

SIDMUN

XVIII

DISEC

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## History of the illegal drug trade:

There is a global-wide market that connects every continent. Drug smuggling has been a problem plaguing the world since the dawn of the age of imperialism. Smuggling is the direct result that comes from drug prohibition and the main reason for smuggling is the direct cash profit resulting from the transaction. Illegal drug smuggling can be seen as early in the 1800's, a clear example would be the Opium War in China. The Chinese had become addicted to the opium provided to them by the British, and once the Chinese government banned it those who had become addicted still wanted their fill. The British then smuggled it into China and got large sums of money for the drug they provided. Eventually, the Chinese grew restless, they wanted their opium and the government would not allow for that, and then the Opium war broke out. The illegal drug trade led to violence, a common theme seen throughout history.

More recently, in the 1960's drug use was at large within the United States and the government began placing restrictions on what was now deemed legal and illegal. In 1973, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration was created to prevent the illegal trade of drugs. With the creation of this department came about the smuggling business inside of the United States. Those who still wanted their heroin, or cocaine, etc began looking elsewhere for their drugs and looked to those out of the country to begin smuggling the drugs, especially their bordering nation, Mexico. This was the start of the smuggling crusade in America that has yet to be stopped.

## DISEC

The Disarmament and International Security Committee (DISEC) was created by the United Nations in order for representatives of each member nation to debate conflicts of disarmament and security. The DISEC committee works for the deterrence and the reduction of certain international conflicts that are not discussed by the United Nations Security Council.

The United Nations Charter states the responsibility of the DISEC committee as such: "consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security" (Chapter IV, Article 11). However, this committee does not have the same ability as the Security Council to enforce its resolutions. It can not call for armed interventions or

establish economic sanctions upon any nation. DISEC is only the first stage of debate over disarmament and security issues. However, because this committee is more general than higher committees, it allows for the establishment of each nation's position on issues, which then creates a guideline for future debate.

During this conference, you will luckily have an opportunity to experience the debate of DISEC. You will be participating in the creation of a (mock) security agenda while providing understanding and solutions to international issues.

### Present Problems:

One of the main aspects of this extremely complicated issue is the fact that national governments are finding it very difficult to manage non state actors. In Mexico, the war between the Los Zetas and the Sinaloa (two rival drug cartels) are severely hampering the safety and the economy of Mexico due to the fact that not only are they fighting each other, they also have a frighteningly considerable impact on the national government due to corruption and a blatant disregard for the law. In 2005, Alejandro Dominguez Coello accepted the post in being the police chief of the border town Nuevo Laredo, one of the biggest centers of commerce between the US and Mexico, and Coello was brutally murdered approximately six hours after he was instated as the police chief by the Los Zetas drug cartel. (1) Mexico and the rest of the international community are having difficulty stopping the actions of these cartels due how far their connections reach within the national government. In 2005, 1500 of the 7500 agents of the Mexican federal agency known as the Agencia Federal de Investigación were under investigation for possibly being involved in criminal activity, and 457 of those agents faced charges. (2) There is also the case of Victor Gerardo Garay Cadena, former head of the Mexican Federal Police who was arrested for ordering his police force to withdraw from entering the house of the head of the Beltran Levya cartel. (3) It is also necessary to mention that these problems do not only involve Mexico, but multiple nations as well. Since Hugo Chavez severed diplomatic ties with the United States in 2005, his administration has been having a great deal of trouble managing Venezuela's drug trade, with Venezuela responsible for 41% of cocaine shipment in Europe. Venezuela has also been having trouble with preventing the smuggling, due to the fact that Venezuelan smugglers use small airplanes to fly over the Colombian-Venezuelan border. (5) Peru has now surpassed

Colombia as the world leader in the production of coca leaves. (6) Bolivia's efforts in stymieing the drug trade within its nation are leaving its citizens in federal assistance, since they are getting so little considering the fact that Bolivia spends a great deal of money preventing the movement of drugs. (7) The United States is also involved in this issue, considering that there is corruption among their borders too. Since 2003, 129 Customs and Border protection agents have been arrested for corruption and in 2009 alone, 576 agents were accused of corruption.

We must now divert our attention and take a look at the problems regarding the smuggling of arms. A point of interest regarding the drug cartels is the origin of the weapons they possess. Between 2004 and 2008, the Department of Justice's Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives initiated a weapons tracing operation targeting the Los Zetas and they eventually found out that 87% of the weapons they possessed are of US origination, and they are coming from the states of Texas, Arizona, and California.(8) Colombia's revolutionary guerilla organization FARC (Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia) is responsible for trafficking assault rifles, pistols, grenades, and other types of weapons. (9) This is more than just a regional issue, this is a global issue. Efforts must be taken in order to strengthen borders, reduce corruption, and working alongside with as many organizations as possible. Just as Ban-Ki Moon said at a Security Council sesión, "The trans-national nature of the threat means that no country can face it alone. This fight requires a comprehensive international approach based on a strong sense of shared responsibility. States must share intelligence, carry out joint operations, build capacity, and provide mutual legal assistance" (10)

### **Bloc Positions:**

Asia:

Since China has opened up their borders to trade, they have attracted a large amount of drug traffickers due to their massive population and numerous coastal cities. As they increased trade with other nations, so did the increase of the trade of illicit drugs. Criminal organizations have impoverished women and children body-carry heroin. The nations such as Japan, China, South Korea, the Phillipines, Vietnam, along with many others are spending billions of dollars trying to stifle the transportation of drugs and arms within their respective borders. As their economic prosperity increases, so does

consumer demand of narcotics, so this is becoming an increasingly bigger issue that these nations are very intent in solving.

