

International transnational crime

[Law](#), [Criminology](#)



INTERNATIONAL CRIME Introduction International crime, also known as transnational crime, poses a serious threat to American communities, financial and business institutions, and to the stability and security of the global populace. International crime knows no boundaries or borders, nor does it recognize the rules or laws within them. National and international security will always be threatened as long as international crime is at its doorstep. According to Picarelli (2011), the U. S. Department of Justice defines transnational organized crime in part as " self-perpetuating associations of individuals that operate internationally for the purpose of obtaining power, influence, monetary, and/or commercial gains, wholly or in part by illegal means, while protecting their activities through a pattern of corruption and/or violence, or while protecting their illegal activities through an international organizational structure and the exploitation of international commerce or communication mechanisms." The United States is at the forefront in fighting international crime with a multitude of collaborating agencies, renewed strategies, and the increased use of signals intelligence (SIGINT), human intelligence (HUMINT), and open source intelligence (OSINT). Additionally, the United States has collaborated with foreign counterparts having conducted several research methods through foreign police investigations, intelligence agencies, and government officials. These findings have shown that the trend of international criminal activity is on the rise within the United States. This increase in criminal activity is attributed to the formation of a strong alliance between foreign and domestic criminal groups and the diversification of their commodities. The scope and intensity of activity for these criminal organizations has increased tremendously due

to globalization, which seems to have caused our national and political INTERNATIONAL CRIME boundaries to begin to fade. Ekblom (2003), states that technology has enabled the syndicates of multinational crime groups to expand their field of operation. The most probable means to limit international crime is through the active cooperation between agencies and countries regardless of their socioeconomic status. This cooperative agreement should include federal, state, local, tribal, and territorial agencies. Teamwork should be encouraged and further enhanced to attack and break the chain of these criminal organizations. At the same time, stability of the rule of law has to be promoted in order to establish a viable and trustworthy international criminal justice system, which can and will reduce the threats of transnational crimes.

International Crime Background According to Albanese (2011), the term "international crime" encompasses a range of illegal activities. Some of these activities are, but not limited to: Money Laundering, Human Trafficking, Cyber Crimes, Drug Trafficking, Terrorism, Extortion, Illegal Immigration, Trafficking Women and Children, Environmental Crimes, Trafficking Firearms and Drugs, Illicit Transfer of Products over International Borders, Financial Crimes, Economic Trade Crimes, Patent Infringements and Piracy of Intellectual Property, Illegal Trade of Artifacts and Theft of Antiquities, Illegal Trade of Endangered Species, Piracy, Counterfeiting, Trafficking of Precious Gems, Sanctions Violations, Nondrug Contraband Smuggling, and Foreign Economic Espionage. The areas in which these criminal activities are conducted are world-wide, and for the most part, go unchecked by governing officials. The occurrence of these activities is secretive in nature, making it difficult to measure the true total

frequency in which they are committed. Additionally, extreme violence is often associated with these illegal activities, closely followed by bribery and terror tactics. Several of the countries and states that transnational crime frequents INTERNATIONAL CRIME are: United States, Europe, Russia, The Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova, Turkey, Middle-East, Eastern-Mediterranean, South and Southeast Asia, China, Taiwan, Japan, The Caribbean, Africa, Central and South America, and Mexico. The groups that conduct these criminal activities are often well-structured having specific hierarchies that are lead by very powerful leaders. Due to the structure, specific formation, and international capabilities of the group, authorities find it extremely difficult to infiltrate and exploit them. Some of the more well known Transnational Organized Crime (TOC) groups are: Russian Mafia, La Cosa Nostra, Yakuza, MS-13, Fuk Ching, Triads, Heijin, Jao Pho, Red Wa, and U. S. Outlaw Motor Cycle Gangs/Clubs. U. S. Agencies used to Combat International Crime The United States of America has established various entities to help in security, surveillance, and the formulation of possible counter-measures and/or tactics. These agencies can be broken into three different categories, the Department of Justice, the Department of Treasury, and the Department of State. These three categories can be further broken down into several components. The agencies within the Justice Department are: • Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) U. S. Citizenship and Immigration Services U. S. National Central Bureau of the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL) Interpol was established in 1923 in order to facilitate international police cooperation. This was aimed at reducing transnational criminal activities

