



Vancouver Youth Model United Nations

The Nineteenth Iteration | October 25-27, 2024

Dear Delegates,

It brings me great pleasure to welcome you all to the 2024 Vancouver Youth Model United Nations Conference! Our dedicated staff at VYMUN are ecstatic to welcome back old delegates and introduce many new ones, incorporating new ideas within our strong team. Our dais features capable and reliable members, with Greyson Tang as Assistant Director and Jayden Chen as our chair. My name is Sheree Li, this is my third year with Model UN at WPGA, and I look forward to serving you this year as your Director for the Disarmament and International Security Committee.

The Disarmament and International Security Committee, the first committee of the United Nations General Assembly is responsible for addressing issues regarding disarmament challenges to global security as well as threats to international peace. Our committee topics this year feature International Drug Trafficking challenges, relating to smuggling and mitigation of black market trafficking. We will work together to draft solutions and resolutions to this multifaceted issue. Our second topic will be the relations between the United States and China in the South China Sea. The intertwined claim stakes in this historical territory will require our collective efforts to resolve.

Our dais team strongly believes in thorough research and studying of the backgrounder guides, you will understand the necessary standpoints of your respective countries. Additionally, we are extremely interested and excited to see what our sophisticated delegates will propose at our conference, so we encourage you to develop your ideas using our tools. Welcome to the VYMUN 2024, and we look forward to working with you all!

Sincerely,

Sheree Li (Director), Greyson Tang (Assistant Director), Jayden Chen (Chair)

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Topic A — Territorial Disputes in the South China Sea

Overview

The South China Sea is one of the world's most strategically significant and contested maritime regions, with multiple nations laying overlapping claims to its waters, islands, and resources. The primary countries involved in these disputes include China, Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan. The area is rich in natural resources, including vast reserves of oil and natural gas, and it serves as a crucial maritime route, with trillions of dollars in trade passing through it annually.

China asserts the most expansive claims in the South China Sea, marked by the "nine-dash line," which covers almost 90% of the sea. This claim is based on historical maps, but it has been widely contested by other nations and rejected by an international tribunal under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) in 2016.⁽¹⁾ The tribunal ruled in favor of the Philippines, stating that China's claims had no legal basis, but China rejected the ruling and continued to assert its dominance in the region.

Tensions in the South China Sea are fueled by China's construction of artificial islands and military installations on disputed features, particularly in the Spratly and Paracel Islands. These actions have raised concerns among neighboring countries and global powers, including the United States, which conducts freedom of navigation operations to challenge China's claims and ensure open sea lanes.

The disputes are further complicated by the involvement of non-claimant states like the US and Japan, which advocate for a rules-based international order and freedom of navigation.⁽¹⁾ The South China Sea disputes remain a marker in regional security, with potential implications for global trade and international relations, as competing national interests and the rising militarization of the area continue to exacerbate tensions.¹

¹ <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/territorial-disputes-south-china-sea>.

10. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/chinas-maritime-disputes>.

Timeline of Events ⁷

1947 - China's "Nine-Dash Line" Claim: The Republic of China publishes a map featuring the "eleven-dash line" (later on reduced to nine), laying claim to most of the South China Sea based on historical grounds.

1956 - Philippines Claims Kalayaan Group: Tomás Cloma, a Filipino explorer, declares the Kalayaan Island Group (part of the Spratly Islands) as "Freedomland", leading to a formal claim by the Philippines in the 1970s.

1974 - Battle of the Paracel Islands: China seizes control of the paracel Islands from South Vietnam following a naval battle, marking a significant escalation in the disputes.

1988 - Johnson South Reef Skirmish: A naval clash between China and Vietnam over Johnson South Reef in the Spratly Islands results in the deaths of 64 Vietnamese soldiers, heightening tensions in the region.

1995 - Mischief Reef Incident: China begins building structures on Mischief Reef, which is claimed by the Philippines, leading to diplomatic protests and increased regional tensions.

2002 - ASEAN-China Declaration on the Conduct of Parties (DOC): China and ASEAN countries sign a non-binding agreement to promote peace and stability in the South China Sea, though it fails to halt the militarization of the area.

2009 - China's Submission to the UN: China officially submits the "nine-dash line" map to the United Nations, triggering formal objections from several Southeast Asian nations.

2012 - Scarborough Shoal Standoff - A prolonged maritime standoff occurs between China and the Philippines over Scarborough Shoal, eventually leading to China's control of the area.

2013 - Philippines Initiates Arbitration: The Philippines files a case against China at the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA), challenging the legality of China's claims in the South China Sea.

2014 - Haiyang Shiyou 981 Oil Rig Incident: China deploys a giant oil rig near the Paracel Islands, sparking a confrontation with Vietnam, including violent anti-China protests in Vietnam.

2016 - Permanent Court of Arbitration Ruling: The PCA rules in favor of the Philippines, stating that China's claims based on the "nine-dash line" have no legal basis under international law. China rejects the ruling.

2018 - China's Continued Militarization: Reports confirm that China has installed missile systems and electronic jamming equipment on several of its artificial islands in the Spratly archipelago.

2020 - USS Theodore Roosevelt Patrol: Amidst rising tensions, the US deploys a carrier strike group led by the USS Theodore Roosevelt to the South China Sea, emphasizing its commitment to freedom of navigation.

2023 - New Code of Conduct Talks: ASEAN and China resume negotiations for a South China Sea Code of Conduct, aiming to establish clearer rules to prevent conflicts, though significant differences remain.

Historical Analysis

The South China Sea, also referred to as the East Sea within Vietnam and the West Philippine Sea within the Philippines, is an area of the Pacific Ocean bound by Southeast Asia to the west, Taiwan and the Taiwan Strait northeast, China in the north, Philippines to the East and the Indonesian archipelago to the south. Containing vital shipping lanes carrying some \$3.4 trillion in trade (one-fifth of global trade), as well as numerous vital shipping lanes, the weight and importance of this region is solidified in the global market. Throughout the late 20th century and early 21st centuries, reserves of natural gas and crude oils were unearthed through undersea explorations. Surrounded by the Paracel Islands, the Scarborough Shoal and the Spratly Islands, many Asian countries involved in the dispute have laid claims to these bodies of land. While maintaining its neutral stance in the conflicts, Indonesia has faced challenges from China in its exclusive economic zone (EEZ), which is a UNCLOS designation that gives coastal states the sole right to fish and extract resources up to 200 nautical miles (370 km) off their coasts. ²After World War II, East Asian geopolitics changed, which is where the current South China Sea conflict originated (1939–45). China's maritime claims go back to the "11-dash line," which was established in 1947 during the Chinese Civil War (1945–49) by Chiang Kai-shek's Nationalists (Kuomintang). The 11-dash line on the map symbolised Chinese sovereignty and nationalist pride following what many Chinese saw to be a century of humiliation at the hands of foreign nations. ²Following the Communist victory over the Nationalists in the civil war and the establishment of the People's Republic of China, Beijing's new government asserted successor status to the Republic of China and its maritime territorial claims, which it slightly altered by converting the 1947 map's 11-dash line to a 9-dash line. The ownership conflicts in the South China region remained mostly dormant until

