



Study Guide

United Nations Human Rights
Council

The correlation between the production of drugs and
poverty rates in South America

Gimnazija Bežigrad Model United Nations



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United Nations Human Rights Council – Study Guide

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INTRODUCTION

Personal Introductions

Mr. Matjaž Renko

Hello! Nice to meet you all. My name is Matjaž, and I am currently a fourth-year student here on Gimnazija Bežigrad. I was born and raised in Ljubljana. My passions include Model UN, sports, debating, and reading.

Like the delegates attending this conference, I started out my Model UN career from secondary school onwards. It has been three years since. Out of all the committees I have been in, I enjoyed SC the most because of the intense climate that always keeps you on your feet and the memorable lessons I have learnt about war, peacekeeping, and diplomacy throughout the years. International conflicts always have multiple perspectives and grey areas – the “truth” can always be questioned – hence I expect to see fresh, engaging debates that take this fact into account.

Ms. Enna Gacevic

Hello delegates, I am extremely excited to get to meet you all! My name is Enna Gacevic and I am currently a 3rd year student here at Gimnazija Bežigrad, but when this conference will be taking place, I will be in the 4th year. I was born in New York and lived there most of my life, but I am from Montenegro, and I have been living in Ljubljana for 4 years now and I love it here. My passions include sports (mainly gymnastics and volleyball) and MUN.

I started MUN in the beginning of my 3rd year of high school and have gone to a couple of conferences so far around Europe. I love debating and travelling. My favourite committee was the Human Rights Council as I enjoy the topics given in the committee. So, I hope you will enjoy this committee as much as I do – and I cannot wait to listen to fruitful debates.

Introduction to the Human Rights Council

The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system that handles strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe. It has a crucial role in addressing situations of human rights violations and making recommendations on how to address them. The council has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year, and it meets regularly at the UN Office at Geneva. Comprised of 47 United

Nations Member States elected by the UN General Assembly, the Human Rights Council replaced the former United Nations Commission on Human Rights, and its mission is to advocate for and uphold human rights globally.

Introduction of the topic

As the correlation between drug production and poverty levels in south America rise, the problem needs to be addressed and solutions need to be found. In the mid-20th century, the drug production turned into a grave issue. Some key factors that contribute to the seriousness of drug production in the area are:

1. Global drug trade: there is a high demand for drugs everywhere around the world which is why in South America people that live in poverty usually join the drug trade as billions are made in the industry.
2. Social consequences: drug production causes serious violence as different drug cartels compete over territories to take control of.
3. Corruption and weak government: the drug trades profitability can corrupt law, politicians etc...

A multifaceted approach encompassing law enforcement, international collaboration, social development initiatives, and other means of support must be taken to address drug production in South America. To effectively address this significant issue and lessen its wide-ranging effects, it is imperative to address the core causes of drug manufacture, such as poverty, inequality, and poor governance.

HISTORY OF THE TOPIC

The relationship between drug manufacturing and poverty levels in South America is a complicated, grave problem with a long historical background. We must dive into the history of drug production and poverty in the area in order to comprehend this correlation.

South America has long been recognized as a significant producer and exporter of illicit drugs, particularly cocaine. The growing of coca leaves, particularly in nations like Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, is intimately related to the production of cocaine. But towards the middle of the 20th century, the modern drug trade as we know it today developed into a significant issue. Demand for cocaine increased dramatically over the world in the 1960s and 1970s, especially in North America. This created an economic opportunity for farmers in South America, who turned to coca cultivation (mass cocaine producing) as a means of escaping poverty. The drug trade provided an alternative source of income.

In many cases, drug production became concentrated in regions characterized by extreme poverty rates, limited state presence, and weak governance. These areas, often remote were attractive to drug traffickers due to the lack of effective law enforcement and the availability of cheap labour. The illegal drug trade offered a chance for economic mobility for poor/damaged communities, even though it came with significant risks and social consequences.

South America's drug trafficking has had a significant social, economic, and political impact on the continent. While it has brought in money for certain people and communities, it has also supported organized crime, bloodshed, and corruption. Drug cartel activity and the resulting violence have weakened the rule of law, weakened communities, and made poverty and inequality worse. And in South America, this has escalated into a major issue.

