempt to ensure some investment in their own region against piracy. These countries may have to plead their case for piracy resources given financial constraints and the relatively low level of piracy in the Caribbean compared to other regions of the world.

Europe

Europe has a particular economic concern regarding oil in the Gulf of Guinea. Consequently, European countries are likely to support strong anti-piracy measures that prioritize the safety of their ships and economic access to Gulf of Guinea oil. Note that non-EU countries may dissent from EU countries in terms of the policies they support. EU countries especially are likely to favor strong training policies and military support, as shown through the EU's continued support for Operation

⁷³INTERPOL. "Project MAST, Southeast Asia." <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Maritime-crime/Project-MAST-Southeast-Asia>.

⁷⁴Devin Lurie, "Understanding Mexico's Piracy Problem," American Security Project, 2020, <https://www.americansecurityproject.org/understanding-mexicos-piracy-problem/>.

NAFOR Atalanta in the Gulf of Guinea, Somalia, and East Africa.⁷⁵ The EU also funds many core INTERPOL operations, like the Port Security Project.⁷⁶ This being said, the EU is a core part of many international development organizations and may also support solutions geared toward the root causes of piracy.

Africa

In West and East Africa, piracy may undermine regimes and threaten legitimate governments' holds on power. Piracy affects both incoming and outgoing trade; 90% of African imports and exports are transported by sea.⁷⁷ It's not just big trawlers and companies that are disrupted; local, coastal Africans also transport many of their goods by sea.⁷⁸ Consequently, African nations will likely support intervention, especially that geared toward increasing African capacity to fight piracy themselves. However, some countries may shy away from too much international influence in their waters, as that situation largely led to piracy in the first place. Task forces should ensure that the patrols do not interfere with any other maritime industries.

This being said, only coastal countries are likely to support the use of INTERPOL funds for anti-piracy measures. Landlocked countries without a vested interest in piracy, for example, might argue that INTERPOL funds are better used in other places, where poverty may also be an issue or even a more serious one.

Asia/Australia/New Zealand

Wealthier countries aligned with Western blocs like Japan and South Korea will likely support securing waters, and Australia and New Zealand will likely support a similar approach. Why? More

⁷⁵ "Warships, Tuna and Pirates – EU NAVFOR Operation Atalanta's Contribution to Security and Development in Horn of Africa and Indian Ocean," EEAS, accessed July 18, 2020, https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/maritime-security/55884/warships-tuna-and-pirates-%E2%80%93-eu-navfor-operation-atalanta%E2%80%99s-contribution-security-and_en.

⁷⁶ "Port Security Project," INTERPOL, accessed July 15, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Maritime-crime/Port-Security-Project>.

⁷⁷ "West Africa Is Becoming the World's Piracy Capital. Here's How to Tackle the Problem," World Economic Forum, 2018, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/06/west-africa-is-becoming-the-world-s-piracy-capital-here-s-how-to-tackle-the-problem/>.

⁷⁸ Ibid.

than 99% of Australia's import volume is transported by sea, and much of this volume passes through high-piracy routes in Southeast Asia.⁷⁹ Other Asian countries may split based on the need for pirate protection and a desire/lack of desire for more police and international presence in the region. China in particular has been very aggressive in the South China Sea in recent years and may not desire a large international presence in the region.⁸⁰

A disclaimer: these summaries are only starting points. Most countries will prefer programs in their own region and especially in their own country, as long as they are not too invasive. As you do more research on your specific country's policies and situation, you may find that your country does not fit into their bloc description above. This is perfectly fine, and you are encouraged to deviate if that is the case. Additionally, innovative solutions should not take second place to any description provided above.

⁷⁹ "What Percentage of Goods Do You Think Travel by Sea?," Australian National Maritime Museum, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://www.sea.museum/2018/09/21/what-percentage-of-goods-do-you-think-travel-by-sea>.

⁸⁰ James Stavridis, "World Cannot Ignore Chinese Aggression in South China Sea," Nikkei Asian Review (Nikkei Asian Review, May 29, 2020), <https://asia.nikkei.com/Opinion/World-cannot-ignore-Chinese-aggression-in-South-China-Sea>.

Glossary

5 sea zones:

- Internal waters: areas like ports, rivers, deltas, and the
- Territorial sea: sea extending 12 nautical miles from a country's coastline. Country has jurisdiction over this territory.
- Contiguous zone: 12-24 nautical miles out. Country has the right to patrol said zone to ensure that any unwanted, armed vessels do not enter its ports.
- Exclusive Economic Area: The region from 12-200 nautical miles out from the coastline. For the most part, countries retain exclusive rights for exploration and economic development of this sea zone.
- High seas: Any sea water more than 200 nautical miles from a coastline. These waters are openly accessible to any ship under any flag.⁸¹

Non-governmental organization (NGO): a nonprofit organization that operates independently of a government.⁸²

Pirate mothership: a larger boat from which pirate attacks are launched. Often a converted fishing boat or other large vessel.⁸³

Skiff: A small, motorized boat used to rapidly approach victim ships. Pirates launch from the mothership in skiffs.⁸⁴

⁸¹ Burgess, John, Lucia Foulkes, Philip Jones, Matt Merighi, Stephen Murray, and Jack Whitacre, eds. "Chapter 2: Maritime Zones." In *The Fletcher School | Law of the Sea; A Policy Primer*. The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy, 2017. <https://sites.tufts.edu/lawofthesea/>.

⁸² Harvard Law School. "Types of IGOs." *Harvard Law School* (blog). <https://hls.harvard.edu/dept/opia/what-is-public-interest-law/public-service-practice-settings/public-international-law/types-of-igos/>.

⁸³ Apps, Peter. "Giant Motherships Give Somali Pirates New Reach-EU." *Reuters*, January 28, 2011. <https://www.reuters.com/article/uk-somalia-pirates-motherships-idUSLNE7oR02O20110128>.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

United Nations Convention for the Law of the Sea: UN agreement that took effect in 1982 which established extensive regulations on maritime activity.⁸⁵

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC): A UN body aimed around helping governments reduce crime and drug trafficking.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ IUCN. "UNCLOS," February 29, 2016. <https://www.iucn.org/theme/marine-and-polar/our-work/international-ocean-governance/unclos>.

⁸⁶ United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime. "About UNODC." [//www.unodc.org/unodc/en/about-unodc/index.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/about-unodc/index.html).

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TOPIC B: INTERNATIONAL DRUG TRADE

Statement of the Problem

According to the UN, drug trafficking is a “global illicit trade involving the cultivation, manufacture, distribution and sale of substances which are subject to drug prohibition law.”⁸⁷ The illicit drug trade is an international mega-industry, and with an estimated GDP of 360 billion dollars, comprises approximately 1% of global GDP.⁸⁸ Around the world, drug empires pose threats to national security, the authority of national governments, and the livelihoods of many. The costs of responding to the drug trade, including rehabilitation programs, border security, and other adaptive measures are astronomical. It will be up to you to determine how INTERPOL can best use the resources at its disposal to best effect change.

Source Countries, Transit Countries, and Destination Countries

Four categories of drugs make up the vast majority of illegal drugs traded around the world: cannabis, opiates, cocaine, and methamphetamines.⁸⁹ These drugs go through an extensive process that includes growing (and/or production), transport, and final distribution. INTERPOL classifies countries as an origin or source country (where production takes place), a transit country (through which drugs are transported en route to another place) or a destination country (where drugs are primarily imported and sold).⁹⁰ Many countries may fit into multiple categories; for instance, lots of heroin is trafficked through and consumed in China.⁹¹

These drugs (with the exception of methamphetamine) are typically grown in regions ideal for illegal production. Afghanistan and Southeast Asia are the world’s heroin production leaders, and

⁸⁷ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “2. Drug Statistics and Trends.” In *World Drug Report 2010*. Vienna, Austria: United Nations, 2010.

⁸⁸ Sean Ross, “Here’s How the Economics of Drug Trafficking Works,” Investopedia (Investopedia, May 27, 2020), <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/personal-finance/o8o116/economics-illicit-drug-trafficking.asp>

⁸⁹ “History of Drug Trafficking.” History.com. A&E Television Networks, May 31, 2017. <https://www.history.com/topics/crime/history-of-drug-trafficking>.

⁹⁰ INTERPOL. “Drug Trafficking.” <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Drug-trafficking>.

⁹¹ “Narcotics Control in China,” Narcotics Control in China, accessed September 29, 2020, <http://www.china-embassy.org/eng/zt/mzpkz/t36387.htm>.