China started making large territorial claims in the 1970s, following the discovery of possible oil and gas riches in the region. China took the Paracel Islands from South Vietnam in 1974, killing around sixty-five Vietnamese soldiers in the process. China subsequently acquired Johnson Reef, a portion of the Spratly Islands, from Vietnam in 1988 and Mischief Reef, another Spratly Island portion, which the Philippines had claimed, from them in 1994. The Paracel Islands are currently entirely under Chinese sovereignty. Vietnam controls the majority of the Spratly Islands' reefs and islands, with China and the Philippines each having territorial claims and active operations over substantial portions of the archipelago. Along with China, Brunei and Malaysia have both claimed portions of the Spratly Islands and the EEZs off their shores. China's ambitious land reclamation operation, sometimes known as "island building," began in the early 21st century and has greatly strengthened China's influence in the South China Sea. On the reclaimed territory, China has constructed military facilities such as airstrips and naval bases.² In addition, the Chinese have attempted to assert their rights by non-military tactics, such as by deploying sizable fishing fleets into other nations' exclusive economic zones. China sank an oil rig into Vietnamese territorial waters in 2014, which sparked widespread unrest in Vietnam. Furthermore, the majority of claimants have arrested foreign sailors and fishers in waters they believe to be their own in an effort to thwart the activities of rivals. Under UNCLOS, the Philippines brought China before the arbitral tribunal in an attempt to use the International Criminal Court (ICC) to resolve the dispute in 2013. The court declared in 2016 that the UNCLOS borders trumped Chinese historical claims in regions where they conflicted, ruling that the nine-dash line was unlawful. In addition, the court declared that China was illegally constructing islands, engaging in illicit fishing, and interfering with Philippine fishing in Philippine Exclusive Economic Zones. China, which declined to take part in the ICC proceedings, contested the verdict. Taiwan, among other nations, declined the court's ruling as well. Australia, Japan, and the United States were among those who supported the decision. Due to the split opinions, ASEAN was unable to produce a unified statement.²

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Current Situation

One of the most significant developments in the South China Sea has been China's construction of artificial islands and the militarization of these features, particularly in the Spratly and Paracel

² <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/chinas-maritime-disputes>.

11. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/south-east-asia/south-china-sea>.

12. <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202408/1318981.shtml>.

Islands. These man-made islands are equipped with airstrips, ports, radar systems, and military installations, allowing China to extend its power projection far from its mainland. The militarization has included the deployment of surface-to-air missiles, anti-ship missiles, and other military hardware, turning these islands into fortresses that significantly alter the strategic balance in the region.⁸ These actions have alarmed other claimants and global powers, particularly the United States, which views China's militarization as a direct challenge to the principle of freedom of navigation.

The United States has responded by increasing its military presence in the region, conducting regular Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) to challenge China's excessive maritime claims. These operations involve U.S. naval vessels sailing close to the disputed islands to assert that these waters are international, not Chinese, according to international law. The U.S. has also deepened its alliances and partnerships in the region, strengthening security ties with countries like Japan, Australia, and the Philippines.⁸ In addition, the Quad—a strategic forum involving the U.S., Japan, India, and Australia—has placed significant focus on ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific, with the South China Sea as a key area of concern.

The Philippines, despite winning the 2016 arbitration case, has struggled to assert its claims against China, particularly under the administration of President Rodrigo Duterte, who sought closer economic ties with Beijing. However, tensions have remained high, especially over incidents involving Chinese fishing fleets and maritime militia encroaching on areas within the Philippines' exclusive economic zone (EEZ). The election of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. has seen a recalibration, with Manila seeking to balance its relationship with China while revitalizing its alliance with the U.S.⁸

The product of the Cold War resulted in a Mutual Defense Treaty between the US and the Phillipines - a headliner underscoring the alliances and international involvement within this small region. The US predominantly seeks to control the US-Phillipines alliance through reassurance and establishment of boundaries between the Phillipines-China conflicts currently. The US has utilised South China Sea conflicts to incite conflict between the parties, based on historical precedent and regional customs. This has resulted in the maritime domain being utilised as a battlefield for great-power rivalry and unilateral hegemony. Through the formation of exclusive "small groups," the US aims to entangle Southeast Asia in clashes and bloc politics. There may be more maritime clashes and a larger military presence in the South China Sea as a result of its attempts to restrict and discourage China through "minilateral" security measures.⁹

Vietnam, another key claimant, has consistently opposed China's actions in the South China Sea. Vietnam has strengthened its own maritime capabilities and sought closer defense ties with other

regional powers to counterbalance China's influence. Despite its complex relationship with China, rooted in both historical conflicts and shared communist ideology, Vietnam remains one of the most vocal opponents of China's expansive claims.²

ASEAN, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, has tried to mediate the disputes by pushing for a Code of Conduct (CoC) in the South China Sea, which would establish rules to prevent conflicts. However, progress has been slow, hindered by differing national interests among ASEAN members and China's preference for bilateral negotiations, which often favor its larger influence over smaller states.²

The involvement of external powers like Japan and the European Union has further internationalized the issue. Japan, while not a claimant, has been vocal in opposing China's actions, providing maritime security assistance to Southeast Asian nations. The European Union has also expressed concerns, emphasizing the need to uphold international law and support freedom of navigation.²

Possible Solutions

Finding solutions to the disputes in the South China Sea is a complex challenge, requiring a multifaceted approach that balances the interests of the claimant nations, regional stability, and adherence to international law. One potential solution is the establishment of a binding Code of Conduct (CoC) between China and the ASEAN member states. Such a code could outline clear guidelines for behavior in the South China Sea, reduce the risk of conflicts, and create mechanisms for dispute resolution. Although ASEAN and China have been negotiating a CoC for years, progress has been slow due to differing national interests and China's preference for bilateral negotiations.³ However, a renewed commitment to finalizing this code could provide a structured framework for managing disputes and maintaining peace in the region.

Another solution involves enhancing regional cooperation through confidence-building measures and joint development initiatives. Claimant countries could agree to set aside sovereignty disputes temporarily and cooperate on the exploration and development of the South China Sea's resources, such as fisheries and hydrocarbons.¹² This approach has precedent in other regions, such as the joint development agreements between Malaysia and Thailand. Such cooperation could reduce tensions by providing mutual economic benefits and fostering greater trust among the nations involved.

