

Committee: Security Council (SC)

Topic: Addressing transnational organized crime to combat terrorist groups

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Position: President

Personal Introduction

Dear Delegates,

My name is Baran Mohammadi, and I am a Year 12 student at Byron College – The British International School. It is my pleasure to be serving as the President of the Security Council in the 9th CSMUN conference. Security Council has always been one of my favorite committees, and I am really excited to be the expert chair on this topic specifically, because it is something that affects a lot of people and its impacts can be felt throughout the world.

The purpose of this guide is to be a first step in your research. The information provided will be general, whereas you will need to do your own research to see how your countries policies align with this topic. Nevertheless, if you need any help or clarification concerning this guide, or with your own research, feel free to contact me through email. I am looking forward to meeting you all, hopefully face-to-face!

Sincerely,

Baran Mohammadi

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Topic Introduction

Transnational organized crime (TOC) is crime conducted with no regards to international borders and in an organized manner, usually with 2 or more parties involved. Examples of TOC acts include drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling of illegal goods and weaponry, and terrorism offences. It is a serious and growing danger to international security, with serious consequences for public safety and



health, democratic institutions, and global economic stability. Not only are criminal networks expanding, but they are also broadening their activities, resulting in the convergence of formerly different dangers that now have explosive and disruptive consequences. Terrorists and insurgents are increasingly using TOC to raise funds and obtain logistical assistance for their violent operations. For example, many notorious terrorist organizations, such as Al Qaeda and Hezbollah, conduct drug trafficking businesses in Latin America to raise funds for their endeavours. Furthermore, the Balkans have been a major hotspot for drug trafficking since the 1970s due to their ignorance concerning the control of TOC. In fact, Romania and Croatia are the only Balkan countries with a National Strategy on Suppressing Trafficking and Abuse of Illegal Drugs. This makes the citizens of the Balkan countries very prone to radicalization, as well as putting the country at a vulnerable position towards terrorist organisations.

Governments have recognized the threat and have opted to act. To increase the collective response to these common threats, international treaties have been enacted. The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) went into effect in 2003. The following year, the United Nations High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges, and Change distinguished transnational organized crime as one of "six clusters of threats with which the world must be concerned now and, in the decades, ahead,". The United Nations Security Council acknowledged in February 2010 that "with concern the serious threat posed in some cases by drug trafficking and transnational organized crime to international security in different regions of the world."¹ Preventing and halting TOC has consequently become a primary concern for the international community. Understanding TOC and incorporating national countermeasures into international approaches will be two challenging aims to achieve before political resolve can be channeled into actual achievements.

¹ *TOCTA REPORT*. 2010, www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/tocta/Introduction.pdf.



Definition of Key Terms

Transnational crimes

“Transnational crimes are violations of law that involve more than one country in their planning, execution, or impact.”² Transnational crimes include crimes that occur in one country but have substantial implications in another, as well as crimes that occur in transit nations. Human trafficking and smuggling, smuggling/trafficking of goods (such as arms and drug trafficking, illegal animal and plant products, and other goods prohibited on environmental grounds (e.g., banned ozone depleting substances), sex slavery, terrorism, torture, and apartheid are examples of transnational crimes.

Transnational organized crime (TOC)

The UN Convention on Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) has no precise definition of the term transnational organized crime. Transnational organized crime is organized crime that is orchestrated across national borders, involving groups or markets of individuals who plan and execute unlawful endeavours in more than one country. These criminal organizations employ systematic violence and corruption to attain their objectives.

Terrorism

“The unlawful use of violence and intimidation, especially against civilians, in the pursuit of political aims.”³

Drug Trade

Drug trafficking is a worldwide illegal trade that involves the cultivation, production, distribution, and sale of controlled narcotics. In 2014, the worldwide drug trafficking

² “Transnational Crime.” *Obo*, www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780195396607/obo-9780195396607-0024.xml#:~:text=Transnational%20crimes%20are%20violations%20of,planning%2C%20execution%2C%20or%20impact.&text=Transnational%20crimes%20are%20distinct%20from,may%20not%20involve%20multiple%20countries.

