



## GROUP OF FIFTEEN Drug Trade and Use in the Developing World

By Evan Covington

### Introduction

For centuries, societies across the globe have co-existed in efforts to retain peace and prosperity. Unfortunately, this nonviolent and harmonious coexistence has often been perturbed by conflicts over certain vital resources such as land, food, and access to water. However, violence has also been precipitated by things that are not inherent to our survival, but rather resources of desire and addiction. One particular resource has slowly rippled through the economies of developed and developing nations: illicit and narcotic drugs.

From Colombia and Afghanistan to the United Kingdom and United States, many nations have stepped into an interdependent system driven by illicit and narcotic drug production, trafficking, and consumption. The growth of the narcotic drug world continues to be spurred by the development of illicit underground economies called **black markets**. In addition, the diversification of narcotic drugs in these markets has led to systems of specialized production and consumption across continents. Various regions of the world have begun cultivating different types of drugs based on agricultural suitability. Much of this cultivation begins in developing countries and is later transported to more developed countries.

However, due to the illegal nature of drug production and trade, countries across the globe have experienced issues in controlling and destroying drug cultivation and trafficking. From Mexico to Brazil large, illegal, and dangerous drug **cartels** have formed over time to promote and control drug trafficking operations. These operations have often led to violence between governments and paramilitary or guerrilla forces aimed at protecting the operations. Worries of a drug trade in Afghanistan have become a reality as the opium and heroin trade are used to fund terrorists such as the Taliban.

The root of the issue of narcotic drugs unfortunately stems primarily from developing nations across Latin America, the Caribbean, Africa, and Asia. Weak criminal justice systems and corruption make it difficult for these countries to address drug activity. Developing nations continue to witness uncurbed violence with the growth of the drug trade. This problem must not only be addressed by the developing nations that supply the drugs, but by the developed nations that consume the drugs and the nations that have the resources to fight the problem.

**black markets**—any system in which goods or currencies are sold and bought illegally

**cartels**—a combination of independent business organizations formed to regulate production, pricing, and marketing of goods by the members

## Explanation of the Problem

### *China's Opium Wars*

One of the first trade conflicts involving drug control occurred centuries ago with China's First Opium War (1839-1842) and Second Opium War (1856-1860). In 1757, the **British East India Company** gained control of the Bengal region of India. Afterward, the British gained a monopoly on opium production and export in India – a key component to their hold on the subcontinent. Over time, British exports of opium to China began to grow. In 1799, the Qing Empire issued a ban on opium imports. However, the ban had little effect on the southern provinces that continued smuggling opium.

After months of being unable to reach an agreement on opium trade with the Qing Empire, the British Empire resorted to action by force against China. They sent British troops and naval ships that wreaked havoc on coastal towns and cut off money supplies to the capital at Beijing. The war ended in 1842 with the signing of the **Treaty of Nanking**. But the initial problem of opium trade remained unresolved. After the First Opium War, opium sales continued to rise in China and create more conflict with the British Empire.

The problems that remained unresolved after the First Opium War, inevitably lead to another conflict. In 1856, with the help of France, Britain invaded China again. In 1860, at the end of the Second Opium War, China and the two nations finally reached a treaty that allowed the creation of ten new port cities – key exchange points for Britain's opium trade.

Over the proceeding decades the opium trade would grow and flourish. In 1909, the first international conference to discuss global narcotic problems was in Shanghai, China known as the Opium Commission. Later, the issues were reexamined in 1912 at the Hague Convention. These forums laid the groundwork for future discussions among nations on methods to control arising drug trades. However, the primary objective of the conventions, "...restricting the use of psychoactive substances under international control to medical and scientific use..." was not achieved. Though these conferences placed more emphasis on combating drug trade, there was little done to enforce such an edict. In response to a crackdown, black markets developed to help criminals with drug operations and demanded a proportionate law enforcement response. The Opium Wars helped open the world to the narcotic drugs that continue to plague developing and developed nations today.

