

General Assembly Legal Committee

Strengthening Legal Mechanisms to Combat Drug
Trafficking and Cross-Border Smuggling



Message from the Dais:

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee at this year's Model United Nations conference. The committee will be discussing the critical issue of Strengthening Legal Mechanisms to Combat Drug Trafficking and Cross-Border Smuggling. This is an urgent topic that requires collective action from all Member States to tackle the global challenges posed by drug trafficking and illicit smuggling activities.

As representatives of your countries, your task is to engage in diplomatic dialogue, seek out cooperative solutions, and craft legal frameworks that can effectively address these pressing concerns. We encourage you to research extensively, come prepared with innovative solutions, and maintain a collaborative approach throughout the discussions.

We look forward to seeing your negotiation skills in action and your contribution to crafting a resolution that upholds international law and promotes global security.

Best regards,
The Dias

Introduction to The Committee

The **United Nations General Assembly Sixth Committee (GA6)**, also known as the Legal Committee, addresses various issues related to international law, including legal aspects of transnational crimes. It is within this committee that critical legal solutions to complex global issues, such as drug trafficking and smuggling, are debated and crafted. The committee's role is to propose international treaties, conventions, and resolutions that can effectively strengthen legal mechanisms and promote cooperation among Member States to address these global threats.

Relation to the Topic:

The topic of drug trafficking and cross-border smuggling is of immense importance in the realm of international law. It affects not only security and stability in various regions but also undermines global efforts to protect human rights and promote sustainable development. GA6, in collaboration with UNODC, is tasked with proposing legal frameworks that can combat these threats effectively through international cooperation and legal mechanisms.

Rules of Procedure

This committee will operate on the basis of the regular BEYMUN rules of procedure. Delegates are required to use the following motions:

1. Setting the Agenda

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to set the agenda in favor of Topic A/B. "

Yet, this motion will not be used in the conference since there is 1 topic.

2. Speaker's List

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to open the Speaker's List with a speaker's time of [Y] seconds. "

3. Moderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a moderated caucus to discuss '[Subtopic Y]' for a total time of [Z] minutes, with a speaker's time of [W] seconds. "

4. Unmoderated Caucus

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into an unmoderated caucus to [form blocs and alliances / discuss resolutions/work on the working paper or draft resolution / discuss the crisis] for a total time of [Y] minutes. "

5. Consultation of the Whole

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a consultation of the whole to discuss [the recommendations elaborated in the previous unmoderated caucus / the crisis] for a total time of [Y] minutes. "

6. Adjourn the Meeting

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to adjourn the meeting for [Y] minutes for the purpose of [a lunch break / a coffee break]. "

7. Solicit a Third Party

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to solicit [Third Party Y], as they possess relevant information or expertise regarding [Subtopic Z / the crisis]. "

8. Press Conference

"The delegate of [Country X] motions to suspend the debate and move into a press conference to discuss [a resolution related to Y / the crisis] for a total time of [Z] minutes. "

9. Extend the Time of the Unmoderated Caucus

“The delegate of [Country X] motions to extend the duration of the current unmoderated caucus by [Y] minutes. ”

10. Introduce the Draft Resolution

“The delegate of [Country X] motions to introduce the draft resolutions with a speaker’s time of [Y] seconds per author or co-sponsor. ”

11. Close Debate and Move into Voting Procedure

“The delegate of [Country X] motions to close the debate and move directly into voting procedure. ”

(Note: This motion requires a two-thirds majority to pass.

Written Motions:

1. Right of Reply: Delegates can request the right of reply to another delegate who has offended their country. There is no right of reply to a right of reply.
2. Appeal to the Chair's Decision: If the delegates feel that the chair has made an unfair decision, the delegates can send it as a note to the Chair.

Points:

- Point of Order: Used to correct a procedural or factual mistake. Interruptive, but do not overuse it.
- Point of Personal Privilege: Request to leave or adjust comfort (e. g. , temperature). Interruptive.
- Point of Inquiry: Ask about the rules or current stage. Interruptive.
- Point of Information: Ask a question when the floor is open. Not interruptive.
- Point to Instigate a Debate: Challenge another delegate’s resolution stance. Interruptive and subject to chair’s approval.

