

HASTRAIN'21

UNODC STUDY GUIDE



**Combating Drug
Trafficking in
Latin America
and Caribbean**

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Letter From Secretary General

Honorable participants,

At long last, it is my immense pleasure to invite you to the 7th iteration of Kadir Has University's train conference, which is set to be held from Saturday, December 4th to Sunday, December 5th of 2021 in Kadir Has University, Istanbul, Turkey!

Last year, to much proud, our club hosted two online conferences in a row for the reason of the COVID-19 Pandemic. Following our online season, we are now very thrilled to welcome our participants in our school's building. Our conference's main mission is to give our participants the best experiences in various ways, and show what Model United Nations conference is. As HASTRAIN'21 is a train conference, we are ready to help all of our participants on their MUN journey. Therefore, there is no need to hesitate in any circumstances, our team will accompany you in their best.

As our world is in an era that almost every crucial topic is related to technology, we aimed to focus two of our committees around it. Crypto market (in WTO) and the Cyber Security (in DISEC) will be discussed in our committees with current width. On the other hand, we have considered discussing the possible consequences of Taliban's new regime in SOCHUM. Last but not least, our fourth committee (UNODC) will be a special committee which will held the discussion about drugs in a world that Colombia is a renown narco-state.

Above all else, it is important to know that I and the entire HASTRAIN team is ready to meet with you. We hope that we will have the best experience together in the first weekend of the December.

Warmly,

Bulut Vize

Secretary-General HASTRAIN'21

Letter From Under Secretary General

Honorable Participants,

As the Under-Secretaries General responsible for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, we would like to express our utmost pleasure and gratitude to be serving in the seventh edition of HASTRAIN Conference.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has been in United Nations' body for two decades and has been active in making the world a safer place, as clean as possible from drugs, organized crime, corruption and terrorism. To achieve the best result for all living organisms, UNODC is dedicated to promote health, security and justice by tackling these aforementioned threats. Because of scalability issues, no office of the United Nations could achieve their purpose in a world-scale, at once. So, in this edition of HASTRAIN, we will be discussing specifically the drug trafficking issues in Latin America and the Caribbean, and trying to find ways to combat those struggles. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Secretary General Mr. Bulut Vize for his support throughout the overall formation of this committee and conference. We would also like to extend our appreciation to Deputy-Secretary General Mr. Efe Coştu for his hard work in the process of completing this study guide and preparing the committee as well; it has been our honor to work with such dedicated individuals within this qualified team.

If you were to have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Şebnem Yaren & Selin Ayaz

Under-Secretaries General responsible for the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

I. Introduction to the Committee: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

UNODC was established to assist the United Nations in better addressing a coordinated, comprehensive response to the interrelated issues of illicit trafficking in and abuse of drugs, crime prevention and criminal justice, international terrorism, and political corruption. These goals are pursued through three primary functions: research, guidance, and support to governments in the adoption and implementation of various crime-, drug-, terrorism-, and corruption-related conventions, treaties, and protocols, as well as technical/financial assistance to said governments to face their respective situations and challenges in these fields.

The office aims long-term to better equip governments to handle drug-, crime-, terrorism-, and corruption-related issues, to maximize knowledge on these issues among governmental institutions and agencies, and also to maximize awareness of said matters in public opinion, globally, nationally, and at the community level. Approximately 90% of the Office's funding comes from voluntary contributions, mainly from governments.

The main themes that UNODC deals with are anti-corruption, criminal justice and prison reform, human trafficking and smuggling, money laundering, organized crime and so on.

II. Agenda Item: Combatting Drug Trafficking in the Latin America and Caribbean

A. Historical Background

Illicit drug trafficking has long been a serious issue in several nations, beginning in Latin America and progressing into Europe. The issues date back to the 1800s when the use of psychoactive chemicals was on the rise.

The trade-in in Latin America is largely concerned with the manufacturing and marketing of cocaine and cannabis, as well as their trafficking to the United States and Europe. Coca cultivation

is concentrated in South America's Andes, mainly in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia; this is the world's only coca supply region.

