



## **Dear Delegates,**

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 2016 Montessori Model United Nations Conference.

The following pages intend to guide you in the research of the topics that will be debated at MMUN 2016 in committee sessions. Please note this guide only provides the basis for your investigation. It is your responsibility to find as much information necessary on the topics and how they relate to the country you represent. Such information should help you write your Position Paper, where you need to cite the references in the text and finally list all references in the Modern Language Association (MLA) format.

The more information and understanding you acquire on the two topics, the more you will be able to influence the Resolution writing process through debates [formal and informal caucuses], and the MMUN experience as a whole. Please feel free to contact us if and when you face challenges in your research or formatting your Position Papers. We encourage you to learn all you can about your topics first and then study your country with regard to the two selected topics. Please remember that both committee members need to be well versed and ready to debate both topics.

Enjoy researching and writing your Position Papers.

We look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

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## **Social, Humanitarian & Cultural**

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### General Assembly Third Committee

Year after year, the General Assembly allocates to its Social, Humanitarian and Cultural Affairs Committee, commonly referred to as the “Third Committee”, agenda items relating to a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues that affect peoples all over the world.

An important part of the Committee’s work focuses on the examination of human rights questions, including reports of the special procedures of the newly established Human Rights Council. In October 2006, the Committee will hear and interact with 25 such special rapporteurs, independent experts,

and chairpersons of workings groups of the Human Rights Council. The Committee also discusses the advancement of women, the protection of children, indigenous issues, the treatment of refugees, the promotion of fundamental freedoms through the elimination of racism and racial discrimination, and the promotion of the right to self- determination. The Committee also addresses important social development questions such as issues related to youth, ageing, disabled persons, family, crime prevention, criminal justice, and drug control.

**Source:** <http://www.un.org/ga/61/third/third.shtml>

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# Prevention of Substance Abuse

## Topic Background

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The World Health Organization describes ‘substance abuse’ as the “harmful or hazardous use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illicit drugs”.<sup>1</sup> The longer one uses and indulges on a psychoactive substance can lead them to acquire the dependence syndrome; this ultimately causes the person to adapt behavior that makes them have a strong desire and addiction for the drugs, with great difficulties in controlling their use of the drugs. Therefore, they will continuously abuse the drug, regardless of the dangerous effects the drugs might have.<sup>2</sup>

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) estimated in the 2015 World Drug Report that there is a total of “246 million people, or 1 out of 20 people between the ages of 15 and 64 years” that used an illegal drug in 2013 alone.<sup>3</sup> Although the issue of using illicit drugs has been stable in accordance with the rising global population, the fact that 1 out of 10 drug users are those with substance abuse problems makes the issue of substance abuse a serious and dangerous issue to address.

In the year 2012, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) found about 23.1 million people between the ages of 12 and older, in the United States alone, required treatment for substance abuse. SAMHSA found that substance use disorders, along with mental disorders that cause people to utilize these drugs, would be one of the main causes of disabilities worldwide by 2020. Abusing drugs and alcohol also leads to numerous physical diseases, including heart diseases. The UNODC researched that drugs such as cocaine is the main drug causing most worry within Latin America and the Caribbean. There was an estimated number of 1,590,000 people who were found to be involved in injecting drugs within these two regions.<sup>4</sup> The use of injected drugs leads to high cases of HIV caused by injecting drugs, with about 10-25% of the population in these regions being affected by this disease. Within Afghanistan, the issue of drug abuse has been a prevalent issue with their history of war, causing people to need and abuse drugs for their related traumas. In addition, the easy availability of cheap drugs contributes towards Afghanistan’s problem, with about 8% of the population, of about one million Afghans.<sup>5</sup>

The large scale of the drug supply and markets contribute towards drug abuse issues, such as the production and growing of Afghan heroin, which has spread towards many new markets around Europe. In addition, the limited access drug treatments make it difficult to prevent or stop abusers who continue to abuse drugs with their difficult lifestyles and ease towards acquiring drugs, such as 700,000 Afghans having no access to

drug treatment despite 90% of them desiring for it. Along with the growing drug market but lack of drug treatment for those who need it, the issue of substance abuse will continue to be a problem. If the problem is not addressed, the number of deaths, such as the 3.3 million deaths caused by alcohol each year, will continue to grow and affect not just local communities and people but the world altogether.<sup>6</sup>