Colombia, Bolivia, and Venezuela are the world's major cocaine producers.⁹² These countries are ideal for production for many reasons. Geography plays an obvious role: Central Asia's geography and climate is ideal for growing opium, and coca plants can thrive in tropical South America.⁹³ Mountainous or rainforest terrain also makes it easier to hide illegal growing activity. Additionally, source countries often face political strife, economic hardship, corruption, low social mobility, and a lack of effective police surveillance.⁹⁴ Venezuela and Afghanistan, for example, suffer from rampant inflation and longtime insurgencies respectively.⁹⁵ The more difficult legal social mobility and political stability is, the more likely a country is to emerge as a drug source country.⁹⁶ Drug production and trafficking has become a lucrative alternative in these countries, much like piracy.

Once drugs are produced, they are then trafficked through transit countries. Transit countries include much of Central America, Central Asia, Southeast Asia, and parts of Africa. Similar conditions may be at play: in particular, governments may lack the capacity to effectively control smuggling through their borders.⁹⁷ Corruption may also hinder efforts to halt drug trafficking. Many Central American officials have been caught on cartels' payrolls: for example, Mexico's INTERPOL representative Ricardo Gutierrez was arrested in 2008 having cooperated with the Beltran Leyva cartel.⁹⁸ Although INTERPOL, and other international bodies, have helped increase government capacity in fighting corruption and drugs, transit countries struggle to control the flow of drugs and money through their countries.⁹⁹

⁹² "Major Illicit Drug Producing, Drug-Transit, Significant Source, Precursor Chemical, and Money Laundering Countries," U.S. Department of State (U.S. Department of State, 2015), <https://2009-2017.state.gov/j/inl/rls/nrcrpt/2015/vol1/238913.htm>.

⁹³ "Central Asia's 'Drug Capital' Fights To Stem Tide Of Narcotics," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty, January 4, 2013, <https://www.rferl.org/a/osh-is-awash-in-drugs/24815565.html>.

⁹⁴ "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report," vol. 1 (Washington, DC: United States Department of State, 2020), pp. 1-244.

⁹⁵ "The International Drug War," Drug Policy Alliance, accessed December 6, 2020, <https://drugpolicy.org/issues/international-drug-war>.

⁹⁶ "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report," vol. 1 (Washington, DC: United States Department of State, 2020), pp. 1-244.

⁹⁷ "Presidential Determination on Major Drug Transit or Major Illicit Drug Producing Countries for Fiscal Year 2021," The White House (The United States Government, 2020), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-determination-major-drug-transit-major-illicit-drug-producing-countries-fiscal-year-2021/>.

⁹⁸ "Former Interpol Mexico Director Faces Money Laundering Charges," Latin American Herald Tribune - Former Interpol Mexico Director Faces Money Laundering Charges, accessed May 28, 2020, <http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=357830&CategoryId=14091>

⁹⁹ "The Destabilizing Influence of Cocaine on Transit Countries" (Vienna, Austria: UNODC, 2009).

Finally, there are destination countries. These tend to be developed countries where there is high demand for illegal drugs, although this is not the rule. While illicit drugs are sold in almost every country in the world, producers tend to route their products to locations with the highest demand. Examples of these major destination countries include the United States, Canada, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, much of Europe, and Japan.¹⁰⁰ Typically, these countries recognize that their wealth raises domestic drug prices, making them an attractive market for drug trafficking and fight desperately to control the trade's effects on society. The United States, for instance, has spent an estimated \$1 trillion in its "War on Drugs" since 1971.¹⁰¹ Despite the United States' aggressive international and domestic action, American annual overdose deaths reached an all-time high of 72,000 in 2019 and the War on Drugs is widely regarded as a failure.¹⁰² Consequently, destination countries tend to have strong anti-trafficking attitudes and policies.

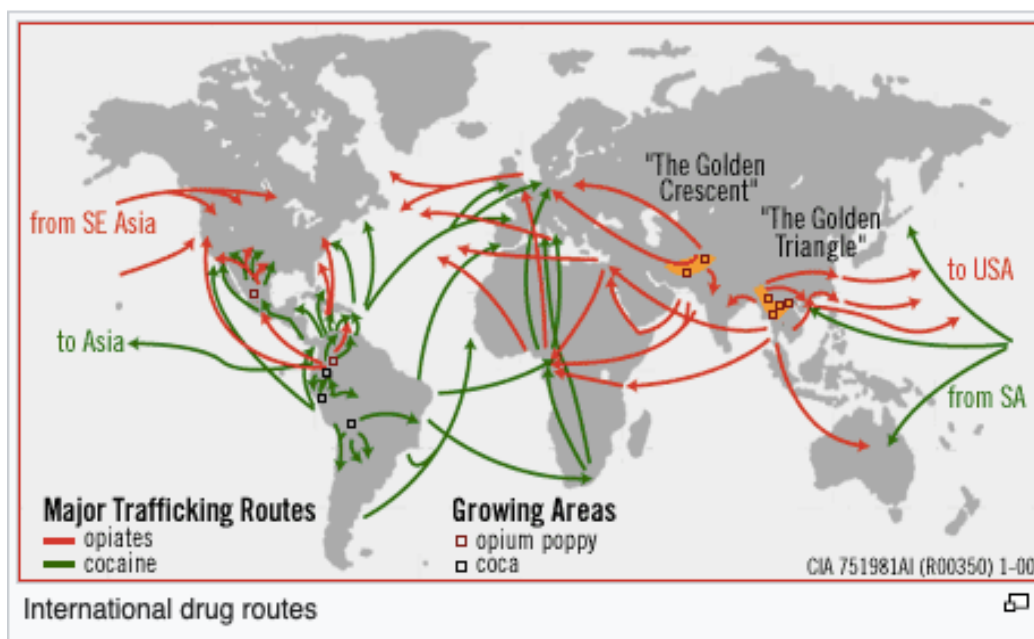


Figure 6: International Drug Flows

¹⁰⁰ "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report," vol. 1 (Washington, DC: United States Department of State, 2020), pp. 1-244.

¹⁰¹ Josh Katz, Abby Goodnough, and Margot Sanger-katz, "In Shadow of Pandemic, U.S. Drug Overdose Deaths Resurge to Record," The New York Times (The New York Times, July 15, 2020), <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2020/07/15/upshot/drug-overdose-deaths.html>.

¹⁰² Betsy Pearl, "Ending the War on Drugs: By the Numbers," Center for American Progress, June 27, 2018, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/criminal-justice/reports/2018/06/27/452819/ending-war-drugs-numbers/>.

Problems Caused by Trafficking

Drug trafficking incurs astounding costs in many spheres of activity. Impacted sectors include the healthcare, legal, defense, environmental, and business sectors. Most importantly, the empirical metrics fail to account for the extreme personal and emotional cost of drug addiction and drug trafficking. While unquantifiable, problems like divorce, early death, financial loss, stress from engaging in illegal activities, and family fallout must be taken into consideration. Individuals involved with the drug trade may be required to use violence or fear that violence will be used against them. Drug trafficking is more than a monetary problem: it is a human problem.

How are various sectors impacted? As for healthcare, drug use can require specialized treatment, ER visits, and prolonged hospital stays. In “highly industrialized developed countries” (likely to be destination countries), up to five percent of hospitalizations are drug related.¹⁰³ In the United States alone, 1.8 million users were admitted to state-run treatment facilities.¹⁰⁴ Rehabilitation programs, safe injection sites, and other venues further drain public health resources. In addition, drug users are not the only ones medically affected. Drug-related domestic violence and other crimes hospitalize and traumatize many people every year. Especially in countries with already-burdened national healthcare systems, reducing the number of drug-related patients would give doctors more time to perform other critical and elective procedures.¹⁰⁵

Drug trafficking may hurt the criminal justice system the most. The consequences of illicit drug use impacts the entire legal system, taxing resources at each stage of the arrest, adjudication, incarceration, and post-release supervision process.¹⁰⁶ To put this in perspective, in 2016, 47% of prisoners in American state prisons were serving time for drug offenses.¹⁰⁷ Drugs also play a role in many other offenses: in 2004, 18% of American inmates claimed that they had committed their

¹⁰³ Thomas R. Einarson, “Drug-Related Hospital Admissions,” *Annals of Pharmacotherapy* 27, no. 7-8 (1993): pp. 832-840, <https://doi.org/10.1177/106002809302700702>.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.