#### North America and Western Europe :

North American and Western European nations (United States, Canada, United Kingdom, Spain, France, Germany, etc.) are the most common target for the trade of illegal substances. However, because drug smugglers can easily alter their routes and distribution points, these developed nations are plagued with a very difficult issue. In June of 1971, President Richard Nixon of the United States began the “War on Drugs.” In this, the United States and other incorporated nations declared to “define and reduce the illegal drug trade by discouraging the production, distribution, and consumption of psychoactive drugs.” In May of 2009, Cliff Huxtable, the current Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, stated that the Obama administration did not plan to alter the illegal drug policy, but would not refer to it counterproductively as the “War on Drugs.”

The United Kingdom fights a very similar battle with illegal drug trade. The government of this nation created the Serious Organised Crime Agency SOCA in order to prevent drug smuggling as well as arms smuggling and human trafficking. SOCA recently intercepted a large haul of cocaine in West Africa, which has become a major destination for drugs that would be later smuggled into the UK. SOCA’s Executive Director of Enforcement, Daniel Tanner, stated, “ We work to put serious criminals behind bars, and use many other tactics to fight crime and keep you safe. In particular, we want to ensure crime doesn’t pay and that it’s harder to commit.”

The North American and Western European nations play a large role in this debate, as their borders are crossed and violated. Because these nations have organized and developed governments, they are able to create organizations that can effectively combat the smuggling of illegal substances. Much of the funds and motivation for the prevention of drug smuggling will come from this bloc, and the incorporation of these nations into solutions will therefore be necessary.

#### Latin America

Drug smuggling within the borders of Latin America has steadily been on the rise. Their drug trafficking not only affects the Latin American nations,

but also the nations that these Latin American countries provide drugs for. Following the establishment of the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration smuggling drugs into America became a skill, a trade. The trafficking exists because the drugs are illegal and their only means for coming into contact with illegal drugs would be on the black market. The United States has Declared a War on Drugs, doing their best to stagger the progression of the trade but the smuggling continues as those who work as smugglers perfect their methods of stealth.

“In the first decade of the 2000s, the U.S. government spent \$9.9 billion on aid programs to help governments in Latin America and the Caribbean reduce the supply of illegal drugs coming to the United States. That is 48 percent of all U.S. aid, and 85 percent of all military and police aid, to the Western Hemisphere.” All of the efforts created to stop all of the drug trade in Latin America has resulted in no change. When measured in tons, Latin America is still producing the same amount of cocaine and other similar drugs as it was 10 years ago. This policy has been a bust. The street price of these illegal drugs is steady and the amount smuggled seems to be satisfying the public who demand it. Even worse, the violence that can be directly associated with drugs in Latin America has never been worse.

Drug trafficking in itself is a horrible trade, but even worse is the violence that is generally associated with drug smuggling. A prime example would be Mexico and the drug cartel wars that are currently ongoing in this nation. Thousands are killed each year in drive-bys and stabbings all across the border, yet many of these instances are failed to be reported out of pure fear from drug trafficking organizations. Often, many reporters and journalists get shot down, attacked and brutalized for trying to publicize this illegal trade. The drug cartels want reporters to stop covering them, leading to more innocent lives being wrongfully taken away. Drug trafficking is illegal, therefore it is known that it should not be done, but people continue for the profit, it is driven by greed. This greed leads to violent defensive smugglers who began to resort to killings in order to protect their trade.

Africa:

Until very recently, drug trafficking has not been an issue in Africa at all. Global changes and other conflicts have led Africans to selling and using this drug more recently. The drug trade in Africa is most commonly linked

with civil strife, poverty, crime, etc like most other places around the world but one statistic is very different.

Africa, even though is recent to the drug trade, still contains the lowest arrests and incarcerations for the possession, trafficking, and use of illicit drugs. In Ethiopia, between 1994 and 1999 only five arrests were made for the possession of heroin. Although, there were more for marijuana that year, this still shows the struggle that countries in Africa face when dealing with this problem. Most people end up bribing police or officials in order to keep their trade going which poses problems for the local communities. Many people that are poverty-stricken in Africa rely heavily upon the drug trade as their only source of income.

The trafficking and selling of these illicit drugs is another problem faced by officials in Africa. For those that are not bought out by drug lords, there are simply not enough officials to stop and prevent this problem. The most present issue faced in Africa is that most shipments of illicit drugs to and from Africa are hidden in cargo shipments or smuggled aboard ship by professional smugglers.

Cannabis, the most widely grown illicit drug in Africa, poses even more issues for the countries in these regions. This is because the governments do not have the manpower or jurisdiction to overlook and regulate where cannabis is being grown and shipped off to.

One of the most shocking statistics is the fact that the age of people in Africa abusing drugs is falling and the number of women and children that are turning towards these illicit drugs is rising. Another frightful piece of information is that fact that heroin injections are slowly rising among drug abusers in Africa which is a problem because HIV/AIDS is already a growing threat in this region and heroin abuse would only help to transfer this disease faster.

Questions a Position Paper must Answer:

1. How has drug trafficking affected your country in the past?
2. How is the drug trade affecting your country currently?
3. Has your country done anything in the past to help regulate this problem? If so explain..

4. What is your country's policy on the illegal drug trade?
5. What solutions do you think your country can implement to help regulate and prevent this problem?
6. How can your country, if able, help other countries confront this problem?
7. How do you think this problem should be addressed on a global scale?

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The New York Times- Thursday September 21,2010 "Mexico paper, drug war victim, calls for a voice"