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ESCUELA DE SEGURIDAD
MULTIDIMENSIONAL-USP

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Course on

ILLICIT MARKETS AND ORGANIZED CRIME IN THE AMERICAS



MINISTÉRIO DA
JUSTIÇA E
SEGURANÇA PÚBLICA



Eurofront

Class

Organized Crime and Illicit Drug Trafficking

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Introduction

In this module we will address organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in the Americas region, from a novel theoretical and conceptual perspective, which could be useful to guide public policy makers, decision makers in this matter, and in general for all those scholars.

The topics to be discussed in the classes will be: conceptual overview of the criminal market institution, conventional market-criminal market relationship, current situation of the public problem, threats to public safety in the urban area, institutional response capacity in crisis due to ignorance of the threat and lack of coordination and the challenges in the region of the Americas in the face of organized crime and illicit drug trafficking.



Concepts

Criminal Market: arises as a response to the satisfaction of different needs generated from social problems in order to maximize profits through illegal activities.

Conventional Market: It is an economic institution through which the determining forces of prices, supply and demand operate.

Outsourcing: used to represent the act of outsourcing services through contracting.



Concepts

Drug dealing: it is an oligopolistic phenomenon associated with the commercialization of narcotics that allows generating and capturing income, maintaining territorial control, subsuming gangs, recruiting people for marginal armed groups, and ensuring access routes to the city and seaports.

Approved preliminary identification tests (PIPH): it is an orientation field test, which consists of preliminary identification of one or more substances at the scene, to provide the authorities with elements of evidence within the investigation.



Institutions

United Nations (UN): it is an international organization founded by 51 countries that pledged to maintain international peace and security, foster friendly relations among nations, and promote social progress, improvement of living standards, and Human rights.

Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC): It was formed in 1964 as a peasant self-defense group, with a Marxist-Leninist ideology and whose military strategy has been mainly the guerrilla struggle.

Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN): it is a Colombian insurgent, drug-trafficking, and terrorist guerrilla organization of the extreme left that operates in Colombia and Venezuela. It is defined as Marxist-Leninist orientation and pro-Cuban revolution. Since its formation in 1964, it has been an actor in the internal armed conflict in Colombia.

Institutions

Clan del Golfo: also known as Clan Úsuga, Los Urabeños, Bloque Héroes de Castaño and Autodefensas Gaitanistas de Colombia, is an organized narco-paramilitary armed group that is part of the internal armed conflict in Colombia.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC): it is a world leader in the fight against illicit drugs and international crime, in addition to being in charge of executing the main United Nations program against terrorism. IT was established in 1997 and is made up of about 500 staff worldwide.

Regional School of the American Anti-Drug Intelligence Community (ERCAIAD): it is a center specialized in academic and operational training in the field of anti-drug intelligence, located in Bogotá, Colombia..

Class Content

Social problems are the genesis of the inadvertent creation of social institutions. The conditions present in the territory configure an opportunity for organizations outside the law.

Thus, we can see how in our countries criminal companies assume the solution of certain social problems through the development of practices such as micro-extortion, drug dealing, "drop-drop" and the illegal monopoly of basic products, just to name a few expressions with economic content that have a criminal connotation.



Class Content

It is important to consider that criminals are economic actors who face the same choice situations or a very similar sequence of choices achieved, precisely, from the transfer of knowledge on the subject and the refinement of the techniques or actions that they carry out on a daily basis.

It is reasonable to think that criminal economic actors tend to identify the options or opportunities available where a criminal market niche can be exploited in order to seize it and improve the results in terms of profits, seriously affecting security in the Americas region..



Class Content

Monopoly is the economic model used by criminal enterprises to regulate the market. To fulfill the purposes established by the criminal institution, the phenomenon of scarcity is generated. It means that criminal companies promote the insolvency of high consumption goods or services, so that customers are forced to acquire what they offer under arbitrary conditions of production, distribution and commercialization.

In the criminal market, market equilibrium is achieved through the imposition of a social control system, where rules, controls, and sanctions channel behaviors and possible conducts in a specific social group.



Class Content

Drug dealing, for criminal organizations and drug traffickers, is an oligopolistic phenomenon associated with the commercialization of narcotics that allows them to generate and capture income, maintain territorial control, subsume gangs, recruit people for illegal armed groups and secure access routes to the city and seaports.

In other words, drug dealing is the visible part of the commercialization of illicit drug trafficking that is associated with territorial control and citizen insecurity, whose manifestations vary from one region to another according to social, political, economic, and cultural conditions.



Class Content

It does not matter to emphasize these approaches, because **drug dealing has a vital economic meaning for organized crime**, to the extent that it is the phenomenon where the products of drug trafficking are monetized. **Its logic responds to a low level of risk, intervention and judicialization, as well as considerable marginal gains**, it also allows organizational processes such as asset management, finance management and capital organization.

For their part, the inhabitants of irregular urban settlements mainly constitute a subsystem that benefits from the interests of organized crime, but since they have an innocuous capacity to organize and self-manage, the dependency remains around a criminal economy and, this, in short, conditions and determines the behavior of the collective, that is, it is instrumentalized. This may be an interpretation of how urban organized crime disputes the legitimacy of the State.

Class Content

Colombia has a serious internal political crisis with a lack of focus on the fight against drug trafficking and this leads to the exploitation of criminal organizations such as the dissidents of the FARC, the ELN and the Clan del Golfo. Everyday there is greater consolidation of these criminal networks in the Pacific, firstly by sea, where speedboats proliferate, and secondly by air, the proliferation of clandestine runways without much control is the main characteristic.



Class Summary

- **Conceptual tour of the criminal market institution:** social problems configure an opportunity for criminal groups to assume their solution in the interest of maximizing their profits.
- **Conventional market-criminal market relation:** The first is an economic institution in which determining forces of prices, supply and demand operate, while the second encourages scarcity to force demand and monopolize prices and supply.
- **Current situation of the public problem:** Organized crime has a broad management structure, is complex to investigate, and is a highly fragmented activity. The advancement of technology, connection with other crimes and transnationalization generate a mega threat for the region.

Class Summary

- **Threats to public safety in the urban area:** drug dealing is perceived by citizens and municipal authorities as disturbing coexistence and local governance, due to the scant state control of urban commercialization.
- **Institutional response capacity in crisis due to ignorance of the threat and lack of coordination:** given the pressure to obtain great operational results, criminal investigation against internal markets is not prioritized.
- **Challenges in the region of the Americas in the face of organized crime and illicit drug trafficking:** In border areas, cooperation mechanisms between police and judicial authorities of the states must be improved, monitoring and advancing in the construction of complementary regional public policies to the local ones.

Reference

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