Forum: United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime
Topic: Imposing and strengthening legal frameworks to combat Mexican drug cartels and their transnational threats
Main Submitter: The United Kingdom
Co-Submitters: The Republic of Cuba, Uruguay
Signatories: Peru, Albania, New Zealand, Bolivia, Canada, Norway, Venezuela, UN Women, Guinea Bissau, Australia, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Mali, Lebanon, Switzerland, Ecuador, The Central African Republic, Canada, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ireland, Thailand, Somalia, European Union, Brazil, Saudi Arabia, Australia, Spain, Moldova, Turkey, Palau, Panama, Argentina, Portugal, Honduras, Costa Rica, Jamaica, Algeria, Belgium, Afghanistan, Morocco, Italy, Israel, China, Egypt, Hungary, Japan, Iran, Mexico, Vietnam, Ghana, Kazakhstan

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime,

Deeply alarmed by the increasing transnational influence of Mexican drug cartels, whose operations include drug trafficking, corruption, violence, and the imbalance of national corporations, as documented in UNODC regional threat assessments,

Recognising that cartel activity is based upon weak legal infrastructure, corruption, and irregular law-enforcement behaviours across affected regions,

Acknowledging that communities facing poverty, limited education, and lack of economic opportunity still remain highly vulnerable to cartel recruitment, coercion, and exploitation,

Reaffirming that all countries are independent and should not face interference from others, while understanding that stronger national laws are needed to stop cartels that operate in many countries,

1. *Calls upon* all Member States to strengthen national legislation to confront cartel operations, including but not limited to:
    a. Increasing penalties for major drug-trafficking offences to enhance avoidance,
    b. Closing legal loopholes that allow traffickers or associated networks to avoid sanctions,
        i. Applying enhanced sentencing for individuals proven to direct, finance, or coordinate cross-border trafficking operations, including long-term imprisonment for major offenders;
    c. Criminalising participation in cartel-linked financial, logistical, or facilitation operations,

2. *Encourages* Member States to implement anti-corruption measures within justice and security bodies, including:

    a. Establishing internal monitoring systems to detect bribery attempts and unauthorised collaboration,
    b. Providing legal and physical protection for officials who report corruption or infiltration by trafficking groups,
    c. Conducting mandatory ethics and transparency training for law enforcement and judicial personnel;
        i. Authorising immediate seizure and forfeiture of vehicles, equipment, and financial assets used in trafficking attempts intercepted at the border;

3. *Recommends* the development of national prevention strategies for communities vulnerable to cartel influence by:
    a. Creating community-based programmes that reduce recruitment into trafficking groups,
    b. Expanding access to education, youth development, and employment projects that provide alternatives to criminal involvement,
    c. Supporting local leaders, civil society groups, and indigenous communities in awareness-raising efforts;

4. *Urges* all Member States to strengthen regulatory frameworks on chemical precursors used in drug production, by:
    a. Reviewing records from chemical suppliers to identify unusual or suspicious purchases,
    b. Requiring identity and purpose verification for the sale of controlled precursors,
        i. Imposing strict criminal penalties for falsifying export documents, manipulating stockpile records, or forging end-user certificates, including long-term imprisonment and full asset confiscation;
    c. Expanding customs screening of inbound shipments containing chemicals associated with illicit drug production;

5. *Encourages* the creation of national early-warning systems to flag suspicious domestic or international orders of precursor chemicals,
    a. Supported by UNODC technical advisory teams upon request,
        i. Requiring states found to have repeatedly violated end-use controls to undergo compliance reviews conducted jointly with UNODC technical teams;

    b. Linked to existing regional monitoring centres to improve rapid information-sharing;

6. *Calls for* strengthened cooperation between Member States and UNODC in the investigation of cartel-linked financial crimes, including:
    a. Money-laundering networks,
    b. Illicit cash-courier routes,
    c. Cryptocurrency-enabled drug-sales operations;

7. *Supports* the development and use of AI-based tracking systems to identify cartel linked trafficking routes and online activity,
    a. Assisting Member States, when requested, with UNODC-provided AI tools that analyse patterns in communications, financial movements, and cross-border trafficking,
    b. Offering training for national law-enforcement agencies to use these tools effectively,
    c. The development and deployment of these AI systems to be funded through voluntary contributions from donor countries, with the remaining amount paid by member states according to their GDP,
    d. Ensuring that all AI systems respect national sovereignty by keeping all sensitive data under the control of the host state;

8. *Invites* Member States to harmonise their national laws with the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC) and relevant UNODC guidelines,
    a. Ensuring penalties for illicit drug production, trafficking, and precursor diversion are consistent with international standards,
        i. Introducing maximum-security detention measures for high-ranking cartel members to prevent communication with criminal networks while incarcerated;
        ii. Establishing life imprisonment without the possibility of parole for individuals proven to direct, finance, or command major cartel operations;
    b. Allowing smoother international cooperation on expulsion, mutual legal assistance, and evidence-sharing.