

Surf City XIX

Huntington Beach High School

UNODC

Topic A: *Combatting the Expansion of Organized Crime in Southeast Asia*

Topic B: *Organ Trafficking in the Middle East*



Welcome Letter

Dear Delegates,

On behalf of the Huntington Beach High School Model United Nations Program, we would like to welcome you to our Surf City XIX advanced conference!

Our annual Surf City conference upholds the principles and intended purpose of the United Nations. Delegates can expect to partake in a professional, well-run debate that simulates the very issues that those at the United Nations discuss every day. Both novel and traditional ideas will be shared, challenged, and improved.

It is our hope that all delegates will receive the opportunity to enhance their research, public speaking, and communication skills as they explore the intricacies of global concerns through various perspectives, some of which may be very different from their own. We hope their experiences here give them new insight and values that they can apply outside of the realm of Model UN for the betterment of the world community.

Please do not hesitate to approach our Secretariat or Staff Members with any questions or concerns that you may have throughout the day. We wish the best to all our participants and hope that they may share a fulfilling experience with us!

Enjoy the conference!

Sincerely,



Zach Bernstein
Secretary General



Vivian Bui
Secretary General



Lauren Le
Secretary General



Alison Miu-Martinez
Secretary General

Meet The Dais

Evan Riederich

What's up delegates! My name is Evan Riederich and I am currently a senior at Huntington Beach High School. I have done MUN all four years here and am super excited to be given the opportunity to chair for you all! Besides MUN, I play football and have been a two time team captain for the HBHS football team. I also tutor many of the kids on the team and some other students. When I am not busy with the listed activities, I enjoy working out, playing games with my little brother, and going to the park. I am super excited to see how you guys creatively solved these issues and wish you all the best of luck!

Lena Blankenbaker

Hello Delegates! My name is Lena Blankenbaker and I am currently a senior here at Huntington Beach High School. This is my fourth year in MUN and I am so excited to be chairing your committee! Outside of MUN, I swim for the school team, as captain, and swim for a club. I am also involved in many clubs at the school such as National Honors Society, Robotics, and Humanitarian Helpers. In my free time I love to read, watch TV series (New Girl is my favorite), hang out with my friends, and go to the beach. I am so excited to see you guys in committee and wish you the best of luck!

Max Duong

Hello Delegates, my name is Max Duong and I am currently a senior at Huntington Beach High School. I am delighted to be back in person, excitedly awaiting to attend and chair, Surf City XIX. Besides devoting my entire being into Model United Nations, I enjoy doing activities such as, listening to Bruno Mars' "An Evening with Silk Sonic," snowboarding, and watching movies. I involve myself in many clubs on campus, which include the SAT Prep Club, Red Cross, Key Club, and the Boys' League. Overall, I am extremely enthusiastic for our upcoming debate and wishing success for all of you!

All Papers are due on **JANUARY 30, 2022** by 11:59pm to
surfcity.unodc@gmail.com

Topic A: Combatting the Expansion of Organized Crime in Southeast Asia

Background

Southeast Asia consists of eleven countries, including, Indonesia, Thailand, Myanmar (Burma), Brunei, Cambodia, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Vietnam, Timor-Leste, and Laos.¹ Since many of these nations are still developing, there are high rates of organized crime due to the lack of border security and increase in the mobility of organized crime groups. The UN has estimated that the Southeast Asia region produces over 100 billion dollars per year through various forms of trafficking, including drug, human, wildlife, and timber. As of today, the most prevalent forms of organized crime in Southeast Asia are the counterfeiting goods, drug trafficking, money laundering, wildlife trafficking, human trafficking, and the smuggling of migrants.²