¹⁰⁶ “Impact of Drugs on Society,” (U) Impact of Drugs on Society - National Drug Threat Assessment 2010 (UNCLASSIFIED), accessed August 2, 2020, <https://www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs38/38661/drugImpact.htm>.

¹⁰⁷ Wendy Sawyer and Peter Wagner, “Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2020,” Mass Incarceration: The Whole Pie 2020 | Prison Policy Initiative, 2020, <https://www.prisonpolicy.org/reports/pie2020.html>.

current offense to get money for drugs.¹⁰⁸ While the justness of drug laws and their history is debatable, it is undeniable that possession and trafficking convictions fill a large portion of prisons. Given that more than 100 countries' prison systems operate above capacity and the current COVID-19 pandemic, finding ways to divert drug users from prisons should be an absolute priority.¹⁰⁹ Not to mention that drug cases are costly, frequently involving the use of confidential informants and lab analysis of drug material.¹¹⁰

Drugs also affect spending on defense and policing. To prevent illegal trafficking into and through their countries, governments often spend billions of dollars on border security. Military action, like NATO's war against the Taliban and their drug operations in Afghanistan, cost trillions of dollars and lasted for 20 years.¹¹¹ A fifty-year war with FARC, a Colombian drug and guerrilla ring, only recently ended in 2017.¹¹² Mexico has launched a decades-long war against cartels within its borders. INTERPOL and other international organizations have spent millions on capacity training programs, rehabilitation programs, and police development.¹¹³ There are countless other examples of vast drug war expenditures that have largely failed to dent global supply and demand for drugs.¹¹⁴

Other affected sectors include the environment and business sectors. For every pound of lab-produced methamphetamine, 5-7 pounds of waste are created.¹¹⁵ Frequently this waste is released into streams, fields, and farms causing extensive environmental damage. As for general business, premature mortality, incarceration, illness, and injuries related to incapacitation as a result of drug use all reduce national productivity. The cost of incarcerating the half a million drug convicts in the United States alone, for example, includes both the extensive cost of incarcerating them as well as

¹⁰⁸ "Drug Use and Crime," Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), accessed August 2, 2020, <https://www.bjs.gov/content/dcf/duc.cfm>.

¹⁰⁹ Niall McCarthy and Felix Richter, "Infographic: The World's Most Overcrowded Prison Systems," Statista Infographics, January 30, 2018, <https://www.statista.com/chart/12717/the-worlds-most-overcrowded-prison-systems/>.

¹¹⁰ "Evidence in Drugs Cases," Release, January 19, 2017, <https://www.release.org.uk/law/evidence-drugs-cases>.

¹¹¹ "Afghanistan," NATO PA, accessed August 2, 2020, <https://www.nato-pa.int/content/afghanistan>.

¹¹² Claire Felter and Danielle Felwick, "Colombia's Civil Conflict," January 11, 2017, <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/colombias-civil-conflict>.

¹¹³ "Our Funding," Our Funding (International Criminal Police Organization), accessed December 6, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Who-we-are/Our-funding>.

¹¹⁴ Jack Guy and Hilary Clarke, "Report Says the UN's Global 'War on Drugs' Has Been a Failure," CNN (Cable News Network, October 22, 2018), <https://www.cnn.com/2018/10/21/health/drug-report-un-failure-intl/index.html>.

¹¹⁵ "Impact of Drugs on Society," (U) Impact of Drugs on Society - National Drug Threat Assessment 2010 (UNCLASSIFIED), accessed August 2, 2020, <https://www.justice.gov/archive/ndic/pubs38/38661/drugImpact.htm>.

their lost contributions to the economy. Around 19.6% of unemployed individuals may “be defined as current users of illicit drugs,” according to the 2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health.¹¹⁶

Destination countries are not the only ones who bear the brunt of drugs’ effects. Those in source or transit countries may live in areas heavily influenced by cartel activity, and experience the cartels’ effects on politics, education, and employment. Drug production may limit access to humanitarian aid, as organizations either cannot reach areas controlled by cartels or do not want to risk that their aid will fall into cartel hands. Additionally, transit and source countries may suffer from drug related homicides, gang violence, and other threats involved in the drug industry.¹¹⁷ Homicides in Mexico, many of which are drug-related, were more than the civilian deaths in Afghanistan and Iraq combined from the 2007-2014.¹¹⁸

The State of Modern Drug Trafficking

In 2015, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated that 250 million people, or roughly 5% of the world’s population, were using drugs. EU users spent upwards of €27 billion in 2016 on illicit drugs, and 29.5 million were dependent and required treatment.¹¹⁹ In the United States, addiction rates are at an all-time high. Additionally, cartels and the drug market are changing. In its 2016 EU Drug Markets Report, the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Monitoring suggests that drug traffickers and cartels have made increasing use of the internet to make transactions. In 2013, the FBI shut down the “Silk Road,” the first major drug vending community on the dark web. Since then, the number of illicit drug transactions has tripled.¹²⁰ Although cryptomarkets do not make up the bulk of the drug market, 25% of total drug transactions online were for over \$1,000, making it likely that dark web markets are becoming common for

¹¹⁶ Ibid.

¹¹⁷ “The Destabilizing Influence of Cocaine on Transit Countries” (Vienna, Austria: UNODC, 2009).

¹¹⁸ Jason Breslow, “The Staggering Death Toll of Mexico’s Drug War,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service, July 27, 2015), <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/the-staggering-death-toll-of-mexicos-drug-war/>.

¹¹⁹ “World Drug Report 2019: 35 Million People Worldwide Suffer from Drug Use Disorders While Only 1 in 7 People Receive Treatment,” United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, 2019, https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/frontpage/2019/June/world-drug-report-2019_-35-million-people-worldwide-suffer-from-drug-use-disorders-while-only-1-in-7-people-receive-treatment.html.

¹²⁰ Albany, Zulfikar. “EU Drug Markets Report: Europeans Spend 31 Billion Euros on Illicit Drugs Every Year,” accessed May 4, 2016, <https://www.dw.com/en/eu-drug-markets-report-europeans-spend-31-billion-euros-on-illicit-drugs-every-year/a-19164507>.

wholesale purchases.¹²¹ These markets on anonymity networks like Tor have made it much harder for police to track these transactions or set up controlled buys, the traditional forms of police drug busts.¹²² INTERPOL will need to continue innovating anti-drug policies to adapt to this new market.

¹²¹ "Online Drugs Trade Growing but Still Dwarfed by Traditional Markets," RAND Corporation, accessed September 29, 2020, <https://www.rand.org/randeurope/research/projects/online-drugs-trade-trafficking.html>.

¹²² Diana S. Dolliver, "Evaluating Drug Trafficking on the Tor Network: Silk Road 2, the Sequel," *International Journal of Drug Policy* 26, no. 11 (2015): pp. 1113-1123, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugpo.2015.01.008>.

History of the Problem

The Americas

In 1964, the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) was founded as a far-left guerrilla movement in Colombia. FARC emerged as a response to a bloody ten-year civil war and government policies directed toward private industrial farming. Although productivity increased, small farmers lost their farms, an influx of urban dwellers drove working wages down, and famine and malnutrition were widespread.¹²³ From 1964-2017, FARC manufactured and trafficked illegal drugs, primarily cocaine, to finance a campaign of guerrilla warfare, terrorism, and kidnappings.¹²⁴

Seeing FARC's drug profits, the Medellín Cartel established itself in the 1980s and pervaded much of Colombian society.¹²⁵ Led by Pablo Escobar and the Ochoa brothers, the cartel rapidly became the world's largest drug empire. It was a truly international operation; cocaine was produced in Bolivia, Peru, and Ecuador, processed in Colombia, and trafficked through Panama and the Bahamas to the United States. At its peak, the cartel brought in \$60 million a day.¹²⁶ In order to maintain their profits and secrecy, the cartel murdered many judges, policemen, politicians, or magistrates who dared oppose them. The impact of the Medellín Cartel went far beyond drugs--the cartel infiltrated politics, carried out brutal murders in both South America and the United States, engaged in vicious warfare with opposing cartels, and selectively "gave back" to communities to garner public support.¹²⁷ These turf wars ravaged local communities, often forcing towns to "pick sides" and hindering the growth of legal economies.¹²⁸ Essentially, the on-the-ground effects of the drug trade ravaged source countries just as much, if not more, than destination countries.

¹²³ "Origin of the Medellín Cartel," Medellín abraza su historia, July 19, 2019, <https://www.medellinabrazasuhistoria.com/origin-of-the-medellin-cartel/?lang=en>.