**British East India Company**—an English company formed in 1600 to develop trade with British colonies in India and Southeastern Asia

**Treaty of Nanking**—the treaty that was signed after the end of the Opium Wars. It ceded four ports to Britain in addition to Hong Kong

### *Narcotic and Illicit Drugs at Large*

In order to better understand the problems surrounding **narcotic drugs**, we must first define them and provide examples. Many of these drugs are created illegally and commonly abused by consumers. Some of the most common drugs found in drug trafficking are:

**Opium**— opium is a poppy seed plant that can be grown and smoked. The poppy seeds can also be used to create morphine and heroin. As of 2007, Afghanistan has supplied 82% of the world's opium supply while Myanmar has supplied approximately 12% (World Drug Report).

**Heroin** – heroin is a fine and highly addictive powder. It is created from opium and often snorted, smoked or injected into the body. Injection has often led to the spread of Hepatitis C – which comes from sharing needles. Heroin causes the greatest physical dependence of any narcotic drug.

**Morphine** – morphine is a medical drug used as a painkiller. It is widely used in hospitals and can be prescribed by doctors. It is illegal when used as a street drug or possessed without a prescription.

**Cocaine** – cocaine is a fine and highly addictive powder. Created from coca, a South American shrub whose dried leaves are used to create cocaine. As of 2007, Colombia has supplied 55% of the world's coca shrubs while Peru and Bolivia have supplied 30% and 16%, respectively (World Drug Report). Cocaine can be taken by snorting, smoking, or injection. Injection can also spread diseases like Hepatitis C and HIV/AIDS.

**Cannabis** – cannabis is the botanical name of the plant from which marijuana comes. It is illegal in most parts of the world but is legal in countries like the Netherlands and Spain. It is often smoked and creates senses of euphoria. It is the most widely cultivated drug in the world.

**Amphetamine-type Stimulants** – amphetamine-type stimulants (ATS) are drugs including amphetamine and methamphetamine. These drugs are smoked, sniffed, or inhaled and used as **psychostimulants** or **sympathomimetic** drugs. They are produced in illegal laboratories.

**narcotic drug**—a drug that in moderate doses dulls the senses, relieves pain, and induces profound sleep, but in excessive doses causes stupor, coma, or convulsions

**psychostimulant**—a drug having mood-elevating effects

**dymphathomimetic**—a drug that stimulates the sympathetic nervous system

In a study by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on citizens age 15-64, 10.7% of Jamaican citizens abused cannabis while 21.5% of

citizens in Ghana abused it. Not only is the developing world a haven for producing illegal narcotics, but these nations also must deal with rising drug use in their countries.

### *Trafficking Routes*

Developing nations have experienced problems cracking down on travel routes for drugs. Since narcotic drugs have become so diverse, nearly all of them are trafficked on different routes. Many of them have various countries of origin and different final destinations where they are later resold by drug dealers and consumed by the public. As the amount of drug seizures increase on each route, drug traffickers develop new routes on which to trade drugs. This can create more difficulties for law enforcement officials.

As of 2007, overall opium seizures increased 33%. The same year, global morphine seizures decreased by 41%. On the heroin front, worldwide seizures rose by 14%. For cocaine, overall global seizures declined 6% from a record high of 750 metric tons in 2005 to 704 metric tons in 2007. Cannabis seizures equaled 5,557 metric tons in 2007 – an increase of about 7% from the year before. Finally, seizures of ATS increased to 52 metric tons. Of this amount, approximately 33.1% was methamphetamine and 40.3% was amphetamine. Although there may be noticeable increases in seizures of some drugs, the overall occurrence and requirement of drug seizures still validates the problems the entire world faces with narcotic drugs. In the future, developing nations that use monetary funds for other needs might experience difficulty attaining larger seizures of drugs. Without funding and new methods of seizing drugs, developing nations will continue to struggle in the fight against the illicit drug trade and make little headway. Moreover, with adequate levels of intelligence, developing nations can develop the capabilities to destroy major drug trafficking flows and gain more control over illicit narcotic drugs.

