

NHSMUN50

National High School Model United Nations



UNTOC
UPDATE PAPER



Secretary-General
Dennis Zhang

Director-General
Christian Hernandez

Chiefs of Staff
Rekha Marcus
Therese Salomone

Conference Services
Agustina Chiaromonte
Passaggino
Scarlett Royal

Delegate Experience
Hajar Ahjum-Mathee
Amy Zeng

Global Partnerships
Safa Elzanfali
Nastasja Vásquez

Under-Secretaries-General

Vikram Arora
Jordan Baker
Parthav Easwar
Shanaya Harjai
Zainab Iftikhar
Lauren Jackson
Hemani Marfatia
Nicole Pilliod
Anya Prasad
Joseph Rojek
Amira Samih
Zaheer Sooliman
Terry Wang
Ellie White

Dear Delegates,

I am thrilled to welcome you to NHSMUN 2024, in the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC)! We are excited for this year's conference, marking 50 years of NHSMUN. This wouldn't be possible without you, the delegates. My name is Mackenzie Boilard, and I am the Assistant Director for Session I of this year's conference. I am looking forward to seeing the research you have been preparing on such complex world issues come to life!

This year marks my fourth year of involvement in Model United Nations and my third in NHSMUN. I was previously a delegate for SOCHUM and UNHRC at NHSMUN. My time as a delegate for NHSMUN was filled with incredible memories and friendships I will forever value. Throughout high school, I was also an active debate club member and HOSA Future Health Professionals, but MUN has always been my favorite. My time at MUN also helped me immensely with my public speaking skills, confidence, and research skills, something I hope to be able to extend to all of you. MUN has allowed me to dive deeper into international relations and diplomacy. It has also expanded my viewpoints by teaching me about perspectives that don't always match mine.

I am Canadian, but I have been fortunate enough to live in a few cool places worldwide. I am currently living in Barbados, a small island in the Caribbean. I graduated high school in Trinidad and Tobago, and I am taking a gap year interning and working as a barista at a local farmers' market on weekends. However, next year, I will return home to study environmental economics and policy at the University of Alberta, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. I love hiking, scuba diving, surfing, and exploring the island in my free time! Just like Adiva, I also love binge-watching *Suits* and everything involving matcha.

In preparing the Update Paper for the committee, my co-Assistant Director and I focused on the changing nature of both topics and the organized crime that fuels both the "Production and Trafficking of Fentanyl" and "Child Trafficking in East Asia." Even if you feel that your country is not directly involved with either of these topics, it is still affected by them somehow. Transnational crime knows no true borders; handling either topic will feel much more manageable once this is understood. The power of trafficking networks can feel like something that is only real on TV or in movies, but please remember that there are real people across the world falling victim to these networks. Most importantly, have fun and take advantage of everything that NHSMUN is!

See you soon,

Mackenzie Boilard

nhsmun.untoc@imuna.org

Assistant Director

United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime

Session I



Secretary-General
Dennis Zhang

Director-General
Christian Hernandez

Chiefs of Staff
Rekha Marcus
Therese Salomone

Conference Services
Agustina Chiaromonte
Passaggino
Scarlett Royal

Delegate Experience
Hajar Ahjum-Matheh
Amy Zeng

Global Partnerships
Safa Elzanfali
Nastasja Vásquez

Under-Secretaries-General
Vikram Arora
Jordan Baker
Parthav Easwar
Shanaya Harjai
Zainab Iftikhar
Lauren Jackson
Hemani Marfatia
Nicole Pilliod
Anya Prasad
Joseph Rojek
Amira Samih
Zaheer Sooliman
Terry Wang
Ellie White



Dear Delegates,

Hello and welcome to the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime Committee (UNTOC)! My name is Sofia Syzonenko, and I will serve as your Assistant Director for Session II of NHSMUN 2024. This is my first time being a member of NHSMUN staff and my second time attending the conference. As a high school student, I attended NHSMUN 2023 and represented China in the UNTOC committee. I will always remember NHSMUN as the most memorable and insightful conference I have ever attended. It was where I made my closest friends, and I am thrilled to create an equally unforgettable committee experience for you this March.

A little bit about me: I was born and raised in Drohobych, Ukraine, but when I was 16, I applied and got accepted with a full scholarship to a private boarding school in Tacoma, Washington. I spent my junior and senior years there. I am a first-year student at Amherst College, majoring in Chemistry and Political Science. I am super involved in my school's mock trial club and part of the International Students Association. Apart from school, I am highly engaged in the Ukrainian scouting organization PLAST, where I lead a group of girls and contribute as a counselor every year at summer camps. I have been doing it since I was 10, and the scouting community has become a real family. I love spreading my culture through it while being miles away from home.

Since joining the Model United Nations community three years ago, I can confidently say that my life has completely changed. I remember being a timid girl, not knowing how to express myself in English. However, over those three years, MUN helped me grow into a mature, confident woman and surrounded me with incredibly motivated and passionate people. I want this conference to be a fun learning experience for all of you!

My co-Assistant Director and I worked tirelessly to write this Update Paper to ensure you have all the necessary information for debate in March. The topics that we will be discussing are essential and prevalent, as children and drug trafficking increase rapidly each year. As we approach the conference, please don't hesitate to reach out with any questions, concerns, or comments about the topic (or if you want to make a new friend!). March cannot come sooner, and I can't wait to meet all of you!

Best,

Sofia Syzonenko

nhsmun.untoc@imuna.org

Assistant Director

United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime

Session II



UNTOC

NHSMUN 2024



TOPIC A: PREVENTING GLOBAL FENTANYL PRODUCTION AND TRAFFICKING

Photo Credit: United States Drug Enforcement Administration

Introduction

The prevention of fentanyl production and trafficking is a growing problem across the world. New substances are becoming increasingly popular, and this increases the risk of fentanyl overdose. Transnational groups have started discussions about new strategies to tackle this issue. They trace it back to the organized crime and corruption that fuels the trades. Pre-existing steps for the prevention of fentanyl trafficking and harm reduction strategies are starting to have impacts on a global scale and are slowly gaining popularity. Pressure on governments is forcing drug organizations to adapt and change trafficking routes.

In the past few months, new international alliances have sprouted, with plans to address the global war on drugs. However, it is still too early to be entirely sure of the outcomes of these plans. Regardless, international cooperation to address this issue is a step in the right direction. Governments are acknowledging the potential that strong diplomatic relationships can have in combating organized crime, especially concerning fentanyl and its precursors. Countries that play vital roles in the trafficking, production, and consumption of fentanyl are beginning to recognize the need for collaboration. This is shifting the tone of this topic from choosing blame to collaborating to solve the deeper criminal issues beyond borders.

By observing global efforts to end the production and trafficking of fentanyl, it becomes clear that this topic is deeply rooted in many other social issues that exist in both producing and receiving countries. New efforts are aimed at targeting fundamental issues within these communities. They primarily target money laundering, poverty, gang violence, corruption, and other social problems that make groups prone to addiction. In the case of producing countries, many families are finding financial relief in the production of fentanyl, something that cannot be overlooked. By ensuring that vulnerabilities on both the supplying and receiving end of this debate are accounted for, delegates can bring peace and safety to areas in need. This action can relieve systems that are drained by the fentanyl trade. By considering the impacts on producing and consuming ends alike, this committee has the

potential to combat international fentanyl trafficking.

Emerging Narcotics

As new illegal substances emerge, fentanyl overdose is a growing concern. One of these new substances is xylazine.¹ Xylazine can be obtained illegally in either a powder or liquid form. When combined with fentanyl, it is either a powder or pressed into a pill.² This substance is often mixed with fentanyl to intensify its effects, making it more addictive and dangerous. New studies and press releases addressing the dangers of xylazine highlight its growing prominence. They also highlight its dangers when not used with proper medical intent. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that in recent years, between 94.7 and 99.1 percent of overdoses related to Xylazine in the United States of America can be attributed to fentanyl use. This makes it the most co-involved drug to fentanyl, surpassing cocaine.³ This means that xylazine is most often abused when combined with fentanyl. To entirely prevent the trafficking and production of fentanyl, its precursors and co-involved drugs must also be addressed.