¹²⁴ "Colombian Ex-Farc Rebels 'Ashamed' of Kidnappings," British Broadcasting Corporation, September 15, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-54160284>.

¹²⁵ Iniseg and Iniseg, "Cártel De Medellín: Su Historia y Actualidad," Información Seguridad, June 22, 2020, <https://www.iniseg.es/blog/seguridad/cartel-de-medellin-su-historia-y-actualidad/>.

¹²⁶ "History of Drug Trafficking," History.com (A&E Television Networks, May 31, 2017), <https://www.history.com/topics/crime/history-of-drug-trafficking>.

¹²⁷ "Origin of the Medellín Cartel," Medellín abraza su historia, July 19, 2019, <https://www.medellinabrazasuhistoria.com/origin-of-the-medellin-cartel/?lang=en>.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*

Although the Medellin cartel was destroyed by the high-profile arrests and killings of Pablo Escobar and his associates in the 1990s, they established trafficking routes and precedent that allows drug trafficking to continue. In fact, the smaller but just as influential Cali cartel supplied 80% of American cocaine in the early 1990s, picking up right where the Medellin cartel left off.¹²⁹

Mexico originally served as a transit country for cocaine and marijuana from Central and South America in the 1980s. By the 2000s, when the major South American cartels had fallen into obscurity, major Mexican cartels developed. By 2006, four major cartels controlled the vast majority of drugs illegally imported into the United States.¹³⁰ In particular, Mexican laboratories produce most of the methamphetamine consumed in the United States. In 2006, Mexico began its prominent War on Drugs, which led to multiple prominent arrests and the splintering of major cartels.¹³¹ Despite these arrests, drug trafficking remains a highly profitable activity and drug lords are still seen as “Robin Hood” figures for investing significantly in rural communities.¹³² Despite the fighting and murders between cartels, police and international bodies have long struggled to change public perception of cartels in the cities where they are based. The largest cartel in Mexico remains the Sinaloa Cartel, based in Culiacan.¹³³

American problems with drug abuse began in the 1970s when these cartels began flooding the American market. Cocaine usage peaked in 1984 with 10.4 million users and crystal methamphetamine became popular in the late 1990s.¹³⁴ When reports of widespread heroin addiction among U.S. servicemen in Vietnam were released in 1971, the US began an aggressive War on Drugs. Mandatory minimum penalties for cocaine, crack cocaine, and heroin trafficking and possession were installed and retained during the Nixon and Reagan administrations.¹³⁵ Police were

¹²⁹ Iniseg and Iniseg, “Cártel De Medellín: Su Historia y Actualidad,” Información Seguridad, June 22, 2020, <https://www.iniseg.es/blog/seguridad/cartel-de-medellin-su-historia-y-actualidad/>.

¹³⁰ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations*, by June S. Beittel, R41576 (2020), 1-34.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Carrie Kahn, “Ruthless Mexican Drug Trafficker Was A Robin Hood In Home State,” NPR (NPR, February 24, 2014), <https://www.npr.org/2014/02/24/282123622/ruthless-mexican-drug-trafficker-was-a-robin-hood-in-home-state>

¹³³ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations*, by June S. Beittel, R41576 (2020), 1-34.

¹³⁴ “The Buyers - A Social History Of America's Most Popular Drugs | Drug Wars | FRONTLINE,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service, 2014), <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/buyers/socialhistory.html>.

¹³⁵ Ibid.

given more freedom to search and the use of no-knock warrants was permitted for drug cases.¹³⁶ America consequently saw skyrocketing incarceration rates in the 1980s and 1990s, especially among younger people of color.¹³⁷ In recent years, the United States has slowly moved towards a more progressive drug policy, legalizing marijuana in many states and allowing some drug offenders to complete time in state-run rehabilitation programs rather than prisons. However, drug trafficking continues to cost the United States billions of dollars: the 2019 budget for drug control was \$29.9 billion.¹³⁸ And that's only the cash; one cannot forget the mental, societal, personal, and cultural effects that drug use and addiction place on society. In the United States alone, 1 in 5 children grows up with a parent who abuses alcohol or drugs, making them three times as vulnerable to neglect and physical and/or sexual abuse.¹³⁹ These burdens destroy families and livelihoods.

Europe

Europe became a primary destination for Afghan opium once the Taliban came to power in Afghanistan in 1996. This opium, usually transformed into heroin, reaches Western European markets via a long overland trafficking route through Iran, Turkey, Greece, and Southeast Europe.¹⁴⁰ Another route from Afghanistan brings heroin to Russia. These two routes produce illegal heroin markets worth about \$20 billion and \$13 billion respectively.¹⁴¹ Despite increased international military action in the 2010s to reduce the heroin industry, it remains extremely profitable and flows to Europe have been largely unaffected.

Cocaine and cannabis use became common in the late 20th century. When Colombian cartels flourished in the late 20th century, they served as the primary exporter of cocaine and crack cocaine to Europe. Cannabis also became and remains Europeans' drug of choice during this time.¹⁴² As

¹³⁶ Lisa D. Moore and Amy Elkavich, "Who's Using and Who's Doing Time: Incarceration, the War on Drugs, and Public Health," *American Journal of Public Health* 98, no. 5 (2008): pp. 782-786, <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2007.126284>.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ "War on Drugs Cost Statistics," National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics, 2020, <https://drugabusestatistics.org/drug-war-cost/>.

¹³⁹ "How Addiction Affects the Family," Addiction Center, December 2, 2020, <https://www.addictioncenter.com/addiction/how-addiction-affects-the-family/>.

¹⁴⁰ "Drug Trafficking," United Nations : Office on Drugs and Crime, accessed August 4, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/index.html>.

¹⁴¹ Ibid.

¹⁴² Victor Bercea, "The History of Cannabis in Europe," Strain Insider, January 21, 2020, <https://straininsider.com/history-cannabis-europe/>.

cannabis growing methods improve, Europe has been able to produce more cannabis within its borders rather than importing it.¹⁴³

While methamphetamine is not widely used in Europe, certain countries are affected much more than others. Of the 483 meth labs discovered in 2008, 461 of them were located in the Czech Republic or Slovakia.¹⁴⁴ While these numbers may be a result of countries specifically hunting down meth labs, they are stark for a country with ~1% of Europe's population. In recent years, Germany has emerged as the primary consumer of such meth, as shown in the figure below.¹⁴⁵

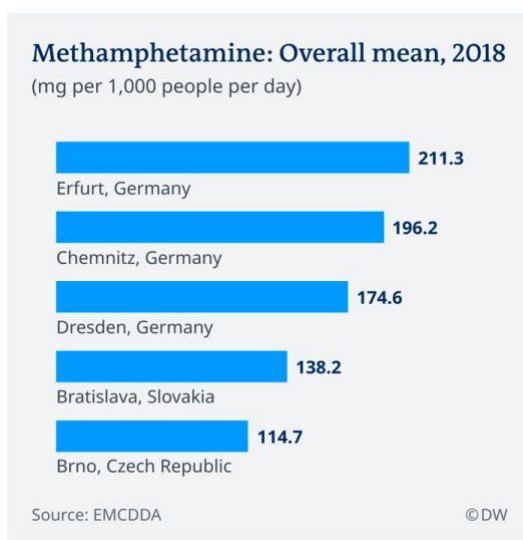


Figure 7. Source: European Monitoring Center for Drugs and Drug Addiction

European countries differ greatly in their drug policies. Sweden's drug policy, for example, is "moralistic," viewing drugs as an "immoral" part of society, and attempts to achieve a drug-free society.¹⁴⁶ No distinction is made between "soft" and "hard" drugs in sentencing, as "soft" drugs like cannabis are seen as gateway drugs. Police are given the liberty to obtain urine and blood samples in criminal cases where drug use is suspected. Policing ensures that drug users are treated similarly to

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ian Hamilton and Harry Sumnall, "Crystal Meth: Europe Could Now See a Surge in Supply and Use," *The Conversation*, June 15, 2020, <https://theconversation.com/crystal-meth-europe-could-now-see-a-surge-in-supply-and-use-140606>.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Caroline Chatwin, "Mixed Messages from Europe on Drug Policy Reform: The Cases of Sweden and the Netherlands," *Journal of Drug Policy Analysis* 11, no. 1 (May 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1515/jdpa-2015-0009>.

traffickers.¹⁴⁷ In the Netherlands, on the other hand, drug policy accepts the inevitability of drug users and aims to normalize some use in society. Emphasis is placed on the destigmatization of soft drugs, safe injection sites for heroin and other “hard” drugs, and the prosecution of traffickers much more harshly than users.¹⁴⁸ Finally, on the far-left end of the spectrum is Portugal, which decriminalized possession offenses for most drugs in 2001 (people found in possession of drugs can still face civil penalties).¹⁴⁹ These strategies have all been met with mixed success. It will be up to you to suggest how policing efforts can be coordinated to achieve one of these drug response strategies.