**trafficking**—to trade or deal in a specific commodity, especially an illegal one

## **Recent Developments**

### *Drugs & Terrorism*

Recently, Colombia has been involved in a series of drug wars with their respective governments as drug cartels continue to grip the country's economy. Colombia has plunged into a seemingly uncontrolled era of drug prevalence, corruption, and violence. As a result, major drug cartels have arisen since the 1970s and taken control of the country. Some major drug cartels include the Medellín Cartel, the Cali Cartel, and the Norte del Valle Cartel. Although the first two Colombian cartels have been destroyed, the Norte del Valle Cartel still operates major cocaine trafficking operations. The cartel has also been esti-

mated to export over 500 metric tons (1.2 million pounds) of cocaine worth in excess of \$10 billion to Mexico to be resold in the United States.

To protect drug trade routes, drug laboratories, and its members, drug cartels have employed guerrilla fighters and paramilitary groups to fight the government and other enemies. According to the United States State Department, three groups were coined as terrorist organizations in Colombia: the group called the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), the National Liberation Army (ELN), and a paramilitary group called the United Self-Defenses of Colombia (AUC). The AUC – a protector of the Norte del Valle Cartel – and the FARC are deeply involved in drug trafficking and receive large funding from drug activities. The US State Department estimates that FARC receives approximately \$300 million a year from drug sales – money that finances its terrorist operations. FARC is known to be involved with all different areas of the drug trade including cultivation, production, and distribution.

However, in recent years, the amount of money financing drug cartels and terrorist organizations in Colombia seems to be declining. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Colombia’s cocaine production in 2008 dropped the most in a decade. Falling coca leaf prices cut cocaine production by 28% to 430 metric tons (947,987 pounds). Around 20,000 fewer farmers planted coca due to the lower value. On the contrary, cocaine cultivation in Bolivia and Peru rose 6% and 4.5%, respectively. Both countries could be able to produce an additional 400 metric tons of cocaine. The UN estimates that the global cocaine market generates about \$320 billion in revenue annually.

Across the world in Afghanistan, large supplies of opium have catalyzed the heroin trade in the country. Afghanistan is the world’s leading producer of opium and cultivates 93% of the world’s heroin-producing crop. From the heroin trade, the **Taliban** – a fundamentalist Islamic militia and protector of al-Qaeda – has received funding by taxing heroin traffickers. The US Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has received information that Osama bin Laden has been involved in financing and facilitating heroin trafficking activities as well. Although opium cultivation dropped 19% in 2008, the UN estimated the Taliban earned about \$50 million to \$70 million from Afghanistan’s opium and heroin trade through taxation. The president of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, issued a ban on opium poppy cultivation and drug production. The ban had opposite effects and caused opium prices to rise creating a boom for traffickers with large amounts of opium for heroin trade. At a recent meeting of Group of Eight nations – the counterpart of Group of Fifteen nations – the U.S. envoy for Afghanistan, Richard Holbrooke, commented that eradication programs “...hadn’t reduced ‘by one dollar’ the amount of money the Taliban earned off opium cultivation and production.” He also stated that, “The farmers are not our

**Taliban**—a *Sunni-Islamist political and religious movement*

enemy, they're just growing a crop to make a living... it's the drug system."

More recently in Mexico, the battle over drug trafficking that was once limited to gangs and police has expanded into terrorist attacks on innocent civilians. On September 15, 2008, a series of deadly grenade attacks took place in Morelia, Mexico killing at least eight people and injuring over 100. Police blamed drug cartels for the lethal incident. Since then, Mexico has suffered from such intense drug violence and corruption that the country nearly reached a failed-state status in early 2009. Similar to Colombia, Mexico has fallen prey to dangerous drug cartels – particularly the Sinaloa Cartel and Gulf Cartel. These cartels have developed their operations by intimidating and corrupting police officials. As a result, Mexican cartels have sold \$13.8 billion annually worth of marijuana, cocaine, heroin, and amphetamines to drug dealers in the United States. About 90% of drugs consumed in the United States travel through Mexico. Also, more than 90% of weapons used in violence and terrorism in Mexico are bought illegally from the U.S. The United States and Mexico have since created the Mérida Initiative which pledges \$400 million to Mexico and \$65 million in aid to Central American countries to combat drug trafficking, crime, and **money laundering**. The initiative also includes training, equipment and intelligence.