The growing popularity of xylazine seems to be following the same path as other opioids. Xylazine was initially made for medical treatment but became a substance that is produced and sold illegally and usually laced with fentanyl. Xylazine was originally developed for veterinary medicine and is not approved for human use.⁴ Also known as “tranq,” xylazine

1 “DEA and DHS Issue Joint Update on Sources of Illicit Xylazine,” DEA, September 22, 2023, <https://www.dea.gov/stories/2023-09/2023-09-22/dea-and-dhs-issue-joint-update-sources-illicit-xylazine>.

2 “Joint Intelligence Report the Growing Threat of Xylazine and Its Mixture with Illicit Drugs,” DEA, 2022, <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/The%20Growing%20Threat%20of%20Xylazine%20and%20its%20Mixture%20with%20Illicit%20Drugs.pdf>.

3 Merianne Spencer et al., “Vital Statistics Rapid Release,” CDC, June 2023, <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr030.pdf>.

4 “Xylazine | National Institute on Drug Abuse,” National Institute on Drug Abuse, April 21, 2022, <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/xylazine>.

shows similar effects to alcohol, acting as a central nervous system depressant. It can slow mental function and drop blood pressure to potentially dangerous levels.⁵ These side effects of the drug mean that when combined with fentanyl, feelings of euphoria are intensified. This adds to its addictiveness. Furthermore, the growing popularity of xylazine as a co-involved substance amplifies the illegal production and trafficking of fentanyl, as they often are sold together. It is important to note, however, that the consumer is often not aware when purchasing xylazine that it is laced with fentanyl.⁶

A common antagonist against the effects of opioid overdose is naloxone (commercially known as Narcan in some countries). However, the danger of xylazine is that it is not an opioid. This means that antagonists like naloxone are ineffective at stopping an overdose. Opioid antagonists can reverse and block the effects of opioids by binding to their receptors within the human body. It can be easily delivered through nasal sprays and different forms of injections. This means that providing naloxone can easily save the life of someone who overdoses on an opioid. Many non-profit organizations have programs that

5 Kazandra Ruiz-Colón et al., “Xylazine Intoxication in Humans and Its Importance as an Emerging Adulterant in Abused Drugs: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature,” *Forensic Science International* 240 (July 1, 2014): 1–8, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2014.03.015>; Palmira Acosta-Mares et al., “Xylazine potentiates the lethal but not the rewarding effects of fentanyl in mice,” *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 253, no. 110993 (December 1, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2023.110993>.

6 Ruiz-Colón et al., “Xylazine Intoxication in Humans.”

7 “Naloxone,” *Samhsa.gov*, last modified August 12, 2023, <https://www.samhsa.gov/medications-substance-use-disorders/medications-counseling-related-conditions/naloxone>.

8 “Understanding the Opioid Overdose Epidemic,” last modified August 8, 2023, <https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/epidemic.html>.

make Narcan easily available. Narcan can often be obtained in free resource kits. Furthermore, pharmacies worldwide sell it over the counter, making it easy to access in many countries. When mixing opioids like fentanyl with xylazine, however, the risk becomes more serious. This is because naloxone cannot block an overdose of xylazine.⁷

Furthermore, an increase in the popularity of combining fentanyl with other narcotics that do not have the same properties means that cartels’ supply chains could be expanding. This is a severe threat to consuming countries. If left unchecked, xylazine risks following the path of other fentanyl precursors, like oxycontin and heroin. Oxycontin and heroin are both trafficked globally and cause thousands of overdoses per year. It is estimated that between 1991 and 2021, nearly 645,000 people died from an overdose involving opioids in the United States alone.⁸ As multi-substance overdoses increase, countries must develop policies that treat each substance both individually and combined with other substances. Many private sector industries have already begun to advertise harm reduction in multi-narcotic overdoses. For



Drug trafficking bust in the Caribbean Sea

Credit: Defense

example, many companies have started creating testing strips designed to detect other substances found in illegally purchased drugs. One company that has incorporated this product into their markets globally is BTNX Incorporated. This company, initially developed for pregnancy tests and urine drug tests, now sells fentanyl, benzodiazepine, and xylazine test strips across North America, Eastern Africa, and Europe. These are all regions that are heavily impacted by fentanyl overdose.⁹ Engagement from the private sector can be effective in helping combat this issue.

Companies are also producing kits of test strips for benzodiazepine. These are a range of pharmaceutically available depressants that are often used to treat anxiety and other mental health disorders. They usually appear commercially as Xanax or Valium.¹⁰ In September 2023, the United States Drug Enforcement Administration imposed stricter regulatory controls on individuals who take these substances for medical treatment and threatened administrative, civil, and criminal sanctions on these drugs. This was because of a recent spike in the trafficking and abuse of these substances. Often combined with other medications, there has been a sudden increase in overdoses of these substances. Although benzodiazepine is usually obtained legally by prescription for medical treatment, it is commonly resold or used in a way other than what is intended. This can lead to the drug becoming addictive and dangerous. Nicknamed “benzos,” this abuse is most frequently reported by adolescents who are being treated for pre-existing issues.¹¹ Users will typically take more than what they are prescribed or use different, more dangerous methods of consumption. Inhalation and injection, for example, are both common with this product. Furthermore, benzodiazepine is usually consumed illegally in combination with other narcotics. The growing prevalence of substance abuse within younger demographics is also concerning, as this drug can act as a gateway to fentanyl and other opioids. Information about this substance is still limited in other countries. Regardless, the

abuse of psychoactive substances is concerning, as prescription substance abuse can lead to abuse of other opioids.¹²

While the committee should focus primarily on fentanyl, it should also address its counterparts that amplify its effects and increase the risk of overdose. A spike in the abuse of a medication used to treat mental disorders also highlights concern for the demographics that are prone to addiction. This demonstrates a growing problem in consuming countries. Furthermore, the recognition by a significant fentanyl-consuming country of new drugs that are abused by younger generations is alarming. This means that the committee should focus on the demographics that are prone to addiction and substance abuse. By considering fentanyl with all of its co-drugs, delegates can take decisive action and make a meaningful difference in overcoming fentanyl abuse and addiction.

Harm Reduction and Decriminalization

In the past few years, there has been a global trend toward decriminalizing opioids and promoting harm reduction instead. This can be seen in states, provinces, and countries. For example, British Columbia in Canada, Oregon in the US, Portugal, Uruguay, and Australia have all made efforts to decriminalize opioid use and possession in recent years. The decriminalization of the use and minor possession of opioids has been statistically proven to either stabilize or reduce overdose rates in these areas. It has become a proven harm reduction strategy for drug use. Decriminalization is the removal of criminal penalties for minor drug related crimes.¹³ Approaches differ depending on the country, but the intent is the same. Decriminalization aims to reduce the harm caused by drug abuse by removing social stigmas and barricades for people struggling with addictions. The hope is that this will lead people with an addiction towards recovery without fear of punishment. Harm reduction as a whole is a set of strategies intended to slow overdoses and addiction. Examples

9 “BTNX | Harm Reduction,” Btnx.com, 2023, <https://www.btnx.com/category/Harm-Reduction>.

10 “Benzodiazepines,” Public Health Scotland, July 5, 2023, <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/rapid-action-drug-alerts-and-response-radar-alerts/radar-bromazolam-alert-2023/benzodiazepines/>.

11 “Drug Street Names,” Addiction Center, October 26, 2023, <https://www.addictioncenter.com/drugs/drug-street-names/>.

12 “Five Synthetic Benzodiazepine Drugs Deemed Imminent Hazard to Public Safety,” DEA, September 25, 2023, <https://www.dea.gov/stories/2023/2023-09/2023-09-25/five-synthetic-benzodiazepine-drugs-deemed-imminent-hazard-public>.

