BACKGROUND GUIDE

INTERPOL

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL POLICE ORGANISATION

AGENDA

Discussion on Transnational crime with special emphasis on curbing terror financing in regions of conflicts

Greetings Delegates,

It is our honour to serve on the executive board for the simulation of The International Criminal Police Organization(INTERPOL) in CHIREC MUN- 2024. This, as you may already know, is a specialised committee. Keeping that in mind, we would like to let you know that it would be a good learning platform where one could enhance their knowledge and oratory skills.

We value your enthusiasm towards the art of diplomacy and hence tried to make this study guide from the perspective of giving factual information and not opinions so that you can best represent your country by stepping into the shoes of a diplomat and voice your ideas in the simulation of INTERPOL.

We will be meeting to simulate the General Assembly in The International Criminal Police Organization, which will be henceforth referred to as INTERPOL throughout this background guide. This committee will be tasked with preventing financial crimes, with a specific focus on money laundering, and the prevention and ethics of hacktivism. While this background guide touches briefly on the organisation of Interpol, it is imperative that all delegates expand their knowledge by doing further research, especially on topics such as financial terrorism and technology. Delegates will be expected to follow appropriate rules of conduct and adhere to the equity policy. Inappropriate remarks towards other delegates or staff will not be tolerated.

Please note that the agenda, having avid and broad subfields, requires intense amounts of research to simulate healthy debate. This study guide is designed to merely give you a starting point for your research and does not cover all aspects of the agenda. Deviation from this agenda is highly unexpected and would not be looked upon in a favourable manner.

Rest assured, we promise that we will try to make this a memorable learning and enriching experience for you. Please make sure that you let go of your inhibitions and participate with hundred percent effort and involvement. Feel free to contact us at any point in time before the simulation of the conference.

Regards,
Executive Board
Mukund Vishwanath
Chairperson

POINTS TO REMEMBER

Few important points delegates should keep in mind while preparing:

Procedure: The purpose of putting in procedural rules in any committee is to ensure a more organized and efficient debate. The committee will follow the UNA-USA Rules of Procedure. Although the Executive Board shall be fairly strict with the Rules of Procedure, the discussion of agenda will be the main priority. So, delegates are advised not to restrict their statements due to hesitation regarding procedure.

Foreign Policy: Following the foreign policy of one's country is the most important aspect of a Model UN Conference. This is what essentially differentiates a Model UN from other debating formats. To violate one's foreign policy without adequate reason is one of the worst mistakes a delegate can make.

Role of the Executive Board: The Executive Board is appointed to facilitate debate. The committee shall decide the direction and flow of the debate. The delegates are the ones who constitute the committee and hence must be uninhibited while presenting their opinions/stances on any issue. However, the Executive Board may put forward questions and/or ask for clarifications at all points in time to further debate and test participants.

News Sources: This Background Guide is meant solely for research purposes and must not be cited as evidence to substantiate statements made during the conference. Evidence or proof for substantiating statements made during formal debate is acceptable from the following sources:

1. Any Reuters article which clearly makes mention of the fact or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by a delegate in council.

2. Government Reports: These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that a report that is being denied by a certain country can still be accepted by the Executive Board as credible information.

3. Reports from NGOs working with UNESCO, UNICEF and other UN bodies will be accepted. Documents from international organisations like OIC, NAFTA, SAARC, BRICS, EU, ASEAN, ICJ may also be presented as a credible source of information.

Under no circumstances will sources like Wikipedia, or newspapers like the Guardian, Times of India, etc. be accepted by the Executive Board as credible proof. However, delegates are still free to quote/cite from any source as they deem fit as a part of their statements.

INTRODUCTION
TO THE COMMITTEE

Established in 1923, the International Criminal Police Organization (abbreviated as INTERPOL), is an international organisation to fight crime on a global scale, with bureaus in all 196 member states. Interpol focusses on terrorism, cyber crime, and organised crime, by connecting police around the world, curating databases, coordinating networks, offering investigative support, and training police officers (INTERPOL).

Bodies of INTERPOL

INTERPOL operates through a structured organisation composed of various bodies, each playing a critical role in its mission to facilitate international police cooperation and combat transnational crime. These bodies ensure that INTERPOL functions effectively, maintaining a global presence and providing essential support to its member countries. The key bodies of INTERPOL include the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, the General Secretariat, National Central Bureaus (NCBs), and the various Regional Offices and Liaison Offices.

1.General Assembly

The General Assembly is INTERPOL's supreme governing body, consisting of representatives from all member countries. It meets annually to set policies, approve the budget, and make decisions on key issues affecting the organisation. Each member country has one vote, ensuring equal representation. The General Assembly's functions include:

- Electing members of the Executive Committee.
- Adopting resolutions and recommendations.
- Approving INTERPOL's strategic plans and programs.