In Southeast Asia, illicit drugs have become extremely profitable as organized crime groups have created an expansion to the methamphetamine exchange. The methamphetamine market alone is estimated to produce around 61.4 billion dollars every year, a significant increase from 2013, when the estimate was 15 million dollars annually. In just one year, from 2019 to 2020, the estimated weight of methamphetamine flowing through Southeast Asia went up 20%, reaching 170 tons in 2020.³ From 2016 to 2019, Thailand saw a significant increase in the number of individuals who use crystal methamphetamines, and according to data from Malaysia and Cambodia, the price of this drug is actually decreasing. One of the main contributors to this is the strict law enforcement in China causing drug trafficking groups to relocate to the Southeast Asia region, specifically Myanmar. Additionally, because Thailand and Laos have little control over some areas of their borders, due to an inadequate infrastructure in Laos, it allows for the flow of drugs from Myanmar. The heroin market is also prevailing in this region at an estimated 10.3 billion dollars every year of profits.⁴ The golden triangle of synthetic drug producers consists of Thailand, Myanmar, and Laos, exporting all the way to countries such as New Zealand, the United States and Australia. In fact, more than half of the existing illegal heroin has come from the Golden Triangle. Though Covid-19 has caused the economy to slow down, the methamphetamine trade in the area increased substantially during the pandemic.

Human trafficking also plays a big role in organized crime in Southeast Asia, particularly, the trafficking of young girls for the purpose of sexual exploitation, forced marriage, or even to take one's virginity. Human trafficking, in Southeast Asia is more contained since the victims come from the less developed countries, such as Cambodia, and are transported to the more developed countries such as Thailand. Migrant smuggling is the illegal entry of an individual across an international border, violating one or more of the nation's laws. Migrant smuggling is also primarily confined to Southeast Asia and has been prevalent since the 1980s in this region. The rapid growth of economies in some nations has encouraged the smuggling of migrants, for the majority are coming from neighboring countries that are not experiencing the same economic growth. About half a million migrants from Myanmar, Cambodia, and Laos are smuggled into Thailand every year.⁵ Many individuals turn to smuggling services, rather than formal labor migration systems, as it is a much quicker and cheaper process, with prices ranging from just a few dollars to a few hundred dollars. The smuggling of migrants generates two billion dollars in revenue per year in this region.⁶ However, migrants that are smuggled can experience extreme

dangers, as they become more likely to be trafficked and/or abused. Due to corruption in the region, migrant smugglers are often able to bribe border officials to get through customs easily. Law enforcement corruption in the area is allowing the number of smuggled migrants in Southeast Asia to significantly increase every year.⁷

Money laundering is another extreme issue in this area as a result of corrupt legal frameworks, powerless border controls, inefficient regulatory mechanisms, and an absence of law enforcement. Casinos in Southeast Asia are spreading and being established as money laundering sights. There are currently over 230 registered casinos in this region, but the UN has reported that a majority of them are not well regulated and are located in areas of significant political corruption.⁸ Of the 230 casinos, 150 of them are located in Cambodia and 67 are located in the Philippines.⁹ There are three stages in the process of money laundering: placement, layering, and integration. The first stage, placement, consists of moving money obtained by illegal activities to acquire funds that can be used without raising suspicions from law enforcement. The second stage, layering, is hiding the trail of money, and the last stage, integration, is making the funds seem available from sources that are “legitimate”.¹⁰ Organized crime groups sometimes repeat a stage many times or combine stages in order to filter out any rising suspicions of money laundering. Out of all the countries in the world, Myanmar ranks number three for the most money laundering with Laos coming in behind, ranking in at number four.¹¹

Another form of trafficking that takes place in Southeast Asia is wildlife trafficking, which is the illegal trade of wildlife/protected species and their related products. A report that came out in 2020 stated that around 900,000 pangolins, 200 tonnes of elephant ivory, and 100,000 pig-nosed turtles were trafficked in Southeast Asia, primarily in Malaysia in the past decade.¹² Inadequate laws, low conviction rates, and lacking regulation of markets are all responsible for the exponential increase in wildlife trafficking. Southeast Asia is responsible for over 25% of the global request for illegal wildlife products, as well as acts as a transit for this trafficking. The wildlife trade creates a serious threat to a loss in biodiversity and contributes to the global extinction crisis.¹³