(Liddick, 2004). The U. S. Marshall Service INTERNATIONAL CRIME The U. S. Attorney Offices country-wide U. S. Department of Homeland Security U. S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) The agencies within the Treasury Department are: Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF) U. S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Internal Revenue Service — Criminal Investigation (IRS) Secret Service Postal Inspection Service Financial Crimes Enforcement Network (FinCen) Federal Law Enforcement Training Center Office of Foreign Assets Control The agencies within the State Department are: Bureau for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Bureau of Diplomatic Security Bureau of Counterterrorism Additionally, a fourth agency, the United States Department of Defense, is used to combat some of the international crimes around the world. The Department of Defense is made up of various agencies including the Air Force, Army, Marines, Navy, National Guard, and Coast Guard. The Growth of International Crime With improvements to our infrastructure, communications, transportation, technology, etc, in the last thirty years it has become much easier for financial institutions, government officials, INTERNATIONAL CRIME and economic and trade associations to conduct business. This globalization coupled with the end of the cold-war, which removed many of the political barricades throughout Europe, has also greatly impacted organized crime syndicates. Not only is it easier to conduct legitimate business, it has become easier for transnational crime organizations to conduct global criminal activities. This form of organized crime undermines the efforts of societies worldwide and disrupts peace and order within their borders. The United Nations were the first organization to

coin the term “ Transnational Crime” around the mid-nineteen seventies. This term was used in order to explain criminal activities the breached or expanded the borders of one nation or state. It wasn’t until the nineteen eighties and nineties that the United States Government began to recognize the threat of international crime. By the mid nineties, the government began to develop and implement different tools and strategies in hopes to combat it. By this time, international organized crime syndicates had already developed a strong financial base for their activities within America. These large crime syndicates purchased legitimate businesses from the money they acquired through extortion, gambling, and prostitution (Duthel, 2008). They used their legitimate businesses as a cover for their international criminal undertakings. The efforts international criminal organizations put forth to expand and grow can cause dire consequences upon government institutions and agencies around the world. They often fuel corruption, allowing for the infiltration of these organizations into political and business activities. This infiltration potentially undermines country-wide social and economical development. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012), international crime is undermining governance and democracy by empowering those that operate outside of the law. Every state is vulnerable to organized international crime.

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International crime, such as terrorism, has had devastating effects on the growth of the economy in every region. In the last thirty years there have been a multitude of attempts and successful attacks within the United States. Terrorism is a worldwide threat that can lead to the disruption or even deterioration of government. Additionally, terrorist networks are often

known as major drug trafficking organizations (DTOs). Most of these terrorist networks rely on drugs to bank-rolle their world-wide activities. Despite heavy attempts of the United States Government to disrupt the trafficking of drugs into its borders, they still remain an extremely large threat to the security, safety, and health of the citizens in America. Cocaine, heroin, methamphetamines, marijuana, and a multitude of other manufactured or grown drugs cross US borders on a daily basis. With the increase in demand for these illicit drugs around the world, international criminal organizations are continually fueled and provided the power they need to operate globally. Human smuggling and trafficking in persons are other international crimes that are on the rise. Despite increased control measures that have been emplaced, criminal organizations are continually evolving to counter every effort to halt their activity. Human smuggling is the hiding of persons and the attempt to transport them into or across international borders. While similar to smuggling, human trafficking is the transferring of a person within or across international borders and holding them in bondage or some type of servitude (prostitution, forced labor, etc.). Weapons trafficking to international organizations, originating within the United States borders also are on the rise. Several of the countries these weapons have been shipped to but intercepted include China, Russia, Yemen, Somalia, Mexico, along with several other countries. According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2012), illicit arms fuel the violence INTERNATIONAL CRIME that undermines the security, development, and justice of countries worldwide. The black and gray market both attribute to the trafficking and sales of these illicit arms globally. In addition to the growth of these several international

crimes, there are a multitude of others that are on the rise as well. The theft of intellectual property coupled with a dramatic increase in cyber-crime have expounded business losses and decreased the confidence in government, financial and corporate network transactions. Many of these are services that our country and the world economy depend on to operate. The crippling of this system would have severe consequences that would be felt globally.

Affects of International Crime Trafficking networks are on the rise worldwide.