Asia

Two regions produce the majority of Asian drugs: Afghanistan, referred to as the “Golden Crescent,” and the “Golden Triangle,” a region encompassing parts of Vietnam, Laos, Thailand, and Myanmar.¹⁵⁰

Modern Afghan history has been fraught with heroin exportation. Profits from heroin have largely funded the Taliban and Al Qaeda since the 1990s, and even, more recently, ISIS.¹⁵¹ Despite increased international military involvement in Afghanistan, opium cultivation increased from around 75,000 hectares in 1994 to 328,000 hectares in 2017.¹⁵² Afghanistan began to take over as the world’s largest opium producer at this time. This increased volume, combined with a trend of manufacturing heroin in Afghanistan rather than abroad, aided Taliban smuggling efforts and drastically increased their profits. If this was not enough, opium production is rife with corruption, which has helped opium growers go unpunished in a country that supposedly punished opium production with the death penalty.¹⁵³ The opium trade has played a major role in lengthening the nearly-20-year-long NATO war in Afghanistan.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ “Opium Throughout History,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed August 6, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heroin/etc/history.html>.

¹⁵¹ Justin Rowlett, “How the US Military’s Opium War in Afghanistan Was Lost,” BBC News (BBC, April 25, 2019), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-47861444>.

¹⁵² Ibid.

¹⁵³ Ibid.

The Golden Triangle heroin trade has followed a slightly different timeline. In 1971, reports emerged that 10-15% of American servicemen were addicted to heroin, having been exposed to the drug during the Vietnam War.¹⁵⁴ These reports pushed heroin use to the front of President Richard Nixon's anti-drug policies, and he promptly created the Drug Enforcement Agency in 1973 to enforce controlled substance laws and reduce addiction rates. Despite this, warlords like Khun Sa continued to successfully export tons of heroin to the US, Europe, Australia, Japan, India, China, and many other countries. for the next twenty years.¹⁵⁵ As the world experienced heroin epidemics over that time period, Khun Sa was referred to as "the worst enemy the world has" by the American ambassador to Thailand.¹⁵⁶ He was never internationally apprehended.

As Khun Sa's power diminished in the 2000s, so did the Golden Triangle's position as an opium stronghold.¹⁵⁷ Police are much more institutionalized in the Golden Triangle countries than in Afghanistan, which may explain Afghanistan's rise to international opium prominence in the 21st century.¹⁵⁸ This being said, delegates should be aware of current opium production trends in both regions and be able to suggest solutions for both regions if necessary.

Africa

Africa's role in the drug trade has largely been that of a middleman between source countries and Europe. Africa is attractive as a transit region for many reasons: non-existent or ineffective border controls, limited cross border and regional cooperation, and serious deficiencies in criminal justice systems.¹⁵⁹ Both West and East Africa have seen rapid growth of illegal drug sectors in the 21st century.

¹⁵⁴ "The Buyers - A Social History Of America's Most Popular Drugs | Drug Wars | FRONTLINE," PBS (Public Broadcasting Service, 2014), <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/drugs/buyers/socialhistory.html>.

¹⁵⁵ "Opium Throughout History," PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed August 6, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heroin/etc/history.html>.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid.

¹⁵⁷ Kelvin Rowley, "Lord of Prosperity," *The Diplomat*, January 21, 2008, <https://thediplomat.com/2008/01/lord-of-prosperity/>.

¹⁵⁸ "World Internal Security and Police Index" (International Police Science Association, 2016), <http://www.ipsa-police.org/Images/uploaded/Pdf%20file/WISPI%20Report.pdf>.

¹⁵⁹ "The Destabilizing Influence of Cocaine on Transit Countries" (Vienna, Austria: UNODC, 2009).

South American cocaine lands anywhere on the West African coast between Guinea and Ghana. It is then shipped by drug mules, often on commercial flights, to Europe, where it is distributed by West African networks or European organizations. In total, West African syndicates process at least 50 tons of cocaine from South America every year.¹⁶⁰ To put the extent of drug trafficking in perspective, Guinea-Bissau police estimated that the amount of cocaine passing through Guinea-Bissau, valued at European street prices, would be equivalent to Guinea-Bissau's GDP.¹⁶¹

The extent of drug trafficking in West Africa threatens security and development in the region, goals that have been on the priority list of multiple international organizations for a long time.

Theoretically, when illegal activity accounts for a hefty percentage of GDP, as it may in Guinea-Bissau, it implies that legal activities are less profitable than they might be in other countries.

Consequently, people have an incentive to dedicate their resources toward the illegal activity, which makes illegal activity a larger percentage of GDP, which encourages more people to engage in the illegal activity, and the cycle continues. Politics are also affected significantly: according to the Executive Director of UNODC, Antonio Maria Costa, "drug cartels buy more than real estate, banks and businesses, they buy elections, candidates and parties. In a word they buy power."¹⁶² Cartels influence politics and as a result, influence appropriation spending. This spending may be diverted away from education, healthcare, infrastructure, and other sources in need of funding. Such power may also partially explain the low number of seizures and forfeitures in West Africa; however, officials think this is likely due to a lack of allocated resources and poor border controls.¹⁶³

East Africa serves as a transit point for heroin from Southeast Asia and cocaine from West Africa. These drugs are processed through ports in Eritrea, Djibouti, Somalia, Kenya, and Tanzania. From there, these drugs get trafficked to the Middle East, North Africa, Europe, and South Africa.¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁰ Timothy Larose, "United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime," Drug Trafficking Patterns, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/easternafrika/en/illicit-drugs/drug-trafficking-patterns.html>.

¹⁶¹ Michael Houtz, "The Global Drugs Trade Shifts to West Africa," The Economist (The Economist Newspaper), accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.economist.com/international/2019/11/21/the-global-drugs-trade-shifts-to-west-africa>.

¹⁶² Patrick Radden Keefe, "Cocaine Incorporated," The New York Times (The New York Times, June 15, 2012), <https://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/17/magazine/how-a-mexican-drug-cartel-makes-its-billions.html>.

¹⁶³ Michael Houtz, "The Global Drugs Trade Shifts to West Africa," The Economist (The Economist Newspaper), accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.economist.com/international/2019/11/21/the-global-drugs-trade-shifts-to-west-africa>.

¹⁶⁴ Timothy Larose, "United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime," Drug Trafficking Patterns, accessed October 4, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/easternafrika/en/illicit-drugs/drug-trafficking-patterns.html>.

Past Actions

UN Action

The United Nations has passed three major agreements with regard to drug trafficking.

As drug trafficking became an international problem, the UN passed the 1961 Single Convention of Narcotic Drugs. Treaty signatories agreed to two main requirements: to limit the possession, trade in, and manufacture of drugs for medical and scientific purposes, and to combat drug trafficking via international cooperation.¹⁶⁵ The Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the World Health Organization were given the power to classify any substance according to a four-schedule system.¹⁶⁶ Additionally, the International Narcotics Board was mandated to regulate drug production, dispensation, and international trade. Finally, the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was created to monitor drug trafficking situations in individual countries and help countries comply with the Single Convention.¹⁶⁷ Notably, the agreement is prohibitionist, stating that "addiction to narcotic drugs constitutes a serious evil for the individual and is fraught with social and economic danger to mankind".¹⁶⁸ Consequently, the agreement attempted to stop any and all drug use for non-medical or non-scientific purposes and focused around limiting supply by prosecuting traffickers and producers. Immediately after the agreement was passed, countries worked with UNODC to enact the policies in their own nations. Many aggressive drug policies, such as those in the US-led War on Drugs, were conceived as a way to meet the provisions of the Single Convention.¹⁶⁹ While this agreement remains the framework for the United Nations' drug policy, given that drug use remains a major issue, tenets and strategies in this agreement may need to be reconsidered or amended.

The Single Convention was limited to drugs with coca, opium, or cannabis-like effects. As the drug landscape changed, two new agreements were enacted. When hallucinogenic substance use became more common in the 1960s, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances was adopted in 1971 to

¹⁶⁵ "Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs." Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs | OSCE POLIS. Accessed August 15, 2020. <https://polis.osce.org/single-convention-narcotic-drugs>.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid.