³ “Terrorism.” *Terrorism Noun - Definition, Pictures, Pronunciation and Usage Notes | Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary at OxfordLearnersDictionaries.com*, Oxford Dictionary, www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/terrorism?q=terrorism.



market increased from \$426 billion to \$652 billion dollars. It accounts for around a third of the overall retail value of international crime.⁴

Money laundering

Money laundering is the practice of converting huge sums of money earned from criminal activity, such as drug trafficking, into legitimate funds. Many jurisdictions have different definitions of what constitutes a crime.

Extradition

Extradition is when one jurisdiction hands over a person suspected or convicted of committing a crime in another jurisdiction to the law enforcement of the other jurisdiction. It is a mechanism for cooperating law enforcement between the two jurisdictions that is dependent on the agreements reached between them.

Background Information

Historical Background

Although organized crime originates from as far back as the 1800's, transnational organized crime (TOC) emerged in the 1970's, as the geopolitical and socio-economic climate of the world started to shift into a more globalized era, with the rise of revolutionary technological developments. It is unprecedented that with softened economic borders and new developments in technology comes greater accessibility and feasibility of conducting organized crime transnationally. In the 1970's, the most common form of TOC was drug trafficking. The entire world was facing a drug smuggling crisis. The Vietnam war took place between 1965 and 1970. During this time period, the smuggling of heroin peaked between Vietnam and the USA. Reports state that after the war, 15% of soldiers were addicted to heroin and the

⁴ Bellamy, Paul, et al. "Transnational Crime." *Human Security in World Affairs Problems and Opportunities 2nd Edition*, BCcampus & University of Northern British Columbia, 8 Sept. 2020, opentextbc.ca/humansecurity/chapter/transnational-crime/.



number of heroin addicts in the US skyrocketed to 750,000.⁵ With the US leading the drug crisis, President Nixon declared a “War on Drugs” in 1971.

The US then started taking stricter measures concerning drugs with this campaign, and even though the FBI became seriously involved in breaking down the organizations and cartels running these drug trafficking rings, it was not enough to even reduce substance abuse and smuggling. This is because in the 1980’s, there was a rise of many different cartels in many different countries, making it substantially difficult for the FBI to track them all down. One of the most well-known organizations was the Medellin Cartel of the notorious Pablo Escobar. This organized group was based in the city of Medellin in Colombia and began operating in the late 1970’s. Violence was greatly associated with the Medellin Cartel as in 1975, the Colombian police seized around 600 kilos of cocaine from an airplane, in which the drug traffickers responded by brutally massacring 40 people the next weekend. This tragedy is known as the Medellin Massacre and represents another effect of TOC; using violence to hold political ground.

Yet another threat was posed to the USA as the Medellin began drug trafficking operations in Panama in 1982, with the authorization of the corrupt Panamanian general Manuel Noriega. A year prior, in 1981, the USA and Colombia signed a bilateral extradition treaty. This was the beginning of the end for the Medellin Cartel, as the South Florida Drug Task Force established by Vice President George H.W. Bush had detected the Medellin Cartel’s undertakings in Panama and soon the federal jury indicted the group’s leaders. Between 1984 and 1991, the US arrested, extradited and convicted most of the leaders, with a few of them getting killed during raids. The last to get convicted was Pablo Escobar, who was imprisoned in 1991 but managed

⁵ “How Vietnam War VETERANS Broke Their Heroin Addictions.” *James Clear*, 20 May 2019, jamesclear.com/heroin-habits.



to escape a year later. He was then relocated in 1993 but was killed while trying to flee from authorities.