**money laundering-**  
*disguising illegally obtained funds so they seem legal*

For G-15 nations, narcotic drugs continue to plague citizens and increase acts of violence and terrorism. It is clear that developed nations play a role in perpetuating the drug trade and resulting terrorist acts, though developing nations remain the source of the issue.

#### *Group of Fifteen Statistics*

A vast majority of countries in the Group of Fifteen have developed a role in the trafficking of narcotic drugs in some capacity. The diversity of drugs and complexity of drug movement amongst many members of the G-15 have complicated efforts to control trafficking. Brief profiles of each country are as follows:

*Algeria* – no significant illicit drug production reported; cannabis and opium are the most abused drugs

*Argentina* – a transshipment center for cocaine headed to Europe, increased law enforcement corruption and money-laundering

*Brazil* – second largest consumer of cocaine in the world, illegal producer of cannabis coca, and transshipment center for cocaine headed to Europe

*Chile* – transshipment center of cocaine headed to Europe and a country of rising domestic cocaine consumption

*Egypt* – a transshipment center for cannabis, heroin and opium moving to Europe, Israel, and North Africa

*India* – largest producer of legal opium for pharmaceuticals and transit point for illicit narcotics produced in neighboring countries and Southwest Asia

*Indonesia* – illegal producer of cannabis and methamphetamine

*Iran* – primary transit point for Southwest Asian heroin to Europe; Iran has high opiate addiction rates and lacks anti-money laundering laws

*Jamaica* – transshipment point of cocaine from South America to North America and Europe; Jamaica also illegally produces cannabis

*Kenya* – transit country for South Asian heroin traveling to Europe and North America; massive corruption and potential for money-laundering

*Malaysia* – drug trafficking prosecuted vigorously with severe penalties; heroin is still the primary drug of abuse in Malaysia

*Mexico* – major heroin supplier, primary transit center for United States bound cocaine from South America, largest foreign supplier of foreign marijuana and methamphetamine to the United States markets

*Nigeria* – transit point for heroin and cocaine heading to Europe, East Asia and North America, amphetamine consumer, major corruption and crime

*Peru* – world’s second largest producer of cocaine; Peru ships finished cocaine out from its Pacific ports to international markets

*Senegal* – illegal cultivator of cannabis, transshipment point for Southwest and Southeast Asian heroin and South American cocaine to Europe

*Sri Lanka* – modest drug problems with heroin; Sri Lanka has gained popularity as a transit point from Southeast Asia due to unpatrolled coasts

*Venezuela* – transit country for cocaine, marijuana, and heroin from Colombia to Europe and the United States, significant money-laundering

*Zimbabwe* – transit point for cannabis, South Asian heroin, and methamphetamine to South Africa

## **Focus of the Debate**

### *Decriminalize Cannabis?*

With numerous narcotic drugs involved in the drug trade, questions regarding the criminal nature of cannabis continue to arise in both developing and developed nations alike. The substance is the most widely consumed narcotic drug in the world, and the overall percentage

of recreational users who develop problematic health issues with cannabis is relatively small. Although the United Nations still classifies cannabis in the same category as heroin, various countries have enacted more tolerant policies towards cannabis consumption and moved towards decriminalization. With these more liberal policies, adults can legally possess up to certain amounts of cannabis without breaking the law. Countries such as Belgium, Australia, Chile, and Argentina have decriminalized cannabis possession and consumption up to certain amounts. The idea behind this debate is that police forces and legal systems should not spend as much time chasing down cannabis users and should focus on more dangerous drugs like heroin. Some nations have even gone so far as to propose a legal regularization of the cannabis market – similar to the regulations that exist for the alcohol and tobacco markets. Many of these measures have not passed since they conflict with international treaties. A negative consequence of this might be a drug epidemic where cannabis gains more popularity due to its decriminalized nature. G-15 countries must decide whether it is still worth attempting to control cannabis in their countries – a decision that could set a precedent for other developing nations. Moreover, are the health risks associated with using cannabis low enough to pay more attention to other drugs? G-15 nations should consider how this option could affect overall efforts to control the drug trade and the health implications such actions could have in the long term.