13 Drug Policy Alliance, “DPA Fact Sheet Approaches to Decriminalization,” February 2015, https://www.unodc.org/documents/ungass2016/Contributions/Civil/DrugPolicyAlliance/DPA_Fact_Sheet_Approaches_to_Decriminalization_Feb2015_1.pdf.

of harm reduction include government-funded rehabilitation, needle disposal, safe injection sites, and drug education in school, to name a few.¹⁴ Although not wholly new, statistics are beginning to prove the effectiveness of these strategies in combating critical issues related to the topic. For example, the province of British Columbia, Canada, six months after decriminalizing small amounts of opioids, found no increased rates of substance use.¹⁵ Additionally, the state of Oregon in the US had as much as 83 percent fewer monthly first-time offense arrests related to opioids.¹⁶

As of September 20, 2023, the United Nations Human Rights Commission (UNHRC) believes that “if effectively designed and implemented, decriminalization can be a powerful instrument to ensure that the rights of people who use drugs are protected.”¹⁷ This means that decriminalization helps to remove stigmas that prevent people with an addiction from finding help. This, in turn, would eventually slow consumption and trafficking as demand slows. The same report found that

the unequal use of criminal penalties in countries with limited harm reduction strategies prevents drug users from seeking support. This only further feeds into stigmas and social exclusion and worsens the issue.¹⁸ UNHRC also emphasizes imbalances in judicial systems that have penal policies for drug use. It stresses, “Today’s drug policies have the greatest impact on those who are poorest and most vulnerable.”¹⁹ By focusing on reducing addictions to fentanyl, trafficking and production would inevitably have to slow. This is because the profitability of organized crime groups and cartels would stall.²⁰ Although UNTOC is primarily focused on the criminal aspect of the production and trafficking of fentanyl, unfair persecution of drug offenders fails to adequately address the underlying issues that allow for illicit drugs to be as uncontrolled as they are today.

Many other countries, such as Saudi Arabia, Indonesia, Iran, and Vietnam, continue to oppose the decriminalization of opioids and different harm reduction strategies.²¹ Their general

¹⁴ “Harm Reduction,” Samhsa.gov, 2023, <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction>.

¹⁵ Elizabeth McSheffrey, “It’s Been More than 6 Months of Drug Decriminalization in B.C. What’s Changed?” Global News, September 8, 2023, <https://globalnews.ca/news/9924506/drug-decriminalization-six-months-bc/>.

¹⁶ Sheila P. Vakharia, “Decriminalization of Drug Possession in Oregon: Analysis and Early Lessons,” *Drug Science, Policy and Law* 9, (2023), <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/20503245231167407>.

¹⁷ “End Overreliance on Punitive Measures to Address Drugs Problem – UN Report,” OHCHR, 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/end-overreliance-punitive-measures-address-drugs-problem-un-report>.

¹⁸ OHCHR, “End Overreliance on Punitive Measures to Address Drugs Problem – UN Report.”

¹⁹ OHCHR, “End Overreliance on Punitive Measures to Address Drugs Problem – UN Report.”

²⁰ OHCHR, “End Overreliance on Punitive Measures to Address Drugs Problem – UN Report.”

²¹ “Drug Laws around the World: Death Penalty for Drugs - DrugAbuse.com,” DrugAbuse.com, December 17, 2013, <https://drugabuse.com/blog/the-20-countries-with-the-harshes-drug-laws-in-the-world/>.



Common preparation of opioids for illegal consumption

Credit: <http://rebcenter-moscow.ru/>

belief is that this is harmful and carries no real benefits. This is because it fails to address underlying issues within communities that struggle with substance abuse, especially fentanyl. A standard thought process in many of these countries is that decriminalization suggests that society as a whole approves of drug use. This would justify the illegal production and trafficking of narcotics.²² A key topic at the December 2023 Commission on Narcotic Drugs 66th session in Vienna, Italy, was the use of the death penalty for drug related offenses.²³ This debate revisited original discussions from 2016 that addressed the death penalty for drug related offenses, which are especially prominent in sections of Asia and East Africa. This debate was driven by the Anti-Death Penalty Asia Network (ADPAN), Harm Reduction International, Women and Harm Reduction International Network (WHRIN), and the World Coalition Against the Death Penalty. They came to the consensus that the death penalty was failing to slow drug trafficking and is instead a violation of human rights. This did not change many countries' perspectives. However, 36 countries still use capital punishment for drug related offenses. Most of these countries argue that criminal action must have consequences, and jail time alone is not a significant enough deterrent.²⁴

A report from Amnesty International in October 2023 found that “presumptions in such countries do exist related to drug use that allow the prosecution to automatically infer guilt without having to prove that drugs found in objects or premises that they were responsible for belonged to the defendant.”²⁵ In other words, many countries that still practice corporal punishment for drug-based offenses have legislation that assumes guilt until proven innocent. This thought process is a direct contrast to many ideas about criminal justice. The treatment of drug offenders varies depending on the country, creating further social stigmas. This causes division between countries when discussing strategies for handling drug-based

offenses globally. Arguments on each side reflect a variety of thought processes and ideologies. Approaches to addressing crimes related to drug use and possession can depend on the influence of cartels, financial resources, and other underlying factors. All factors relating to specific countries' approaches should be considered when creating decisive action against the production and trafficking of fentanyl.²⁶

Emerging Strategies to Combat Drug Trafficking and Organized Crime

In recent months, international alliances have proposed plans to address the global war on drugs. For example, the European Commission released the “EU Roadmap” in October 2023, designed to take a multi-step approach to address substance abuse internally and drug trafficking globally. This plan reflects on past European successes and failures to create a theoretically effective strategy to reduce illegal drug consumption internally. It also combats the trafficking and production of drugs globally, along with their precursors.²⁷

The EU Roadmap to fight drug trafficking and organized crime plans to increase the strength of ports against drug trafficking by creating the European Ports Alliance. This alliance is designed to dismantle high-risk criminal networks through more coordinated investigations and Schengen Information System Alerts. It also plans to take measures to prevent organized crime by sharing best practices among states.²⁸ By dismantling networks of drug trafficking within the European Union, production that is targeted towards Europe will be forced to change their business models. As demand slows, so must supply to keep any profitability from a trafficking point of view.

The fourth step in their plan is improving relations with

22 University of New South Wales, “Decriminalisation or Legalisation: Injecting Evidence in the Drug Law Reform Debate | NDARC - National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre,” National Drug and Research Centre - UNSW, 2023, <https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/blog/decriminalisation-or-legalisation-injecting-evidence-drug-law-reform-debate>.

23 “CND 66th Session Reconvened,” IDPC, 2023, <https://idpc.net/events/2023/07/cnd-66th-session-reconvened>.

24 IDPC, “CND 66th Session.”

25 Amnesty International, “2023 World Day against the Death Penalty: End Unlawful and Discriminatory Death Penalty for Drug Related Offences,” news release, October 10, 2023, <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ACT5072662023ENGLISH.pdf>.

26 IDPC, “CND 66th Session.”

27 “New EU Roadmap Steps up the Fight against Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime,” Migration and Home Affairs, October 18, 2023, https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-eu-roadmap-steps-fight-against-drug-trafficking-and-organised-crime-2023-10-18_en.

28 “Questions and Answers on the Communication on the EU Roadmap to fight Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime,” European Commission, 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_23_4983.

international partners, especially in West Africa, Latin America, and the Caribbean. This step involves strengthening diplomatic relations globally by expanding postings. This is similar to Interpol and Europol postings, which focus on international collaboration instead of one distinct hub. Each of these is designed to strengthen relationships with regional law enforcement and to foster better cooperation between countries. They also aim to encourage the sharing of relevant information about organized crime and drug trafficking. The hope is that host countries will share information more transparently through increased support. This, in turn, benefits all countries involved. The Roadmap describes this step as wanting to “develop and foster partnerships within their region and assist with investigative inquiries between countries.”²⁹

The Roadmap program also aims to further develop Europol. Formally known as the European Union Agency for Law Enforcement Cooperation, their goal remains the same.³⁰ This agency seeks to expand communications and intelligence. This is mainly done by posting officers globally to provide help for local law enforcement projects when needed. It also aims to develop relationships with authorities to foster a better understanding of how their legal systems work. Specifically, the Roadmap plan seeks to create more substantial levels of EU cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean. They plan to do this by supporting investigations that are trying to undo encrypted communication networks used by cartels. This is in addition to investing in maritime analysis programs and further implementing regional technical assistance programs like Eurofront and the Global Illicit Flows Programme. These programs have already proven to be effective. Europol has already been able to track down a super cartel of cocaine traffickers in November 2022, as well as many other high-profile operations. Achieving this involved

tracking shipments, tracing information, and supporting local maritime interventions. This increased support aims to create a world with no safe havens for criminals. By investing in areas where fentanyl is highly processed and trafficked, they can prevent it from ever reaching European soil.³¹

Along with this plan, countries in Latin America and the Caribbean have started to collaborate and discuss alternate approaches to combat drug trafficking internally. This began at a meeting in Cali, Colombia, on September 9, 2023. The Colombian president, Gustavo Petro, recommended creating an alliance between Latin American and Caribbean states to present a united front against drug trafficking.³² In his statement, he acknowledged drug consumption as a public health and criminal issue. He emphasized the flaws of past approaches and the need for a new strategy to fight drug trafficking within the region. In a joint statement issued a few days later, a consensus was reached where participating countries in the area agreed to uplift communities where drug production was most out of control. They aimed to do this by encouraging agricultural development, increasing social support, and snapping the links between corruption, money laundering, gang violence, and organized crime concerning drug trafficking.³³

However, little action has been taken beyond press releases and verbal communications. Should action be taken, countries within the region would face social pushback, and risk increased violence if not done correctly. Drug production and trafficking have benefited many lower-income areas, with UNODC estimating that it could make up anywhere between two to 11 percent of the GDP in some countries in the Latin America and Caribbean region.³⁴ Regardless, the recognition of underlying problems and acceptance of accountability by major fentanyl trafficking outlets marks a severe shift in tone for this committee.