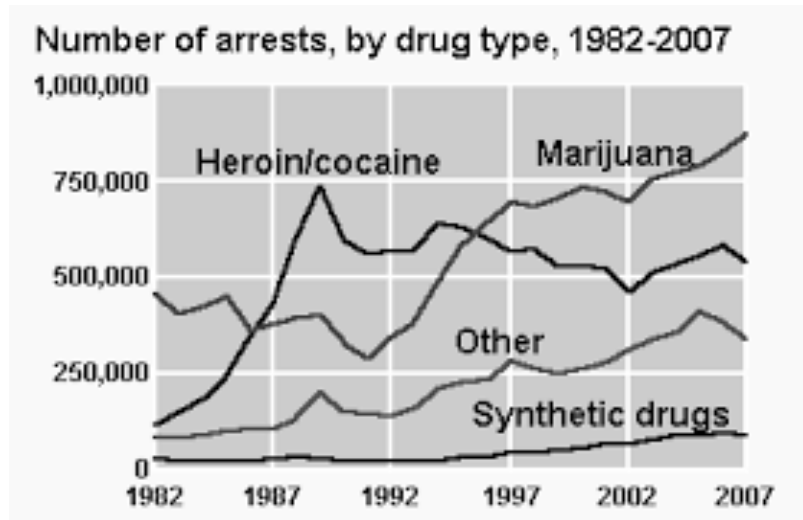


Figure 1: Crime in the United States, annually.⁶

Interpol

The International Criminal Police Organization, widely known as Interpol, is an organization established based on connecting police forces all around the world, and in the recent years it has proven to be very effective in combating TOC. Its predecessor, the International Criminal Police Commission (ICPC), was established in 1923 and was the first formalized form of cooperation among police of different jurisdictions. 22 delegates representing different countries, including Austria, Germany, Belgium, Poland, China, Egypt, France, Greece, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Japan, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, and Yugoslavia, agreed on its administration in 1923, whereas the UK joined in 1928 and the US did not join until 1938.

However, things took a turn after the beginning of World War II. The headquarters of the ICPC were based in Vienna, which soon was occupied by Nazi Germany. As the organization was then under their control, they moved the headquarters to Berlin in 1942 and appointed high ranking SS officers as the

⁶ "Enforcement." *Bureau of Justice Statistics*, bjs.ojp.gov/drugs-and-crime-facts/enforcement.

presidents of the organization, and at that point, most member states withdrew their support and stances in the ICPC. However, in 1946, after the defeat of Nazi Germany, the headquarters were relocated in France. In 1956, a new constitution was adopted, and the organization was renamed to Interpol. Today, they specialize in combatting three main types of international crime: terrorism, cyber-crime and organized crime.



Figure 2: Colombian Interpol taking Domenico Trimboli, a suspected leader of the Calabrian mafia, into custody. Interpol agents cannot make arrests, thus using “Red Notices” to detain suspects.⁷

The issues surrounding Interpol

One of Interpol’s core values was to not involve politics in their operations, so much so that in 1981, they refused to take part in the prosecution of Nazi war criminals. However, in recent years, they seem to have drifted from their politically neutral stance as Interpol has been used by many countries for achieving political agendas. For example, Interpol was used to detain Uyghur Muslims living abroad as per China’s command and as of 1997, there have been 1546 cases of Uyghur detention from 28 different countries. Furthermore, Russia has many a time attempted to place Ukrainian politicians subject to criminal persecution by extradition to Russia. To exemplify, on 12th January 2015, former Ukrainian president Viktor Yanukovych was put on the

⁷ “What Do Interpol Agents Really Do?” *Slate Magazine*, Slate, 1 July 2013, slate.com/human-interest/2013/07/what-do-interpol-agents-really-do.html.

Interpol's wanted list per Russia's request. He was the second politician to be wanted by Interpol after the beginning of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. However, 6 months later, his arrest warrant was suspended.

Moreover, Interpol is also able to detain refugees on the wanted list when crossing the border, much to the discern of the United Nations High Commissioner to Refugees (UNHCR), who believe that these detentions may be politically motivated. In a 2008 statement, the Deputy Director of the Division of International Protection Services for the UNHCR, Vincent Cochetel, responded to Interpol's actions: "There is a clear perception in some quarters that asylum is misused to hide or to provide haven for terrorists. Such perceptions are statistically and analytically unfounded, and must change. Terrorist attacks in Europe and elsewhere over the last ten years have shown that terrorists do not need to use the asylum channel to commit their criminal acts" ⁸.