Cannabis, particularly cannabis herb, is produced in modest quantities in the Caribbean area and is mostly used inside the region. Although output has fallen over the previous decade, Jamaica remains the region's leading cannabis grower and exporter. The Caribbean became a key transit location for cocaine trafficking from its then-dominant supplier, Colombia, in the 1970s.

Throughout the 1980s, cocaine traffickers were able to extend their market because of regional contacts with the United States and Western Europe, as well as the Caribbean's large and irregular monitoring coastline. Speedboats, cargo containers, and privately-owned fishing boats are thought to transport around 10% of cocaine heading for the United States through the region, as well as narcoplanes (light aircraft that transport narcotics). The National Drug Council of the Dominican Republic reported that at least 200 planes flew over the nation in 2007, dropping hundreds of pounds of cocaine at a time. The Bahamas is still an important transit point for cocaine and Jamaican cannabis from other parts of the Caribbean. The Caribbean-South Florida route is still operational, albeit it is less popular than the Central America-Mexico route at the moment. Drug flights to Central America have decreased by a third since Honduras increased its anti-narcotics effort in 2013. With this, traffickers have rediscovered the Caribbean-South Florida route, with a rise in cocaine imports into the United States from the Caribbean islands from 4% in 2011 to 16% in 2013. The Dominican Republic is well-known for its drug-trafficking activities. Following a decline at the start of the twenty-first century, the country saw a surge in cocaine seizures between 2005 and 2010, indicating that it remains an important transit route for cocaine from South to Northern America, as well as to European markets. There are also indications that trafficking routes are migrating to the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States' tiny island states, including Saint Lucia, Montserrat, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the US Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico. Saint Lucia is a particular vector for cocaine from South America into Martinique for onward

shipment to metropolitan France and then throughout Europe. The Netherland Antilles has also seen an increase in the number of travelers transporting cocaine and heroin to the Netherlands.

Cannabis is the most commonly used drug in the Caribbean, with high usage rates across the board. With the advent of the cocaine market in the 1980s and the Caribbean's placement on the cocaine transshipment route, the area experienced a rapid rise in cocaine dependence, notably in the smokeable form known as "crack" cocaine. According to a recent survey on student drug usage, Guyana, Jamaica, and Haiti had the greatest levels of cocaine use.

One of the most important factors of the current state of illicit drug trafficking and usage is the demand in the United States of America. Beginning in 19th century and throughout history, several chemicals have been illegally imported, marketed, and disseminated in the United States. First starting with the introduction of opium to the Americans, opium dens sprung through California and then New York and other major cities. They began experimenting with other opiates, such as morphine and codeine, not long after and during the Civil War these were used as pain killers which resulted in the addiction of thousands of soldiers. Even though the Harrison Act of 1914 made it illegal to consume opium and cocaine for non-medical purposes, the illegal substances continued to spread. In New York's Chinatown, a black market for opium was established in 1925. There were around 200,000 heroin users in the United States at the time. During the Jazz Era of the 1930s and 1940s, opiates were still widely distributed. During this time, marijuana became a popular recreational drug in various places. As early as the 1950s, American Mafia organizations were captured transporting and distributing illegal narcotics, as well as gambling and other criminal operations. These well-organized gangs paved the way for future drug cartels to profit from narcotics. Because smugglers in New York City would capture shipments of Turkish opium

arriving from Paris and Marseilles, France, the Mafia's involvement in the drug trade was called the "French Connection."

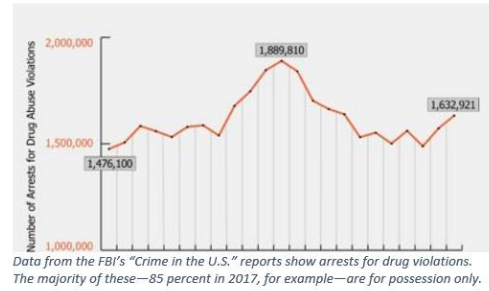
The U.S. involvement in the Vietnam War also led to a boost in heroin being smuggled into the United States between the years 1965-1970. Drug use among

Vietnam soldiers was widespread. In 1971, reports showed 15 percent of active soldiers were heroin addicts, and many more smoked marijuana or used other drugs. The number of people dependent on heroin in the United States soared to 750,000 during these years. By the mid-1980s, the US-Mexico border had become the principal entry point for cocaine, marijuana, and other narcotics.