#### *Decriminalization: The Prisoner's Dilemma*

Another aspect of the narcotic drug debate for G-15 countries surrounds punishment for crimes dealing with narcotic drugs. As countries continue to tighten anti-drug laws, a rise in prison **incarcerations** has resulted. Some argue that imprisonment for consuming illicit narcotic drugs lacks any positive impact on society in terms of diminishing the illegal drug demand and supply. Limiting punishments to trafficking offenses – including preparatory acts with intention to traffic – can allot law enforcement officials a more refined scope in the fight on illegal drugs. This limitation would exclude punishment for personal drug consumption. However, an exact definition of an amount for “personal consumption” would need to be developed by G-15 countries. On the other hand, decriminalizing personal consumption seems to have the opposite effect on health protection of the public.

Another issue the G-15 should focus on is the security of prisons in the developing world. Not only do developing countries not have the resources to catch drug traffickers, but keeping them in prison remains a problem as well. With ease, drug traffickers can continue their operations, recruit new members, and even escape. For example, in May 2009, 53 members of the Mexican drug cartel escaped from a Mexico City prison without so much as a shot fired. As a result of Mexico's in-

**incarceration** - *imprisonment*

sufficient prison system, the number of extraditions to the United States from Mexico has increased. As members of the G-15, you must weigh the pros and cons of **extradition** of drug traffickers to developed countries with more secure prisons versus allocating money to prison security in the developing world.

**extradition**-the surrender of an alleged fugitive from justice or criminal by one state, nation, or authority to another

### *Reducing Harm to Health*

Public health remains at the center of narcotic drug trafficking. Debate continues over whether programs and campaigns to decrease the spread of diseases like HIV/AIDS and Hepatitis – diseases spread through drug needle injection – could actually help the fight against drugs. For example, some countries have enacted needle-exchange programs. These are programs that make sterile needles available to injection drug users with anticipated hopes of decreasing diseases spread via needle injection. Some argue that these types of programs will only encourage drug use and lead to a greater demand for illicit narcotic drugs from traffickers. Moreover, others argue options like this will only draw more crime to areas where it is available. Only 77 countries have needle exchange programs, most of these are in developed countries. For example, in Latin America, only five countries have needle exchange programs.

### *Alternative Development and Eradication*

Debates on forms of alternative socio-economic development for developing nations afflicted by drug production and trafficking continue. When creating solutions, leaders of G-15 nations must take into account all aspects of the problem– from human rights and governability to conflict resolution. In 1998, the United Nations General Assembly held a special session on drugs. One of the main goals was:

“...to promote lawful and sustainable socio-economic options for those communities and population groups that have resorted to illicit cultivation as their only viable means of obtaining a livelihood, contributing in an integrated way to the eradication of poverty.”

Developing nations must conceive different agricultural options for those who cultivate the ingredients for illicit drugs. What other ways can they legally make a living? G-15 nations need to decide whether eradication programs will aid in the fight against drug trafficking. Some argue that eradication will hit the very core of drug production and carry a noticeably direct effect. However, others claim that eradication efforts will do little to affect drug cultivation in the long term. In fact, drug crops will only shift locations, production technologies will evolve, and total production may decrease if any at all. Regardless of the decision on eradication, cultivators will need other socio-economic options to

maintain their livelihood. A life enslaved to producing drugs can yield no positive benefits.

## NGO Perspectives

### *Amnesty International*

Amnesty International is a global organization and movement, which campaigns for internationally recognized human rights for everyone. Issues surrounding how to handle and prosecute drug offenders continue to grasp the attention of Amnesty International. Since many countries have different statutes on addressing drug criminals, this NGO's number one goal is to protect human rights and life. They, "... call upon governments... to cease applying the death penalty for drug-related offenses." In countries like Malaysia and India, Amnesty International believes death sentences are often passed after unfair legal processes, and these violate international standards on fair trials. Amnesty International encourages G-15 nations to look at alternatives to the death penalty in punishing drug offenders. They believe, "...the death penalty therefore not only violates the right to life of those condemned, but is actually counterproductive to efforts to reduce the harm caused by drugs." Amnesty International appeals to member states of the G-15 to **commute** all death sentences for drug offenses and remove provisions within domestic legislation that allow for the death penalty for drug related offenses. Overall, Amnesty International's main priority is to protect the natural human rights of any person – including drug traffickers and abusers.