Lastly, many of Interpol's high-ranking officers themselves were involved in cases of corruption when dealing with TOC. In 2012, former South African Interpol president Jackie Selebi was convicted on bribery and corruption charges after an investigation proved that he accepted \$10 million in bribes to cover up for a drug trafficking and money laundering case, as well as sharing confidential information about the police investigation to the drug kingpin, Glenn Aglioti. In more recent years, on June 20th, 2019, former Chinese Interpol chief Meng Hongwei plead guilty to corruption and bribery for accepting \$2 million in bribes, however critics believe that his arrest was politically motivated. Interpol's charter bars them from intervening or participating in activities with a political, religious, racial or military nature, yet this raises 2 concerns; firstly, does Interpol truly stand by their politically neutral stance, or are the instruments provided abused by many countries for political gain?

⁸ See UNHCR presentation to the Joint Seminar of the Strategic Committee on Immigration, Frontiers and Asylum (SCIFA) and Committee on Article 36 (CATS) organized by the Slovenian EU Presidency, Ljubljana, 17 – 18 January 2008 "Terrorism as a Global Phenomenon" Remarks by Vincent Cochetel, Deputy Director of the Division of International Protection Services, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.



Present Day TOC threats and concerns over terrorism

TOC is a growing threat to international security because new technologies paved the way for new forms of TOC, such as cybercrime, and they also make operations way more efficient and discreet for criminals. The COVID-19 Pandemic has further boosted cyber terrorism as criminals saw an opportunity to profit off these unprecedented times. For example, attacks on critical supply chains rose by 420% in 12 months, severely disrupting COVID-19 efforts. Globally, malware attacks have risen by 358% and ransomware attacks by 435% since 2019, and recently they have become even more dangerous, as 93.8% of malware was polymorphic⁹, which means that it can continuously change its code in order to avoid detection. In September 2020, a hospital in Cologne, Germany was a victim of a ransomware attack and stopped accepting patients, however one of these patients was in critical condition and died on the way to another hospital. German authorities consider this a negligent homicide.

Many organizations use these attacks to obtain information on people for future plots or for profits. Cyberterrorism is a distinct type of cybercrime which intends to cause physical harm or disruption to victims. It is usually used against governments to coerce them and affect their conduct, or to gather confidential information. For example, in Kashmir, Pakistani insurgents infiltrated India's intelligence systems and kidnapped family members of high-ranking officers to hold for ransom in 2019 (this is called cyberespionage). Other examples of cyber terrorism include disturbance of fatal infrastructure systems such as cutting off power, water and oil supplies, interception of government websites to spread the political agenda of the attackers, and illegally disabling military technology.¹⁰ Recently, such attacks have become more discreet, as a simple link can enable cyberterrorists to access personal information, also known as identity theft. The most common use of this technique is in credit card fraud, which

⁹ Stainer, Patricia, and *. "Alarming Cybersecurity Statistics for 2021 and the Future." *Retarus Corporate Blog - EN*, 16 Sept. 2021, www.retarus.com/blog/en/alarming-cybersecurity-statistics-for-2021-and-the-future/.

¹⁰ See Historic Instances of Cyberterrorism, Hanna, Katie Terrell, et al. "What Is Cyberterrorism?" *SearchSecurity*, TechTarget, 26 July 2021, searchsecurity.techtarget.com/definition/cyberterrorism.



accounted for 393,000 of the 1.4 million reports of identity theft in 2020, a 44.6% increase from 2019.¹¹

Weapons trafficking is an increasingly growing business, especially in conflicted regions like the Middle East and East Africa. Illicit weapon trade is the main arms supply of terrorist and insurgent organizations, which pose a huge threat to civilian security. One of the largest weapon trafficking businesses in the world is run by the terrorist organization Al Qaeda, in East Africa. They are notorious for supplying arms to insurgent groups in Mali, Libya, South Sudan, Somalia and Yemen. The FBI estimates that Al Qaeda's illicit weapons market is around the size of 20% of the current weapons market. Not only does this affect the economic and political stability of these unstable war-torn countries, but it also threatens the safety of civilians and violates sanctions which just further destabilizes the situation. The World Food Programme states, "Over 5 million people in Yemen are on the brink of famine as the conflict and economic decline have left families struggling to find enough food to get through the day. The rate of child malnutrition is one of the highest in the world and the nutrition situation continues to deteriorate".