Lastly, the creation of counterfeit goods continues to be a widespread problem in Southeast Asia. “Counterfeit” is used to describe products that are unlicensed or not branded properly, or a product made to imitate a different product with the purpose of deceiving. Between the years of 2014 and 2016, half of the countries located in Southeast Asia were ranked in the top 25 economies that have benefitted, and will continue to benefit from the expansion and use of counterfeit and pirated goods.¹⁴ Counterfeiters have taken advantage of the Covid-19 pandemic, as many more people began buying counterfeit goods, since there is a shortage of branded goods and services. Covid-19 has also encouraged online shopping, in which there is currently counterfeited goods already being sold on social media, e-commerce sites, and more.¹⁵ The most important counterfeit good to recognize is counterfeit medicines being produced in Southeast Asia. In 2019, UNODC identified Vietnam, Indonesia, Thailand, and the Philippines as being transit points for fraudulent medicines. Additionally, in 2003, 79% of anti-malarial medications in Cambodia and 90% in Laos were found to be falsified.¹⁶ Furthermore, in 2017, the World Health Organization found that 10.5% of pharmaceutical drugs were fake/substandard in low income countries in Southeast Asia. Asia is responsible for the largest number of counterfeit drugs in the world, according to the Pharmaceutical Security Institute. In 2009, 20 million pills were seized in Southeast Asia for being counterfeit by the International Criminal Police Organization. These pills actually contained antibiotics, antimonials, and birth control medications. Not only do the countries within Southeast Asia contribute to the increase in

counterfeit medicines but Myanmar, Vietnam, and Thailand all play major roles in the transit points for counterfeit pharmaceuticals.¹⁷

United Nations Involvement

The United Nations has a long history in attempting to combat the ever growing issue of organized crime, first addressing the issue in 1985 when they passed resolution 40/34. This resolution adopted the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power, which worked to improve the juvenile system in areas of high conflict to effectively prosecute those playing a part in organized crime¹⁸. Then in 2000, the UN passed resolution 55/25, which has grown to be the primary international instrument in addressing transnational organized crime.¹⁹ This resolution established the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, which over the past two decades has worked to incorporate new legal frameworks, legal assistance for adolescents, and the increased training of national authorities. Many protocols following, such as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons in 2003, have been adopted by this resolution and put into effect, representing a major progression in the fight against transnational organized crime.²⁰

To specifically address the organized crime partaking in Southeast Asia, the UNODC created the Regional Programme and Strategy for Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia.²¹ This programme works with all nations in the area to combat the issues and threats that contribute greatly to organized crime such as: trafficking of illicit drugs, trafficking of persons, smuggling of migrants, counterfeiting of goods, human and wildlife trafficking, amongst a variety of other issues. These issues are being addressed through collaboration with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, which is helping significantly with their ASEAN Connectivity 2025 Plan.²² This plan is significantly helping lower rates of organized crime since it entails incorporation of digital technologies, a sustainable infrastructure, and seamless logistics, all of which significantly increase the amount of data and surveillance in the area, making it more easily accessible for governments. In addition, the UN has been working on implementing resolution 9/1 in the region, which entails the advancement of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Moreover, resolution 9/1 plans to encourage international cooperation and collaboration, supply assistance to nations upon request, and record any significant pieces of data that can aid in formation of a more cohesive protocol.²³ To address the issues of human, wildlife, and drug trafficking, UNODC has worked to enhance border security in this region by providing training programs for staff to be equipped with the specific skills they necessitate. By doing so, they have also significantly increased data collection, simultaneously strengthening partnerships amongst nations in the region. To prevent the recruitment of children into organized crime groups in the region, the UN passed A/RES/54/263, which establishes a minimum age for direct and indirect participation in organized crime groups.²⁴

To sufficiently enforce international laws and assist national police, the UN created the United Nations Police Division. This body works closely with the UNODC, the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), ASEAN, and other member states of the UN to design effective and sustainable solutions to the crimes and threats that organized crime brings forward.²⁵ This body works through the formation of an active Crime Intelligence Virtual Working Group (CIVWG) consisting of experts brought together by the UN to establish and create sufficient crime intelligence structures.

In all, the United Nations recognizes that the issue of organized crime in southeast Asia is a multifaceted issue and has worked incredibly hard to combat many aspects of the issue over the past thirty years.