International law, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), must remain a cornerstone of any long-term solution. While the 2016 Permanent Court of Arbitration ruling clarified legal boundaries, its rejection by China underscores the need for stronger international enforcement mechanisms. The international community, led by major powers like the United States, Japan, and the European Union, could play a crucial role by consistently supporting UNCLOS and encouraging all parties to respect legal rulings.¹² Regular diplomatic dialogues and multilateral forums that include non-claimant states could also help to keep the issue in the global spotlight and apply pressure for a peaceful resolution.

Lastly, expanding Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) by the U.S. and its allies can help to uphold the principle of free passage through the South China Sea, deterring any attempts to restrict access to these critical waters. However, these operations must be carefully managed to avoid escalating tensions.³ A balanced approach, combining diplomacy, legal frameworks, regional cooperation, and the strategic presence of international powers, offers the best chance for a peaceful resolution of the South China Sea disputes, ensuring that the region remains open and stable for future³ generations.

Bloc Positions

China and Allies

China's stance on the South China Sea disputes is rooted in its assertion of historical rights and sovereignty over the majority of the area, marked by the "nine-dash line" that covers nearly 90% of the sea. China claims that its rights to these waters and features date back centuries, citing ancient maps and historical usage. This expansive claim includes the Spratly and Paracel Islands, as well as other smaller features like the Scarborough Shoal. Despite the 2016 Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA) ruling that rejected China's claims under international law, specifically UNCLOS (United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea), China has refused to recognize the decision, viewing it as biased and invalid.

³ <https://behorizon.org/the-conflict-in-the-south-china-sea-a-focus-on-a-possible-solution/>

13. <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/Susan-Thornton.pdf#:~:text=These%20include%20attempts%20at%20diplomatic%20isolation%2C%20negotiation%20of,operations%E2%80%9D%20%28FONOPs%29%3B%20as%20well%20as%20other%20presence%20operations.>

China's strategy in the region has involved a combination of diplomatic assertiveness, economic incentives, and military presence. The country has been actively building and militarizing artificial islands in the Spratly archipelago, equipping them with runways, missile systems, and other military infrastructure.¹⁵ This militarization has not only strengthened China's physical control over these disputed areas but has also allowed it to project power further into the South China Sea. Additionally, China has deployed its Coast Guard and maritime militia to assert its claims, often leading to confrontations with vessels from other claimant states.

Diplomatically, China prefers to engage in bilateral negotiations with the other claimants, which allows it to leverage its economic and military might more effectively. This approach has been met with skepticism by ASEAN countries, which have pushed for a multilateral solution to ensure that smaller nations are not overpowered by China's influence. Economically, China has offered development aid, investments, and trade partnerships to Southeast Asian nations, sometimes using these as leverage to soften their stance on the disputes.¹⁵ However, China's assertive actions in the South China Sea have drawn international criticism and have led to increased tensions with the United States, which conducts Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) in the region to challenge China's claims and maintain open sea lanes. Despite international pressure, China remains steadfast in its position, viewing control of the South China Sea as critical to its national security, economic interests, and regional influence.⁴

Southeast Asian Claimants (Vietnam, Philippines, Malaysia, Brunei)

The Southeast Asian claimants in the South China Sea dispute—Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei—each have unique but overlapping territorial claims, primarily focused on the Spratly and Paracel Islands and the surrounding waters. These countries rely heavily on the South China Sea for resources like fisheries, hydrocarbons, and as vital shipping lanes, making the resolution of these disputes crucial to their national interests.¹⁶

Vietnam is one of the most vocal opponents of China's expansive claims. Vietnam claims both the Spratly and Paracel Islands and has a long history of confrontations with China, including the 1988 naval skirmish at Johnson South Reef, where 64 Vietnamese soldiers were killed. Vietnam rejects China's nine-dash line and has strengthened its military capabilities in response to Chinese actions, such as the deployment of oil rigs in contested waters.⁴ Vietnam also actively seeks international

⁴ <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/12/south-china-sea-conflict-philippines-coast-guard>.

14. <https://www.cfr.org/timeline/chinas-maritime-disputes>.

15. <https://www.britannica.com/topic/territorial-disputes-in-the-South-China-Sea>.

16. <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/06/23/the-role-of-asean-in-the-south-china-sea-disputes/>.

support, fostering closer ties with the United States, Japan, and other nations to counterbalance China's influence.

The Philippines has also been a key player in the disputes, particularly after winning the 2016 PCA ruling, which invalidated China's nine-dash line. However, under President Rodrigo Duterte, the Philippines adopted a more conciliatory approach toward China, seeking economic cooperation while downplaying the dispute. Nevertheless, tensions have persisted, particularly over incidents like the 2019 collision involving a Filipino fishing boat and a Chinese vessel.⁴ With the election of President Ferdinand Marcos Jr., there has been a shift towards recalibrating the Philippines' stance, balancing economic ties with China while revitalizing its security alliance with the United States.

Malaysia maintains claims to parts of the Spratly Islands and has a more low-key approach compared to Vietnam and the Philippines. Malaysia has engaged in oil and gas exploration in areas it claims, leading to occasional stand-offs with Chinese vessels. However, Malaysia has generally avoided direct confrontation with China, instead opting for diplomatic engagement while quietly reinforcing its maritime capabilities.¹⁶

Brunei has the smallest claim, focused on the southern part of the Spratly Islands. Brunei's approach has been very cautious, avoiding any major confrontation with China and largely seeking to manage the dispute through ASEAN mechanisms.¹⁶

Overall, these Southeast Asian nations favor a multilateral approach to resolving the disputes, advocating for a binding Code of Conduct (CoC) between ASEAN and China to manage tensions and ensure regional stability. However, the varying degrees of economic dependence on China among these countries complicate their collective stance, making a unified approach challenging.¹⁷

United States' Position⁵

The United States does not have any territorial claims in the South China Sea, but it has a significant strategic interest in ensuring freedom of navigation, maintaining regional stability, and upholding international law, particularly the principles enshrined in UNCLOS, even though the U.S. has not ratified the convention.⁵ The U.S. views China's expansive claims and militarization of the South China Sea as direct challenges to these principles and a threat to the rules-based international order. As a result, the U.S. has taken an active role in countering China's actions through a combination of diplomatic, military, and strategic measures.

⁵ <https://www.globaltimes.cn/page/202408/1318981.shtml>.

17. <https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/12/south-china-sea-conflict-philippines-coast-guard>.

18. <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/06/23/the-role-of-asean-in-the-south-china-sea-disputes/>.