Despite counter-drug victories such as the defeat of the Medellin cartel, illicit drugs continue to pose a severe and growing threat to the world's health, safety, security, and financial well-being. The global demand for illicit substances drives criminal organizations' dominance, impunity, and bloodshed all around the world. Drug Trafficking Organizations (DTOs) in Mexico, such as Los Zetas, are amplifying the severity of their violent actions to increase their market share in the West, secure their operations in Mexico, and expand their reach into the United States. Afghan DTOs, usually backed by the Taliban, have also been seen collaborating with West African DTOs to smuggle heroin into Europe and the United States. Many well-established organized criminal groups, including those in Russia, China, Italy, and the Balkans, are increasingly forming relationships with drug producers in order to expand their own

¹¹ Mint. "25 Credit Card Fraud Statistics to Know in 2021 + 5 Steps for Reporting Fraud." *MintLife Blog*, 21 June 2021, mint.intuit.com/blog/planning/credit-card-fraud-statistics/.



distribution networks and markets. As the United Nations has observed in countries such as West Africa and Central America, the spread of drug trafficking is sometimes accompanied by substantial rises in local crime and corruption. For instance, the Hezbollah, a political party and terrorist group in Lebanon (However, Russia and Iran don't recognize them as the latter), has been caught smuggling drugs and illegal undeclared goods such as cigarettes to East Africa and the rest of the Middle east on multiple occasions.

Nevertheless, it is not only terrorists who contribute to TOC, but also their facilitators. Money laundering is the only way criminal organizations make profits while going undetected from authorities, as the origins of their income are hidden. Thus, banks and countries with minimal legislation concerning clean money are to be held responsible for facilitating TOC. It is estimated that around \$800 billion - \$2 trillion is laundered per year ¹². One of the largest money laundering cases in the world is that of Wachovia bank, which used to be one of the US' biggest banks but was later bought by Wells Fargo. On the 10th of April 2006, a jet was seized in the Gulf of Mexico and was discovered to have contained 5.7 tonnes of cocaine, worth \$100 million. After a 22-month investigation conducted by the US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and other federal organizations, it was uncovered that this plane belonged to the Sinaloa drug cartel, and that they had purchased the plane using the money laundered through Wachovia bank. The amount of money laundered in total was found out to be \$390 billion. After this connection was made, the US federal court charged a \$50 million fine, as well as \$110 million for forfeiture¹³. Nonetheless, no single individual was arrested or held accountable.

¹² Lazic, Marija. "27 Informative Money Laundering Statistics in 2021." *Find Best Law Jobs in the US in 2021*, LegalJobs, 13 Sept. 2021, legaljobs.io/blog/money-laundering-statistics/#:~:text=A%3A,%24800%20billion%20to%20%242%20trillion.

¹³ Vulliamy, Ed. "How a Big US Bank Laundered Billions from Mexico's Murderous Drug Gangs." *The Guardian*, Guardian News and Media, 2 Apr. 2011, www.theguardian.com/world/2011/apr/03/us-bank-mexico-drug-gangs.



Major Countries and Organizations Involved

Iran

Iran, being a neighboring nation to Afghanistan, is subject to a substantial amount of TOC within its borders, especially drug trafficking. It is continually strengthening its armed forces to fight threats such as the Taliban, who mainly conduct drug trafficking in the nation, and ISIS, who conduct TOC for political reasons, targeting the nation with its terrorism, and has held conferences in Vienna to combat this issue. However, Member States like the USA and the UK have accused Iran of being a main facilitator to terror groups such as Hezbollah and Shia militias in Iraq, yet Iran denies most of these claims. Nevertheless, it is said that the Iranian government launders money to circumvent blacklists and US regulations, and they were accused of being involved in the money laundering scandals of HSBC in 2012 (\$8 billion) and of Standard Chartered also in 2012 (\$265 billion)¹⁴.