The environment has suffered because of the drug trafficking. Coca cultivation and medication manufacturing are frequently linked to deforestation, soil erosion, and water contamination. These environmental effects exacerbate the vicious cycle of vulnerability and poverty in the impacted areas.

There have long been initiatives to address the link between drug manufacturing and poverty levels in South America. Various tactics, such as crop replacement programs, alternative development initiatives, and law enforcement measures, have been put into practice by governments and international organizations. Finding efficient and long-lasting solutions, meanwhile, is still difficult because of how deeply ingrained and intertwined social, economic, and political issues are with the drug trade.

Some nations in the area have made major strides in lowering drug production and enhancing security and socioeconomic conditions recently, most notably Colombia. However, the issue remains complex and requires a comprehensive approach that addresses not only the supply side of the drug trade but also the underlying socioeconomic factors that contribute to its persistence.

THE CURRENT SITUATION

The drug production and poverty levels in South America are rising and continue to rise, especially after the pandemic. When addressing poverty in South America the social Panorama project 2022 project shows that 201 million people which is 32.1% of the whole region's population are living in situations in poverty and 13.1% are in extreme poverty. When discussing drug production etc... In South America we must look at the current situation of drug trafficking organizations (mainly in Mexico and Colombia). These organizations are said to generate a total of 18-39 Bn from drug proceeds per year. The Cartels (organizations) target impoverished children that will work for extraordinarily little money to make ends

meet. The main routes for drug transferring to the US and Europe are the Pacific route, the Caribbean route, and the Atlantic route.

Children in Latin America experience poverty at a rate of 43%. These kids come from families who cannot afford to provide them with food, clothing, or shelter. Cartels offer these kids jobs since they are aware of their difficulties. Eighty percent of children under the age of 25 consent to work for Latin American drug cartels because many of them believe they have no choice but to accept the task.

In Mexico and other Latin American nations, little children arouse less suspicion than older people and are eager to work for Meagre pay. As a result, the cartels make full advantage of them. Drug cartels frequently transfer unaccompanied youngsters across borders to transport drugs. Border security will thereafter assist unaccompanied minors, making it easier for drug traffickers to smuggle drugs across borders.

PAST ACTIONS OF THE UN AND THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL

Useful resolutions and reports

Special session of the United Nations General Assembly on the world drug problem (2016) to review the progress in the implementation of the Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem of 2009, including an assessment of the achievements and challenges in countering the world drug problem, within the framework of the three international drug control conventions and other relevant United Nations instruments.

United Nations convention against illicit traffic in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances (1988) provided more legal mechanisms for enforcing the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances.

Convention on psychotropic substances (1971) treaty to control psychoactive drugs.

The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) to controls activities of specific narcotic drugs and lays down a system of regulations for their medical and scientific uses; establishment the International Narcotics Control Board.

UNODC's Global Strategy 2021–2025 addressing the challenges posed by illicit drugs, organized crime, and terrorism. Its Global Strategy for the period of 2021-2025 provides a framework for the organization's work and outlines its strategic priorities and goals.

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development set goals to eradicate poverty and prevent the usage of drugs around the world.

UNODC strategic vision for Latin America and the Caribbean 2022-2025 provides a plan to tackle poverty to achieve lower drug production

Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem (2009) establishment of a global framework for addressing the challenges posed by illicit drugs. Its purposed is to provide guidance and to establish a comprehensive strategy to tackle the world drug problem through international cooperation.

BLOCK POSITIONS

Argentina

The nation does not have a significant role in global drug production, but it serves as a transit country for drug trafficking due to its strategic geographic location. Poverty remains a concern in Argentina, with a notable portion of the population experiencing economic hardships. With the inflation, which is higher than 100%, the economy is a brink of collapse.

Belgium

Belgium's port of Antwerp is the Europe's drug gateway, where thousands of tons of cocaine are seized every year, just in 2022, 110 metric tons of cocaine were found by the authorities. The country is also facing with prominent levels of bribery, cartel activities and drug use among the population. A recent study showed that Belgium's sewage waters contain the most amount of cocaine and MDMA in Europe.

Bolivia

The country is the source of the world's largest production of both coca leaves and cocaine. It is estimated that Bolivia produces 10,000 metric tons of cocaine annually. The involvement of drug cartels has led to corruption, undermining governance and exacerbating social challenges. The United States has played a role in supporting Bolivia's efforts to combat drug trafficking through financial assistance and cooperation, aiming to dismantle cartels and reduce the illicit drug trade.