One of the primary ways the U.S. asserts its position is through Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs), where U.S. naval vessels sail close to the disputed islands and features claimed by China. These operations are intended to demonstrate that these waters are international and that no state should unlawfully restrict passage through them. FONOPs are often accompanied by strong diplomatic statements condemning China's actions and reaffirming the U.S. commitment to defending the rights of all nations to operate freely in international waters.⁵

The U.S. also strengthens its position in the South China Sea through military alliances and partnerships with regional countries. The U.S. has formal defense treaties with the Philippines and a close security relationship with Japan, both of which are key players in the Indo-Pacific region. Additionally, the U.S. has increased military cooperation with Vietnam and other Southeast Asian nations, providing them with training, military equipment, and intelligence support to enhance their maritime security capabilities.⁵ The U.S. has also participated in joint military exercises in the region, signaling its readiness to support its allies and partners.

Diplomatically, the U.S. has been vocal in international forums, including the United Nations, in calling for the peaceful resolution of disputes based on international law. The U.S. has repeatedly urged China to respect the PCA ruling and has criticized Beijing's refusal to engage in multilateral negotiations. The U.S. also supports ASEAN's efforts to negotiate a binding Code of Conduct with China, although it remains skeptical of China's commitment to such agreements.¹⁸

In recent years, the U.S. has sought to broaden its strategy through the Quad, an informal security dialogue with Japan, India, and Australia, which has increasingly focused on ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific. The Quad countries have expressed concerns over China's actions in the South China Sea and have emphasized the importance of upholding international law and maintaining the status quo in the region.¹⁷

In summary, the U.S. position in the South China Sea is centered on deterring Chinese aggression, ensuring freedom of navigation, and supporting regional allies in upholding a rules-based order. While the U.S. aims to prevent the South China Sea from becoming a Chinese-dominated area, its actions are carefully calibrated to avoid direct military confrontation, instead relying on a mix of diplomatic pressure, military presence, and strategic partnerships.¹⁷

ASEAN's Position⁶

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) plays a crucial but complex role in the South China Sea disputes, as it represents a regional grouping that includes several claimant

⁶ <https://www.e-ir.info/2022/06/23/the-role-of-asean-in-the-south-china-sea-disputes/>.

states—Vietnam, the Philippines, Malaysia, and Brunei—along with other members like Indonesia, Singapore, and Thailand, which have a vested interest in regional stability. ASEAN’s position has been to advocate for a peaceful resolution of the disputes through dialogue, adherence to international law, and the promotion of regional cooperation. However, ASEAN’s effectiveness in addressing the South China Sea issue has been hampered by the diverse interests of its member states and the influence of China. ⁶

ASEAN’s primary approach to the South China Sea has been through the promotion of a Code of Conduct (CoC) with China. The CoC is intended to establish rules and guidelines for behavior in the South China Sea, reduce the risk of conflicts, and provide mechanisms for dispute resolution. Negotiations for the CoC have been ongoing for years, with varying degrees of progress. ⁶ While ASEAN countries generally agree on the need for such a code, they differ on the specifics, particularly regarding the inclusion of legally binding enforcement mechanisms, which China opposes. Despite these challenges, ASEAN remains committed to finalizing the CoC, seeing it as a vital tool for maintaining peace and stability in the region.

ASEAN has also sought to manage the South China Sea disputes by emphasizing the importance of UNCLOS as the legal framework for resolving maritime disputes. ASEAN has repeatedly called for all parties to respect international law, including the 2016 PCA ruling, although it has been careful not to antagonize China directly. ⁶ This cautious approach reflects the reality that several ASEAN members have significant economic ties with China and are wary of jeopardizing these relationships.

The unity of ASEAN on the South China Sea issue is often tested, as some members, particularly those without direct claims, prioritize their economic relations with China over a strong collective stance on the disputes. For instance, Cambodia and Laos, which are heavily dependent on Chinese investment and aid, have at times blocked or diluted ASEAN statements critical of China’s actions in the South China Sea. This has led to criticisms that ASEAN’s consensus-based decision-making process can be a hindrance to taking a strong and unified position on sensitive issues like the South China Sea.

Discussion Questions

1. Why is the South China Sea important to so many countries? What makes it a region of conflict?

2. What are the main reasons China claims most of the South China Sea? How do other countries in the region feel about these claims?
3. How can the countries involved work together to share the resources in the South China Sea without conflict? Is it possible for them to agree on this?
4. What role should the United States play in the South China Sea? How can the U.S. help maintain peace in the region?
5. Why is it difficult for ASEAN countries to agree on how to handle the South China Sea disputes? How does China's influence affect their decisions?
6. How does the building of artificial islands by China in the South China Sea affect the region? What are the potential dangers of these actions?
7. What steps can the international community take to encourage peaceful negotiations between the countries involved in the South China Sea disputes?
8. What are the risks if the conflicts in the South China Sea are not resolved peacefully? How could this affect the rest of the world?

Additional Resources

<https://www.asiapacific.ca/publication/manila-must-look-out-allies-counter-beijings-maritime-aggression>

/china-philippines-ships-ramming-1.7310580

<https://www.state.gov/u-s-support-for-the-philippines-in-the-south-china-sea-6/>

<https://www.nbcnews.com/news/world/us-reiterates-obligation-defend-philippines-new-clash-south-china-sea-rcna157666>

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[0include%20attempts%20at%20diplomatic%20isolation%2C%20negotiation%20of,operations%E2%80%9D%20%28FONOPs%29%3B%20as%20well%20as%20other%20presence%20operations.](#)

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[https://www.e-ir.info/2022/06/23/the-role-of-asean-in-the-south-china-sea-disputes/.](https://www.e-ir.info/2022/06/23/the-role-of-asean-in-the-south-china-sea-disputes/)

Topic B — Drug Trafficking

Overview

Drug trafficking is an international issue involving the manufacturing, distribution, cultivation and marketing of substances prohibited by international or national laws. The world's heroin consumption has reached a high of 340 tons, seizures representing an annual flow of 430-450 tons of illicit heroin into the global market. About 50 tonnes of the amount are created using opium from Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic; the remaining 380 tonnes are made entirely of morphine and heroin made from Afghan opium.¹ The majority of the 375 tonnes that are not consumed or confiscated in Afghanistan are transported globally via routes that enter and pass through Afghanistan's bordering nations. Major transportation routes for heroin trafficking linking Afghanistan to the Russian Federation and Western Europe's markets are via the Balkan and Northern Routes, traversing the Islamic Republic of Iran, Turkey, Greece and Bulgaria - the annual market amounting to approximately \$20 billion.

Throughout the early 2000s, cocaine was used by roughly 17 million people worldwide, with North America accounting for over 40% of the global cocaine consumption (averaging at 470 tons). In contrast, the European Union and European Free Trade Association nations represented just over a quarter of the total consumption.¹ North America and the relative European countries hold more than 80% of the international stakes in the global cocaine market, valuations determining it reaping roughly \$88 billion in 2008.¹⁶ North American cocaine markets rely on the transportation flow through Colombia, Mexico and Central American regions via oceanic routes. The main producers of this stimulant are Colombia, Peru and the Plurinational State of Bolivia.⁷

Timeline of Events²

1909 - The International Opium Commission congregates in Shanghai, marking one of the first international efforts to control drug trafficking.