Russian Federation

The Russian Federation is infamous for their organized crime groups, commonly labeled as the Mafia, which originate all the way from the Tsarist era. Hence, Russia has become a TOC hotspot all around the world. Therefore, the Russian government is very invested in fighting such crimes and has implemented a plethora of mechanisms to do so, such as collaborating with the US' FBI to train Russian law enforcement personnel in techniques of criminal investigation. Although President Vladimir Putin is accused of gaining his political influence using/complicit of TOC, he firmly stands by and endorses his policies against TOC. Although Russian police have strengthened their measures against TOC, critics argue that the Russian government benefits from TOC and thus do not crack down on it enough.

¹⁴ "From Wachovia to Danske BANK: Biggest Money Laundering Cases in..." *Tookitaki*, 25 Mar. 2019, www.tookitaki.ai/news-views/from-wachovia-to-danske-bank-biggest-money-laundering-cases-in-recent-times/.



The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA)

Human trafficking is on the rise in the KSA. Thus, communications between the government and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) are at their peak. The KSA has around 10 million migrants in the workforce, and unfortunately, these migrants are the ones who are very vulnerable to human trafficking, UNODC finds. Therefore, the National Committee on Combatting Human Trafficking (NCCHT) was emerged in November 2020 and is expected to run until 2022. Nonetheless, the KSA has also been accused of facilitating terrorist groups such as Al Qaeda, who were responsible for the September 11th terrorist attacks, and Sunni militia groups in Iraq, including ISIS. The KSA denies all these claims.

Unites States of America

The USA has held a very strong stance against TOC since President Nixon's declaration of the "War on Drugs" in 1971. The Federal Bureau of Investigation founded a daughter organization called the Drug Enforcement Administration (USDEA) in 1973. The USDEA has successfully brought down many drug cartels such as the Medellin and the Sinaloa, however many consider their policies on money laundering to being more lenient towards US citizens, especially with the Wachovia bank case. Moreover, many question their motives for their involvement in the Middle East, specifically in Yemen and Syria, because of the countries' political instability due to it. Withal, the USA has adopted very strict immigration laws to combat terrorism in general.

Al Qaeda

Al Qaeda is a terrorist organization claiming to be a Sunni Islamist movement. They have a political goal, which is to enforce Sharia law globally, and their main tactic to enforce their views is to conduct terrorist attacks, usually bombings. They are most notorious for the September 11th incident and the 2002 Bali bombings. The crime they conduct is considered transnational as they have stations in many countries, and they



also take advantage of unstable political situations, especially in East Africa, to establish their presence and control. For example, in Mali, the Northern side of the country is completely under control of jihadist insurgents who have links to Al Qaeda. The terror group's highest form of income comes from weapons trafficking.

Hezbollah

Hezbollah is a political party in Lebanon and is recognized as a Shia Islamist terrorist group by the USA, Israel, and many other UN Member States. The Hezbollah is rumored to have links with the Taliban to expand their drug trafficking business, probably their highest form of income, as they constantly take advantage of the Tri-Border Area (TBA), in Latin America, which consists of the frontiers on Argentina, Brazil and Paraguay. In 2016, Hezbollah's high-ranking officials administrated a supply line of giga-tonnes of illegal drugs, specifically cocaine, from the TBA and its illicit economy to markets around the globe, in order to generate funds for the group. This information was uncovered by Arab League intelligence forces on the 6th of January 2021.

