



Mission Viejo High School Model United Nations
29th Annual Conference
“Through the Fire the Spirit is Forged”



Topic Synopsis

UNODC, Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Hey delegates. My name is Sarah Braymer and I will be your head chair. I'd just like to remind you that all papers found to contain plagiarism will receive a score of zero. The dias is looking forward to hearing all of your innovative and creative solutions, but please remember to cite your sources.

I. Background on Topic

When talking about the commission on narcotic drugs, it is first important to note that there are two issues that need to be discussed under the topic. This first issue is the monetary commission that can be made off of the selling of narcotic drugs. The second issue covered under the topic would be discussing the UN's Commission on Narcotic Drugs committee, which was formed in an attempt to combat the global issue of drug abuse.

Throughout history, almost every region of the world and every group of peoples have used and abused drugs. As early as 2737 B/C., the Chinese were medically using Marijuana. In South and Latin America, now illegal substances were used in medical remedies. As long as drugs have been in demand, there have been individuals willing to sell them. The amount of money that could be made off of selling drugs is astronomical, causing the industry to boom. These drugs, however, also had many negative side effects, such as addiction. Once the global community realized the harmful effects that narcotic drugs were having they began to take steps towards banning the selling and trading of drugs.

It has been evident over history how influential the narcotic drug trade has been on nations. During the 19th century, for example, Great Britain effectively controlled China through its excessive export of opium. Great Britain was exporting opium into China in exchange for



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silks and teas. This in turn, however, resulted in a huge demand for opium in China, forcing China to remain under the power of Great Britain. Britain was able to maintain its status as a world power simply because it was able successful create a drug market in China.

The greed created due to the vast amounts of money that can be made off of the drug trade did not end in the 19th century, however. By the 1980’s, the United Nations reported that the amount of money made though the selling of illegal drugs was second only to the revenue created from selling arms. The industry was estimated to have made up to \$400 billion dollars a year.

Even today, the world is suffering from the many side effects that come with the use and trade of illegal drugs. Nation’s borders are being compromised as the drug industry grows and continues to smuggle drugs from nation to nation. Millions of drug users day every year from fatal overdoses. Billions of dollars have been spent purchasing these illegal narcotic drugs, while the money only goes to increase the industry’s power.

II. UN Involvement

Attempts to regulate, control, and stop the abusing of drugs actually started before the United Nations with its predecessor, the League of Nations. During the very first assembly of the League, the Advisory Committee on the Traffic in Opium and Other Dangerous Drugs was created. From May 2nd, 1921, the date of the advisories first meeting, to 1940, the advisory worked towards fighting the abuse of narcotics. The Advisory remained inactive from 1940 to 1946, due to the war. After the UN was founded, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs was established to carry on the work of the Advisory. Under the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the Commission was given the powers:



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- “a) To amend the Schedules
- b) To call the attention of the Board to any matters which may be relevant to the functions of the Board;
- c) To make recommendations for the implementation of the aims and provisions of this Convention, including programmes of scientific research and the exchange of information of a scientific or technical nature; and
- d) To draw the attention of non-parties to decisions and recommendations which it adopts under this Convention, with a view to their considering taking action in accordance therewith”¹

In its attempts to fight the war on illegal drug use, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has worked with many other UN and non-UN organizations, including the Permanent Central Opium Board and Drug Supervisory Body, the World Health Organization, the Food and Agricultural Administration, and INTER-POL.

Since its conception, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs has created many treaties and resolutions in an attempt to control the worldwide abuses on drugs. It’s first large scale success came in 1961, when the 1UN Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, working along side with the Commission, banned a wide range of drugs. The UN as a whole backed the Commissions ideas by supporting the 1971 *Vienna Convention on Psychotropic Substances* which reiterated what the 1961 bans stated. Later that same year, the United Nations established the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC) to provide aid to countries trying to fight the widespread use of narcotic substances within their borders.

As time has passed, the United Nations has realized just how problematic this issue was. In April 1996, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs called for a 53 member council to meet and



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further discuss the issues that were plaguing the global community. Even with all of these resolutions and treaties, however, the issue has still not been resolved.

III. Possible Solutions

There is no simple solution as to how to end the sale of illegal drugs. Many aspects of the problem must be taken into account, including the transfer of drugs across borders, the monopoly that drug lords hold over a nation’s economy, the nation’s own inability to eradicate the drug trade.

In order to make a profit, many drug cartels smuggle their goods across borders. This creates a huge international problem, because now more than one country is directly involved in the problem. The trafficking of drugs across country’s borders also creates a security issue for each country. In an attempt to stop the smuggling of drugs from one nation to another, stronger border regulations would have to be put into place.

The power that drug cartels are able to hold can be clearly seen. In nations such as Columbia and Mexico, the government is primarily controlled by drug lords. The amount of money that they make through illegal actions is enough to support the country’s economy. It must be considered, therefore, how the issue of commission on narcotic drugs could be addressed in nations such as these. Would the national economy be able to survive without the money infused into it from the drug trade?

IV. Bloc Positions



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- American (North and South): The global drug trade can be traced, in most cases, to Latin and South American countries. The United States is adamant about trying to stop the illegal smuggling of drugs across borders, and the Mexican government wants to try to stop the control that drug cartels have on the government. Most small Latin and South American countries, however, cannot afford to completely give up the drug trade without risking the collapse of their economy.
- Asia: Most governments in Asia and the Middle East are for trying to regulate and control the drugs trade. They are benefitted by the illegal business, however, and it is important to examine what they both gain and lose from the trade. People in countries such as China, however, more favor the drug trade due to the large amount of citizens who are Opium users.
- Europe: The regulation of the drug trade is generally favored in European nations. There are nations, such as Sweden for example, who do not feel that the drug trade should not be controlled by the government. It is also important to understand what European nations both gain and lose in the drug trade.

V. Guiding Questions

- What is your country's position on legalizing the sale of narcotic drugs in order to gain revenue from taxes on the drugs?
- How are the citizens of your country directly affected by narcotic drugs?
- Is a high percentage of your nation addicted to an illegal substance? If so, what are the main factors contributing to this addiction?



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- Does your country gain from the narcotic drug sales?



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