29 Royal Canadian, “Liaison Officers and Analysts | Royal Canadian Mounted Police,” Rcmp-grc.gc.ca, 2020, <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/liaison-officers-and-analysts>.

30 “Europol – Law Enforcement Cooperation | European Union,” European Union, 2023, https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/europol_en.

31 “Press Corner,” European Commission, 2023, https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_23_4983.

32 Dario Sabaghi, “Colombian President Proposes Latin Alliance to Shift War on Drugs towards Public Health Approach,” *Forbes*, September 12, 2023, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dariosabaghi/2023/09/11/colombian-president-proposes-latin-alliance-to-shift-war-on-drugs-towards-public-health-approach/?sh=453cf68c12b4>.

33 “Colombian President Proposes Latin American Alliance to Transform ‘War on Drugs,’” Reuters, September 9, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombian-president-proposes-latin-american-alliance-transform-war-drugs-2023-09-09/>.

34 UNODC, “Number 6 ECONOMIC and SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES OF DRUG ABUSE and ILLICIT TRAFFICKING,” 1998, https://www.unodc.org/pdf/technical_series_1998-01-01_1.pdf.

In another recent conference in San Francisco, Chinese President Xi Jinping responded to nearly a year of American efforts to achieve anti-drug cooperation. He agreed verbally to a crackdown on chemicals flowing to fentanyl labs from China.³⁵ This pledge came days after the US Department of the Treasury identified nearly 30 suspects involved in the production or trafficking of chemicals related to illegal drugs. They placed sanctions on each with hopes of either slowing or stopping their exports. Most of these designations directly target groups associated with fentanyl supply coming from Chinese chemical precursors towards Mexican cartels for production.³⁶ This means that should the crackdown be executed, fentanyl precursor exports coming from Chinese companies would slow down. This would eliminate a significant supplier of chemical precursors to other countries involved in the production of fentanyl. This breakthrough in diplomatic cooperation between China and the United States marks a shift in the committee's tone. The strategies used to come to an agreement in this instance could be replicated in other regions where chemical precursors to fentanyl are being developed and trafficked. This agreement, if successful, could set the tone for addressing illegal chemical exports globally, as it involves two opposing countries as a united front against transnational organized crime. It would also act as a powerful symbol of diplomatic cooperation between two states that historically have not agreed on matters regarding drug abuse.

Conclusion

As countries across the world work together to prevent fentanyl production and trafficking, new strategies are emerging. This includes statistics that prove that harm reduction is effective. Creating global alliances with proactive plans is proof of collective efforts toward a solution. Furthermore, new narcotics that are resistant to naloxone create extra pressure on these bodies to collaborate and take new approaches to solve this issue. The drug trade is constantly developing as criminals change their strategies and take steps to protect themselves at the expense of others. They intentionally shift

their supply chains to vulnerable regions and capitalize on global conflict. These patterns are especially relevant today and require collaboration between countries affected by addictions and countries where trafficking and production are common.

Recent developments reaffirm the need for UNTOC to draft a plan to address concerns in all world regions. Global production and trafficking of fentanyl, its precursors, and co-involved drugs must each be addressed from each end of the chain of supply to fully alleviate this issue. The committee also must consider other underlying social issues such as corruption, gang violence, and organized crime. By addressing consumption, trafficking, and production, the criminal networks that profit off of the deaths of thousands of people a year globally through fentanyl overdose will be forced to slow. By undermining these groups, delegates can bring new security to the world when needed.

³⁵ David Ovalle and John Hudson, "China Vows to Crack down on Fentanyl Chemicals. The Impact Is Unclear," *The Washington Post*, November 19, 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/11/19/china-fentanyl-crackdown/>.

³⁶ "Treasury Targets Large Chinese Network of Illicit Drug Producers," U.S. Department of the Treasury, October 3, 2023, <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1779>.



UNTOC

NHSMUN 2024



TOPIC B:
CHILD TRAFFICKING IN EAST ASIA

Photo Credit: U.S. National Archives and Records Administration

Introduction

Child trafficking remains one of the most important and terrifying issues. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released a report in 2023. This report on global human trafficking trends shows that around 35 percent of victims of human trafficking worldwide are children. Children are vulnerable to trafficking for several reasons, including bad economic situations in their respective countries. The lack of access to education, humanitarian crises, and the lack of support networks also impact children. “Traffickers are known to prey on children in vulnerable situations. This happens more often when their parents or guardians struggle to support their households. This places children under pressure to contribute to the family’s income,” explains Mukundi Mutasa, crime prevention and Criminal Justice Officer at UNODC.¹

According to UNODC data, natural disasters that occurred in 2023, such as floods, droughts, and armed conflicts, are major contributors to child trafficking as well. Child trafficking is on the rise in East Asian countries such as Thailand, Myanmar, China, Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia. A form of child trafficking that is rapidly developing in the region is the exploitation of children by adults through tourism. Other new trends that are having an impact are climate change, the use of artificial intelligence, and many more. International cooperation is essential to ensure that children are always protected, regardless of location.

Tourism and Child Trafficking

While tourism brings a lot of money to a country’s economy, the development of tourism has encouraged human trafficking in recent years. The increased number of tourists can create demand for cheap labor and sexual services. Traffickers exploit people in these industries.² Moreover, they often take advantage of the increased demand for labor in the hospitality and entertainment sectors. This pushes victims into exploitative situations. When traveling to foreign countries, it is common for tourists to stay “anonymous.” Anonymity is possible for tourists when traveling because of the frequent

changes of guests. This allows trafficking victims and offenders to go unnoticed in hotels and airports. For this reason, most sex traffickers use hotels and motels as part of their operations. Furthermore, labor trafficking increases the vulnerability of victims in the tourism industry. This is due to subcontractors like security guards, wait staff, and maintenance workers.³ Anonymity means offenders can engage in trafficking without being identified or held accountable.⁴

The primary victims of child exploitation in tourism are orphans. Orphanage tourism is one of the most significant types of tourism that involves child exploitation. This type of tourism often refers to when people visit orphanages while traveling. In most cases, people from Western and wealthier countries are the ones who visit these sites in less-developed countries. It is seen as an element of playing “hero” for these children.⁵ Orphanage tourism involves many activities, including short- to long-term volunteering shifts, donations of money and goods, and performances by children. However, this type of tourism has a lot of negative implications and often leads to orphanage trafficking. This refers to a form of child trafficking involving the recruitment or transfer of children from orphanages for exploitation and profit. Victims of orphanage trafficking are often coerced into sexual activities by so-called “volunteers.” This is often due to the lack of

¹ “UNODC Shines Spotlight on Causes and Impact of Child Trafficking.” United Nations: Office on Drugs and Crime, September 20, 2023, <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/Webstories2023/unodc-shines-spotlight-on-causes-and-impact-of-child-trafficking.html>.

² Marcin Frackiewicz, “How Does Tourism Affect Human Trafficking?” TS2 SPACE, November 25, 2023, <https://ts2.space/en/how-does-tourism-affect-human-trafficking/>.