## Past Actions

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The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) includes goal number 8, which aims to “Develop a Global Partnership for Development.” Along with this goal includes Target 17 which aims to “provide access to affordable essential drugs in developing countries” while aiming to increase access to these drugs on a “sustainable basis”. Therefore, their goal is to ensure people acquire access to drugs that are important for their well being, while doing so on a level that can be maintained properly and controlled. Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon discussed the need to “Think Health, Not Drugs” at the International Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking, emphasizing that combatting illicit drugs “must go hand-in-hand” with the MDGs.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, he discusses the dangerous health effects drug abuse created, including the spread of HIV in correspondence with heroin use, stating that ensuring drug control including controlling its harmful effects must be dealt with. Ban Ki-Moon states that we must break the “vicious circle” of drug abusers acquiring substances through the growing illicit drug trade and trafficking, highlighting the need to acceleration development in regions drugs are growing in.<sup>8</sup>

The UNODC, the main UN organization dealing with substance abuse and drug crimes, was established in 1997, acting as a part of the UN Development Group. Their emphasis revolved around combatting illicit drug trafficking and researching into various governments’ involvement in preventing substance abuse and providing treatment and care towards those affected, amongst numerous other drug-related issues around the world. The UNODC established family skills training programs, called Project GLO-K01 for countries with numerous low and middle-income families.<sup>9</sup> The goal of GLO-K01 was to provide families training sessions for parents and children on preventing substance abuse lifestyles, training them on how to be more attentive towards school and work achievements rather than paths that can lead towards drug abuse. The project has been established in the regions of Central Asia, Latin America, and Southeast Europe, with reports on their statuses being updated and written by UNODC on their progress. In addition, UNODC focuses much on children, aiming to allow their communities and groups to focus on preventing substance abuse through the UNODC Youth Initiative program. The UNODC works with schools and active youth in their communities to be involved in drug use prevention around the world, allowing them to provide insight on how to help their peers steer away from drug abuse. These discussions, called Youth Forums, have been initiated in areas such as Pakistan, where students take a part with policy makers on drug prevention strategies.

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The Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs (VNGOC) is a large NGO partnering with the UNODC on fighting drug-related issues, acting as a connection with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) and the UNODC, having members throughout their local branches all over the world. VNGOC was created in 1983, and works with governmental and non-governmental groups to create partnerships in acquiring their “Beyond 2008” initiative. They’ve provided strategic plans for communities to adapt to prevent substance abuse, increase treatment plans, and work with their partners directly to achieve these goals. Specifically, they want to work with civil societies, allowing them to provide reviews on the UN General Assembly Special Session on illicit drugs, using their views to make their Declaration and three Resolutions on using the NGO community and societies to fight drug issues.<sup>10</sup>

## **Possible Solutions**

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UNODC reported in their 2015 World Drug Report how although drug use around the world has been stable, access towards treatment has still been difficult, with only one out of six drug users having access. Therefore, a large focus for UNODC regarding the Post-2015 Development Agenda revolved around aiming at long-term goals and strategies to prevent substance abuse and to acquire treatment for those affected now. Their goals revolved around many sub-issues, three main ones being: accessibility to treatment, drug trafficking prevention, and education on drug dependence.<sup>11</sup>

Access to treatment has been a continuously problem with low-income communities being unable to afford treatment for their drug abuse. In addition, treatment programs can simply be not accessible around them. The programs and projects set by NGOs and the UN on treatment needs to expand and be spread enough for all communities where drug abuse is high, but treatment is low. It is important to consider whether current treatment programs are effective and safe or not. The UNDP reported in their 2015 report on “Addressing the Development Dimensions of Drug Policy” that there were more than 235,000 people forced, without their consent or due process, to be in drug detention centers within East and Southeast Asia. The report states that these centers were under the “guise of treatment or rehabilitation,” but included numerous human rights violations including forced labor, physical, psychological, sexual violence, and lack of proper medical attention. Therefore, more research on current treatment centers and their effectiveness, as well as closing them down if needed, must be done.

The illegal drug market has been growing worldwide as well, with opium production being at 7,554 tons in 2014 with the increasing cultivation in Afghanistan. The smuggling and trafficking of drugs such as Afghan heroin must be prevented, as its increased distribution has led to more access for people in regions where these drugs can be cheaply sold. Looking further into this issue, we will see the relation to poverty and how farmers are dependent on illicit drug cultivation, especially in rural communities where there is a lack of security and income for them. In order to address this sub-issue, delegates must look at these root causes of poverty, and provide alternative, safe methods

for farmers to acquire income and not take part in this drug trafficking circle. Steps to prevent cultivation of drugs can ultimately lead to preventing drug trafficking and accessibility for people to abuse.<sup>12</sup>

UNODC's Executive Director Yury Fedotov stated the lack of education for substance abusers in how serious the issue of drug addiction and use can be for them. He stated that there needs to be more promotion of health and spread of education on how drug dependence can lead to serious physical conditions, like diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, or mental disorders that all require long-term treatment, which can be costly and time-consuming. Therefore, delegates should find methods to educate people on the consequences of substance abuse, letting them understand the dire results that can happen if they decide to take this unstable path.