Case Study: Myanmar (Burma)

Organized crime groups in Myanmar are currently operating a multi-billion dollar industry that is spanning across the entirety of the southeastern Asian nations.²⁶ There are many aspects that contribute greatly to this absurdly dominant industry, including the practices of: trafficking humans, wildlife, drugs, gems, timber, and other contrabands.²⁷ Each of these practices have become such a dominant industry within the nation of Myanmar that a variety of nations including China, Thailand, India, Laos, Bangladesh, Vietnam, Indonesia, South Korea, Cambodia, and even the United States have begun to demand the contraband they provide. There is a deep history and complexity to the rapid and powerful development of organized crime within Myanmar.²⁸

In order to begin to understand how organized crime has become so prevalent within Myanmar, one must understand how it developed. It all began in 1962 when the reign of Buddhist Marxism was at its peak. General Ne Win led a revolution and dismantled the current democracy ruling over Myanmar, abolished the constitution in place, and established a cruel military order in the region.²⁹ Following his abolishment of the democracy, Ne Win incorporated a form of socialism that resulted in insufficient economic policies that completely dismantled the economic growth of Myanmar. Since they were enduring severe economic issues, the majority of rice farmers were forced to move to the northern area of the Shan State, whose only growable crop was opium at the time, which greatly contributed to the rise of drug influence and current availability of it in the region. In addition to the economic struggles, there was also immense corruption that began, which has carried over into the present day. When Ne Win led the revolution, he initiated a new junta (military group), the Tatmadaw, to come in and replace the old junta. With the initiation of the Tatmadaw, human rights abuse, violence, black market participation, extrajudicial killing, and torture all exponentially increased. This reign of terror lasted for nearly thirty years until 1990 when the international community pressured Myanmar to hold a free and fair election for the first time since the revolution. National League for Democracy candidate Aung San Suu Kyi won the election by a drastic margin, but this only accelerated the corruption occurring in the state. The Tatmadaw refused to accept the election results and ordered the arrest and torture of all who contributed to the political campaign of Suu Kyi. Alongside this they also “passed” laws that restricted Myanmar citizens and their rights to freedom of speech and assembly. These clear signs of corruption angered the citizens of Myanmar and led to the rise of many insurgent groups, resulting in the passing of a ceasefire of the Myanmar government, attempting to prevent a Civil War from erupting. This ceasefire entailed a law that allowed insurgency groups and Tatmadaw to create partnerships, jumpstarting the trade of illegal goods across southeastern Asian nations.³⁰ The history behind what allowed the growth and prevalence of organized crime is essential, for it can help broaden a delegates ideas and topics they should address. Some topics include: how to address political corruption, what national policies can be incorporated in the southeastern Asian region to prevent a civil war/infighting, how can farmers be provided sustainable income besides the growth of opium poppy, all just as a starting place.

Now that the history of organized crime in Myanmar is established, the current state of organized crime can be more comprehensively analyzed. First, one must understand how armed

groups in the region have created and kept a sufficient criminal network that stretches from India to Malaysia and up into China. The main operating force in Myanmar, as of the current age, is the State Peace and Development Council (SPDC). This has allowed organized crime groups to operate with no threat of prosecution from the government, which has granted them the opportunity to grow with no chance of punishment.³¹ To prove this, studies conducted by the State Department showed that the largest organized criminal group in Myanmar, UWSA, currently rules the Shan State with a militia containing 16,000-20,000 members.³² In many nations, governmental action would likely take place, but the SPDC of Myanmar has not, and will not take action. By controlling the Shan State the UWSA is able to have heavy influence in production of illicit opium production, for they provide 80% of illicit opium in the region. The trafficking and smuggling of illicit goods, such as drugs, is made possible through the official corruption of army and police personnel involved in border patrol/security. Not only do they not sufficiently patrol the borders, the International Narcotics Control Report states that Myanmar armed forces are directly involved in the cultivation of opium poppy in the Shan State.³³ The corrupt forces also take advantage of the peasants and poor, since organized crime groups collaborate with the armed forces of the government to find willing recruits in populations living under the poverty line. The Asian Development Bank declared in a study that 27% of the Myanmar population is living below the poverty line, and went even further to clarify that peasant farmers, rural hunters, and other people living in poverty were the base of Myanmar's international crime network.³⁴ Not only do they aid in the growing of opium poppy seeds, but they also contribute to the illegal poaching of exotic species and serve as mules for contraband of these groups. By recognizing the corruption and regional influence on organized crime groups, delegates can broaden their views to resolve the current state of organized crime. One should consider how to aid those in poverty, along with those corrupted within the armed forces and border patrol groups.