Brazil

Brazil faces challenges related to drug production and drug trafficking due to its generous size, porous borders, and proximity to drug-producing regions. While it is not a major drug producer, it serves as a significant transit country for illicit drugs, particularly cocaine.

Chile

According to a recent assessment, drug trafficking in Chile has become increasingly prominent, diversified, and violent over the past year. The market for synthetic drugs grew 680 percent between 2017 and 2019, while the country's poverty rates are below 15%.

China

China is a major source of precursor chemicals necessary to produce fentanyl, cocaine, heroin, MDMA and crystal methamphetamine, which are used by many Southeast Asian and Pacific Rim nations. China not only continues to be a major transit route for Southeast Asian heroin bound for international drug markets, but also for Southwest Asian heroin entering northwestern China from Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Tajikistan.

Colombia

With only 14 percent of the global coca-leaf market in 1991, by 2004 Colombia was responsible for 80 percent of the world's cocaine production. The Colombian government has programs to eradicate coca by mechanical means (burning or cutting) or with herbicides, such as glyphosate sprayed by airplanes and helicopters. The aerial spraying of glyphosate herbicide is one of the most controversial methods of coca eradication. It has taken place because of Colombia's willingness to cooperate with the US in the militarized eradication of coca after signing Plan Colombia in 2000.

Cuba

Cuba's proximity to south and north America has played a role in the development of the drug trade in the region drug trade particularly in the form of smuggling of illegal drugs such as cocaine and marijuana. Today Cuba is not a significant producer consumer or transit point for illegal drugs, the Cuban government strict control over its borders and airspace have contributed to a relatively low incidence of drug trafficking activities.

Dominican Republic

Dominican Republic has a strategic position from where they can transport illegal drugs from Columbia to the US and Europe. As the economy in the nation is weak gang groups have risen and lead youth involvement in drug trafficking, crime, and gangs. This gang groups also have close relationships to officials in ports across Europe and USA.

France

French authorities seized more than 157 tons of drugs in 2022, with cannabis standing for the majority. The country has also committed 11 billion euros in the Latin America since 2009 and aims to increase financing to 2 billion euros per year by 2020. With bilateral agreement they help funding new infrastructure and combatting inequalities.

Germany

In 1994, the Federal Constitutional Court ruled that drug use and possession of lesser amounts of drugs for the purpose of drug use were not crimes. The nation also has one of the lowest poverty rates in Europe, even though recreational use of drugs is on the rise again.

Guatemala

Guatemala lies directly in the path of cocaine moving from Colombia to the United States, which makes it a perfect location of drug production and trafficking. With the recent civil war, the younger generations help themselves and their families with the selling of illegal drugs.

Honduras

Murders and the transport of drugs in Honduras is linked to gang members who are part of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS 13) gang. Even as recently as 2009, the president of Honduras was removed from office in a move that many refer to as a coup d'état. This political instability has encouraged corruption, reduced the ability of law enforcement to operate effectively and has enabled drug traffickers and bankers laundering drug proceeds to operate with much more freedom.

Mexico

The drug situation in Mexico continues to be a major concern, with its impact reaching across the border into the United States. The illicit drug trade between the two countries remains rampant, fuelling

violence and addiction on both sides. Efforts to combat drug trafficking and enhance cooperation between Mexico and the United States are ongoing but face significant challenges.

Panama

The core of Panama's problem is the wealth of shipping resources next to the world's largest supply of cocaine. Overall, Panama has higher drug use statistics than most other Central American countries. And not just cocaine, but also cannabis and synthetics. No other Central American country comes close to Panama's cocaine consumption figures. And its cannabis consumption is many times higher than most other Central American countries.

Peru

The drug situation in Peru is deeply rooted inside the cultivation of coca flora, which are used to provide cocaine. Despite authorities' efforts to combat drug trafficking, Peru stays a key player in the global drug trade. The remote areas of the United States, along with the coca-growing areas within the Amazon rainforest, present widespread challenges for law enforcement in their combat in opposition to drug production and distribution.

