

Chair Report

Forum: JGA3

Issue: The question of inter-governmental cooperation towards international drug control

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Introduction:

Drugs are substances that people intake body for its effects. Over-the-counter medication, prescribed by doctors and pharmacists, can be abused for its enticing effects. Illicit drugs circulate through many markets and are a global problem. Drugs are incredibly harmful on the human body system, and dependency on drugs often leads to complications such as increasing expenditure for drugs. Tackling these problems is the core of this topic. This topic calls for intergovernmental cooperation towards drug control on an international scale; with goals in mind of reducing the supply, preventing the demand and recovery from addiction in all forms.

Definition of Key Terms:

High

Being high is the state of being under the influence of illicit drugs taken for pleasure

Illicit Drugs

Illicit drugs are illegal drugs for recreational use. There are many types of drugs, each with their own unique effects; Due to the generally illegal background, there are many 'street' names for these drugs.

- **Illicit Drugs** that are the most notable;
 - Heroin
 - Crack Cocaine (Coke)
 - Marijuana (Cannabis/Weed)
 - Ecstasy/Molly
 - Methamphetamine (Meth)

Hallucinogens

Hallucinogens are drugs with an 'out of body' effect, altering feelings and perceptions. They tend to come with hallucinations and sensations that feel real. Some examples are:

- LSD (D-Lysergic Acid Diethylamide)
- Acid
- Mushrooms
- Ketamine
- PCP (Phencyclidine)

Opioids

Opioids are often prescribed for relieving pain, but can be easily abused as it acts on the opioid receptors.

Stimulants

Stimulants raise the levels of physiological activity, heightening senses and awareness of surroundings.

Depressants

Depressants, contrary to stimulants, reduce stimulation. It slows down messages sent from the brain, making the user a lot more inactive.

Drug Cartels

Drug cartels are organizations formed to control the production and distribution of illegal drugs. They have immense wealth and power and are very well organized to achieve this.

Addiction

Drug addiction is when someone depends on a substance. The effects of addiction vary by person. A notable effect is wanting to feel high.

Overdose

Overdose is when a person intakes an excessive amount of drugs. An overdose likely results in the death of the person in question.

Prohibition

A prohibition is a forbidding of something by law.

Criminalization

Criminalization is turning an activity into a criminal offence by making it illegal.

Background Information:

Global use of illegal drugs for recreational purposes has increased by 26% over the last decade. Even during times of economic recession and modern conflicts, drugs such as cannabis, cocaine, and heroin have damaged the lives of many due to addictions and life-threatening drug overdoses. Understanding this threatening issue, many organizations and international bodies such as the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs work toward the regulation of drugs and stopping the problem.

Our human society has been using drugs ever since recorded history; in the hope to treat disease and to relieve themselves, ancient China used cannabis (Source of Marijuana) around 3000 BCE. More drugs were developed due to immigration; for example, Chinese immigrants brought the poppy plant (opium) to the United States. Drugs were developed for medical and prescribed use as an anesthetic, like the cases of cocaine and morphine. Coca-Cola had its original recipe with cocaine in the drink. With the opium trade and wars fought over it between the Qing dynasty and United Kingdom, The First International Opium Convention was held and signed at The Hague in 1912, gathering countries to restrict and control “all persons manufacturing, importing, selling, distributing, and exporting morphine, cocaine, and their respective salts, as well as the buildings in which these persons carry such an industry or trade”. The United States introduced The Harrison Act of 1914, which prohibited and criminalized the possession and use of cocaine and morphine.

There are many incentives for drug dealers and cartels to distribute illegal substances. The drug industry is a lucrative business with immense profits as it operates in black markets due to prohibition. The illicit status of most drugs makes it difficult for governments to track sales, enact quality control, and regulate the price of drugs, unlike over-the-counter medication. High addiction rates of drugs are another problem as it can cause individuals to spend unhealthy amounts of money to keep taking the drug as their dependency grows. According to the National Center for Drug Abuse Statistics in the United States of America, at least one in every eight

teenagers abused an illicit substance, and from 2016 to 2020, substance use among eighth graders increased by 61%.

Modern conflicts and the COVID-19 pandemic have made existing drug problems worse. The numbers are hitting a record high according to the UNODC's World Drug Report in 2022, with around 284 million people aged 15-64 using drugs worldwide in 2020 and cocaine manufacturing at a record high in 2020, growing 11% from 2019. The quantities of methamphetamine seized grew five-fold between 2010 and 2020.