To reduce organized crime in the area, nations such as the United States have taken various actions in an attempt to reduce corruption in the region which had adverse effects. The United States arranged sanctions and embargoes to be placed on Myanmar, but instead of resulting in less corruption within the region, it only amplified it.³⁵ By imposing sanctions on the region, the United States caused the economy to not fail, but rather become dependent on the organized crime groups and their illicit activities. One should view this as an example of what not to do and stimulate thinking of other policies that can be incorporated usefully in the region.

Despite the various governmental and economic issues within their own borders, the regional demand for contraband produced by the Myanmar organized crime groups is incredibly high, which allows corruption in neighboring nations as they necessitate the illicit goods coming from Myanmar. The absolute dominance of organized crime in Myanmar and the production of their contraband has allowed a sense of disrespect for law and human rights to bolster across the southeastern asian nations.³⁶

Questions to Consider

1. How can the international community improve previous resolutions and projects to successfully counter the trafficking of children, firearms, drugs, and timber?
2. What roles do specific nations play in this issue? What policies and solutions can be incorporated into the most troubled nations to help resolve this issue?
3. What previous actions has your nation taken to address organized crime? Did it work? Can it be incorporated in the Southeast Asia region?
4. How does political corruption negatively inhibit nations from addressing the issue at hand?
5. How can the UNODC and other UN entities be utilized in this region to specifically address all factors of the issue?
6. How can nations ensure the safety of civilians within these nations?

Endnotes

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Topic B: Organ Trafficking in the Middle East

Background

In 1954, the first human organ transplant was successfully performed on a living patient — transforming the medical field and its studies.³⁷ Through this breakthrough, the prevention and treatment of rejection from transplants has only improved and increased in demand. This has led to the development of pressing dilemmas and challenges of both ethical and legal means in the international scope.

With the purpose of organ removal, the growth of human trafficking has exponentially increased in the past decades. In recognition of it being one of the fastest-growing transnational organized crime markets, it stands out to be a leading factor in organ trafficking, human enslavement, forced labor, rape, violation and abuse, ostracism, and deficiencies in living skills.³⁸ In respect to the International Labor Organization (ILO), it estimates traffickers generate about \$150.2 billion through their human market transactions.³⁹ In the present day, 21 million men, women, and children are subjected to human trafficking; the ILO stating that even more remain unaccounted for. For a majority, their unfortunate circumstances such as poverty, unemployment, displacement, lack of knowledge or experience, coming from broken families, and/or cultural practice differences, have greatly perpetuated their victimization in human trafficking.⁴⁰ In the Asia-Pacific region, nearly 11.7 million of the victims stem from there and finance \$51.8 billion of the total enterprise.⁴¹ Therefore, with this in mind, human trafficking enables a growing prevalence in terrorist and insurgent movements that ultimately spread fear and alarm across the world.

Organ trafficking is a phenomenon that sources crude, immoral methods in order to attain illegally harvested or transported organs. In the United States alone, organ trafficking generated an estimated \$840 million to \$1.7 billion annually — deriving from 12,000 illegal transplants.⁴² Frequently, the top priority in these illegal or legal organ markets is to obtain “sales” for kidneys, livers, hearts, lungs, and pancreases.⁴³ Among these organs, kidneys are the most typical to be sold through illegal or legal pipelines and are usually the least expensive on the black market. Through these pipelines, kidneys are commonly received and harvested from living donors with or without their consent. By using discrete, black market operations, illegal organ trafficking is tremendously difficult for authorities to detect and track.⁴⁴ Their integral chain of command maintains confidentiality of their dealings, with brokers and vendors organizing recruitment of vendors, recipients, and medical professionals. Essentially, organ trafficking encourages corruption in talented workers in the medical field, as well as instilling positions of power for profiteering government officials. In many reported cases, organ traffickers coerce incoming migrants and refugees from displaced regions, threatening them of their freedom, in exchange for their kidneys. Displaying that, whether or not organ donations are performed willingly or unwillingly, the illicit trade is deeply rooted in monetary gain and causing harm to others.