¹⁶⁹ "Four Decades and Counting: The Continued Failure of the War on Drugs," September 22, 2020, <https://www.cato.org/publications/policy-analysis/four-decades-counting-continued-failure-war-drugs>.

include these substances (including amphetamines and psychedelics) in international anti-drug measures.¹⁷⁰ Measures taken to enforce the psychotropic substances convention were similar to that of the Single Convention, where UNODC helped countries implement anti-drug laws. The 1971 Convention effectively criminalized all mainstream drugs, committing countries to a devastating War on Drugs.

By 1988, the UN realized that previous conventions had failed to contain the spread of illicit drugs. The 1988 Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances escalated the ongoing War on Drugs in multiple ways. Firstly, the agreement mandated international cooperation in tracing drug assets and required banks to release any financial records necessary in drug cases.¹⁷¹ Secondly, a legal basis for drug-related extraditions was established for countries that had no prior extradition treaties or provisions in their governmental frameworks.¹⁷² Thirdly, the treaty recognized the demand for, as well as the supply of, drugs as a major international issue and called on destination countries to enact harsher sentences for possession.¹⁷³ The international focus helped streamline cross-border efforts, especially against multinational cartels like the Medellin Cartel.

International Action

The United States has engaged in the most well-publicized War on Drugs. In 1971, Nixon dramatically increased the size and presence of federal drug control agencies. Police powers were increased, such as the use of no-knock warrants in drug cases, and mandatory minimums for drug offenses were established. Said policies resulted not in a reduction of drug use rates but did cause large disparities in drug arrests and seizures. Additionally, laws put in place during the War on Drugs (and others put in place around the world to comply with the UN agreements) made it extremely difficult for offenders to reintegrate into society, perpetuating a cycle of crime, poverty, and

¹⁷⁰ "Convention on Psychotropic Substances." Convention on Psychotropic Substances | OSCE POLIS. Accessed August 15, 2020. <https://polis.osce.org/convention-psychotropic-substances>.

¹⁷¹ "Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances." Accessed August 15, 2020. <https://polis.osce.org/convention-against-illicit-traffic-narcotic-drugs-and-psychotropic-substances>.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

addiction in low-income neighborhoods.¹⁷⁴ In the 21st century, however, American drug policy has become much more liberal with widespread decriminalization or de facto decriminalization of marijuana in some states. Although the United States still spends billions on drug control, increasingly liberal drug policies may make international players like INTERPOL take a larger role in the fight against drug trafficking.

In Latin America, Mexico has waged a bloody war on drug cartels that has cost thousands of lives and has been fraught with corruption and murders.¹⁷⁵ This war on drugs has produced multiple notable killings and arrests, including the widely publicized arrest and recapture of Sinaloa cartel leader Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman. Colombia, Venezuela, Brazil, Peru, Ecuador, and Bolivia have also engaged in deadly anti-drug wars against cartels and organizations like the Medellin cartel, Cali Cartel, and FARC.¹⁷⁶ Although Mexico has succeeded in eliminating major cartels like the Tijuana and Beltran Leyva, the war has ravaged communities, corrupted police forces, and hindered development in regions controlled by cartels.¹⁷⁷

Asian countries have taken some of the most hardline stances toward drug possession. Drug offenders frequently face the death penalty in China, Singapore, almost the entire Middle East, Vietnam, Bangladesh, and Malaysia. Capital punishment is used for serious drug offenses in many other countries as well. Despite these hardline policies, heroin production in Southeast Asia and Afghanistan has skyrocketed, seizures of methamphetamine have also risen, and drug use and overdoses have continued.¹⁷⁸

As mentioned in the History of the Problem, some European countries have taken a liberal approach to drug policy, treating addiction as an illness rather than a crime. Europe directs some military

¹⁷⁴ Betsy Pearl, “Ending the War on Drugs: By the Numbers,” Center for American Progress, accessed October 14, 2020, <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/criminal-justice/reports/2018/06/27/452819/ending-war-drugs-numbers/>.

¹⁷⁵ Jason Breslow, “The Staggering Death Toll of Mexico’s Drug War,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service, July 27, 2015), <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/article/the-staggering-death-toll-of-mexicos-drug-war/>.

¹⁷⁶ Stephen D. Morris, “Drug Trafficking, Corruption, and Violence in Mexico: Mapping the Linkages,” *Trends in Organized Crime* 16, no. 2 (March 2013): pp. 195-220, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12117-013-9191-7>.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid.

¹⁷⁸ “Myanmar Police Seize Largest Haul of Synthetic Drugs,” BBC News (BBC, May 19, 2020), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-52712014>.

resources toward curbing and eliminating common drug trafficking routes, such as those from Afghanistan, to limit the supply of drugs in European markets.¹⁷⁹

INTERPOL Action

INTERPOL assists national, regional, and international law enforcement groups to counter illicit production, trafficking, and abuse of drugs. In recent years, INTERPOL has conducted global operations against drug trafficking, assisted ongoing investigations of crime leaders and groups, and provided comprehensive training for police worldwide. INTERPOL also analyzes intelligence about drug trafficking routes, modus operandi, and criminal networks. All of these operations make heavy use of I-27 and other INTERPOL databases.¹⁸⁰

In 2013, INTERPOL began Operation Folsa, a massive effort in conjunction with the UNODC targeting drug trafficking across the globe. Although the operation began in Latin America, it quickly spread to Europe, Africa, and Asia. Police seized upwards of \$10M worth of illicit drugs as well as millions more in gold and currency.¹⁸¹ The operation was successful largely because police were able to share information about high-risk trafficking routes and travelers via the I-27 database. Analysis of the database yielded 200 suspects expected to travel through certain airports. Police then heightened security at these airports and increased controls on departing, transiting, and arriving passengers at international airports known for being included in smuggling routes. The added surveillance allowed customs officials and police to find more drugs smuggled through suitcases and on one's person.¹⁸² Additionally, INTERPOL Red Notice alerts allowed police in bordering countries to identify and detain traffickers escaping local authorities. Operation Folsa is still ongoing and will likely continue to a new phase of acting on new information. For example, many international drug routes, trafficking procedures, and protocols have been identified.¹⁸³ How INTERPOL will act on the new information remains to be seen.

¹⁷⁹ Daniel Korski, "Afghanistan: Europe's Forgotten War" (European Council on Foreign Relations, 2008), https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/91746/Afghanistan_0108.pdf.

¹⁸⁰ "General Legal Activities INTERPOL Washington," INTERPOL Washington (2018).

¹⁸¹ Marco Venier, "United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime," AIRCOP - Operation Folsa, accessed May 28, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrika/en/aircop---operation-folsa.html>

¹⁸² *Ibid.*

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*

INTERPOL began a Global Conference on Illicit Drugs in 2018, bringing together police experts from 100+ countries. The 2018 and 2019 conferences, held at Toledo, Spain and Cape Town, South Africa, disseminated information about heroin routes, the intersection of drug crime with financial and cybercrime, and emerging concealment methods.¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁴ "Drug Crime: Global Experts Push for Increased Cooperation," INTERPOL, accessed May 28, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2019/Drug-crime-global-experts-push-for-increased-cooperation>)

Possible Solutions

As discussed in prior sections, countries have enacted a wide range of policies geared at reducing drug use, addiction, and its effects on society. These include addressing poverty, inequality, educational opportunities, and social immobility. While these measures are important as these issues are correlated with drug use, they are largely outside the scope of INTERPOL, a body mandated to help police respond and act on criminal threats. Although solutions in committee may reference ways in which they will help social issues, please ensure that they remain within INTERPOL's powers and jurisdiction.

Professionalize police forces and pay better wages

In many countries, police are underpaid, underequipped, and poorly respected. Take Mexico as a case study. Despite playing a major role in Mexico's 15-year-long drug war, police lack the necessary weapons and pay to attract qualified officers. Cartels well-funded by illegal activities are often better equipped than police. Moreover, according to Mexico's Centro de Estudios Sociales y Opinión Pública, 2/3 of Mexicans believe police are "reasonably controlled by criminal organizations."¹⁸⁵ A quarter of respondents would not report a crime due to lack of trust in authorities. Negative public perception of police, as evidenced in Mexico, makes it vastly more difficult to track and fight cartel members. According to former Mexican president Enrique Peña Nieto, Mexico requires "well trained and equipped police, capable of investigating proficiently and using information and intelligence to perform surgical strikes against the organized mafias, tackling their structures from the top down" to effectively fight organized crime.¹⁸⁶

Mexico is not the only country suffering from police inefficiency and lack of police funding. In Nigeria and much of Western and Central Africa police are paid paltry salaries, struggle to receive pensions,

¹⁸⁵ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations*, by June S. Beittel, R41576 (2020), 1-34.

