



GROUP OF FIFTEEN

Narcotic Drugs in the Developing World

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Introduction and Summary of the Problem

Within the developing world, narcotic drugs continues to play an enormous role on a daily basis. With an underground market that continues to expand, dangerous drugs have swept across the globe and expanded into new countries over the past centuries. Developed nations often receive the negative effects of these pernicious narcotic drugs and continue to struggle with fighting against them. The issue has become extremely difficult to tackle as the problem stems from those who produce the ingredients to the drug sellers and purchasers alike.

The violence erupting from the trade of narcotic drugs has continued to plague citizens of developing countries. Thousands of people die each year from the violence of drug wars and drug cartels that emerge simply to make profit off addictive and lethal substances. With significant levels of poverty present in many developing countries, illicit narcotic drugs have flourished; moreover, health issues continue to arise with the spread of narcotic substances. Deep corruption within governments and police forces has also allowed narcotic drugs to flourish. Developing nations must cooperatively work together to curb the spread of narcotic drugs across the globe for the safety of their citizens and health of their population.

Focus of the Debate

Threat of Violence & Drug Cartels

As a large part of the narcotic drug world, drug cartels continue to destroy communities across developing nations and developed nations alike. Narcotic drugs continue to spark wars amongst paramilitary, guerrilla, and military wars. On the border of Mexico – a member of the G15 – and the United States, the international press recorded 7,400 drug war-related deaths in 2007. Drug cartels across Latin America continue to clash with civilians. Many of them continue to corrupt government officials in order to strengthen the drug trade and ensure livelihood.

In Mexico alone, drug violence killed approximately 6,290 people as well.

Even though not all developing nations suffer from drug cartel violence as intensely as Latin American nations, they are all adversely affected. Many of the ingredients used in producing narcotic drugs come from nations of the G15. Many economies of developing countries rely on agricultural products, and citizens of these countries rely on agriculture for their livelihood. With this in mind, it may be difficult to determine the root cause of the problem – farmers and workers of poorer developing countries who are simply trying to make a living. Nonetheless, with this in mind, developing nations must focus on the violence that continues due to narcotic drugs. These nations must act unilaterally to produce cohesive legislation that will curb the reign of violence spurred by drug sellers, gangs, and cartels.

Narcotic Drugs & Health

The illicit narcotic drug trade also takes a negative effect on the health of those who consume such drugs. Narcotic drug abuse continues to prevail in developing countries that do not have the adequate healthcare resources to counter the issue. Developing nations must fight drug trafficking for the benefit of their citizens. Al-

though some drug substances – like cannabis – may be used for medicinal purposes, the vast majority of other drugs are abused. Developing countries should pay particular attention to usage amongst younger populations. It will be in the best interest of G15 members to explore methods of preventing addiction and ways to curb illicit narcotic drug usage as well.

Recent Developments and Questions to Consider

The Internet & Drug Trade

With the growth in technology over the past years, the narcotic drug trade has been boosted with increasing usage of the Internet. Through this, drug producers, sellers, and consumers can utilize virtual interface to expand the market for illicit drugs. According to BBC News, “Dutch firms were using the web to sell cannabis seeds and products all over the world”. Additionally, the International Narcotics Control Board, “...is particularly concerned that countries without legislation against crime involving new technologies may become sanctuaries”. Many developing nations lack appropriate legislation or the means to counter crime involving new technologies due to corrupt government.

The G15 nations amongst other developing nations can be detrimentally affected by this development since, “...drug trafficking has only recently come to the notice of most national authorities, and very few have taken legal action to stem it”. The Internet provides an easier way for drug traffickers in both developing and developed nations to trade drugs in their illegal economic framework. According to a report by the International Narcotics Control Board, use of psychotropic substances continues to plague Africa while opium production continues to remain a major issue. Developing nations must work together to halt the spread of this new type of drug dealing. Traditionally, “With traditional drug trafficking, you knew your dealer, you knew where the drugs came from. Here, you don’t know anything” (AFP). Moreover, “A website may be hosted in Sweden, but the drug will come from Latin America and shipped by boat to South Africa, with dealers spread out across Europe. It’s a global network” (AFP).

Since legislation on narcotic drugs differ from country to country, it may be tougher for developing nations to create a comprehensive agreement to target products that may be illegal in one place yet legal in another. Nonetheless, with the permanence of the internet and a growing number of users across developing and developed countries, it will be more imperative than ever for developing nations to act swiftly to counter this new method of illicit drug trade.

Questions For Policymakers

The problem with narcotic drugs is very multifaceted in nature. Proper resolutions must not only target the causes of such a deadly phenomenon, but also identify how developing nations will work to gradually eradicate the spread of narcotic drugs. With the diversity of narcotic drugs that are produced, exported, and consumed across the globe, it is even more difficult to find comprehensive solutions for the issue. From amphetamines and marijuana to cocaine and beyond, the variety of narcotic drugs will present a complex problem to policymakers; similarly, the constantly developing underground drug trade routes will also be issues for policy makers to take into account when forming resolutions.

From a more focused perspective, how should policymakers address those afflicted with narcotic drug addictions? Should the deadly addictions punish those who become addicted to such drugs or those who sell them to consumers? This solution might be quite nuanced in this situation. Furthermore, how should developing nations develop a comprehensive plan to destroy trade routes of narcotic drugs? How

can the Group of Fifteen help prevent the underground trade of drugs from taking detrimental tolls on the economy? Finally, what steps should be taken in order to curb the violence associated with drug cartels that often control much of the drug trade? These are a few questions that members of the G15 must consider; however, nations should not be limited by these questions. The problem with narcotic drugs is widespread and diverse in many ways, and it must be tackled in the most comprehensive and efficient manner for the protection of all people.

Conclusion

As the world of narcotic drugs continues to become more complex and expansive, it is more imperative than ever for developing nations to cooperative work together and counter the issue. With the rise and development of new technology like the Internet, G15 members must tackle the problem from numerous angles. These nations must also be willing to work with developed nations such as those in the G8 – who are also integral in the illicit narcotic drug trade. From public health to jobs, the environment, and beyond, the illicit narcotic drug trade has taken its toll across many areas. However, by working to strategically eradicate illicit drugs from production and consumption, such nations will improve the lives of their citizens and the lives of other people around the globe.

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