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia—People's Army (FARC)

The Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces—Army People's is a terrorist organization that has been involved in the ongoing Colombian conflict since 1964. They were known to use a range of military tactics, specifically guerrilla warfare, and they were also known to perpetrate mass murders. It is said that they had an involvement in the Medellin Massacre. The UN estimates that FARC is responsible for 12% of civilian deaths during the conflict. The FARC inherited the drug routes and plantations of the two main drug trafficking organizations of Medellin and Cali after they fell out of favor in the 1990s. The FARC insurgents arrived in the Colombian Amazon to take control of the coca-growing districts, tax the profits from the sale of coca-paste and safeguard the routes against the government. As of 2017, they officially disbanded, however dissidents remain. In 2019, Colombia rejected the



extradition of a former FARC commander to the US, which came as a shock to the world.



Figure 3: ex-FARC rebels regrouping and expanding into Northern Colombia.¹⁵

¹⁵ Wires, News. "Ex-FARC Commanders Launch Political Movement in a Blow to Colombia's Peace Process." *France 24*, France 24, 5 Sept. 2019, www.france24.com/en/20190905-colombias-farc-rebels-launch-clandestine-political-movement.

Timeline of Events

<u>September 7th, 1923</u>	The International Criminal Police Commission, the predecessor of Interpol, was founded.
<u>1956</u>	The ICPC changed its constitution and became the International Criminal Police Organization – Interpol.
<u>June 18th, 1971</u>	US President Richard Nixon declares a war on drugs as drug use hits a new peak in the US, a result of the Vietnam war.
<u>July 1982</u>	FARC joins forces with the Medellin and Cali drug cartels in Colombia. In the same month, Hezbollah was formed in Southern Lebanon.
<u>April 1988</u>	Al Qaeda is founded by Saudi Arabian Osama Bin-Laden and Egyptian Ayman al-Zawahiri.
<u>December 2nd, 1993</u>	The Medellin Cartel completely disbands after the murder of Pablo Escobar, the last surviving leader.
<u>November 15th, 2000</u>	The UN adopts the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC).
<u>September 11th, 2001</u>	Al Qaeda crashes jets into the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center in New York. This attack resulted in a total of 2,996 deaths.
<u>2012</u>	Iran accused of laundering money after the (combined) \$273 billion scandals of HSBC and Standard Chartered.
<u>June 27th, 2017</u>	FARC signs a peace deal and is disbanded as a paramilitary force, and hands over its weapons to the UN.
<u>January 6th, 2021</u>	Hezbollah's drug operations in the TBA are revealed. These operations began in 2016.

Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue

United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and the Protocols

The major international weapon in the battle against transnational organized crime is the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, which was adopted by the General Assembly. Established in 2000, The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea, and Air, and the Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition, are all added to the Convention to target specific areas and manifestations of organized crime. Before becoming party to any of the Protocols, countries must first become parties to the Convention.

This treaty is the first legally binding instrument to present universally agreed upon definitions of the different types of TOC, which is a huge first step as the authorities of each country can streamline their investigations; it gives them direction. However, a weakness that this treaty has is the lack of inclusion of the civil society; essentially, everything is trusted to NGO's and intergovernmental forces. This is consequent of not including a review mechanism and any follow-up actions. Conversations about said mechanism only emerged in 2020, which is saddening because a majority of TOC could have been combatted and even prevented if follow-up action was in place. This proves that time is of the essence when it comes to combatting a growing threat.

Financial Action Task Force on Money Laundering (FATF)

An initiative of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the FATF is an intergovernmental organization founded by the G7 summit in 1989 with the purpose of combatting money laundering and terrorism financing. The organization's mandate surrounds 40 recommendations on combatting money laundering and 9 special recommendations on combatting terrorism financing. In 2004, it developed a compliance mechanism which was a reference document for assessing the methodology used to implement the recommendations. In addition,



FATF also created a blacklist for Non-Cooperative Countries and Territories (NCCTs), however many Member States opposed this instrument as they believed that it would clash with other international laws and jurisdictions concerning money laundering. Thus, it was changed into the greylist, and finally a “Call for Action”, which were both less severe and more diplomatic forms of the blacklist.