¹⁸⁶ "5 Solutions for Mexico's Drug Violence and Security Challenges," *The Christian Science Monitor* (The Christian Science Monitor, June 4, 2012), <https://www.csmonitor.com/Commentary/Opinion/2012/0604/5-solutions-for-Mexico-s-drug-violence-and-security-challenges/Professionalize-our-police-forces>)

and work in appalling conditions.¹⁸⁷ In some countries, police do not even have a monopoly on criminal justice: people often have multiple choices, with varying degrees of legitimacy and government connections – from family and friends out to exact revenge, to local militia, customary courts, and formal commercial security guards.

Attack Corruption in police and judicial positions

Likely caused in part by poor salaries, conditions, and equipment, police corruption is rampant in many parts of the world. Police bribes are common in Eastern Europe, Asia, South America, Africa, and Central America. Excessive police force is receiving attention in Western countries like the United States and United Kingdom. INTERPOL is not immune either. Ricardo Gutierrez, the head of INTERPOL Mexico, was convicted for corruption related to his ties with Mexican cartels, and Meng Hongwei, the former president of INTERPOL, was convicted after pleading guilty to bribery charges in his Chinese homeland.¹⁸⁸

Not only have cartels infiltrated police, they have also infiltrated legal and political systems. Mexico is a well-publicized example, where anti-drug efforts have long been hindered by corrupt legal institutions infiltrated by top cartels.¹⁸⁹ Additionally, it's not only source countries that struggle with corruption. Transparency International publishes a Corruption Perceptions Index every year, ranking countries on a scale of 0 (totally corrupt) to 100 (very clean). The global average corruption score was a 43, and most countries had shown little to no progress in improving their corruption score over the past decade.¹⁹⁰ Given the police's role in fighting organized crime, INTERPOL should make limiting police corruption a priority.

¹⁸⁷ "EXCLUSIVE: Inside Nigeria Police Shocking Work Conditions Where Officers Are Left Homeless, Paid Peanuts," Premium Times Nigeria, May 18, 2015, <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/159124-exclusive-inside-nigeria-police-shocking-work-conditions-officers-left-homeless-paid-peanuts.html>.

¹⁸⁸ Colin Dwyer, "Former Interpol President Sentenced To Prison In China For Corruption," NPR (NPR, January 21, 2020), <https://www.npr.org/2020/01/21/798121397/former-interpol-president-sentenced-to-prison-in-china-for-corruption>.

¹⁸⁹ Felbab-Brown, Vanda. "Mexico's Out of Control Criminal Market." *Brookings*. Accessed August 27, 2020. https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/FP_20190322_mexico_crime-2.pdf.

¹⁹⁰ "Corruption Perceptions Index," Transparency.org, accessed August 28, 2020, <https://www.transparency.org/en/cpi>.

Increase Size of Current INTERPOL operations

Currently, INTERPOL engages in drug trafficking support around the world. INTERPOL's main projects include Operation Folosa, Project AMEAP (Asia Middle East Asia Pacific), Project CRIMJUST (Latin America, Caribbean and West Africa), as well as the ongoing operation and maintenance of world-class criminal databases. While Operation Folosa was discussed in detail, the other two operations have also played a role in reducing cocaine and methamphetamine trafficking in their respective regions.¹⁹¹ One possible solution, therefore, would be to convince more countries to join these respective projects. This would create more funding, more information, and better cross-national cooperation.

Target Intersection of Drug and Financial Crime

Money cartels earn from illicit activity cannot be spent right away. Large expenditures without an apparent legal source of funds would tip authorities off to illegal activity. Consequently, cartels need to launder their profits into the formal economy. This process, called money laundering, is the process of making "dirty" money appear "clean."¹⁹² Tracing these money laundering flows could lead back to cartel leaders and affiliates.

Money laundering has become ever more complex, but governments have largely tried to track on two forms of money laundering. The first is through cash transactions. Cash is portable, bears no record of its origin, and large amounts can be easily smuggled through vehicles, airplanes, boats, and luggage.¹⁹³ Oftentimes, the goal is to move cash from a destination country, where anti-laundering protocols may be stricter, to a source country where it is easier to use and conceal illegal funds. INTERPOL should and can consider ways it can better track and intercept these cross-national flows of money.

¹⁹¹ "Project CRIMJUST," INTERPOL, accessed August 29, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Drug-trafficking/Project-CRIMJUST>.

¹⁹² Jimena Galindo, "An Improved Strategy to Fight Drug Trafficking, Organized Crime and Corruption in the Hemisphere," *Global Americans*, July 18, 2020, <https://theglobalamericans.org/reports/improved-strategy-fight-drug-trafficking-organized-crime-corruption-hemisphere/>.

¹⁹³ "Combating Money Laundering and Other Forms of Illicit Finance," FBI (FBI, November 29, 2018), <https://www.fbi.gov/news/testimony/combating-money-laundering-and-other-forms-of-illicit-finance>.

The second way involves the misuse of banks and other financial institutions. Criminal networks often funnel money through multiple banks and money service businesses, slowly distancing the funds from their original source and combining the money with other, legally obtained funds. This process, known as layering and integration, makes it difficult to separate illicit money from licit money.¹⁹⁴ Steps governments and financial institutions have taken to make laundering harder include lowering the minimum transaction value for which banks are required to report the transaction, which makes money laundering more tedious.

There are many other ways to launder money, but I will list them here rather than write out summaries. In trade-based money laundering, an organization buys or sells an asset and misreports the value of the transaction to authorities, allowing for illegal money to go undetected.¹⁹⁵ In bank capture, criminal organizations buy a commanding interest in a bank and move money through it without scrutiny. The use of shell corporations and offshore investments and accounts is also common. Finally, in recent years, use of cryptocurrencies and the dark web has allowed cartels to hide assets more effectively.¹⁹⁶

Let's consider a sample money laundering case. Let's say a drug lord wants to use illicit money to buy a house in the United States. The initial drug money is obtained from sales in the United States. That money is smuggled back to Central America in cash form. Next, the money is used to buy an asset in Central America, either from a sympathetic merchant (who will keep quiet about where the money came from) or where money laundering protocols may be less strict. Later, that asset is sold and reported as a legitimate source of capital gains (income from sale of an investment). Finally, that money is used to buy a house in the United States, where it appears to be "clean" because it came from the legitimate sale of a house in Central America. Now, this example is an oversimplification of one of the many ways money laundering is conducted, but it gives a sufficient overview.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ James Chen, "Money Laundering," Investopedia (Investopedia, August 28, 2020), <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/m/moneylaundering.asp>.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

Bloc Positions

As with piracy, few, if any countries will support inaction against international drug trafficking. Even countries that advocate drug legalization will likely oppose the criminal activity of organized cartels. This being said, if there are country policies I am not aware of, by all means bring them up in conference.

North America

North America is home to both the world's largest destination country (the United States) and to major transit and source countries. The United States has large influence on this bloc; expect but do not be assured that the rest of North America and the Organization of American States will follow Joe Biden's drug policies.¹⁹⁷

South America

Parts of South America still suffer the aftereffects of a long war on drugs. These countries will have been working on ways to improve police capabilities and to that end, will likely be open to INTERPOL aid and joining INTERPOL projects.¹⁹⁸

Europe

European countries have taken a wide stance on drug legalization and implementation of policing measures, and this variety will likely play out in debate. The EU has funded many anti-drug operations for INTERPOL and other bodies and may continue to do so. Expect Europe to advocate for increased policing action of drugs coming from Africa and Afghanistan. European countries may

¹⁹⁷ "International Narcotics Control Strategy Report," vol. 1 (Washington, DC: United States Department of State, 2020), pp. 1-244.

¹⁹⁸ "Project CRIMJUST," INTERPOL, accessed August 29, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Drug-trafficking/Project-CRIMJUST>.

also introduce specific strategies that have worked in their individual countries for international consideration.¹⁹⁹

Asia

In May 2020, Myanmar police conducted the largest synthetic drug seizure ever recorded in Southeast Asia.²⁰⁰ These seizures are a sign of a large problem in the region, where drug prices remain low despite high demand. It is easy to conceal drug trafficking in mountainous jungles of Thailand and Laos, which facilitates international trafficking and sales. Consequently, expect Asian countries, especially Southeast Asian countries, to call for increased international cooperation.