1912 - The Hague International Opium Convention is signed, aiming to regulate opium, morphine, and cocaine trade.

⁷ <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2023.html>.

1) <https://www.unodc.org/roseap/en/2023/06/biggest-drug-trafficking-corridors/story.html>.

1931 - The Convention for Limiting the Manufacture and Regulating the Distribution of Narcotic Drugs is established to curb the production and distribution of drugs.

1947 - The United Nations formed the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) to coordinate international drug control efforts.

1961 - The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs was adopted by the United Nations, consolidating previous treaties and expanding control measures.

1973 - The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is established to combat drug trafficking.

1984 - The Medellín and Cali cartels rise to prominence in Colombia, becoming major players in cocaine trafficking.

1986 - The Anti-Drug Abuse Act is passed in the US, increasing penalties for drug offences and establishing mandatory minimum sentences, forming models for international organizations.

1993 - The capture and killing of Pablo Escobar marks the decline of the Medellín cartel.

2000 - Plan Colombia is launched, a US-funded initiative to combat drug cartels and reduce cocaine cultivation.

2006 - Mexican President Felipe Calderón launches a military crackdown on drug cartels, leading to a surge in violence.

2020 - Global drug trade adapts to COVID-19, with changes in trafficking routes and methods.

2021 - The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reports an increase in synthetic drug production and trafficking, especially in Asia relating to opioids.

2022 - By the early 21st century, nations with state/provincial autonomy have begun and executed debate on the legalization of marijuana.

2023 - Major crackdowns on fentanyl trafficking in the US and Mexico highlight the evolving nature and demand of the drug trade. ⁸

⁸ <https://publications.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/BP/bp435-e.htm>.

Historical Analysis

To escape the economic chaos within China, numerous Chinese immigrants chased the American Dream and prospects of wealth with the gold rush by arriving in California during the mid-1800s. Opium and opioid usage was a commonality within much of Asia at the time, and the new influx of immigrants exposed the American population to opium - distributing, manufacturing and trading this substance throughout the regions. Opium dens, the main shops distributing and selling opium began to sprout in urbanized areas around America such as California and New York City. Not long after, the population became hooked to opium and began to experiment with other opiates such as morphine and codeine; morphine being popularized during the Civil War, initially acting as a pain reliever. Despite the Harrison Act of 1914, outlining the policies against the usage of opium and cocaine in non-medical situations, illicit drug circulation remained prominent throughout the nation, featuring newfound black market trades in Chinatown and an ever-growing statistic of users.

Throughout the Jazz Era of the 1930s and 1940s, Marijuana took dominance in the recreational drug department combined with the circulation of opiates. By the 1950s, organized groups such as American Mafia families had already begun the smuggling and marketing of illicit drugs, accompanied by other illegal activities. Nicknamed the “French Connection”, the Mafia’s participation in the drug trade involved shipment seizing of Turkish opium that arrived from Paris and Marseilles. The Vietnam War led to an increase in illicit heroin distribution in the US between 1965 and 1970. By 1971, over 15% of active Vietnamese soldiers were heroin addicts, with many being involved with other recreational drugs such as Marijuana. In the late 1970s, the cocaine trade had evolved to become a major facet of the economy throughout the world, the Medellin Cartel being one of the largest operating organizations during this time in Colombia. Over 600 kilos of cocaine was seized from a plane in 1975, an act that faced retaliation from involved drug traffickers; subsequently, they murdered 40 people during a weekend that was later dubbed “The Medellin Massacre”. A trigger of the violence and crime linked with drug trafficking in the later years.

The Medellin Cartel, run by brothers Jorge Luis, Juan David, Fabio Ochoa Vasquez; Pablo Escobar; Carlos Lehder; George Jung; and Jose Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha rose to power in the 1980s. As for heroin-centred trafficking, regions of Southeast Asia nicknamed the “Golden Triangle” became the epicentre of a thriving opium economy and the main source of narcotics internationally. Encompassing Burma, China, Laos and Thailand, the weather and humidity of these regions provided ideal conditions for opium cultivation stemming from the 16th and 17th centuries. Upon distribution in the Americas, World War II and the Vietnam War increased the overall demand for opioid substances, creating a booming market and profitable businesses. The US has cut off

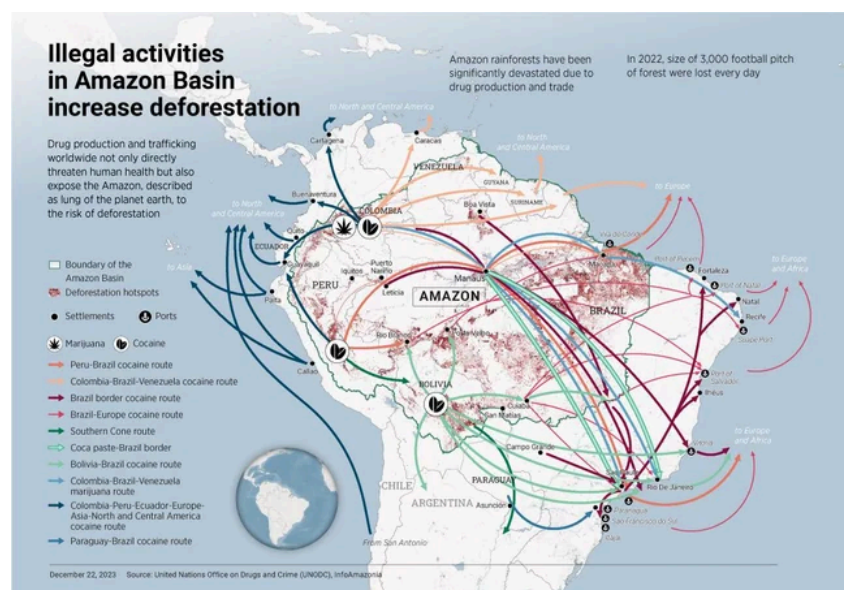
assistance to the Burmese Government to combat drug trafficking under suspicions of tampering with equipment and repurposing it for counterinsurgency operations. Due to lack of regulation, humid weather and spike in cultivation have increased opium production since the 1960s. This has resulted in a significant price drop of marketed heroin and more efficient heroin distribution, a similar pattern within the production of numerous other recreational drugs throughout the black market. Overall, drug trafficking mainly impacts public health safety, increasing the risk of addicts and active users - contributing to the spread of diseases such as HIV and hepatitis. Major tragedies such as the “Medellin Massacre” are not uncommon within the drug marketing world, crime being a close sibling of this economy within underground relations. Since the American declaration of the “War On Drugs”, 53 years have passed with numerous influxes in crime and overdose death rates, where staggering statistics continue to rise in deaths and users; the single most widespread war affecting every nation’s governing bodies with variable extents.