Moreover, in established countries and partially recognized states such as China, India, and the Republic of Kosovo, the forcible removal of a person’s organs to later be used in non-consensual transplants is known as organ theft.⁴⁵ China reported that in their hospitals,

anonymous organ donations occur more rapidly than official organ donations. It was subsequently investigated by the U.S. House of Representatives and the European Parliament, suspecting and discovering that China had been harvesting the organs of prisoners. In 2015, the allegations from the U.S. and EU cracked down on China's inhumane punishments against convicts and enforced severe regulatory standards on organ procurement.⁴⁶ In contrast to China's failure in securely surveilling organ trade, the United States heavily oversees its surgical removal and transportation of organs. Through the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), it prevents the unethical allocation of donors' organs. However, organ availability for patients is limited and insufficient. As of 2021, the U.S.'s national waiting list for organ transplantation is approximately 107,000 people.⁴⁷ Despite every single one of them requiring a replacement, only 34,000 patients received a transplant. Considering this, that means an estimated amount of 20 patients die each day, as they seemingly have to wait for UNOS' decision for them to live or die. As a result, ethical debate and controversy shroud the topic of organ procurement and how it should be handled.

In the Middle East, over 5 million refugees are potentially vulnerable to the exploitation of organ trafficking. In 2019, towards the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the human organ trade in the Middle East produced \$600 million to \$1.2 billion annually.⁴⁸ According to Global Financial Integrity, refugees within displaced regions in Yemen and Israel exceedingly are made into victims and targets for this "red market" that the people dubbed⁴⁹. Whilst battling hunger, poor living conditions, and anxiety for what the future entails, displaced refugees desperately look for a way to escape⁵⁰. For this reason, agents of organ trafficking attempt to coerce their victims with false promises in order to exploit and manipulate refugees. Some of which include safe passage to Europe or sending exorbitant amounts of money in return. As the numbers continue to drastically increase, more of these unfortunate people are tricked with promises for a brighter future.

Additionally, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) disclosed that suspicious activities of organ trafficking have occurred within Syria for the last 6 years⁵¹. The history and conflict of Syria decimated the population with 2 million people, preparing them to be prey for human trafficking, organ trafficking, or mental abuse. Within other organ trafficking hotspots in the Middle East, Lebanon and Yemen extensively involve themselves on the red market. In a recent survey taken by The International Rescue Committee, Lebanese refugee camps are filled with deceitful recruiters scouting for minors. Through these means, these traffickers are searching for potentially, qualifying children with healthy organs to be harvested.⁵² Comparably in Yemen, countless nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) direct their attention to how Yemen's conflicts cause lawlessness, chaos, and a receding economy which then affects people resolving to organ harvesting. According to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC), organ donors in Yemen do not even receive payment or improve their lives with said payments. From a multitude of accounts, victims of organ trafficking suffer post-medical issues from their improper surgery and harvest.

Nonetheless, in the Middle East, Bahrain has shown to keep up with the international expectation to report to the U.S. State Department's Tier 1 on human and organ trafficking trends. The Bahrain government consistently attempts to fight against any type of trafficking through passing laws, victim detection systems, and forming partnerships with NGOs. Besides this, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and Chief of Mission of IOM in the Kingdom of Bahrain — Mohammed El-Zarkani — founded the Regional Center for Excellence against Human Trafficking, to tackle red market issues at all local and regional levels. His mission with this committee is to develop and gather a strong curriculum based on the training of government

officials, private sector representatives, civil society associations, and healthcare professionals. By doing so, it will focus all efforts against organ trafficking and its counterparts.

United Nations Involvement

The United Nations has made numerous efforts to put an end to organ trafficking through producing resolutions, collaborating with member states, and the creation of conventions. In 2005, the UN passed A/RES/59/156 for the purpose of preventing organ trafficking and strengthening cooperation between member states. This resolution specifically urges that member states share information and experience concerning punishing the removal of human organs with other member states. It also encourages that the secretary-general works with the states and other organizations to create a study of the phenomenon of organ trafficking. This resolution overall improved transparency and cooperation between nations as well as with smaller non-governmental organizations. ⁵³