Mapping to the Sustainable Development Goals

This topic directly relates to several Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) as follows:

- **SDG 16: Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions**

- The fight against drug trafficking and cross-border smuggling aligns with SDG 16, which emphasizes the need to promote the rule of law **and** reduce illicit financial flows. Strengthening legal mechanisms can help ensure justice and build stronger institutions that can combat organized crime.

- **SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being**

- Drug trafficking contributes to widespread health crises, including the spread of drug abuse and addiction. Strengthening legal frameworks can help reduce the supply and consumption of illicit drugs, improving public health outcomes globally.

- **SDG 10: Reduced Inequalities**

- Cross-border smuggling often exploits vulnerabilities in developing countries. By addressing this issue, we can work towards reducing inequalities and creating more equitable opportunities for all nations.



Introduction to The Topic

Illicit Trade and Smuggling

Illicit trade refers to any illegal activity related to the production, distribution, sale, and purchase of goods that violate legal regulations and international laws. The global scale of illicit trade is staggering, with estimates suggesting that over 2 trillion USD is lost annually due to illegal transactions. This illicit market surpasses the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many large economies, highlighting the immense size and impact of the underground economy.

A significant aspect of illicit trade is the black market, where goods are exchanged without regulation or oversight. The black market deals with everything from illegal tobacco and narcotics to counterfeit goods and weapons. For instance, the rising price of legal tobacco products due to higher taxes has led to an increase in illegal tobacco consumption, particularly in regions like the European Union, where illegal cigarette consumption rose by 3.9% in 2021.



Another critical component of illicit trade is smuggling, the illegal transportation of goods across borders. Smuggling networks often target products such as weapons, drugs, and even people. The practice thrives in regions with weak legal structures or in areas of conflict where governments struggle to maintain control and enforce laws. Smuggling operations contribute heavily to organized crime, fueling violent activities and undermining state authority.

The dangers of illicit trade extend beyond economic losses. Smuggled goods—whether they are counterfeit products or unregulated drugs—pose serious risks to public health and safety. These goods often bypass health and safety regulations, leading to dangerous consequences for consumers. For example, smuggled drugs or counterfeit medicines can cause significant health crises, contributing to the growing number of global health issues tied to illicit trade

Topic in Depth

The Interplay Between Illicit Arms, Organized Crime, and Conflict

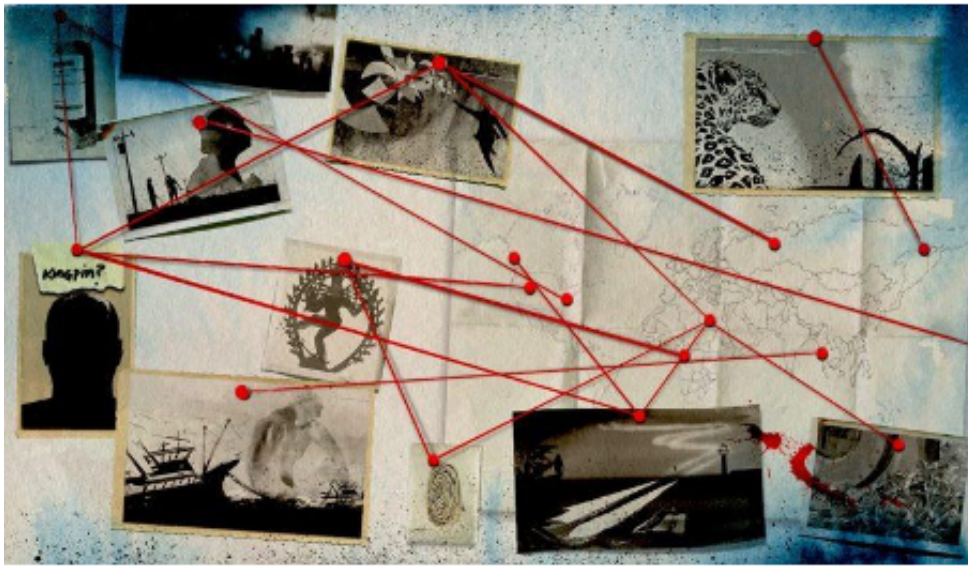
The issues of illicit arms trafficking, organized crime, and armed conflict are deeply interconnected, forming a vicious cycle that perpetuates violence and instability in many regions of the world. Non-state armed groups (NSAGs), which operate outside state control, play a significant role in this cycle by acquiring illicit weapons and engaging in illegal activities to fund their operations. These groups often rely on illicit arms to sustain their conflicts and maintain power within regions where governments are weak or unable to control violence effectively.