Current Situation

Environmental Factors

According to a 2023 UNODC report, the Amazon Basin has recently been identified as the intersection of multiple organized crime groups influencing poor environmental health in the area, and negative implications for the safety and security of the regional population. The abundance of natural resources and limited State presence has increased the cultivation of raw materials used for illicit drug cultivation. Additional

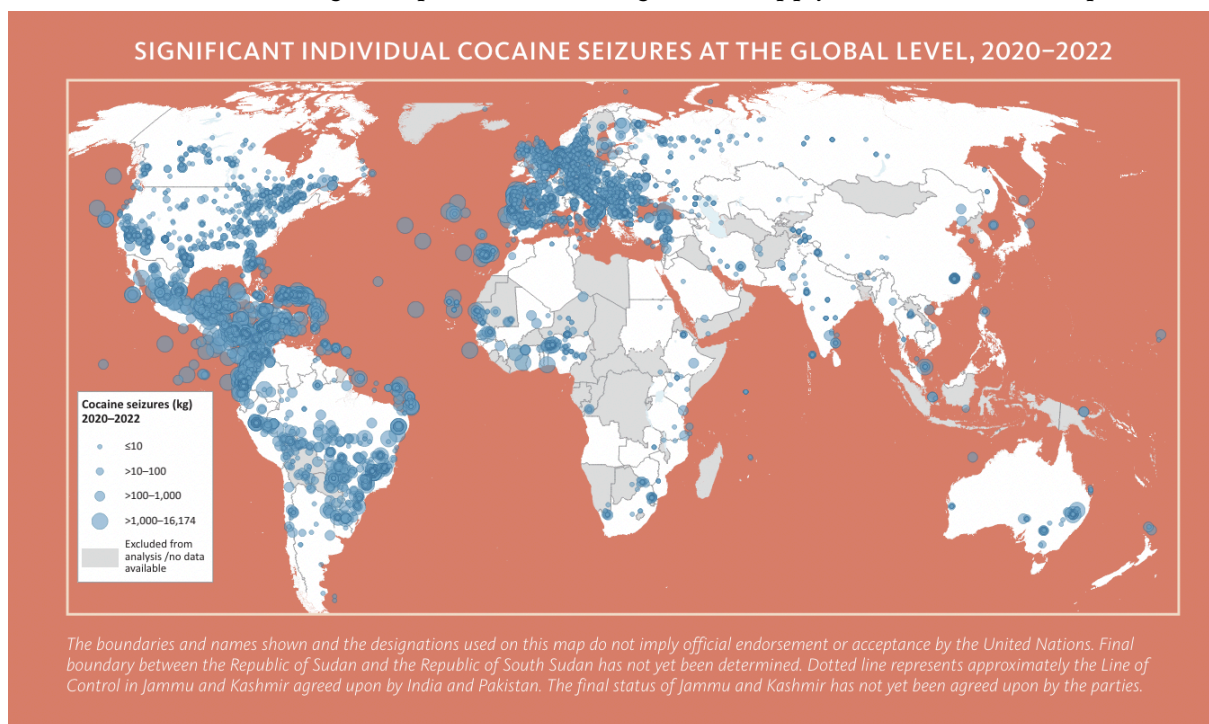
factors include the influence of informality, inequality and unemployment in the area. Although drug cultivation covers the majority of illegal activities in the area, numerous other illicit activities persist as the following; land-grabbing, illegal logging, illegal mining, and trafficking in wildlife. In addition to increasing deforestation, these organized crime groups are also making convergent crimes—such as tax and financial crimes, homicide, assault, sexual violence, exploitation of labourers and minors, and victimization of individuals who protect the environment and Indigenous Peoples—more common. The concept of “Narco-deforestation” is a rising real estate issue in which the laundering of illicit profits is directed toward the agricultural sector’s



infrastructure and land, accelerating the imposing environmental damage in the world's largest rainforest.

Cocaine Market

The global cocaine market is a direct representation of a supply and demand-driven market, with increased distribution equating to increased users. The coca bush cultivation inventory covered over 315, 500 hectares of land in 2021, reaching a record-high production rate of 2,304 tons. Evaluations of active cocaine users in 2021 reached 22 million, increasing and compounding by increased prevalence rates in the last two decades. Cocaine seizures have grown to reach 2,026 tons in 2021 - relative to the long-term plans of containing the net supply available for consumption.



UNODC - 2023 International Drug Report (Illicit Drug Economics, Converging Crimes and Conflict)

Methamphetamine Market

Centred primarily within Eastern, Southeast Asia and North America, global methamphetamine manufacturing rates are reaching stabilized levels within these regions - expanding elsewhere. There's an increased number of subregions reporting methamphetamine seizure, with a major increase in Afghanistan and expanded trafficking for markets in Oceania and Europe. Precursor manufacturing has been detected within Southeast Asia, a potential marker of an attempt at control over raw methamphetamine-producing materials by organized crime groups. As for opium, production continues to take place in a smaller number of countries - specifically Afghanistan. Production of illicit opium in Afghanistan reached 6,200 tons (equivalent to 80% of the global production), followed by Myanmar (795 tons) and Mexico (504 tons), racking up a total of 7,800 tons globally in 2020. Droughts in early 2022 stunted opium poppy cultivation in Afghanistan by

10%, a decrease supported further by the 2022 national drug ban. Early reports suggest reductions in the current drug economy from this stakeholder, but time will determine the trends within the global heroin market dependent on newfound laws. Another 2023 ban on narcotic production within Afghanistan has shifted the drug supply and outflow of substances throughout the market. Policy and regulatory changes within Afghanistan could have severe effects on drug users as well as impoverished regional populations relying on the illegal opiate economy.

Conflict and Market Trade

The relationship between conflict and drug trade is prominent; conflict erupts where drug production is flourishing, and drug production blooms within loose legal regulations that subsequently start conflict. Current conflicts in Ukraine have disrupted emerging trafficking routes for narcotics and opioids, but a potential liability lies in the potential for route expansions. Humanitarian emergencies such as war prompt large waves of people being forced to emigrate or seek refuge in other nations, increasing population displacement. Acute physical and psychological trauma is a substantial side-effect of an immediate emergency, increasing their vulnerability to substance abuse. Availability, accessibility and efficiency of mental health services (including drug treatment services) pose a major challenge for marginalized or displaced communities, facing stigma and discrimination when seeking aid.

Possible Solutions

Combating international drug trafficking requires a multifaceted approach targeting the socio-economic, political, and security challenges. To truly tackle an issue of this magnitude, global coordination is necessary - whether it be through international organizations such as the UNODC (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime) or Interpol.