For numerous regions, the issue of substance abuse has affected many people, with many affected up to 30 percent in sub-Saharan Africa for HIV infections through drug injections. However, specific regions where drug production and distribution is common affects other regions of the world. In Latin America, West Africa, and Asia, illicit drug production is a large activity, making it easier for other Western and European regions to acquire drugs through illicit smuggling and trafficking. Therefore, as long as the drug market continues to grow, substance abuse will grow with the inevitable effect that all regions have on each other.

Delegates must understand the need to develop strong solutions that revolve not just on increasing treatment, but getting down to the root causes of why substance abuse is so prevalent in our world. Have solutions revolve around how to combat letting people access drugs in the first place, what to do for them when they are in the stage of abusing drugs, and how to help them get out of it.

### Further Research

- <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/data-and-analysis/statistics/drug-use.html>
- [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg\\_goals/mdg8.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg_goals/mdg8.html)
- <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/about-unodc/post-2015-development-agenda.html>
- [http://www.vngoc.org/details.php?id\\_cat=7&id\\_cnt=85](http://www.vngoc.org/details.php?id_cat=7&id_cnt=85)

### Endnotes

1. "Management of Substance Abuse: Facts and Figures." World Health Organization. [http://www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/facts/en/](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/facts/en/)
2. "Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illness." Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. <http://www.samhsa.gov/prevention>



3. “Drug use prevention, treatment and care.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/drug-prevention-and-treatment/index.html>
4. “World Drug Report 2015.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. [http://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr2015/World\\_Drug\\_Report\\_2015.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr2015/World_Drug_Report_2015.pdf)
5. “Drug Use in Afghanistan: 2009 Survey.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/Studies/Afghan-Drug-Survey-2009-Executive-Summary-web.pdf>
6. “Post- Development 2015 Agenda.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/about-unodc/post-2015-development-agenda.html>
7. “Work to Achieve Millennium Development Goals, Fight Illicit Drugs ‘Must Go Hand-in-Hand’, Says Secretary-General in Message on Day.” Secretary-General Ban Ki-Moon. <http://www.un.org/press/en/2010/sgsm12969.doc.htm>
8. “Goals, targets, and indicators.” Millennium Project. <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/gti.htm#goal8>
9. “Prevention of drug use, HIV/AIDS and crime among young people through family skills training programmes in low- and middle-income countries (Project GLO-K01).” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/prevention/glok01.html>
10. “Welcome to the VNGOC e-home.” Vienna NGO Committee Narcotic Drugs. [http://www.vngoc.org/details.php?id\\_cat=7&id\\_cnt=85](http://www.vngoc.org/details.php?id_cat=7&id_cnt=85)
11. “2015 World Drug Report finds drug use stable, access to drug & HIV treatment still low.” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. <https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/press/releases/2015/June/2015-world-drug-report-finds-drug-use-stable--access-to-drug-and-hiv-treatment-still-low.html>
12. “A global partnership for development.” United Nations Development Program. [http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg\\_goals/mdg8.html](http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/mdgoverview/mdg_goals/mdg8.html)

## Questions

1. What UN organization fights against drug-related issues of all kinds, including drug trafficking and drug abuse?
2. What MDG is related to increasing development in regions, including regions affected by substance abuse?
3. What is one sub-issue the Post-2015 Development Agenda focuses on regarding substance abuse?
4. Worldwide, how many people are involved by substance abuse?
5. What is one of many causes that lets people access drugs easily?

## Answers

1. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
2. Goal 8: Develop a Global Partnership for Development

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3. One of these three: Accessibility to treatment, drug trafficking prevention, and education on drug dependence. Although there are many more sub-issues you can research on as well.
4. 246 million people, or 1 out of 20 people between the ages of 15 and 64 years (UNODC World Drug Report)
5. Some causes: cheap price of drugs, farmers cultivating drugs to enter the market, increase production and distribution of drugs across regions, mental disorders that make them desire drugs, and many more delegates can research on.

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