More recently, in 2019, the UN passed A/RES/73/189 in which an outline was created showing how to strengthen and advocate for more efficient measures and encourage better cooperation between nations regarding organ donations. The UN believes that through stronger cooperation for organ donations, the trafficking of individuals for the use of their organs can be better prevented. This resolution also pressed for member states to adopt the numerous actions in conformity with their legislation. These include: the strengthening of already existing legislative frameworks, creating measures to ensure that organ donations are led by clinical criteria, developing a regulatory surveillance of medical facilities, and providing medical assistance for living donors. A/RES/73/189 expresses the importance of maximizing organ donations by creating strategies to decrease the chance of diseases resulting from transplantation. This document gives focus to border security as well, requesting that member nations provide the necessary training for border officials and law enforcement when looking to identify potential cases of trafficking. This resolution led to better coordination and cooperation from member states when adding new actions to legislation to addressing the problem of organ trafficking ⁵⁴

Furthermore, the UN has expressed great concern for China in the fight against organ trafficking. There has been evidence that China is holding minorities in detention camps and that organ trafficking is taking place within them. The minorities are forced to take blood tests and have their organs examined so this data can be put into a database of living organ supply. In 2006 the UN sent experts to speak with the Chinese government on the issue at hand. When the Chinese government showed a lack of data for these accusations, the UN experts went back the next year in 2007. These experts have encouraged China to respond to these accusations in order to allow independent monitoring. This has not worked, however, as China has neglected the concern of the UN and has not taken any action to combat the issue. ⁵⁵

Lastly, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been working to assist nations to ratify and enforce the UN Protocol on Trafficking in Persons. UNODC is working to build networks by creating partnerships with both governmental and non-governmental organizations to investigate trafficking crimes through a joint effort. One of the most important jobs that they integrate is helping countries draft and develop legislation to efficiently end organ trafficking. Additionally, UNODC has supplied nations with studies and research that is both up to date and supported through evidence. ⁵⁶ UNODC also provides training to individuals to carry out the prosecution and conviction of traffickers in order to support victims. Through the services they have worked to provide, UNODC has been able to support collaborations, such as the partnership between Iraq and European nations, to exchange

information regarding the criminal networks that exist between Iraq and the borders of European countries. Austria is specifically a significant country when it comes to organ trafficking as a result of its location. In June of 2021, Iraq officials began working with the Austrian police officials to gain training (also in collaboration with UNODC experts) to further investigate human trafficking.⁵⁷

Case Study: Iran

As the global demand for healthy, properly functioning organs expands, the allocation and supply for them are increasingly becoming more difficult to source. With the addition of a worldwide shortage of these indispensable body parts, donated kidneys are evolving to have the potential to transform into commercial assets. The advocacy of financial payments and benefits being given to donors is discussed throughout Iran, however, it does question ethical means.⁵⁸ In recent years, the rise of health tourism has occurred, where patients are willing to abandon their domestic lives in order to receive the necessary surgery or transplant in a foreign country. By doing this practice, it advertently causes medical professionals to violate and ignore their duties as healthcare providers to those needing immediate attention. To prevent these burdensome decisions from being made, the Declaration of Istanbul in 2008, outlined the guidelines for organ trafficking and transplantation. Thus, making the commercial trade of human organs outlawed in all countries with the exception of the Middle Eastern country of Iran. Hence, widespread discussion about the legality and regulation of organ trade is debated; neither aspect finding a conclusive compromise against illegal trafficking and the organ shortage.

Across all established nations, the country of Iran is the only one to be internationally recognized and approved to provide and sell organs in exchange for currency.⁵⁹ Supported by this healthcare model, Iran does not require or need patients to apply for a waiting list, as well as, fear shortages in organs. In contrast to developed countries, Iran avoids any complications that the U.S. or EU may come across and does not struggle with failure to keep up with transplant queues. Before following Iran's current "successful" model, it lacked the proper infrastructure and healthcare system to efficiently support organ transplants in the early 1980s. After a few more years, the Muslim Law Council of Great Britain issued approval of a fatwa: smiling upon the practice of transplanting organs. Through this religious act, Iran became a commonplace for operations and transplants. By legislating policies towards living non-related donations (LNRD) of clients' kidneys, the country's possibilities opened up.⁶⁰ In April 2000, a law in Iran was passed by parliament, stating that the procurement of organs could be ethically-approved if patients were deemed clinically brain-dead or registered to be donor-compensated transplants. Thereby, allowing even additional organs to be harvested and procured for patients in desperate assistance. Moreover, through Iran's establishment of the Charity Association for the Support of Kidney Patients (CASKP) and the Charity Foundation for Special Diseases (CFSD), the flow and management of organ transportation became streamlined.⁶¹ The Ministry of Health also oversees the regulation of trade for organs in cooperation with CASKP and CFSD.