The trafficking of illicit weapons plays a central role in fueling armed conflicts, particularly in areas where the rule of law has broken down. These weapons, often acquired from corrupt governments, black market dealers, or surplus stockpiles, are used by armed groups to escalate violence and destabilize regions. The presence of such groups leads to an increase in illegal activities, including drug trafficking, human trafficking, and money laundering, all of which exacerbate regional instability.

In conflict zones, where borders are porous and law enforcement is compromised, the demand for illicit trade rises significantly. These areas become prime targets for organized crime groups, which capitalize on the chaos to smuggle drugs, arms, and other illicit goods across borders. The flow of illegal arms into conflict zones not only strengthens the position of violent groups but also prolongs the conflict by providing these groups with the means to resist government forces and escalate violence.

The aftermath of armed conflicts creates further opportunities for the diversion of weapons. For instance, surplus arms left behind after a conflict can be sold or smuggled into other regions, where they may be

used to fuel new conflicts. This ongoing flow of weapons ensures that even after a conflict has ended, the risk of violence remains high, and regions continue to suffer from instability.



Organized Crime's Role in Illicit Trade

Organized crime syndicates contribute significantly to the global problem of illicit trade by facilitating the movement of drugs, weapons, and other illegal goods across borders. These criminal organizations operate in both legal and illegal markets, using their resources to establish smuggling routes and bribe officials to avoid detection. Their involvement in the drug trade, for example, provides them with enormous financial resources, which are then reinvested into acquiring more weapons, funding illegal activities, and maintaining control over illicit territories.

Organized crime groups profit immensely from these illegal activities, but their operations also create a range of negative consequences for both local communities and global security. Drug trafficking, one of the primary sources of revenue for organized crime, causes widespread public health issues. The demand for illicit drugs is fueled by addiction, and organized crime groups often target vulnerable populations to exploit them for their illicit profits. Similarly, the trafficking of humans and smuggling of goods such as weapons and counterfeit products further destabilize societies, hinder economic development, and promote lawlessness.

The violence and corruption associated with organized crime groups undermine government control and make it more difficult for countries to restore peace and stability. Governments often lack the resources

and political will to combat these illicit networks, which further weakens the state and allows criminal organizations to flourish.



The Need for International Action

The close links between illicit arms trafficking, organized crime, and armed conflict highlight the need for a unified international response. These issues cannot be addressed by individual countries alone, as they are inherently global problems. International cooperation is essential to disrupt the flow of illegal arms, cut off the financing of criminal groups, and improve border security. Efforts such as stronger legal frameworks, better intelligence-sharing, and improved law enforcement capabilities are crucial to tackling this multifaceted issue. Additionally, addressing the root causes of illicit trade, such as poverty, corruption, and weak governance, is essential to breaking the cycle of violence and crime.

International Actions

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Strategy 2021-2025

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) plays a pivotal role in global efforts to combat illicit trade, drug trafficking, and organized crime. In response to the growing challenges posed by these issues, the UNODC developed the Strategy for 2021-2025, which focuses on enhancing global peace and security, particularly in regions

affected by conflict. The strategy recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated economic and societal vulnerabilities, which has led to an increase in criminal activities, including illicit trade and smuggling.