³ Talia Dunyak, “Tourism and Trafficking,” Human Trafficking Search, June 22, 2021, <https://humantraffickingsearch.org/tourism-and-trafficking/>.

⁴ Frackiewicz, “How Does Tourism Affect Human Trafficking?”

⁵ “What is orphanage tourism and why is it BAD?” Tourism Teacher, last modified August 19, 2023, <https://tourismteacher.com/orphanage-tourism/>.



Child labor in Siem Reap, Cambodia
Credit: David Villa

proper screening of volunteers at many orphanages. Many international reports, including the Global Slavery Index, show the link between orphanage tourism and trafficking. They call for measures to address the harm related to orphanage volunteering programs.⁶

Exploitation of children in the tourism industry is prevalent in many East and Southeast Asian countries. These include Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and the Philippines. Thailand is a country with an estimated number of 200,000 to 300,000 sex workers. The child sex trade in the country generates around USD one billion per year. This shows the great financial power the industry has in Thailand.⁷ Economic inequality in the country is a primary factor contributing to this issue. Many families must force their children to work in this industry for financial survival. Traffickers often take advantage of vulnerabilities such as poverty, debt, and economic disparities between urban and rural areas. Corruption among local officials contributes to this ongoing problem as well.⁸

⁶ Kathryn van Doore and Rebecca Nhep, "Orphanage Tourism and Orphanage Volunteering: Implications for Children," *Frontiers in Sustainable Tourism* 2 (November 15, 2023), <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsut.2023.1177091>.

⁷ Lorena Castillo, "Prostitution In Thailand Statistics," Gitnux Marketdata Report 2024, last modified December 16, 2023, <https://gitnux.org/prostitution-in-thailand-statistics/>.

⁸ Hanan Zaffar, "Despite Laws, Child Prostitution Thrives in Thailand," FairPlanet,

September 2, 2023, <https://www.fairplanet.org/editors-pick/despite-prohibition-child-prostitution-thrives-in-thailand/>.

⁹ Zaffar, "Despite Laws, Child Prostitution Thrives in Thailand."

¹⁰ Minh, "Thailand surpassed the milestone of welcoming 23 million international visitors," VN Express Vietnam, November 11, 2023, <https://www.vietnam.vn/en/thai-lan-vuot-moc-don-23-trieu-luot-khach-quoc-te/>.

Since the sex industry in Thailand operates secretly, it is difficult to figure out exactly how much it adds to the country's economy. In 2015, it was estimated to be around USD 6.4 billion annually. The main areas for child trafficking in Thailand are Pattaya, Phuket, and the country's northern regions. These locations make children living on the street direct victims of trafficking. Even though sex work is technically illegal, laws are uncertain and not enforced in many cases. This allows erotic services, including those involving minors, to be accessible in red-light districts and entertainment establishments.⁹ Tourism is mostly directly related to this issue because Thai cities such as Pattaya and Phuket attract many visitors. As of November 12, 2023, the country welcomed more than 11 million visitors. As a result, the country earned almost USD 23.4 billion from tourism alone.¹⁰ The red-light district is a trendy area for people to visit, which enhances tourism and child trafficking. However, Thailand has been taking action to prevent and minimize child trafficking and child exploitation for tourism. In particular, NGOs, such as the HUG Project in Chiang Mai, founded by advocate Boom Mosby, are actively

addressing child trafficking. These organizations collaborate with law enforcement and the government to conduct educational initiatives, survivor rehabilitation, and aftercare services. Government-led protective initiatives, collaborative efforts, and creative strategies aim to rehabilitate rescued children.¹¹

Cambodia is dealing with a similar issue. Children are often coerced into traveling primarily to engage in prostitution. Similarly, economic crises, the booming tourism industry, and increased demand contribute to the global exploitation of an estimated 150 million girls and 73 million boys under 18 globally each year.¹² Despite the official prohibition of prostitution, the crisis in Cambodia drives many young girls and boys into the industry. Some enter for economic reasons. Others are sold by their parents for prices ranging from EUR eight to 80. Approximately one-third of all escorts in Cambodia are under 18. These underage children face deep trauma and often lack resources for professional help. Every year, some 400,000 people travel to Cambodia for the sole purpose of engaging in sex tourism.¹³ This is an example of how tourism impacts child trafficking negatively.

A recently released report based in the Philippines shows nearly half a million Filipino children are being trafficked for adult exploitation. The abuse is driven mainly by demand from the United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and Europe. Offenders often pay Philippine-based traffickers as little as USD 25 to participate in the abuse of children, both in-person and online. The report shows that US-originating payments triggered the most significant number of suspicious financial transaction reports related to online child sexual abuse and exploitation in the Philippines. The Philippine Anti-Money Laundering Council published the report.¹⁴

There are other consequences of the exploitation of children

related to tourism. Violent physical assaults from clients are standard methods of coercion that cause lasting injuries to children, as their bodies are not fully developed. Moreover, transmission of HIV and other STDs also threatens victims' physical health. Lack of access to contraceptives often causes unwanted pregnancies and dangerous back-alley abortions.¹⁵ Mental health impacts are equally severe. Depression, anxiety, PTSD, and suicidal urges are common among survivors of underage sex trafficking. Substance abuse frequently emerges as a means of coping with unrelenting trauma as well.¹⁶

September 27 is known as World Tourism Day. In 2023, Mama Fatima Singateh, the UN Special Rapporteur on sale and sexual exploitation, made a statement. In this statement, she emphasized the importance of protecting children from horrible situations. These include forced labor, sexual abuse, and general exploitation. She recognized global efforts to create standards to prevent exploitation and child abuse in travel. However, Mama Fatima stressed the need for further action. One of her proposals was to enhance the tourism sector's competitiveness, resilience, and environmental sustainability. These goals should align with responsible business practices, sustainable child and family support, and children's rights awareness programs. She also emphasized the importance of regulating and monitoring tourism activities, such as volunteer work, since they lack adequate supervision. Additionally, she urged governments, development partners, the private sector, and the international community to take further action. She stated that solutions to this issue should aim to protect and rehabilitate child victims in the tourist sector. They should also aim to prevent child exploitation in the tourism industry in the first place. Mama Fatima encouraged states to ratify the UN World Tourism Organization Framework Convention on Tourism Ethics before proposing new action items. Finally, she called on the private sector to actively engage in joint

11 "The HUG Project - Protecting Thai Children from Sexual Abuse and Online Sex Trafficking," The HUG Project, accessed December 27, 2023, <https://www.hugproject.org>.

12 Anna Trauner, "Human Beings to Buy and Sell: Pedocriminal Sex Tourists in Cambodia," Hope for the Future, September 13, 2023, <https://www.hopeforthefuture.at/en/human-beings-to-buy-and-sell-pedocriminal-sex-tourists-in-cambodia/>.

13 Rabiyyatul Adawiyah, "Human Trafficking and Sex Trafficking in Cambodia as a Threat to Human Security," Modern Diplomacy, November 3, 2023, <https://modern diplomacy.eu/2023/11/03/human-trafficking-and-sex-trafficking-in-cambodia-as-a-threat-to-human-security/>.

14 "1 in 100 Children Sexually Exploited in Livestreams, New Abuse Images and Videos in the Philippines Last Year, Driven by Foreign Demand," IJM USA, September 7, 2023, <https://www.ijm.org/news/1-in-100-children-sexually-exploited-livestreams-new-abuse-images-videos-philippines-last-year-driven-by-foreign-demand>.

15 Kong, "Confronting Thailand's Epidemic of Child Sex Trafficking," *Dimsum Daily*, December 1, 2023, <https://www.dimsumdaily.hk/confronting-thailands-epidemic-of-child-sex-trafficking/>.