**commute**—to change a penalty and make it less severe

### *The Heritage Foundation*

The Heritage Foundation is an American public policy research institution whose goal is to formulate and promote conservative public policies. These policies are based on the principles of **free enterprise**, limited government, individual freedom, and strong national defense. With narcotic drugs, the Heritage Foundation believes that drug abusers are enslaved to the drugs they use. This weakens their ability to contribute to society. The Heritage Foundation recommends that G-15 countries use more enhanced intelligence sharing in order to combat the drug trade. A more systematic approach can help streamline efforts amongst developing nations and create greater international cohesion. Intelligence collection and sharing can inhibit growth of dangerous drug organizations that threaten the safety and health of civilians. The Heritage Foundation stands firm in declaring an international commitment in the fight against drug trade and warfare. G-15 nations should focus on fostering greater international cooperation rather than individual efforts to fight against narcotic drugs.

**free enterprise**—an economic and political doctrine holding that a capitalist economy can regulate itself in a freely competitive market through the relationship of supply and demand with a minimum of governmental intervention and regulation

### *Center for American Progress*

The Center for American Progress is a liberal American think tank focused on improving the lives of people through progressive ideas and action. Contrary to The Heritage Foundation, the Center for American Progress believes in public policy that can, "...champion the common good over narrow self-interest, harness the strength of diversity, and secure the rights and safety of people." The Center for American Progress recommends that developing nations focus on individual geographical areas of the world – such as Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean – and develop regional strategies for combating drug trafficking. These strategies could allocate funds to the areas to fight drug trafficking and increase prevention efforts. However, the Center for American Progress advises G-15 nations not to focus exclusively on reducing drug-related violence and trafficking high-activity countries like Afghanistan and Colombia, but create more comprehensive strategies. G-15 nations should focus on training law enforcement officials and diminishing corruption in police forces to restore public confidence. Sharing technologies and practical prevention methods that could inhibit drug trade, money laundering, and terrorism amongst G-15 countries is also a positive idea. Overall, the Center for American Progress would urge G-15 nations to take idealistic approaches to attain realistic goals.

### **Possible Solutions**

A number of possible solutions exist to improve drug trade control between developing and developed nations. It is important that we see drug use as an illness and to get those addicted to drugs medical help as opposed to criminal retribution. These people provide the majority of demand in drug trafficking that keeps supply up and can be an effective way of shrinking the available market of consumers. In this sense, law enforcement should shift a bit more focus from drug users to drug traffickers – the real culprits of the drug trade.

It is also critical to consider ways of reinstating control over cities that have drifted out of control. In the same way that most illegal cultivation occurs in countries and regions outside of government control, most drugs are sold to broken down neighborhoods and communities. Increasing focus on creating jobs, housing, education, and medical and public services can create safer communities. Providing recreational options and other constructive programs for teenagers can help curb rates of teen drug abuse as well. This solution takes root in focusing on more social aspects of the community rather than legal enforcement and can improve methods of prevention. Also, by supporting rural development in regions and populations affected by illicit drug cultiva-

tion and production, G-15 nations can influence farmers to grow more agriculturally beneficial crops.

In the area of law enforcement, it can be more efficient for developing nations to focus their police forces on smaller numbers of high profile, high volume, and violent criminals as opposed to petty offenders. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, "...in some countries, the ratio of people imprisoned for drug use compared to drug trafficking is 5:1." Clearly, focusing on smaller cases as opposed to the large suppliers and traffickers is a waste of police money and waste of time in prosecution. By concentrating on more large-scale operations and dangerous individuals, this could discourage smaller operations from developing. Taking efforts to curb illicit firearm sales in exchange for illicit drugs can help prevent drug cartels and terrorist organizations from obtaining weapons that harm civilians.