The current climate of the use of illicit drugs can be concentrated in countries with major drug production and distribution. Afghanistan is an excellent example of this, as the country in question produces 90% of the world's opium and heroin and remains to be the world's largest drug trafficking country which is dependent on these drug exports. With the Taliban regime banning the cultivation of opium poppies and narcotic drugs, it remains a widespread problem with many calling the ban 'smokes and mirrors' as the production remains at high levels. Countries that have legalized drugs such as the Netherlands have shown that drugs statistically steadily decline following decriminalization.

Major Parties involved and their views:

United States of America

The United States of America has a history of gang violence in its history of prohibition; the country incited the rise of gangs and the black market by criminalizing beer and alcohol. This continued with narcotics drugs after decriminalizing alcohol. In the United States, half of the people 12 and older have used illicit drugs at least once. The U.S. has also signed multiple treaties against drug abuse and control of the substance. They include: The Convention on Psychotropic Substances and United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Some states have already decriminalized some narcotic substances such as weed, and Oregon decriminalized the possession of all drugs in small amounts.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The United Nations has always been a central part of core issues and this problem for the international cooperation for drug control. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is a branch of the United Nation dealing with topics such as substance use prevention, dependency

treatment, and fighting against drug trafficking. UNODC's Children's Program, GLOK42 is a youth program to fight against teen drug abuse.

Sinaloa Cartel

One of the biggest drug cartels based in Mexico, the Sinaloa Cartel primarily exports heroin and cocaine in South America. They are very violent in their operations and little is known about them, but their leader, El Chapo was infamously beheaded. The drug cartel still operates at large to this day with connections to the federal police and military.

Timeline of Relevant Events:

| Date | Description |
|------------------|--|
| 23 January 1912 | <p>The First International Opium Convention, The Hague</p> <p>The first ever convention on dangerous drugs, focusing on the opium trade and heavily regulating it.</p> |
| 19 February 1925 | <p>Second International Opium Convention</p> <p>The creation of the Permanent Central Opium Board, which works to supervise the opium trade.</p> |
| 1961 | <p>Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs</p> <p>An international treaty that controls the activities and creates the necessary foundation for research and licensing. It also established the International Narcotics Control Board. (INCB) as it combined previous opium-related treaties to the overall drug problem.</p> |
| 1970s | <p>The rise of drug cartels</p> <p>Though having roots in prohibition in America, with the growing demand for cocaine, the first few drug cartels started. In Columbia the Medellín cartel and rival groups start competing. Mexican drug cartels were also prominent as a large source of marijuana.</p> |

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| 1971-2016 | <p>International drug control system and the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) on the world drug problem</p> <p>Resolution 67/193 of 20th December 2012 Is a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly which affirms drug making policies. This is further reviewed in the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (1998, 2016).</p> |
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Related UN Treaties and Events

- Resolution 67/193 of 20th December 2012 Is a resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly which affirms drug making policies, this is further reviewed in the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on the World Drug Problem (1998, 2016).
- Declaration on the Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction
- Action Plan on International Cooperation on the Eradication of Illicit Drug Crops and on Alternative Development
- United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs, holding sessions for a week annually to tackle the world drug problem.
- Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol
- Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971
- United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988

Previous Attempts to solve the issue

There are many attempts to solve the issues; excluding some of the treaties and organizations that were already established, many suggestions include trying to reduce the supply of narcotics, raising awareness of drug addictions as an illness, and even eradicating illicit crops that can make the drugs. There are also ideas to try to increase the treatment and prevention of drugs, targeting drug traffickers and increasing border control for smugglers.

Many countries have opted to criminalize the possession and usage of drugs; this has also thrown many innocent people into jail. 82% of drug arrest in the U.S. was due to a small

amount of possession. However, the mass incarcerations ended up increasing the budget for prisons and using taxes.

Many organizations such as the World Health Organization, Human Rights Watch, and NAACP, support the decriminalization of drugs.

Possible Solutions

The core problem can be rooted in instability and poverty, like many problems, it can lure people to turn to drugs as an escape from reality. Many treaties opted for punishment and short-term solution rather than long term solutions and overall prevention.

Improving the economy in areas that are noticeably poor and linked to drug abuse can help. The fairer and economically stabler a country is, the higher the likelihood that people seek help and have treatments for substance abuse.

Creating a treaty that encompasses and understands each of the countries' ability to execute the change in policy is needed is necessary, and the first steps have been taken in the example treaties shown by real life parties above.

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