Neutral Perspective

Information sharing is key in global coordination, featuring improved intelligence sharing and shared operations between national and international law enforcement agencies. On one end of the spectrum, involving improved regulations, a possible solution is enhancing law enforcement. Involving specialized training within law enforcement personnel in the detection, and interception of drug trafficking follows in suit. Additionally, introducing more modified and advanced technology through government funding allows more monitoring and control over common trade routes and borders.

Aggressive Enforcement

Land routes aren't the only places to monitor however, as ports are one of the main forms of transporting large shipments of illicit drugs, such as the recent seizure of cocaine in the Rotterdam

port. Increasing the regulation and policing around oceanside ports and consistent check-ups provide a strong receipt of incoming traffic and their certifiability, mitigating the risks for large shipments in the wrong packaging. Directing funding toward monitoring allows for more controlled asset seizure, as well as neutralization of key cartel leaders to destabilize trafficking networks. Implementing stronger legal frameworks to prosecute and convict drug traffickers is another more offence-oriented approach - with the reparations potentially mimicking the “Medellin Massacre.”

Passive Enforcement

On the more passive end of the spectrum, possible solutions involve drug policy reformation; this can look like either decriminalizing or legalizing certain drugs to undercut the black market sales and reduce the profitability of drug trafficking. Along with this, regulatory and control measures can be set in place for the legal production and distribution of drugs such as cannabis, ensuring safety and quality control from reliable manufacturers. In addition, with further introduction and integration of new drugs into mainstream consumerism, funding directed towards education programs can help ensure the awareness of the general public on the effects of these drugs. Potential downsides to the legalization are the higher risk of exposure to youth, as well as increasing the number of addicts in decriminalized regions. Competitions between black market products and government-admitted companies can spur violence and potential theft, all considerations that must be mitigated. We can speculate two overarching themes regarding potential solutions, one being more control-based and the other being more leniency-based, with varying pros and cons to each framework.

Bloc Positions

North America, Europe, Oceania (Combined Approach)

Being one of the largest drug hubs in the world, the majority of North American nations remain diligent in this “War on Drugs.” The United States maintains a rigid stance on drug trafficking by directing monetary focus toward interdiction, enforcement and international cooperation.

Formations of agencies such as the DEA influence their offensive attacks against drug cartels, domestically and abroad. Canada emphasizes both a passive and offensive approach, combining strict law enforcement against trafficking accompanied by progressive drug policies such as the legalization of cannabis. Working internationally to support anti-trafficking measures, Canada shares comprehensive knowledge in collaboration with other nations. Mexico is both a major transit and producing country as well as a battleground in the fight against cartels. Their government works closely with the US in combating drug trafficking through joint operations and intelligence sharing, although the country faces significant challenges due to cartel violence and

corruption. These two neighbouring nations have direct production-to-market relations with drugs, especially with the surplus of cultivation in Mexico.

All in all, North American countries demonstrate levels of progressive policies with drug decriminalization, modern intelligence-sharing skills and software as well as increasingly strict legal involvement. The European Union adopted a coordinated approach against this war, emphasizing both increased law enforcement and harm reduction. Europol facilitates cooperation amongst member states to combat drug trafficking, while individual countries balance strict enforcement with public health strategies, maintaining individual autonomy on decriminalization in some nations such as Portugal. Countries such as the Netherlands take on a pragmatic approach, with tolerance of softer drugs such as cannabis under certain age regulations and cooperation with international partners to combat larger trafficking schemes; supporting via intelligence sharing and personal border monitoring. The UK employs a strict law enforcement approach to combat drug trafficking, working closely with European and international agencies. The UK also focuses on disrupting the financial networks of traffickers and supporting rehabilitation programs domestically, with less tolerance for recreational drug distribution as a whole. For example, distribution or possession of cannabis can reach up to 14 years in prison within the UK under their drug policies, and indicators show little change or possibility of decriminalization. Nations within Europe remain mostly autonomous in their approaches towards combating drug trafficking, but additionally working in close relation with their neighbouring countries and many of the outgoing sources of drugs' governments.

Australia adopts a progressive approach to combating drug trafficking featuring similar techniques as the US and Canada, combining stringent law enforcement with harm reduction strategies; less focus on the decriminalization of drugs within the nation. Australia collaborates closely with international partners in the active interception of drug shipments and disruption of trafficking networks. Consequences and jail time depend variably on the quantity of the drug, ranging from smaller punishments to a penalty of life imprisonment. Special Operation Ironside is an example of the active interception of networks, an operation involving the covert creation of a criminal app launched into the market, secretly developed by FBI agents, AFP, and Australian Journalists. As for its neighbour, New Zealand, they employ similar balanced approaches to drug trafficking; enacting strong enforcement measures complemented by progressive drug policies and harm reduction initiatives. With sentences up to a life sentence, drug trafficking, sowing, cultivation and other related actions are met with a hefty punishment; any medicine additionally held without prescription is met with the same degree of "tolerance". Both countries work closely together and internationally through intelligence sharing, strategized operations and a moderately-ranged progression into this conflict.

Latin America, Middle East, Asia (Aggressive Approach/Major Distributors)

Latin American countries have a long history of battling with powerful drug cartels and the cultivation of illicit raw materials on stolen grounds. The humid weather and surplus of natural materials make many Latin American nations the environment to manufacture and produce these drugs. Colombia especially has a complex history with drug production, being the single most dominant nation in the outflow of drugs. The government, supported by U.S funding and training through initiatives like Plan Colombia have focused on eradication, interdiction and dismantling of trafficking networks. Cartel influence is prominent within the population and even within the government, with corrupt individuals and leaders playing a large role in the evergrowing economy and stance of drugs within Colombia. Brazil on the other hand is a key transit point for cocaine heading to Europe and has since adopted stringent measures to combat trafficking. Brazil and many of its transit neighbours work with international partners to improve border security, conducting significant law enforcement operations against drug gangs. Aside from these two central countries, the majority of Latin American countries have some sort of relationship with incoming and outgoing illicit shipments. Almost all cocaine produced globally originates from the Andean region, Peru being responsible for 26% of annual coca cultivation, followed by Bolivia being responsible for 13%. Due to the positioning of this region, cultivation and transportation are extremely efficient for cartel services. Political instability in Andean countries in recent years is equally accelerating the worsening public security and border control measures set in place, with many criminal organizations collaborating amid conflict and taking advantage of loose political regulation. Focused primarily on initiatives and monetary support from countries like the U.S, the majority of Latin American countries face the issue of government corruption; however, their combating efforts against trafficking remain mostly on the offensive approach of installing new forces, stronger border security, adapting legal frameworks and further investigations into cartel organizations.