Africa

Similarly to Asia, countries in Africa are likely to advocate for increased emphasis on trans-national trafficking and border security. African syndicates cross multiple international borders going north, south, east and west when trafficking. UNODC's 2018 report found that 87% of pharmaceutical opioids seized globally were from Africa, and that Africa also experienced the largest rise in cocaine seizures that year.²⁰¹

¹⁹⁹ Caroline Chatwin, "Mixed Messages from Europe on Drug Policy Reform: The Cases of Sweden and the Netherlands," *Journal of Drug Policy Analysis* 11, no. 1 (May 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1515/jdpa-2015-0009>.

²⁰⁰ "Is Southeast Asia's Drug Trade Too Big to Control?: DW: 19.05.2020," DW.COM, accessed September 1, 2020, <https://www.dw.com/en/is-southeast-asias-drug-trade-too-big-to-control/a-53500062>.

²⁰¹ "UN Reports 'Alarming' Trends in Drug Trafficking in Africa," Voice of America, December 20, 2018, <https://www.voanews.com/africa/un-reports-alarming-trends-drug-trafficking-africa>.

Glossary

Cannabis: A psychoactive drug made from the leaves of the cannabis plant. Marijuana and hashish are the most common forms. Effects of cannabis on a user include euphoria, altered sense of time, difficulty concentrating, and poor short-term memory.²⁰²

Cocaine: A powerful stimulant drug made from the coca plant. Cocaine (powder form) and crack (rock form) are the most common forms of the drug. Cocaine users often experience extreme alertness, energy, paranoia, and hypersensitivity to light and/or sound.²⁰³

Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: A more serious convention about drugs in 1988 mandating international cooperation on cartels and recommending individual stronger action against drugs.²⁰⁴

Convention on Psychotropic Substances: A 1971 convention which essentially added amphetamines and other synthetic drugs to the provisions of the Single Convention.²⁰⁵

Destination country: A country for which drugs produced for export are bound. Often wealthier countries with high demand for drugs like the United States, United Kingdom, or France.²⁰⁶

Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC): A Marxist guerrilla group in Colombia operating from 1964-2017 involved in the Colombian conflict. Known for using extremist methods like terrorism, kidnappings, and drug trafficking to fund and sustain their operations.²⁰⁷

²⁰² "Other Commonly Used Addictive Substances," June 25, 2020, <https://www.drugabuse.gov/publications/media-guide/other-commonly-used-addictive-substances>.

²⁰³ Ibid.

²⁰⁴ "Convention against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances." Accessed August 15, 2020. <https://polis.osce.org/convention-against-illicit-traffic-narcotic-drugs-and-psychotropic-substances>.

²⁰⁵ "Convention on Psychotropic Substances." Convention on Psychotropic Substances | OSCE POLIS. Accessed August 15, 2020. <https://polis.osce.org/convention-psychotropic-substances>.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

²⁰⁷ "Colombian Ex-Farc Rebels 'Ashamed' of Kidnappings," British Broadcasting Corporation, September 15, 2020, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-latin-america-54160284>.

Global Conference on Illicit Drugs: An INTERPOL conference held every year to discuss police techniques regarding drug trafficking and to update INTERPOL databases.²⁰⁸

Golden Crescent: A region known for opium cultivation at the crossroads of South, Central, and West Asia. Compared to the Golden Triangle.²⁰⁹

Golden Triangle: A region known for opium cultivation at the border of Thailand, Laos, and Myanmar. Compared to the Golden Crescent.²¹⁰

Khun Sa: Shan drug warlord in Myanmar, active from 1976-1996. Khun Sa ultimately “surrendered” but due to his connections in the Thai and Burmese governments, was able to transition into a licit lifestyle.²¹¹

Medellín Cartel: Preeminent cartel in Colombia in the 1980s and 1990s, headed by kingpin Pablo Escobar. Played a major role in Colombian politics and daily life. The Medellin Cartel was supplanted by the Cali cartel in the 1990s.²¹²

Meng Hongwei: Former president of INTERPOL indicted by China in 2018 on bribery charges.²¹³

Methamphetamine: Highly addictive, synthetic stimulant that appears as crystals. Users experience a high involving a faster heartbeat, faster breathing, and increased blood pressure.²¹⁴

“Moralistic” drug policy: Drug policy that views drug use as “immoral” and attempts to rid the country of use and trafficking. Sweden is a country with a moralistic drug policy.²¹⁵

²⁰⁸ “Drug Crime: Global Experts Push for Increased Cooperation,” INTERPOL, accessed May 28, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/News-and-Events/News/2019/Drug-crime-global-experts-push-for-increased-cooperation>

²⁰⁹ “Opium Throughout History,” PBS (Public Broadcasting Service), accessed August 6, 2020, <https://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/heroin/etc/history.html>.

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Ibid.

²¹² Iniseg and Iniseg, “Cártel De Medellín: Su Historia y Actualidad,” Información Seguridad, June 22, 2020, <https://www.iniseg.es/blog/seguridad/cartel-de-medellin-su-historia-y-actualidad/>.

²¹³ Colin Dwyer, “Former Interpol President Sentenced To Prison In China For Corruption,” NPR (NPR, January 21, 2020),

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ Caroline Chatwin, “Mixed Messages from Europe on Drug Policy Reform: The Cases of Sweden and the Netherlands,” *Journal of Drug Policy Analysis* 11, no. 1 (May 2016), <https://doi.org/10.1515/jdpa-2015-0009>.

Operation Folosa: Massive INTERPOL training program and initiative with UNODC targeting drug trafficking in Latin America, Europe, Africa, and Asia.²¹⁶

Opiates: Addictive, narcotic substances derived from the opium poppy. Heroin, fentanyl, and morphine are all examples of opiates. Opiates relax the user and act as painkillers.²¹⁷

Project AMEAP: INTERPOL drug trafficking response project in Asia, Middle East, and the Pacific.²¹⁸

Project Crimjust: Similar to Project AMEAP but in Latin America and the Caribbean²¹⁹

Ricardo Gutierrez: Mexico's former chief liaison with INTERPOL who was arrested in 2008 for cooperating with the Beltran Leyva drug cartel.²²⁰

Sinaloa Cartel: Largest drug cartel and money laundering organization in Mexico. Led by the infamous El Chapo before his prison capture, escape, recapture, and extradition to the United States.²²¹

Single Convention of Narcotic Drugs: UN treaty in 1961 designed to limit the sale and possession of drugs. Also developed the "schedule" system of classifying drugs.²²²

Source country: A country from which drugs are usually grown in or prepared for international distribution. Source countries may also be transit or destination countries. Source countries include

²¹⁶ Marco Venier, "United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime," AIRCOP - Operation Folosa, accessed May 28, 2020, <https://www.unodc.org/westandcentralafrica/en/aircop---operation-folosa.html>

²¹⁷ Ibid.

²¹⁸ "Project CRIMJUST," INTERPOL, accessed August 29, 2020, <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Drug-trafficking/Project-CRIMJUST>.

²¹⁹ Ibid.

²²⁰ "Former Interpol Mexico Director Faces Money Laundering Charges," Latin American Herald Tribune - Former Interpol Mexico Director Faces Money Laundering Charges, accessed May 28, 2020, <http://www.laht.com/article.asp?ArticleId=357830&CategoryId=14091>

²²¹ U.S. Library of Congress, Congressional Research Service, *Mexico: Organized Crime and Drug Trafficking Organizations*, by June S. Beittel, R41576 (2020), 1-34.

²²² "Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs." Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs | OSCE POLIS. Accessed August 15, 2020. <https://polis.osce.org/single-convention-narcotic-drugs>.

Afghanistan, Colombia, and Myanmar.²²³ Just because a country is a source country does not mean that drug addiction and consumption is not a problem in the country.

Transit country: A country through which drugs are trafficked en route to a destination country. Examples include Panama, Russia, and much of West Africa.²²⁴

War on Drugs: A US policy began in 1971 by President Richard Nixon that aimed to curb drug use and trafficking by greatly increasing sentences for drug traffickers and users. Largely agreed to have failed in its objectives. The War on Drugs is also used to describe the international effort against drug use and trafficking.²²⁵

²²³ INTERPOL. "Drug Trafficking." <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Drug-trafficking>.

²²⁴ Ibid.

²²⁵ Lisa D. Moore and Amy Elkavich, "Who's Using and Who's Doing Time: Incarceration, the War on Drugs, and Public Health," *American Journal of Public Health* 98, no. 5 (2008): pp. 782-786, <https://doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2007.126284>.

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