Methamphetamine was first distributed by Mexican traffickers in the late 1990s.

With all of these combined, the illegal cocaine trade became a big moneymaking potential across the world in the late 1970s. During this period, *the Medellin Cartel*, an organized gang of drug traffickers and smugglers centered in Medellin, Colombia, began functioning. It surged to power in the 1980s. It was run by brothers Jorge Luis, Juan David, and Fabio Ochoa Vasquez; Pablo Escobar; Carlos Lehder; George Jung; and Jose Gonzalo Rodriguez Gacha. During the peak of its reign, the Medellin cartel brought in up to \$60 million a day in drug profits. One of the major occurrences during this period is when Colombian cops confiscated 600 kilograms of cocaine from an aircraft in 1975. Drug dealers reacted by killing 40 individuals in what became known as the "Medellin Massacre" throughout one weekend. Years of violence followed, involving assassinations, kidnappings, and raids. Importantly, the U.S. and Colombian governments ratified a bilateral extradition treaty in 1981. This treaty became a significant concern for Colombian traffickers.

The Sinaloa Federation is the most well-known and largest Mexican drug organization, also known as the Guzman-Loera Organization, the Federation, and the Blood Alliance. Between 1990 and 2008, the Sinaloa cartel imported and trafficked about 200 tons of cocaine and substantial amounts



of heroin. Joaquin “El Chapo” Guzman took over Sinaloa in 1989. In 2003, the US Treasury declared Guzman the “world's most powerful drug trafficker.” Guzman was caught in 2016 after many arrests and jail escapes. He was extradited to the US in early 2017.