Constructed and enacted between 2009-2014, the UNODC's Regional Programme for East Asia and the Pacific constructs the framework in the 34 countries and territories across East Asia. Supporting two broad themes, this initiative categorizes much of the Asian Nation's Stances towards combating drug trafficking. The Rule of Law categorizes appropriate response measures to illicit trafficking, governance and criminal justice issues. The Health and Development clauses target compromising drug demand and reducing active exposure, as well as responding to issues such as HIV/Aids transmission and sustainable livelihood issues. As for individual country responses, major manufacturing countries react as follows; China maintains a zero-tolerance policy towards drug trafficking, with an offence approach implementing harsh penalties for traffickers and extensive law enforcement efforts. The country cooperates internationally to combat trafficking, especially concerning synthetic drugs. China is responsible for many of the precursor chemicals necessary for the production of narcotics, opioids and numerous other recreational drugs. Many underground operations are present within the dense population, hand-in-hand with the comfortable drug-producing environment. However, the country combats this issue with

extremely strict laws and regulations, especially with border patrol. As for India, this country faces significant challenges as both a consumer and transit country for drugs. The government employs strict enforcement measures and collaborates regionally and internationally to combat trafficking. The major drug laws in the country of India remain mostly punitive, such as the NDPS Act prohibiting any form of marketing, production and cultivation of any illicit drugs within the country. Regulations and funding into legal frameworks remain somewhat futile against the ever-growing population. Drug usage and illicit cultivation remain a large issue in much of the poorer regions of the country, with exportation being one of the main supporters of the poverty-ridden economy. Countries in Southeast Asia, particularly those in the Golden Triangle (Myanmar, Laos, Thailand), are major producers of illicit drugs. ASEAN works collectively to address trafficking through coordinated law enforcement and regional cooperation initiatives. Considering the strength and sheer size of their drug economy, it's relatively safe to say that regulatory measures in these areas may need reinforcement. Within these three major producing countries, there are not only ideal niches for cultivating root materials for opioids but also complex governance issues in the present day that leave gaps for drug manufacturing. Transporting drugs in and out of these conflicting countries poses a large issue for the neighbouring countries, with reports of fluctuating waves of incoming drugs specifically from the Mekong River. There are no particular stances of these Southeast Asian nations at the moment, however, action is necessary for public safety.

Afghanistan is the world's largest producer of opium, Afghanistan faces immense challenges in combating drug trafficking. Efforts to mitigate illicit drug manufacturing and distribution are often hindered by political instability and ongoing conflict in nearby regions, making it one of the dominant forces of the drug economy. Under the Taliban's rule, a decree has been issued stating the banning of the production and sale of all illicit drugs. Despite this strict policy, the industry has still been progressing, increasing in sales dramatically since the US and NATO-led invasion in 2001 following the major humanitarian conflict. Tripling between 2002 and 2022, the cheap cultivation of poppy and methamphetamine precursors such as the ephedra plant have jeopardized public health and exportation rates. This present-day issue with governmental instability equating to increased drug cultivation is representative of nearby countries within the Middle East such as Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon and so forth - the majority of which are facing the reparations of the current Israel-Palestine conflict and internal governmental corruption. Iran combats and intercepts the outflow of drugs from Afghanistan directly, with strict anti-trafficking laws, cooperating regionally and internationally with a powerful military. Enforcing strict border controls, identification of drug trafficking rings and organized gangs as well as arresting addicts while arranging treatment and rehabilitation, Iran is a prime example of an offensive strategy against this enemy and recuperation is crucial for societal growth.

Africa (Community Approach/Aggressive Approach)

Much of West Africa struggles with weak enforcement capacities and corruption within the government, but regional bodies such as the ECOWAS (Economic Community of West African States) work collectively against trafficking. With significant transit routes for drugs heading to Europe, West Africa is a major hub for illicit drug usage and marketing. Ghana, in particular, has felt the impact of the drug smuggling epidemic with a drastic increase in domestic consumption and endemic high-level corruption, leading to greater scrutiny of the ECOWAS policies. Emerging as a reform leader in 2020, Ghana has proposed alternatives to incarceration for drug possession with the Narcotics Control Commission Act (1019), enacting substantial drug policy changes and diverting harm of the criminal justice system from active users of drugs. Their new proposed policies target high-level contributors to the illegal drug economy, enhancing the control of the Narcotics Control Commission, and taking an offensive approach to combating the Drug Conflict. They are adapting tactics to strengthen their law enforcement amidst corruption and enhanced monitoring, specifically towards cartels and transportation. There is little talk of decriminalization or leniency with recreational drugs in the present day. South Africa's relationship with drugs is similar to that of West Africa, being a central transit point and consumer market for drugs. The government focuses primarily on law enforcement and regional cooperation through organizations such as the Southern African Development Community. Following the 1948-1994 apartheid and uprising of the National government, many of the communities previously segregated into Bantustans were targeted the most for illicit drug usage and trade. Numerous communities throughout much of the African continent suffer from a lack of economic opportunity, residing in poverty and resorting to drug usage.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the root causes of drug trafficking in different regions, and how can international policy address these underlying factors effectively?

- Consider socio-economic disparities, political instability, corruption, and lack of economic opportunities. How can international efforts focus on these root causes to create sustainable solutions?

2. How can international cooperation be improved to more effectively combat drug trafficking networks that operate across multiple countries and continents?

- Discuss the role of international organizations like the UNODC and Interpol. What are the barriers to effective cooperation, and how can they be overcome?

3. What are the ethical implications of current drug enforcement strategies, and how can policies be adjusted to ensure they respect human rights and dignity?

- Evaluate the impact of militarized drug enforcement on communities. How can policies balance the need for security with the protection of human rights?

4. How effective are harm reduction strategies in reducing drug-related harm and drug trafficking, and should these strategies be more widely adopted globally?

- Analyze the success of harm reduction programs in countries like Portugal and Canada. What evidence supports their effectiveness, and can they be implemented in different cultural and legal contexts?

5. In what ways can legal and regulatory reforms, such as decriminalization or legalization of certain drugs, impact the dynamics of international drug trafficking?

- Examine case studies where decriminalization or legalization has been implemented. What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of such approaches on a global scale?

6. How can technology and innovation be leveraged to disrupt drug trafficking networks while ensuring privacy and civil liberties are maintained?

- Discuss the use of advanced surveillance, data analytics, and blockchain technology in tracking and dismantling drug networks. What safeguards are necessary to protect individual freedoms?

7. What role should economic and social development play in international strategies to combat drug trafficking, and how can these initiatives be effectively funded and implemented?

- Consider the importance of providing alternative livelihoods and strengthening social infrastructure in regions heavily affected by drug trafficking. What are the best practices for integrating development initiatives with anti-trafficking efforts?

Additional Resources

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/world-drug-report-2023.html>

<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-trafficking/index.html>

<https://www.ojp.gov/pdffiles1/ojp/183152.pdf>

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