2017 UNITED NATIONS OFFICE ON DRUGS AND CRIME BACKGROUND GUIDE

The University of Notre Dame Model United Nations Conference
Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the first annual NDMUN! I am beyond excited to serve as your chair for UNODC, as the topics we will discuss will play a huge role in international politics for decades to come. I am a current sophomore double majoring in Political Science and Computer Science, and I’ve been involved in MUN for over five years. As a high schooler, I attended over 30 conferences and worked as a Media Associate for BestDelegate.com, the world’s biggest Model UN resource (check it out if you haven’t already!). I have experience training both first time delegates and nationally acclaimed delegates, so feel free to e-mail me any questions beforehand or during the conference.

Model UN is clearly a big deal to me; it’s shaped who I am today and played a huge role in the decisions I make for my future, and I owe all of that to the mentors who encouraged me to participate. So if you do just one thing for our committee, I hope you choose to participate in our discussions and writings. Model UN has the potential to really impact your own view point as well as that of others, and while research and planning are central to that, the most crucial aspect is being active in committee and expressing your nation’s opinion. I look forward to seeing all of you soon, and I encourage you to not just research, but to also stay informed in regards to our topics.

Sincerely,

Prathm Juneja

pjuneja@nd.edu
Topic A: Corruption as a Global Issue

Topic Overview:

The issue of corruption has been a longstanding topic in the UNODC since its founding. Since the beginning of political institutions, corruption has played a role in collapsing democracies, fostering governmental instability, and stunting the economic development of nations. Measures to prevent and thwart corruption have been met with significant internal resistance, driven by the fact that those who are generally responsible for ending corruption are the same ones involved in the malpractice.

This committee will seek to pass comprehensive policies to deter and eradicate corruption in both the short term and long term, whilst setting realistic expectations for various nations. While similar attempts have been made in the past, international policy on corruption has done very little to decrease the magnitude or spread of the issue, and it is urgent that real progress is made.

Corruption can be defined as: “a crime committed by officials (public or private) abusing their rule to procure gain for themselves or somebody else,” (UNODC) and affects every single nation in some way or another. The most corrupt regions are Asia, Africa, and South America, and the least corrupt region is Europe. In fact, according to Transparency.org, Denmark is the least corrupt nation, whereas Somalia is the most corrupt. One of the leading causes of this regional disparity is central to the fact that corruption is directly correlated with instability, and since the instability of nations affects that of their neighbors, corruption can easily spread amongst a region.

The United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) is currently “the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument.” Passed in October of 2003, the UNCAC has four major legislative categories: prevention, criminalization, international cooperation, and asset
recovery. Included in the prevention category are attempts at preventing future campaign finance corruption, systematic corruption, and new forms of technological corruption. Since the convention is legally binding, it also mandates that countries “establish criminal and other offences to cover a wide range of acts of corruption…” It is crucial to realize here that the same bodies responsible for criminalizing corruption are those that are generally the most corrupt, and that the two ideas of prevention and criminalization have failed to correctly tackle the issue.

The other two portions of the convention are quite different from the former. International cooperation means that countries are legally bound to assist in legal battles and help solve disputes when asked to. Asset recovery, similarly, requires international cooperation in regards to returning corruptly obtained assets, and was a breakthrough at the convention. These two aspects of the convention have met significant success, and as a result can be used as models for how to decrease corruption as a global issue.

Since 2003, the UNODC has sought to fight corruption through regional specific bodies, as well as through the introduction of the TRACK and Anti-Corruption Legal Library, which give access to all the legislation (legal and non-legal) that the UNODC has worked on in regards to corruption. These platforms seek to use education and awareness as weapons in the fight against corruption. This powerful platform has not been used to its potential, and should be discussed throughout the committee.