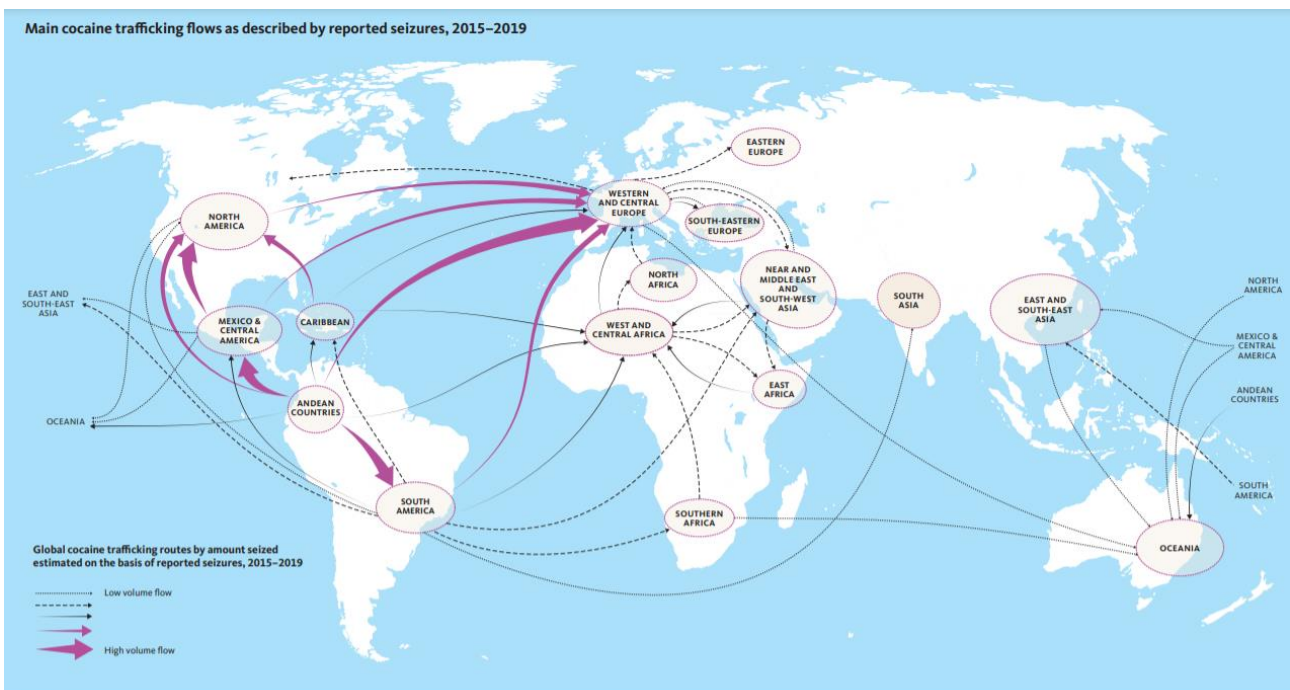
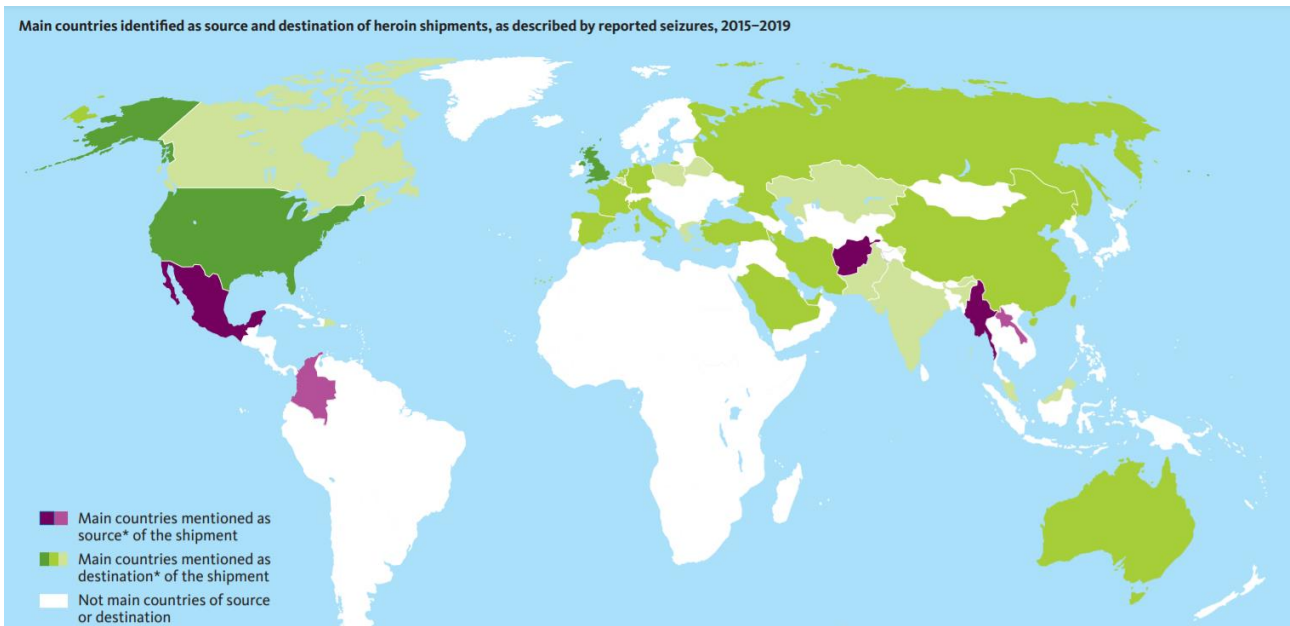
Gulf, a Mexican cartel, began in the 1920s but didn't achieve traction in the drug trade until the 1980s. In the 2000s, Gulf became a major opponent. The Gulf Cartel partnered with Los Zetas, a gang of former Mexican military elite. Los Zetas members acted as hitmen for Gulf. When the two factions separated in 2010, the result was the most violent era in Mexican organized crime history. Los Zetas were known for their brutality, including leaving body parts in public and recording killings online. Leader Miguel Angel Trevio was arrested in 2013.