Puerto Rico

Puerto Rico faces a complex drug situation intertwined with high stages of poverty. The island serves as a transit factor for drug trafficking among Latin America and the US, fuelling the local drug market and contributing to crime rates. The socioeconomic demanding situations, such as big poverty and restrained monetary opportunities, create an environment where drug exchange thrives as an alternative supply of earnings for prone populations. Efforts to deal with the drug scenario in Puerto Rico should be seen with the aid of comprehensive poverty alleviation techniques to address the root causes that perpetuate the cycle of drug abuse and trafficking.

Salvador

Recent drug situation in El Salvador is deeply intertwined with excessive levels of poverty. The use of a struggle with drug trafficking, resulting in extended violence and crime charges. This, coupled with extensive poverty, creates hard surroundings that needs comprehensive strategies addressing both the drug exchange and poverty to foster stability and improvement.

Spain

Spain grapples with some poverty and drug-associated challenges. While a level of poverty exists, the country's strategic place additionally makes it a main transit point for drug trafficking. Addressing each poverty and effective drug management measures are vital in tackling those problems and their societal effect in Spain.

Switzerland

The nation of a has implemented effective harm reduction strategies, inclusive of prevention, treatment, and support offerings, ensuing in a high-quality effect on the drug situation. These efforts have helped mitigate drug abuse and trafficking, emphasizing public fitness and offering help to individuals and communities suffering from substance abuse.

United Kingdom

The state deals with issues such as drug abuse, drug trafficking, and drug-related crimes. Efforts are being made to address these challenges through prevention, treatment, and enforcement, with the goal of reducing the harm caused by drugs and promoting public health and safety.

United States of America

The United States has a long-standing record of the "War on Drugs" policy, which has had massive implications for Latin America. The US-led efforts to fight drug manufacturing and trafficking have ended in extensive financial contributions to Latin American nations. However, those contributions have regularly been gone with through unintended effects, inclusive of increased violence and instability inside the area. Critics argue that the focal point on supply-aspect interdiction and eradication has not efficaciously addressed the root causes of drug troubles and has as an alternative perpetuated a cycle of violence and corruption. Calls for a shift towards complete drug guidelines that prioritize public health, damage reduction, and addressing socioeconomic elements have gained traction in latest years.

Venezuela

The political and financial crisis in Venezuela has worsened these issues, as organized criminal groups take advantage of the instability. Efforts to cope with the drug scenario in Venezuela require a complete method that consists of strengthening law enforcement, seeking international cooperation, and addressing the underlying socioeconomic factors that gas drug-associated activities.

SUMMARY / CONCLUSION

The current socio-economic state of most of the countries in the Latin America is atrocious, nations are combatting high inflation, systematic corruption and inefficiency of the public institutions. The climate in the Latin America is suitable to produce illegal drugs which can later be sold in the USA or Europe for 10 to 100 times higher price. This has led many, especially young people, to work for gangs or produce illegal drugs and receive salaries which are big enough to combat the economic situation of the country. Columbia and Bolivia are the most known for their drug production, however nowadays plenty of countries have problems with drug productions. Other countries like Brazil are facing the problem with drug trafficking and others like the Dominican Republic with the transport of these drugs to the USA and Europe. All operations are usually carried by cartels, which can be present in multiple countries and have connections with many officials at the ports around the globe. These cartels later grow to such sizes, they have more power than the local police. This results again in assassinations and coups, which all again cycles this to more poverty.

QUESTIONS/ISSUES TO ADDRESS

1. How does drug production in south America disproportionately affect women rights and what are the specific challenges they face in relation to poverty exploitation and limited access to resources?
2. What are the economic and social implications of drug production on local communities in south America and how does it contribute to poverty cycles?
3. In what ways does drug production impact the environment and natural resources and how does this exacerbate poverty and affect local populations?
4. How do drug production and associated criminal activities contribute to the erosion of governance structures and institutions in south America hindering poverty alleviation efforts?
5. What strategies and initiatives have been successful in addressing the root causes of pharmaceutical production and poverty in South America and how can they be scaled up or replicated elsewhere?
6. How can international cooperation and multilateral partnerships play a role in addressing the link between medicine and poverty in South America and what specific strategies can be used to enhance cooperation?
7. What are the potential long-term consequences of the nexus between medical poverty and social inequality and how can comprehensive and sustainable solutions be developed to break this cycle?

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