In reference to Iranian government assistance, supporters of organ donations are provided tax credit compensation, free health care insurance, and are nearly always compensated for their donation — an average amount evaluating to \$1200. Luckily, these nonprofit organizations also give job opportunities to donors to encourage economic self-sufficiency and build upon a future for themselves.⁶² Furthermore, by maintaining this joint system, Iran is able to keep kidney prices at an affordable \$2000 to \$4000. In comparison, on the black market, the same kidney is valued at over \$160,000 and the proceeds are transferred to the middlemen, not the donor. Not

only does Iran prioritize patients' health and safety, but they also care for personal security as well. The installation of non-disclosure agreements obscure the chance for corruption or inequality being present; keeping it completely anonymous from the transplant center and transplant medical professionals, to ensure the process of identifying vendors is impossible. In spite of taking these measures Iran does have restrictions in place on the commercial sale of organs. Firstly, Iran strictly conducts a "no-compromise" policy where foreigners are unable to access or purchase organs from Iranian citizens. The purpose is to combat and limit the upcoming climb of health tourism. Secondly, Iran prohibits Iranian citizens from receiving organs from outside their nationality. It may be cruel and unfair, but by doing this, it enables Iran to care for its own.

Nonetheless, despite Iran's so-called "success" with organ trafficking and transplantation, other nations with their ethical activists say otherwise. Last reported in May 2000, the World Health Organization (WHO) stated that Iran's healthcare system is ranked at 58 and its health-system performance is 93, out of 191 countries.⁶³ Through some insight from critics, it is argued that the Iranian government's system for organ trade and trafficking is coercive. It targets an enormous minority in Iran which are the poor, who make up 70% of donors.⁶⁴ Additionally, their support system is said to be flawed with inconceivable results for short-term or long-term investments in the health of organ patrons. On the other hand, the legalization of organ trafficking within Iran has stimulated and flourished many aspects of donors' lives. Proven by Iran's results, their model can be effective and safe for the rest of the world. However, it could be due to Iran's policy on LNRD, sustaining plentiful storage of organs to be transplanted on Iranian patients.

In spite of the detailed specifications that the Iranian government desires to uphold, side deals between the wealthy and poor donors are made.⁶⁵ With possibilities of earning thousands of more dollars than they could originally attain from government compensation, eager donors help bypass their buyers through yearlong waits for transplants. Delegates should take into consideration the medical profession's view on "rotten jobs," and how they are forced to decide whether to harm the poor and save the rich. It has been discovered that foreigners from Saudi Arabia, forged Iranian IDs in order to collect illegally harvested or obtained kidneys.⁶⁶ Whilst respecting Iran, the international community views commercialized advertisements for kidneys as unethical and ignorant to the people who are in dire need of transplants. Lately, suggestions have been circulating of possible compromises to implement a non-monetary reward system. It agrees to renegotiate and reinstate the priority waiting list for transplants. The government would be in control of monetary transactions and donors' organs will instead go to the ones who require it the most. Iran stands to be the very pillar that defies all other countries and their laws.⁶⁷ Therefore, delegates should keep an open mind about the ethicality of Iran's healthcare model for organ trafficking.

Questions to Consider

1. How has your country been affected by organ trafficking and what has your country done to prevent/combat it?
2. What nations play the largest role in this issue? Have other nations or the UN implemented solutions in these countries? Have they worked?
3. Considering border security plays a large role in preventing organ trafficking, how can border security be strengthened?
4. How does the economic status of a country influence organ trafficking?
5. How does the role of healthcare affect organ trafficking? How does this differ between developed and underdeveloped nations?
6. How can countries work together to solve this issue? Can current plans and resolutions be expanded upon?

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