The trafficking of persons is an extreme violation of human rights. Usually, children become victims of trafficking. Many of the children that have become victim have been kidnapped, or sold into bondage by their family members. Countries with low socioeconomic status are often used as the suppliers of trafficked women and children. Almost half of all trafficked persons are younger than eighteen years old. According to a 1997 study, it was estimated that nearly 30, 000 women were trafficked into the United States from Southeast-Asia. Analysts have deduced that international drug trafficking in the US is growing five times the rate of economic growth. The supply of drugs has dropped by two thirds. This has in turn raised the demand for drugs. Many criminals especially from other continents have identified a ready market for their commodities (Babor, 2010). Exhaustive efforts have been made in order to shut down the trafficking of drugs into the United States. Several large cartels have been reduced, only to have new organizations step-up to fill the void. INTERNATIONAL CRIME It is estimated by the United States Government that several hundred million dollars of illegal arms are sold to terrorist organizations, insurgent groups, and international criminal organizations annually. The black and gray arms

markets facilitate these sales worldwide. Since the end of the cold war, large quantities of weapons have become readily available to the highest bidding organization. It is estimated that the annual count of illegal immigrants entering the United States via smuggling services is approximately 500, 000 persons. It is believed that an additional halfmillion illegal aliens enter the United States without the assistance of smugglers. Most of the illegal aliens entering the United States do so through the Canadian and Mexico borders. A smaller portion of illegal aliens entering the U. S. uses maritime vessels. International environmental crimes have proven to be one of the fastest growing and more profitable crimes globally. It is estimated that twenty-two to thirty-one billion dollars is earned annually with environmental crimes. These crimes can range from hazard waste disposal/dumping to the destruction or trafficking of protected natural resources. It was estimated that over eleven-million metric tons of waste (including industrial and toxic) were dumped into the Mediterranean Sea in 1997. Also, the United Nations (UN) estimated the twenty to thirty thousand metric tons of ozone depleting substances are sold on the black market annually. The fight against international crime is a task that consumes many resources from a wide scope. Time, technology, labor and funds amongst other things are a " must have" before moving forward with any activity that pertains to the pursuance of international crime. These resources take a much larger portion of the budget than most people know, and as time progresses, the cost of these resources can significantly increase. With the current economic developments, these resources could be channeled to other projects geared towards creating job opportunities and INTERNATIONAL CRIME reducing the

intensity of inflation. (Jacobs, Friel & Radick, 2001). With this in mind, it is easy to understand why many tasks or strategies may go undone. Stopping International Crime The collaboration of national agencies has established a strong foothold in order to confront serious criminal activities as well as safeguard the security of people in America and worldwide. Intense and active partnerships between law enforcers, the public, and other relevant authorities dealing with security is one way of reducing and tracking down the network of various criminal organizations. An increase in the employment of competent personnel will help to facilitate the expedient crack-down of transnational criminal organizations. An action-oriented program used in fighting crime has fostered crime prevention strategies. It has helped to enable the tracking down of criminals, whom have adopted modern technology in their daily activities and operations. Due to the increased pace of globalization, increased and easy world travel, and improved technological advances, those who promote and conduct illegal activities also have increased opportunities through which their illicit businesses can thrive. This means that authorities must constantly review and refine their strategies to stay ahead of the rate at which international crimes are committed. According to statistics, international crime rates will more than double a decade from now. In addition, if the American economy is going to face hard economic shocks, then the level of crime will increase drastically because of the high unemployment rates and other economic hardships (Powers, 1983). Although the American government is strict on immigration laws, some of its citizens (Muslims) may collude with foreigners and commit erroneous criminal activities as a way of maintaining the

solidarity with the terrorist group. INTERNATIONAL CRIME Bassiouni (1999) observes that Criminal groups have the potential to grow due to the support of new, improved technology. Under-developed and developing countries are not left behind as they form safe havens and transit routes through which illegal goods easily pass, making their way to a ready market in developed economic countries like the United States. Moreover, such illegal activities thrive and succeed because of the societal demand that is placed upon them. Conclusion Since the September 11 attacks on the United States, the Federal Government has remained focused and steadfast in its endeavors to prevent any future attacks within our country's borders. With our national boundaries disappearing more every day due to globalization, it is our requirement as a leading nation to remain vigilant in our quest to combat the everyday activities of transnational criminal organizations. In addition to the multiple benefits that are provided with globalization, they will also be accompanied with several detriments or drawbacks. Bassiouni (1999) states that each new innovation that is introduced to our society, there is a profound, economic, and human impact. In order to remain vigilant, we must always be thinking ahead to the possibilities international crime may become. INTERNATIONAL CRIME References Albanese, J. S. (2011).

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