### Questions for Policymakers

With all of the knowledge and factors taken into consideration, you as members of the Group of 15 must now decide how to address several key areas in the debate for enhanced drug control. One key issue lies in reaffirming and prioritizing public health as a widespread and holistic initiative. Developing countries must work to balance resources devoted to law enforcement improving public health. How do we address drug dependence? Are there ways to prevent people from consuming narcotic drugs and **ameliorate** resulting health and social effects?

**ameliorate**—to improve or make something better

Another area on which to focus is crime prevention and rule of law on a national scale. Countries like Colombia, Myanmar, and Afghanistan continue to produce large amounts of drugs without control of their respective central government. How do we destroy the links between drug trafficking, organized crime, corruption, and terrorism? We have seen how drug trafficking is destroying public security in places like Mexico, the Caribbean, South America, and Africa. How might developing nations control the drug money used to corrupt officials and finance more drug trafficking? What responsibility do developed nations have in the drug trade in the developing world?

It is also important for you to look at methods that protect human rights. The UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights should remind you of our inalienable rights to life and fair trial. What are appropriate methods of prosecuting drug traffickers, abusers, and corrupt officials? Even though drugs can kill, you should not jump to killing as an **admissible** option.

**admissible**—authentic, valid or legal

Nonetheless, it is important to consider how the policy you create will work with developed nations like those of the Group of Eight.

Since the problem is global in scope, how might developing and developed countries work together to solve the problem? How can you prevent the drug trade from expanding to other nations? Also, how far do you want the power of the Group of Fifteen to extend? All of this and more lie in your intellectual, strategic, and creative planning.

## **Conclusion**

Narcotic drug trafficking is clearly an intricate issue that can affect nearly anyone. From violence and crime to devastating health consequences, drug production, trafficking, and consumption continues to destroy the peace and prosperity many nations once knew. The supply and demand interchange between developing and developed countries have created an individual market for drugs alone and made people's lives dependent on a good that can kill through direct and indirect methods. When these factors combine, it is easy to realize the difficulties developing nations are forced to face in comparison to developed nations. Countries like those in the G-15 must create smart and efficient solutions that will enable them to tackle even the most threatening issues brought about by illicit narcotic drugs. Naturally, these problems will be tough to engage and must be handled with care. Simply refusing to address the issue can lead to the fall of all nations.

## **Guide to Further Research**

For further research about illicit narcotic drugs and drug trafficking, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime is an excellent resource. Their website contains many documents – such as the World Drug Report 2009 – that will be helpful in learning more about narcotic drugs, statistics & trends, trafficking, and more. For example, the statistics on drug seizures in this briefing came directly from the World Drug Report 2009. You will also find information on terrorism and violence – unfortunate byproducts of narcotic drug trafficking. The CIA World Fact book online is another helpful resource that lists transnational issues for many G-15 countries. Illicit drugs tend to be included.

To explore the health aspect of drugs more, simple health science publications and journals can help you understand more about how narcotic drugs affect people physically and behaviorally. The United Nations World Health Organization might also be an option to explore since the website contains health statistics for each region of the world. To find more contemporary occurrences with illicit narcotic drugs, it is also helpful to look at major news archives such as BBC, the *New York Times*, or Bloomberg. These resources can have more updated information that outdated sources lack.

To learn about what kind of resolution will be looked for in committee, take a look at G-15 communiqués from the past. Due to the relatively limited history of the G-15, you will not need to do too much extensive research to be updated. It might also be helpful to look up information on countries that take similar political, social, or economic stances to that of your own.

It will be helpful to look at different solutions already in place and measure the efficacy of them. Research different proposals to control illicit narcotic drug trade and develop fresh ideas that you can contribute to facilitate a healthy debate. Creativity is a key element in solving the most demanding problems. Openness to alternatives is also critical when refining your ideas to combat narcotic drugs.

Should you need any help with your research or have questions, please do not hesitate to contact your chairs, Evan Covington ([ecovingt@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:ecovingt@fas.harvard.edu)) or Alexandra Courtis ([acourtis@fas.harvard.edu](mailto:acourtis@fas.harvard.edu)).

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