The carnage of Mexico's drug cartels continues today. Recent cartels have formed, some after shattering earlier ones. Between 2006 and 2015, the Mexican drug battles cost over 80,000 deaths

B. Current Situation

At current levels, world heroin consumption (340 tons) and seizures represent an annual flow of 430-450 tons of heroin into the global heroin market. Of that total, opium from Myanmar and the Lao People's Democratic Republic yields some 50 tons, while the rest, some 380 tons of heroin and morphine, is produced exclusively from Afghan opium. While approximately 5 tons are consumed and seized in Afghanistan, the remaining bulk of 375 tons is trafficked worldwide via routes flowing into and through the countries neighboring Afghanistan.

The Balkan and northern routes are the main heroin trafficking corridors linking Afghanistan to the huge markets of the Russian Federation and Western Europe. The Balkan route traverses the Islamic Republic of Iran (often via Pakistan), Turkey, Greece, and Bulgaria across South-East Europe to the Western European market, with an annual market value of some \$20 billion. The northern route runs mainly through Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan (or Uzbekistan or Turkmenistan) to Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation. The size of that market is estimated to total \$13 billion per year.



Sources: UNODC elaboration.

The size of the route is based on the total amount seized on that route, according to the information on trafficking routes provided by Member States in the annual report questionnaires, individual drug seizures and other official documents, over the 2015–2019 period. The routes are determined on the basis of reported country of departure/ transit and destination in these sources. As such, they need to be considered as broadly indicative of existing trafficking routes while several secondary routes may not be reflected. Route arrows represent the direction of trafficking: origins of the arrows indicate either the area of departure or the one of last provenance, end points of arrows indicate either the area of consumption or the one of next destination of trafficking. Therefore, the trafficking origin may not reflect the country in which the substance was produced. Please see the Methodology section of this document.

The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

The increasing fights and tension amongst cartels, cartels' activities and their illegal drug smuggling is mainly due to the increasing demand around the world and particularly the US, but more importantly to the political situations of the countries in the region. Most of them lack political transparency, strong political and economic institutions, efficient governance and law enforcement. Most cartels basically control the respective governments and the policies operating within them. It's

also related to the fact that the market is big and profitable for several parties, therefore resulting in cartels and traffickers operating within the system pretty easily.

i. Country-by-country analysis

a. Colombia

The illegal drug trade in Colombia has, since the 1970s, centered successively on four major drug trafficking cartels: *Medellin*, *Cali*, *Norte del Valle*, and *North Coast*, as well as several *bandas criminales*, or BACRIMs. The trade eventually created a new social class and influenced several aspects of Colombian culture and politics.

The Colombian government's efforts to reduce the influence of drug-related criminal organizations is one of



the origins of the Colombian conflict, an ongoing low-intensity war among rival narcoparamilitary groups, guerrillas, and drug cartels fighting each other to increase their influence and against the Colombian government that struggles to stop them.

b. Mexico

The Mexican Drug War (also known as the Mexican War on Drugs) is the Mexican theater of the global war on drugs, as led by the U.S. federal government, that has resulted in an ongoing asymmetric low-intensity conflict between the Mexican government and various drug trafficking syndicates. When the Mexican military began to intervene in 2006, the government's principal goal was to reduce drug-related violence. The Mexican government has asserted that their primary focus is on dismantling the powerful drug cartels, and on preventing drug trafficking demand along with the U.S. functionaries.

Violence escalated soon after the arrest of Miguel Ángel Félix Gallardo in 1989; he was the leader and the founder of the first Mexican drug cartel, *the Guadalajara Cartel*, an alliance of the current existing cartels (which included *the Sinaloa Cartel*, *the Juarez Cartel*, *the Tijuana Cartel*, and *the Sonora Cartel*). Due to his arrest, the alliance broke and certain high-ranking members formed their own cartels and each of them fought for control of territory and trafficking routes.

