



UNODC
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RE-EMERGING CARTEL

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Topic: The sudden re-emergence of the infamous Medellín cartel through a series of events.

Chair: Eugenia Rios Martinez

Position: President

Introduction

Marking 30 years after the assassination of Pablo Escobar and the end of the infamous Medellín Cartel, the criminal organization has re-emerged. The nation of Colombia is undergoing a series of coordinated attacks on government buildings, multiple public transports, and the hijacking of a plane in direction to the United States. There have been countless civilian casualties, and, although the number might keep rising, the series of unprecedented events have so far amounted to 223 deaths of civilians. All within one day, the cartel has made its comeback by this series of illegal attacks, and leaving a series of messages that indicate the clear revival of this criminal organization. The Medellín cartel is attempting to intimidate the Colombian government, as well as international governments involved in the fight against illegal drug trade. The group purposely left clues in the sites of the crimes in order to do so, unironically, they claim to be “stronger than ever”. Many details remain unknown, such as the current leaders behind this stunt, or their agenda for future plans. However, they have made it public knowledge that they seek vengeance for the death of their original founder, Pablo Escobar. Throughout its years of operations from 1976 to 1993, the Medellín cartel used terror as a tactic to eliminate rivals, intimidate law enforcement, and maintain control over its operations. Given the brutality of the events carried out by this criminal organization, action against it needs to take place in order to prevent the cartel with a history of extreme power from becoming bigger and stronger.

Definition of Key Terms, Countries, and Organizations Involved

Cartels

"A cartel refers to an organization or group of independent entities, typically businesses, that collaborate to achieve common goals, often related to controlling and manipulating a specific market or industry. Cartels can take various forms, but they commonly involve entities within the same industry working together to regulate production levels, set prices, and limit competition. This collusion allows cartel members to exert greater control over the market, maximize profits, and maintain a collective advantage over competitors. While cartels can be found in various sectors, the term is often associated with illegal drug cartels, such as those involved in the production and distribution of narcotics. In this context, cartels are criminal organizations engaged in illicit activities, often characterized by violence, corruption, and other illegal practices". (ChatGPT 3.5, 2023)

Cartel de Medellín

Founded in 1973, the Medellín Cartel was a highly powerful drug cartel that defied the law for many years, and was a main producer and supplier of cocaine, as well as other drugs. Their operations were mainly from Colombia to the United States and European countries. They encountered several rivalries, such as rival cartels, guerilla groups in the nation, and most importantly the government. The cartel came to an end after the death of its notorious leader, Pablo Escobar, in December 1993.

Pablo Escobar

Pablo Escobar (1949–1993) was a notorious Colombian drug lord and the leader of the Medellín Cartel, which dominated the global cocaine trade in the late 20th century. Escobar was an extremely ruthless and violent leader who was persecuted for several years, until he was killed by the authorities in 1993.

Colombia

Colombia has faced for many years a prominent drug problem in its nation, more specifically, since the 1970s. The massive issue began mostly with the marijuana business, being smuggled to the United States. However, these businesses began to quickly escalate in size and power, and Colombian cartels were mainly producing and distributing marijuana. The government's efforts to combat the dangerous cartels that threatened national peace, safety, stability and

legitimacy, were significant, seeing as it was the government who managed to assassinate Pablo Escobar and bring an end to the infamous Medellín cartel.

United States

To this day, the United States has been extensively involved in dealing with illicit drug organizations from a variety of countries, particularly cartels whose primary business is distribution to the United States. Despite the fact that the United States is only marginally involved in major drug production, it is one of the countries with the largest demand in the world, making it a prime business target for most cartels. In the 20th century, the United States was a major player in supporting the Colombian government in its fight against drug trafficking organizations. They did so in a number of ways, but principally by providing financial and military support to strengthen opposition to cartels, particularly the Medellín cartel.

General Information

The fall and rise of “El cartel de Medellín”.