16 Kong, "Confronting Thailand's Epidemic of Child Sex Trafficking."

efforts to address vulnerabilities based on gender, disability, race, ethnicity, and age. Her main goal is to end forced labor, sexual abuse, and child exploitation.¹⁷

On October 16, 2023, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, the World Childhood Foundation, and the Permanent Mission of Sweden to the United Nations hosted an event about placing child protection at the core of sustainable travel and tourism. During the meeting, it was emphasized that essential steps have been taken at the global, regional, and national levels to tackle violence, exploitation, and abuse in the context of travel and tourism. However, progress has yet to be made at the needed scale or speed. They urged countries to rethink travel and tourism to ensure that child protection is at the core of making the sector sustainable. The bodies recognized that the travel and tourism sector is crucial in supporting the livelihood and development of communities and states worldwide. They also emphasized the promotion of sustainable travel and tourism as an essential dimension of achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. At the end of the meeting, they urged countries to take action, as the ongoing increase in the number of travelers worldwide coincides with an increase in children's vulnerability to exploitation.¹⁸

Emerging Trends for Human Trafficking

Technology can be beneficial in lots of situations; however, in the case of human trafficking, it can be a threat. Recent reports highlight the role of online platforms in human trafficking. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), for example, found that in Myanmar, at least 120,000 people are held in vulnerable situations due to online platforms. There are an additional 100,000 people in vulnerable situations in Cambodia. These vulnerable situations involve being forced to perform lucrative online scams. These vary from illegal gambling to crypto fraud. People facing these

issues come mainly from China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, and South Asia.¹⁹

In 2023, emerging trends related to human trafficking and technology mainly involved casinos and online scamming. Countries such as Cambodia, the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), and Myanmar have taken advantage of constant unemployment to set up online scam operations. These use trafficked victims to perform criminal acts. People get involved in these activities because they are attracted by lucrative employment opportunities. However, human trafficking is only one type of transnational organized crime related to these illegal businesses. Digital fraud, extortion, money laundering, and corruption are only a few other examples. These illicit financial flows have grown so much that the governance and stability of the Asian region are being affected. Therefore, some Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) members have proposed a roadmap to improve their cooperation and coordination. This roadmap has four main pillars. The first is preventing organized crime from infiltrating communities, economies, and political institutions. The second is based on pursuing criminal groups and their illicit gains through judicial processes. This will increase businesses' accountability and reduce illegal operations. The third is to protect vulnerable people and victims from further harm. The last is to promote cooperation and partnerships on multiple levels.²⁰

The convergence of online activities with human trafficking comes from businesses needing to adapt to new situations and the rising unemployment crisis in the region. Some organized crime groups have engaged in cybercrimes in Southeast Asia. The enhanced law enforcement and regulatory pressures on the online casino industry in the region have forced criminal groups to adapt their operations. Many casino operators have moved their operation bases to countries with looser regulations, such as Cambodia, Lao PDR, the Philippines, and Myanmar. Other relevant regions with these emerging threats are Africa, Eastern Europe, and the Pacific. In these areas,

17 Mama Fatima Singhatheh, "Create child safe tourism for the planet and prosperity," UN Expert, September 26, 2023, <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/09/create-child-safe-tourism-planet-and-prosperity-un-expert>.

18 "Placing Child Protection at the Core of Sustainable Travel and Tourism | UN Web TV," Webtv.un.org, October 16, 2023, <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1k/k1k9vhs8qa>.

19 "Hundreds of thousands trafficked into online criminality across SE Asia," United Nations, August 29, 2023, <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/08/1140187>.

20 "ASEAN Member States and the People's Republic of China Regional Cooperation Roadmap," UNODC, September 2023, https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/Publications/2023/ASEAN_Member_States_and_the_Peoples_Republic_of_China_Roadmap.pdf.

groups have tried to legitimize their operations by making investments in licensed but unregulated offshore gambling companies. Youths are involved in these activities because they are facing unemployment. They are usually recruited via social media platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, Telegram, and WeChat. Cyber fraud victims are targeted using data from online data markets.²¹

Another impact technology has on this issue is directly related to artificial intelligence (AI). On one hand, AI is believed to help prevent the online exploitation of children. However, AI can produce more risks than benefits. For example, AI-generated images of child abuse are on the rise. These images normalize these acts and create challenges for law enforcement.²² A Stanford study showed that generated machine learning models can produce explicit content. These tools can alter benign images of clothed victims and remove them to create nude and vivid photos. The Internet Watch Foundation also released a report that shows the rise of AI-generated child sexual abuse images. The study found over 3,000 images on a

single dark web in a month. Since these materials are produced online, criminals can evade detection. Furthermore, AI's quick advancements can overwhelm efforts to combat child abuse online.²³ One software being misused is "Stable Diffusion," which was initially a tool to create art and graphics. Another example is "Patreon." This site requires consumers to pay for a subscription to access content. This is a major global concern, largely because no precedents exist for prosecuting these acts.²⁴ While AI is the cause of this issue, it can also be the solution. Using AI with a cloud storage capability can help investigators gain information on online child abuse in seconds. According to Jim Cole, a retired Homeland Security Investigations agent, from a research intelligence point of view, AI is valuable and efficient. Compared to manual ways, AI can go through a lot of data and get results more quickly. This helps catch more offenders and rescue more children.²⁵

Another trend that has been followed in the last few years is a technique known as "The Loverboy Method." Simply put, this method is based on using affection to attract victims. The

21 "Casinos, Money Laundering, Underground Banking, and Transnational Organized Crime in East and Southeast Asia," UNODC, January 2024, https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/Publications/2024/Casino_Underground_Banking_Report_2024.pdf.

22 "US-UK Alliance Takes a Stand Against AI-Generated Child Abuse Images," ADF Solutions, November 17, 2023, <https://www.adfsolutions.com/news/us-uk-alliance-takes-a-stand-against-ai-generated-child-abuse-images>.

23 David Thiel, "Identifying and Eliminating CSAM in Generative ML Training Data and Models," Stanford Digital Repository, December 23, 2023, https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:kh752sm9123/ml_training_data_csam_report-2023-12-23.pdf.

24 Elijah Clark, "Pedophiles Using AI To Generate child Sexual Abuse Imagery," Forbes, October 31, 2023, <https://www.forbes.com/sites/elijahclark/2023/10/31/pedophiles-using-ai-to-generate-child-sexual-abuse-imagery/?sh=3b61c4271656>.

25 Nikki Davidson, "AI-Powered Task Forces Tackle Online Child Exploitation," Government Technology, November 14, 2023, <https://www.govtech.com/public-safety/ai-powered-task-forces-tackle-online-child-exploitation>.

Artificial Intelligence
Credit: Pixabay



main target is young, vulnerable women and girls. Traffickers can be seductive and charming, making the victims feel good, attractive, and, in some cases, loved. Once offenders achieve this, they manipulate or force victims to participate in abusive activities. In many cases, the victims are taken to foreign countries away from emotional support networks of family and friends. Common signs of this technique are tailored affection, control techniques, gaslighting, isolation, and others. Tailored affection refers to copying the victim's body language and non-verbal cues or questioning their general interests. The control techniques can be leading the victims with lots of calls and texts and then being evasive to create feelings of loss and longing for the offender.²⁶ Agencies such as Europol have been able to save victims involved in this method of trafficking. In July 2023, after two years of investigating a criminal network involved in this type of exploitation, the Spanish National Police and the Romanian Police were able to dismantle it. These police departments received support from Europol and Eurojust. In this case, investigators were able to identify more than 25 victims involved and 10 suspects. These joint efforts led to 9 arrests made in Spain, 14 victims safeguarded in Spain, and 10 victims safeguarded in Romania.²⁷ This Europol case is an example of how, if implemented correctly, joint efforts can save victims of this type of online abuse and exploitation. Examples such as this show the possibility of achieving these victories in more regions based on their general jurisdictions.