The strategy is designed to focus on five thematic areas that will guide international efforts over the next five years:

- **Countering the World Drug Problem:**

The UNODC supports Member States in implementing international drug policy commitments. This includes efforts to address the widespread trafficking of illicit drugs, bolster law enforcement capabilities, and ensure sustainable practices in combating drug-related crime. The strategy emphasizes the importance of monitoring global drug trends and reinforcing national drug enforcement efforts to mitigate the impact of drug abuse and trafficking.

- **Combating Organized Crime:**

Strengthening the capacity of countries to fight transnational organized crime is another key objective of the UNODC strategy. This includes the illicit trafficking of drugs, arms, and humans, as well as cybercrime and money laundering. The UNODC promotes international cooperation and the sharing of expertise to dismantle criminal organizations operating across borders, targeting their financial resources and illegal operations.

- **Preventing Corruption and Economic Crime:**

Addressing corruption is crucial in the fight against illicit trade, as corrupt practices often facilitate organized crime. The UNODC strategy aims to enhance the implementation of anti-corruption measures by helping countries adopt legal frameworks and tools to combat corruption. In addition, new technologies will be explored to improve global asset recovery efforts and increase international cooperation in addressing economic crimes.

- **Countering Terrorism:**

The UNODC plays a critical role in assisting Member States in their efforts to prevent and combat terrorism. This includes enhancing legislative frameworks, improving cross-border cooperation, and ensuring that terrorism financing is curtailed. The strategy stresses the importance of addressing the root causes of terrorism and providing support to countries that are most affected by violence and extremist activities.

- **Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice:**

The strategy also focuses on improving crime prevention policies by targeting the root causes of crime and violence in communities. The

UNODC aims to strengthen criminal justice systems and improve the resilience of societies to criminal activities. Evidence-based practices will be promoted to enhance the effectiveness of crime prevention strategies, ensuring safer and more stable communities worldwide.



European Union Action Plan on Trafficking in Cultural Goods

The European Union has also recognized the growing problem of illicit trade, particularly in cultural goods. In December 2022, the EU adopted an Action Plan to combat the trafficking of cultural heritage items, which includes antiquities and art illegally taken from cultural institutions or conflict zones. This form of trafficking not only threatens the preservation of global cultural heritage but also funds criminal organizations and, in some cases, terrorism.

The EU's action plan is based on four strategic objectives aimed at addressing this issue:

- **Enhancing Prevention and Detection of Criminal Activity:**
The EU's plan calls for strengthening the ability of market players and cultural heritage establishments to identify and prevent illegal activities, particularly focusing on high-risk areas for trafficking.
- **Improving Law Enforcement and Judicial Capacities:**
To combat the illegal trade in cultural goods, the plan supports strengthening national legal frameworks and improving the

capacity of law enforcement agencies to detect and prosecute trafficking activities.

- **Fostering Global Cooperation:**

The EU emphasizes the importance of global collaboration, particularly with countries involved in the supply and transport of cultural goods. The action plan encourages cooperation with international organizations to ensure the protection of cultural assets, particularly in conflict zones.

- **Engaging Additional Stakeholders:**

Recognizing that safeguarding cultural heritage is a shared responsibility, the EU aims to engage additional stakeholders, including museums, auction houses, and other entities involved in the cultural goods trade, to work together in preventing illegal trafficking.

These international actions underscore the importance of global cooperation in tackling the complex issues related to illicit trade, drug trafficking, and organized crime. By strengthening legal frameworks, improving enforcement, and enhancing cross-border collaboration, these initiatives aim to disrupt the global networks that fuel such activities, promoting a more secure and sustainable world.

Key actors:

1. The United States: The United States is a major player in the fight against illicit drug trafficking and cross-border smuggling. As one of the largest consumer markets for illegal drugs, the U.S. has dedicated substantial resources to curbing the flow of narcotics across its borders. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) work extensively to prevent smuggling and dismantle trafficking organizations. The U.S. also collaborates internationally through programs like the Merida Initiative with Mexico and Plan Colombia, focusing on both interdiction and reducing demand.