The Medellín cartel rose to power in 1973 with several leaders in power. Among them are Carlos Lehder, José Gonzalo Rodríguez Gacha, and Jorge Ochoa. In Particular, Pablo Escobar rose to prominence as one of the most notorious drug traffickers in history. Beginning in the early 1970s, the Medellín cartel sought a business opportunity in the production and distribution of cocaine into other countries. Starting modestly, this criminal organization grew enormously as the marijuana business in South America declined, but the cocaine business, on the other hand, was a market with increasing demand and consumers with significant purchasing power. The Medellín cartel produced cocaine and worked to distribute it mostly in the United States and Europe. The cartel became extremely dangerous with time, and they held an enormous amount of power, both nationwide and internationally. The government of Colombia felt this threat deeply and did everything they could to defeat this criminal group. Eventually, they managed to do so, by killing their main leader, Pablo Escobar. Ever since then the cartel disappeared completely. And even though many other cartels have risen in the 21st century, the world was much safer without the Medellín cartel operating. Utility today.

Possible solutions (UNODC)

Collaboration and aid

Socioeconomic aid in marginalized communities are main targets of cartels, where they can inflict their power and terrorize the community. Aside from education in order to prevent the expansion of criminal organizations, the true key would be to reintegrate these marginalized groups into society and push them into the law, rather than out. Thus, reintegration is essential for communities not limited to South American scenarios, but globally. More specifically, socioeconomic aid and law reinforcement can be the true catalyst to achieve this goal. It has been proved that many urban areas, rural cities, or underdeveloped cities, are seen by cartels as a point to grow their power and dominance.

In this specific case, leaders and key figures remain unknown. However, with the extra support of cooperative member states, the set-up of a mission to combat this organization, can be much more accessible. Financial and military aid for Colombia will be urgent if wanting to combat the rise of such a cartel again. An example of this is the United States role in combating el cartel de Medellín back in the 1970, who thoroughly aided the Colombian government in defeating many criminal drug trafficking organizations.

Drug control policies and reinforcement of security measures

In order to lessen the burden of drug crime in whole societies, it would be deemed fit to implement several policies that further strengthen government bodies. Many criminal drug trafficking organizations, who unfortunately handle a lot of economic power, seeing as according to an official UNODC report, the drug market is valued at over 300 billion. Therefore, cartels are highly likely to buy politicians, elections, or even parties, in order to control entire nations. Building stronger and less corrupt systems through lessening the number of infiltrations of members from criminal organizations, or people sided with such, is key to lessen the impact of criminal organizations in government bodies. Policies that would combat cartels such as the Medellín cartel can also be regarding other manners. Such as creating measures to enhance international control and security through stronger border security in order to reduce drug distribution and reduce global consumption. To tackle the rise of a group that threatens the security of many innocent lives, and the legitimacy of governments, coordination of efforts to disrupt drug trafficking networks and related criminal enterprises is needed through certain measures. For example, when the Colombian

government fought the Medellín cartel in the 20th century, the United States decided to help Colombia in order to bring down an organization that threatened global legitimacy. They did so by providing funding for counternarcotics operations, equipment, training for Colombian security forces, and the provision of intelligence.

Reducing demand and enhancing treatment

Governments must endeavor to create policies that will reduce the negative impacts of substance usage. Members of the UNODC are required to fulfill a number of obligations pertaining to harm reduction, treatment, and prevention in an integrated manner rather than in a mutually exclusive manner. Member states need to push for reducing drug demand in their nations, and doing so through the treatment of abuse issues, rather than instantly criminalizing demand.

Education and Awareness

Youth are the most susceptible demographic in every country when it comes to the brutality of drug cartels; they are more likely to become victims of murders, kidnappings, and recruitment. Drug cartel recruiters specifically target young people from marginalized neighborhoods and those who drop out of school because they seek a sense of belonging and an escape out of poverty. Moreover, education is essential to producing strong workers. Hence, reducing the necessity to turn to participation in risky organizations. The UNODC may launch educational programs and public awareness campaigns to educate communities about the risks associated with drug usage and the effects of organized crime. The goal of these initiatives is to get support from the population for policies that combat drugs and reduce crime. But most importantly, member states should continuously seek to prioritize education in all areas of society, in order to give all citizens a chance at a job, and a stable life.

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