The UNODC's Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2022 further emphasizes the need to address this issue. This report showed that there were 51,675 trafficking victims in 166 countries in 2020. Of those, 35 percent were children, 18 percent were girls, and 17 percent were boys. According to the Conference of the Parties (COP), these statistics emphasize the importance of creating gender-responsive and transformative approaches to tackle this issue. In addition, to adapt to every child's needs, these solutions should recognize different backgrounds, identities, and characteristics. South

Asia, Central America, and the Caribbean show more children trafficked into forced labor than any other region in the world. In these regions, most victims of child trafficking are girls. Other factors that increase a child's vulnerability to trafficking are poverty, illiteracy, and orphanhood. The report also found that in Bangladesh, children under the age of 12 are often recruited by traffickers for exploitation. Also, children who lack adult supervision are easier targets.²⁸

One final trend worth discussing is climate change. Activities that include environmental degradation, such as mining, fishing, logging, and more, can rely on forced child labor in many cases. Climate change can make communities vulnerable, and in these circumstances, communities are further exposed to the risk of exploitation or trafficking. The Philippines, for example, has faced many obstacles when trying to tackle human trafficking. In the Global Climate Risk Index, last released in 2021, the Philippines was ranked fourth on the list of countries most at risk of being affected by the side effects of climate change. In this area, extreme weather events like typhoons and heavy rains are expected. When facing a crisis like climate change, local communities become vulnerable to forced labor, child labor, sex trafficking, and online sexual exploitation of children (OSEC). In Filipino regions like Eastern Visayas and Caraga, forced labor was prevalent in the manufacturing, construction, and stream gold mining industries. Children in these areas are employed for long hours, paid very little, and exposed to harmful and dangerous conditions. Furthermore, this exploitation is not reported to authorities. This is because members of the community often accept child labor as a coping strategy that is inevitable. Recognizing that climate change increases the vulnerability of children and communities to human trafficking and exploitation is necessary to create effective solutions.²⁹

26 "The Loverboy Method: How to spot this human trafficking technique," Crime and Investigation, accessed January 19, 2024, <https://www.crimeandinvestigation.co.uk/articles/loverboy-method-how-spot-human-trafficking-technique>.

27 "Prolific love: fourteen young victims of 'lover boys' saved in Spain," Europol, December 13, 2023, <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/prolific-love-fourteen-young-victims-of-lover-boys-saved-in-spain>.

28 "Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime," October 3, 2023, United Nations Secretariat, https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/WG_TIP_2023/CTOC_COP_WG.4_2023_4/CTOC_COP_WG.4_2023_4_E.pdf.

29 Marta Furlan, "How climate change increases vulnerability to human trafficking in the Philippines," news release, December 11, 2023, <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/how-climate-change-increases-vulnerability-human-trafficking-philippines>.

Conclusion

Some countries and international organizations are stepping up to find solutions to decrease the number of children being exploited. As technology advances, it is imperative to consider both its benefits and harmful effects. On one hand, it uses surveillance and data analysis to create more efficient prosecutions. On the other hand, rapid development can make children more vulnerable to exploitation. Considering emerging trends is critical when building solutions.

When creating solutions, it is important to consider children's needs. In addition, international cooperation and partnerships with international organizations can be very beneficial. Another crucial factor that should not be overlooked is the relevance of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Many of the 17 goals are related to tackling child trafficking. No Poverty, Quality Education, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, and Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions are a few examples that are related to child trafficking.³⁰ The fight against child trafficking requires support from different countries and states. Every child deserves a free and secure future without the horrors of exploitation and trafficking.

³⁰ United Nations, "The 17 Goals," accessed January 20, 2024, <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.

Works Cited

Topic A

UN Sources

- IDPC. “CND 66th Session Reconvened,” 2023. <https://idpc.net/events/2023/07/cnd-66th-session-reconvenedOHCHR>.
- OHCHR. “End Overreliance on Punitive Measures to Address Drugs Problem – UN Report.” 2023. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/09/end-overreliance-punitive-measures-address-drugs-problem-un-report>.
- UNODC. “DPA Fact Sheet Approaches to Decriminalization.” Drug Policy Alliance. February 2015. https://www.unodc.org/documents/ungass2016/Contributions/Civil/DrugPolicyAlliance/DPA_Fact_Sheet_Approaches_to_Decriminalization_Feb2015_1.pdf.
- UNODC. “Number 6 ECONOMIC and SOCIAL CONSEQUENCES of DRUG ABUSE and ILLICIT TRAFFICKING.” 1998. https://www.unodc.org/pdf/technical_series_1998-01-01_1.pdf.

Non-UN Sources

- Acosta-Mares, Palmira, et al. “Xylazine potentiates the lethal but not the rewarding effects of fentanyl in mice.” *Drug and Alcohol Dependence* 253, no. 110993 (December 1, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.drugalcdep.2023.110993>.
- Addiction Center. “Drug Street Names.” October 26, 2023. <https://www.addictioncenter.com/drugs/drug-street-names/>.
- Amnesty International. “2023 World Day against the Death Penalty: End Unlawful and Discriminatory Death Penalty for Drug Related Offences.” 2023. <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ACT5072662023ENGLISH.pdf>.
- “Benzodiazepines.” Public Health Scotland. July 5, 2023. <https://publichealthscotland.scot/publications/rapid-action-drug-alerts-and-response-radar-alerts/radar-bromazolam-alert-2023/benzodiazepines/>.
- Btnx.com. “BTNX | Harm Reduction.” 2023. <https://www.btnx.com/category/Harm-Reduction>.
- Canadian, Royal. “Liaison Officers and Analysts | Royal Canadian Mounted Police.” Rcmp-grc.gc.ca. 2020. <https://www.rcmp-grc.gc.ca/en/liaison-officers-and-analysts>.
- CDC. “Understanding the Opioid Overdose Epidemic.” Last modified August 8, 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/opioids/basics/epidemic.html>.
- “DEA and DHS Issue Joint Update on Sources of Illicit Xylazine.” DEA. September 22, 2023. <https://www.dea.gov/stories/2023/2023-09/2023-09-22/dea-and-dhs-issue-joint-update-sources-illicit-xylazine>.
- DEA. “Five Synthetic Benzodiazepine Drugs Deemed Imminent Hazard to Public Safety.” September 25, 2023. <https://www.dea.gov/stories/2023/2023-09/2023-09-25/five-synthetic-benzodiazepine-drugs-deemed-imminent-hazard-public>.
- DrugAbuse.com. “Drug Laws around the World: Death Penalty for Drugs.” December 17, 2013. <https://drugabuse.com/blog/the-20-countries-with-the-harshesdrug-laws-in-the-world/>.
- Drug Policy Alliance. “DPA Fact Sheet Approaches to Decriminalization.” February 2015. <https://drugpolicy.org/issue/decriminalize-drugs-invest-in-health-services/>.
- European Commission. “Press Corner.” 2023. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_23_4983.
- European Commission. “Questions and Answers on the Communication on the EU Roadmap to fight Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime.” October 18, 2023. https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/qanda_23_4983.
- European Union. “Europol – Law Enforcement Cooperation | European Union.” 2023. https://european-union.europa.eu/institutions-law-budget/institutions-and-bodies/search-all-eu-institutions-and-bodies/europol_en.
- McSheffrey, Elizabeth. “It’s Been More than 6 Months of Drug Decriminalization in B.C. What’s Changed?” Global News., September 8, 2023. <https://globalnews.ca/news/9924506/drug-decriminalization-six-months-bc/>.

- Migration and Home Affairs. “New EU Roadmap Steps up the Fight against Drug Trafficking and Organised Crime.” October 18, 2023. https://home-affairs.ec.europa.eu/news/new-eu-roadmap-steps-fight-against-drug-trafficking-and-organised-crime-2023-10-18_eng.
- Ovalle, David, and John Hudson. “China Vows to Crack Down on Fentanyl Chemicals. The Impact Is Unclear.” *The Washington Post*. November 19, 2023. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/health/2023/11/19/china-fentanyl-crackdown/>.
- Reuters. “Colombian President Proposes Latin American Alliance to Transform ‘War on Drugs.’” September 9, 2023. <https://www.reuters.com/world/americas/colombian-president-proposes-latin-american-alliance-transform-war-drugs-2023-09-09/>.
- Ruiz-Colón, Kazandra, Carlos Chavez-Arias, José Eric Díaz-Alcalá, and María Antonia Martínez. “Xylazine Intoxication in Humans and Its Importance as an Emerging Adulterant in Abused Drugs: A Comprehensive Review of the Literature.” *Forensic Science International* 240 (July 1, 2014): 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.forsciint.2014.03.015>.
- Sabaghi, Dario. “Colombian President Proposes Latin Alliance to Shift War on Drugs towards Public Health Approach.” *Forbes*. September 12, 2023. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/dariosabaghi/2023/09/11/colombian-president-proposes-latin-alliance-to-shift-war-on-drugs-towards-public-health-approach/?sh=453cf68c12b4>.
- Samhsa.gov. “Harm Reduction.” 2023. <https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/harm-reduction>.
- Samhsa.gov. “Naloxone.” Last modified August 12, 2023. <https://www.samhsa.gov/medications-substance-use-disorders/medications-counseling-related-conditions/naloxone>.
- Spencer, Merianne, Jodi Cisewski, Margaret Warner, and Matthew Garnett. “Vital Statistics Rapid Release.” 2023. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/vsrr/vsrr030.pdf>.
- U.S. Department of the Treasury. “Treasury Targets Large Chinese Network of Illicit Drug Producers.” October 3, 2023. <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/jy1779>.
- United States Drug Enforcement Administration. *DEA Joint Intelligence Report the Growing Threat of Xylazine and Its Mixture with Illicit Drugs*. Springfield: DEA, 2022. <https://www.dea.gov/sites/default/files/2022-12/The%20Growing%20Threat%20of%20Xylazine%20and%20its%20Mixture%20with%20Illicit%20Drugs.pdf>.
- Unsw.edu.au. “Decriminalisation or Legalisation: Injecting Evidence in the Drug Law Reform Debate | NDARC - National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre.” 2023. <https://ndarc.med.unsw.edu.au/blog/decriminalisation-or-legalisation-injecting-evidence-drug-law-reform-debate>.
- Vakharia, Sheila P. “Decriminalization of Drug Possession in Oregon: Analysis and Early Lessons.” *Drug Science, Policy and Law* 9 (2023). <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/20503245231167407>.
- “Xylazine | National Institute on Drug Abuse.” National Institute on Drug Abuse. April 21, 2022. <https://nida.nih.gov/research-topics/xylazine>.