2. China: China is both a source and destination country for a range of illicit goods, including synthetic drugs like methamphetamines and fentanyl, which are often trafficked globally. The country has taken steps to address drug trafficking and smuggling, implementing strict drug laws and cooperating with international law enforcement. However, China remains a

key supplier of precursor chemicals used in drug production, making it a major player in global illicit trade networks. Additionally, its large role in international trade and smuggling operations — especially via its ports and trade routes — means that China is a significant actor in both the legal and illicit flows of goods.

3. Nigeria: Nigeria serves as a source and transit country for drug trafficking, human trafficking, and smuggling. As one of Africa's largest economies, it is a critical node in the illicit trade network, particularly for cocaine and heroin trafficking. Nigerian criminal syndicates are involved in trafficking drugs to Europe and the Americas, and the country's ports are often used for the smuggling of illicit goods. The Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA) has taken steps to curb the trafficking of narcotics, but corruption and insufficient resources remain significant challenges. Nigeria also faces challenges related to human trafficking, with many women and children trafficked for forced labor and sexual exploitation.

4. Mexico: Mexico serves as both a transit and source country for illicit drugs and is a vital partner in international efforts to combat trafficking. The Mexican government has faced significant challenges from powerful drug cartels, and despite major security efforts, illicit trafficking remains a critical issue. In response, Mexico has engaged in bilateral cooperation with the United States, implementing joint operations to intercept drug shipments and dismantle trafficking networks. Mexico also plays an essential role in the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) framework, addressing smuggling and illegal trade across borders.

Questions to consider

- Has your country ratified any international agreements or conventions aimed at curbing illicit trade and smuggling?
- In what ways has illicit trade and smuggling impacted your country, particularly in relation to its role as a source, transit, or destination point for illegal goods?

- How can the international community, particularly through organizations like the UNODC, strengthen its collective efforts to combat illicit trade and smuggling, especially in conflict-affected regions?
- What actions has your country taken to combat the trafficking of illicit goods and to minimize its impact on national and regional security?
- How can your country improve its participation in international information-sharing and law enforcement cooperation to dismantle smuggling networks operating across borders?
- To what degree does your country rely on illicit economic activities, and how does this influence its approach to criminal justice and border control?
- What role should post-conflict reconstruction efforts play in reducing the opportunities for illicit trade and smuggling to re-emerge in formerly unstable regions?
- How does the flow of illicit goods contribute to the funding of armed groups in conflict zones, and what strategies can be implemented to disrupt these financial networks?

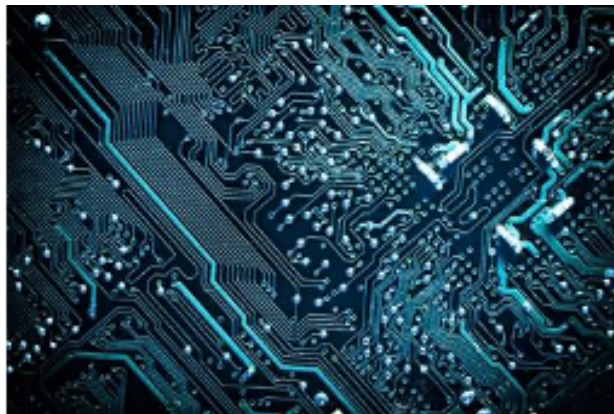
Recommendations

As a committee, it is important to consider the following recommendations:

- Strengthen International Legal Frameworks:
 - Expand the scope of international treaties and agreements to address new and emerging smuggling techniques.
 - Increase the cooperation between law enforcement agencies through shared databases, joint task forces, and mutual legal assistance treaties (MLATs).



- Enhance Border Control Technology and Surveillance:
 - Invest in modern technology such as drones, AI, and automated scanning systems to improve monitoring and enforcement at borders.



- Address Demand Reduction:
 - Implement prevention programs and education campaigns to reduce the demand for illicit drugs, with a focus on vulnerable populations.
- Foster Capacity Building:
 - Provide technical assistance and training for border enforcement officials, particularly in developing countries, to strengthen legal enforcement capabilities.

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