Although Mexican drug trafficking organizations have existed for several decades, their influence increased after the demise of the Colombian Cali and Medellín cartels in the 1990s. Mexican drug cartels now dominate the wholesale illicit drug market and in 2007 controlled 90% of the cocaine entering the United States. Arrests

of key cartel leaders, particularly in the Tijuana and Gulf cartels, have led to increasing drug violence as cartels fight for control of the trafficking routes into the United States.

Federal law enforcement has been reorganized at least five times since 1982 in various attempts to control corruption and reduce cartel violence. During that same period, there have been at least four elite special forces created as new, corruption-free soldiers who could do battle with Mexico's endemic bribery system. Analysts estimate that wholesale earnings from illicit drug sales range from \$13.6 to \$49.4 billion annually. The US Congress passed legislation in late June 2008 to provide Mexico with US\$1.6 billion for the Mérida Initiative as well as technical advice to strengthen the national justice systems. By the end of President Felipe Calderón's administration



(December 1, 2006 – November 30, 2012), the official death toll of the Mexican Drug War was at least 60,000. Estimates set the death toll above 120,000 killed by 2013, not including 27,000 missing. Since taking office in 2018, President Andrés Manuel López Obrador declared that the war was over; however, his comment was met with criticism as the homicide rate remains high.

c. Peru

Peru is currently in the top three producers of coca bush in the world, with 62,500 hectares of its land being under cultivation in 2011. UNODC's alternative development program works closely with the Government and farmers to provide viable alternatives to coca bush cultivation.

UNODC has been involved in alternative development in Peru for over 25 years by providing the technical assistance necessary for developing modern and commercially viable legal enterprises.

UNODC has worked directly with over 8,000 farming families (40,000 people) that used to be dependent on coca bush cultivation. In Peru, UNODC supports the introduction of alternative development in areas like forest management, the protection of ecosystems in indigenous communities, livestock raising, and the development and consolidation of legal and self-sustained economies through the marketing of palm oil, heart of palm, cacao, and coffee.

UNODC supports farming enterprises to implement modern management practices, meet international quality control and environmental protection standards, and open new national and export markets for their products. These enterprises have been extremely successful, with sales of products increasing steadily, year after year. Over the past 3 years, alternative development programs improved the social and economic situation of families in targeted coca bush-growing areas through farmer-led small business enterprises, which were able to increase revenues on the international markets. Exports of products stemming from alternative development reached in excess of \$150 million in 2012. Domestically, these enterprises also profited from positive marketing developments. In addition, beneficiaries have become partial owners through the purchase of shares.

d. Puerto Rico

Illegal drugs in Puerto Rico are a problem from a criminal, social, and medical perspective. Located in the Caribbean, Puerto Rico has become a major transshipment point for drugs into the United States. Violent and property crimes have increased due in part to dealers trying to keep their drug business afloat, using guns and violence to protect themselves, their turfs, and drug habits.

Crimes related to drugs are not the only crimes plaguing the island. Along with gang violence, the island has also been victim to police and political corruption.

C. Further Reading

- <https://www.nationmaster.com/country-info/stats/Crime/Drug-trafficking>
- <https://dataunodc.un.org/data/drugs/Global%20Seizures>
- <https://dataunodc.un.org/data/drugs/Annual%20Drug%20Seizures>

III. Points to be Addressed

- How can the situation in the regions be analyzed; in respect to the current activities of cartels, drug trafficking and consumption?
- What are the main reasons of the drug trafficking and the fact that it can't be stopped?
- What are the main effects of drug trafficking on the region, respectively on social life, political stability, law enforcement, and economy?
- What kind of actions can UNODC take to monitor the drug trafficking routes?
- What kind of a framework should UNODC have to combat drug cartels and their activities in their local regions?

- What should be done to assist governments and local authorities in fighting addiction, cartels, and trafficking?

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- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FpwoMQlrugA>
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3byJ0-bgx5w&t=1s>