Topic B

UN Sources

- Singhateh, Mama Fatima. “Create child safe tourism for the planet and prosperity.” UN Expert. September 26, 2023. <https://www.ohchr.org/en/statements-and-speeches/2023/09/create-child-safe-tourism-planet-and-prosperity-un-expert>.
- United Nations. “Hundreds of thousands trafficked into online criminality across SE Asia.” August 29, 2023. <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/08/1140187>.
- United Nations. “The 17 Goals.” Accessed January 20, 2024. <https://sdgs.un.org/goals>.
- United Nations Secretariat. “Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime.” October 3, 2023. https://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/WG_TIP_2023/CTOC_COP_WG.4_2023_4/CTOC_COP_WG.4_2023_4_E.pdf.
- UNODC. “Casinos, Money Laundering, Underground Banking, and Transnational Organized Crime in East and Southeast

Asia.” January 2024. https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/Publications/2024/Casino_Underground_Banking_Report_2024.pdf.

UNODC. “ASEAN Member States and the People’s Republic of China Regional Cooperation Roadmap.” September 2023. https://www.unodc.org/roseap/uploads/documents/Publications/2023/ASEAN_Member_States_and_the_Peoples_Republic_of_China_Roadmap.pdf.

UNODC. “UNODC Shines Spotlight on Causes and Impact of Child Trafficking.” September 20, 2023. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/Webstories2023/unodc-shines-spotlight-on-causes-and-impact-of-child-trafficking.html>.

Webtv.un.org. “Placing Child Protection at the Core of Sustainable Travel and Tourism | UN Web TV.” October 16, 2023. <https://webtv.un.org/en/asset/k1k/k1k9vhs8qa>.

Non-UN Sources

“1 in 100 Children Sexually Exploited in Livestreams, New Abuse Images and Videos in the Philippines Last Year, Driven by Foreign Demand.” IJM USA. September 7, 2023. <https://www.ijm.org/news/1-in-100-children-sexually-exploited-livestreams-new-abuse-images-videos-philippines-last-year-driven-by-foreign-demand>.

Adawiyah, Rabiyyatul. “Human Trafficking and Sex Trafficking in Cambodia as a Threat to Human Security.” *Modern Diplomacy*. November 3, 2023. <https://moderndiplomacy.eu/2023/11/03/human-trafficking-and-sex-trafficking-in-cambodia-as-a-threat-to-human-security/>.

ADF Solutions. “US-UK Alliance Takes a Stand Against AI-Generated Child Abuse Images.” November 17, 2023. <https://www.adfsolutions.com/news/us-uk-alliance-takes-a-stand-against-ai-generated-child-abuse-images>.

Castillo, Lorena. “Prostitution In Thailand Statistics.” *Gitnux Marketdata Report 2024*. Last modified December 16, 2023. <https://gitnux.org/prostitution-in-thailand-statistics/>.

Clark, Elijah. “Pedophiles Using AI To Generate child Sexual Abuse Imagery.” *Forbes*. October 31, 2023. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/elijahclark/2023/10/31/pedophiles-using-ai-to-generate-child-sexual-abuse-imagery/?sh=3b61c4271656>.

Crime and Investigation. “The Loverboy Method: How to spot this human trafficking technique.” Accessed January 19, 2024. <https://www.crimeandinvestigation.co.uk/articles/loverboy-method-how-spot-human-trafficking-technique>.

Davidson, Nikki. “AI-Powered Task Forces Tackle Online Child Exploitation.” *Government Technology*. November 14, 2023. <https://www.govtech.com/public-safety/ai-powered-task-forces-tackle-online-child-exploitation>.

Dunyak, Talia. “Tourism and Trafficking.” *Human Trafficking Search*. June 22, 2021. <https://humantraffickingsearch.org/tourism-and-trafficking/>.

Europol. “Prolific love: fourteen young victims of ‘lover boys’ saved in Spain.” December 13, 2023. <https://www.europol.europa.eu/media-press/newsroom/news/prolific-love-fourteen-young-victims-of-lover-boys-saved-in-spain>.

Frackiewicz, Marcin. “How Does Tourism Affect Human Trafficking?” *TS2 SPACE*. November 25, 2023. <https://ts2.space/en/how-does-tourism-affect-human-trafficking/>.

Furlan, Marta. “How climate change increases vulnerability to human trafficking in the Philippines.” News release. December 11, 2023. <https://reliefweb.int/report/philippines/how-climate-change-increases-vulnerability-human-trafficking-philippines>.

Kong..” *Confronting Thailand’s Epidemic of Child Sex Trafficking.* *Dimsum Daily*. December 1, 2023. <https://www.dimsumdaily.hk/confronting-thailands-epidemic-of-child-sex-trafficking/>.

Minh. “Thailand surpassed the milestone of welcoming 23 million international visitors.” *VN Express Vietnam*. November 11, 2023. <https://www.vietnam.vn/en/thai-lan-vuot-moc-don-23-trieu-luot-khach-quoc-te/>.

The HUG Project. “The HUG Project - Protecting Thai Children from Sexual Abuse and Online Sex Trafficking.” Accessed

December 27, 2023. <https://www.hugproject.org>.

Thiel, David. "Identifying and Eliminating CSAM in Generative ML Training Data and Models." Stanford Digital Repository. December 23, 2023. https://stacks.stanford.edu/file/druid:kh752sm9123/ml_training_data_csam_report-2023-12-23.pdf.

Tourism Teacher. "What is orphanage tourism and why is it BAD?" Last modified August 19, 2023. <https://tourismteacher.com/orphanage-tourism/>.

Trauner, Anna. "Human Beings to Buy and Sell: Pedocriminal Sex Tourists in Cambodia." Hope for the Future. September 13, 2023. <https://www.hopeforthefuture.at/en/human-beings-to-buy-and-sell-pedocriminal-sex-tourists-in-cambodia/>.

van Doore, Katherine, and Nhep, Rebecca. "Orphanage Tourism and Orphanage Volunteering: Implications for Children." *Frontiers in Sustainable Tourism* 2 (November 15, 2023). <https://doi.org/10.3389/frsut.2023.1177091>.

Zaffar, Hanan. "Despite Laws, Child Prostitution Thrives in Thailand." FairPlanet.

September 2, 2023. <https://www.fairplanet.org/editors-pick/despite-prohibition-child-prostitution-thrives-in-thailand/>.

The National High School Model United Nations Conference (NHSMUN) is a project of IMUNA, a non-profit organization formally associated with the United Nations Department of Global Communications (UNDGC). IMUNA is dedicated to promoting global issues education through simulation.

Written by Mackenzie Boilard, Nicole Pilliod, and Sofia Syzonenko
Edited by Ana Margarita Gil, Christian Hernandez, Nicole Pilliod,
Rekha Marcus, Therese Salomone, and Zaheer Sooliman
© 2023 IMUNA. All Rights Reserved.