While there are no specific bloc positions in regards to corruption, pay close attention as to what your country’s corruption rates are like and also what the corruption issue is like in your region. Every nation should have some anti-corruption policy already in place, and in committee it is crucial to address the strengths and weaknesses of the different policies.
Questions to Consider:

1. How can current UNODC agreements and initiatives be expanded to more successfully fight corruption?
2. What are the major contributing factors to systemic corruption? How do they fit into a long term solution?
3. What are the different ways of eradicating corruption? Prevention? Action?
4. How can non-legally binding legislation supplement the legally binding legislation that already exists? What other types of legislation can be used?
5. What incentives exist to fight corruption in other nations? What exactly does corruption do to a country?

Helpful Sources:


http://www.track.unodc.org/Pages/home.aspx

http://archive.transparency.org/global_priorities/international_conventions/conventions_instruments/uncac

https://www.transparency.org/country/

Topic B: International Terrorism Prevention

It is clear that in today’s society, the issue of terrorism plays a large role in international discourse. The problem is real, the threat is real, and UNODC plays a significant role in combatting it. As of right now, the UNODC has a “Terrorism Prevention Branch”, and is the key UN branch focused on providing counter-terrorism collaboration and assistance amongst member states. The necessity of this branch is rooted in the nature of terrorist action: terrorism follows no specific borders, in most cases it is an international issue, and the only true way of stopping many of these threats is through comprehensive, international, efforts.

The main document that attempts to address this issue is the “UN Action to Counter Terrorism”, which contains the 19 universal legal instruments to fight terrorism (legal being the only instruments the UN has the power to authorize outside of the Security Council), and the UNODC is in charge of assisting in these instruments. It is necessary, for the sake of our limited time to discuss, to focus in on instruments your nations see as out-of-touch or behind that need reform.

Another important topic to study is the “Counter-Terrorism Committee,” as established by Security Council Resolution 1373. The CTC is made up of all 15 Security Council member states, and asks for reports from member states about current counter-terrorism efforts, offering suggestions when necessary. The UNODC plays a special role in the CTC by providing member states with useful legislative and legal assistance, and has the goal of helping member states meet anti-terrorism standards.

This committee will seek to pass resolutions that will help implement and further anti-terrorism efforts, and will particularly pay attention to the intricacies of terrorism in 2016 and
beyond, specifically the Islamic State and the difficulty of combatting terrorism at such a scale. However, it will also seek to address another issue of an ever changing society: cyber terrorism. In the past, the UNODC as well as the UN in general has not adequately discussed this topic, and as a result we will seek to create the conversation during our meeting.

Cyberterrorism is defined as “the politically motivated use of computers and information technology to cause severe disruption or widespread fear”. The limited work conducted on cyber-terrorism by the UNODC is mainly included in the 2012 report titled “The use of Internet for terrorist purposes”. Many studies have shown that the threat is prevalent and worrisome, and recent developments involving corporate and governmental breaches, whether that displayed with Sony Pictures or the United States Democratic National Committee, shows that immediate action is necessary.

As a result, our committee will seek to pass resolutions that further the 2012 report as well as make it known that cyber terrorism is a prevalent threat. The methods for this are vast: legal resolutions, the setting of standards, or further research and collaboration programs are just a few of the valid suggestions UNODC should discuss and deliberate upon.

Similarly to Topic A, there are no “blocks” for this topic. Every nation is affected by terrorism and cyber-terrorism differently, and many nations play unique roles in the issue. It is crucial that delegates research the terrorism history in their nation and region, as well as the policies put in place to discourage (or in some cases, encourage) terroristic actions, and identify ways to combat against the issue.
Questions to Consider:

1. What actions can be taken immediately to help stop the threat of rapidly growing terrorist groups?

2. What are the limitations of UNODC in terms of combatting the threat of terrorism? What is the strongest action that can be taken through this body?

3. How can UNODC assist member nations without the proper infrastructure to combat terrorism? What are the available routes for collaboration amongst members?

4. What is the threat of cyber-terrorism? What examples have we seen of it in the past?

5. What are the current solutions to cyber-terrorism? Are there any examples of successful policies? If so, how can we implement them in every member state?

Helpful Sources:


https://leb.fbi.gov/2011/november/cyber-terror


http://archive.adl.org/terror/tu/tu_38_04_09.html
Works Cited


http://archive.transparency.org/global_priorities/international_conventions/conventions_instruments/uncac