Despite its successes in trimming down on the amount of money laundered after 9/11 by enforcing their very strict recommendations and sanctioning NCCTs which contribute to terrorism financing, the FATF still has its weaknesses. The main concern is that due to the strict regulations, many NGOs are not able to provide humanitarian aid in war-torn countries, and this impact is seen most severely in the Middle East. The truth of the matter is that the FATF does not have recommendations concerning NGOs, which is why many do not pass the required checks.

Relevant UN Resolutions, Treaties and Events

Resolution 5/4 of the UNTOC

This resolution is about illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition. It was a huge milestone for African countries as the Protocol was finally enforced in the region, abundant in weapon trafficking due to their unstable political situations.

Resolution 10/1 of the UNTOC

This resolution is about the launch of the review process of the Mechanism for the review of the implementation of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto. This was an essential move from the part of the UNTOC as it allows room for growth and improvement of strategies to combat TOC.

Security Council Resolution 2482 (2019)

This resolution expresses concern over terrorism financing through TOC. Its primary goal was to encourage collaboration between countries, as well as encourage collaboration between governments, non-state actors and local communities to



combat TOC. It also discusses the promotion of rehabilitation in prisons for convicted terrorists so as to prevent further radicalization.

General Assembly Resolution 55/25

This resolution marks the establishment of the UNTOC multilateral treaty. It also determines its Protocols, providing the necessary definitions for them. It also establishes the Ad Hoc Committee on the Elaboration of a Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, a committee which is in charge of the definitions and methodology all ratified Member States will use.

General Assembly Resolution 73/186

This resolution is about strengthening crime prevention by expanding the technical cooperation capacities of Member States. It requests the UNODC to provide training for criminal police in Member States, specifically LEDCs. Lastly, it asks for the complete development of a learning module created by the UNODC, “Sharing Electronic Resources and Laws on Crime”.

Possible Solutions

Interpol

Firstly, the issues surrounding Interpol must be addressed. One option is for all Member States to hold a conference in where they discuss reforms for the organization, as it has proven to be very unnecessarily difficult to intervene in cases with its charter. The conference must call for a revaluation of the Charter, focusing on the clauses mentioning how Interpol is barred from interfering in political, racial, and religious cases. These cases must be defined clearly. Another option is to request the formation of a committee which thoroughly investigates high-ranking members of Interpol to prevent scandals of corruption. This committee will surveil the officers, however the intensity and intrusiveness of the surveillance is up for discussion depending on the policies of the Member States.



Electronic Surveillance

Electronic surveillance is the most essential law enforcement tool in the fight against organized crime. It is a method which guarantees conviction; weaponizing the defendant's own words against them to prove a crime. Through the testimony of the participants themselves, electronic surveillance evidence gives credible, objective evidence of crimes. Electronic monitoring also allows law enforcement to learn about criminal conspirators' plans before they are conducted out. This permits them to monitor illegal operations such as the transportation of contraband and clandestine gatherings, as well as disrupt and abort them when necessary, making electronic surveillance extremely useful in preventing the occurrence of such crimes. Electronic surveillance is also extremely useful in transnational crimes since it allows law enforcement to intercept conspirators in the home nations plotting crimes with terrorist ties in other nations. Electronic monitoring provides proof of conspiratorial preparation against co-conspirators active outside the home to national law enforcement. To adopt this method in combatting terrorism and transnational organized crime, Member States must first track down any TOC and terrorism threats to the base, surround the area with authorities all the while planting electronic surveillance gadgets.

Measures against money laundering

Money laundering to finance terrorism can be prevented in multiple ways. Firstly, governments must criminalize and prosecute individuals who are involved in money laundering, and the UNTOC may guide Member States on that. Furthermore, employees at financial institutions must be trained to detect suspicious activity from the transactions a client makes. Many transactions at once or transactions in small amounts but done many times can be considered red flags. An international program should be set up by the FATF to administer this. Financial institutions must keep customer data and deny transactions when certain criteria aren't met. There is software that can implement this strategy, such as Big Data software. A final way of ensuring that money is in fact clean is requiring a holding period for large sums of

money, as it reduces the risk of money being moved from bank to bank to be laundered.

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