2. Executive Committee

The Executive Committee comprises 13 members elected by the General Assembly, representing different regions of the world. It oversees the implementation of the General Assembly's decisions, provides guidance to the General Secretariat, and ensures the organisation's proper administration. The Executive Committee meets three times a year and includes the President of INTERPOL, who presides over the meetings and represents the organisation.

3. General Secretariat

The General Secretariat is the operational hub of INTERPOL, responsible for the day-to-day administration and execution of the organisation's activities. Headquartered in Lyon, France, with regional offices around the world, the General Secretariat operates 24/7 to support member countries. Key responsibilities include:

- Facilitating international police cooperation through the I-24/7 communications network.
- Managing INTERPOL's databases and providing operational support.
- Coordinating international operations and response teams.
- Conducting training and capacity-building programs.

The Secretary General, appointed by the General Assembly, heads the General Secretariat and serves a five-year term, renewable once. The Secretary General ensures the effective implementation of INTERPOL's strategic initiatives and oversees its staff and operations.

4. National Central Bureaus (NCBs)

Each member country has an NCB, which serves as the primary liaison between national law enforcement agencies and INTERPOL. NCBs are responsible for:

- Exchanging information and intelligence with other NCBs.
- Coordinating international investigations and operations.
- Requesting and responding to INTERPOL notices, such as Red Notices for wanted persons.
- Ensuring compliance with INTERPOL's rules and procedures.

NCBs play a crucial role in enabling INTERPOL's global network, allowing for seamless cooperation and information sharing among member countries.

5. Regional Offices and Liaison Offices

INTERPOL maintains Regional Offices and Liaison Offices to enhance its presence and cooperation in different parts of the world. These offices support the General Secretariat's efforts by:

- Providing localised support and coordination for member countries.
- Facilitating regional training and capacity-building initiatives.
- Enhancing communication and cooperation among countries within the region.

6. Specialized Units and Task Forces

INTERPOL has several specialised units and task forces dedicated to addressing specific types of crime, such as:

- **Counter-Terrorism:** Focuses on preventing and combating terrorism through intelligence sharing, operational support, and capacity building.
- **Cybercrime:** Works to combat cyber threats and cyber-enabled crimes by providing technical expertise, coordinating international investigations, and promoting best practices in cybersecurity.
- **Human Trafficking and Child Exploitation:** Aims to identify and dismantle trafficking networks, rescue victims, and support investigations into child exploitation.

- **Drug Enforcement:** Targets drug trafficking organizations and facilitates international cooperation to combat the global drug trade.
- **Environmental Crime:** Addresses crimes such as illegal logging, wildlife trafficking, and pollution through coordinated international efforts.

7. INTERPOL Notices and Databases

INTERPOL utilises a system of notices to communicate critical information to its member countries. These notices include:

- **Red Notices:** Request the location and arrest of wanted persons.
- **Blue Notices:** Collect additional information about a person's identity or activities.
- **Green Notices:** Provide warnings and criminal intelligence about persons who have committed criminal offences and are likely to repeat these crimes.
- **Yellow Notices:** Help locate missing persons, often minors, or to identify persons who are unable to identify themselves.
- **Black Notices:** Seek information on unidentified bodies.
- **Orange Notices:** Warn of an event, a person, an object, or a process representing a serious and imminent threat to public safety.
- **Purple Notices:** Seek or provide information on modi operandi, objects, devices, or concealment methods used by criminals.

INTERPOL's databases hold critical information on stolen property, missing persons, fingerprints, DNA profiles, and other crime-related data, accessible to law enforcement agencies worldwide.

INTERPOL AGENDA
2022 – 2025

Interpol's agenda from 2022 to 2025 reflects its values to create a safer world for future generations, its strategic goals focus on enhancing global policing effectiveness through four key areas.

The first goal emphasises improving law enforcement's access to trusted information, ensuring data privacy, and managing information according to international standards.

The second goal seeks to enrich policing by fostering partnerships, enhancing operational coordination, and engaging with global security forums.

The third goal aims to advance policing through digital transformation, innovative technologies, and collaborative efforts. Lastly, the fourth goal focuses on boosting organisational performance by fostering leadership, decentralising governance, ensuring resilience, and promoting a culture of ethics, diversity, and inclusion.

These strategies collectively aim to strengthen INTERPOL's role in combating transnational crimes and supporting member countries.

MANDATE OF THE INTERPOL

STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK 2022-2025

VISION
Connecting police for a safer world

MISSION
Preventing and fighting crime through enhanced cooperation and innovation on police and security matters

VALUES
Respect Integrity Excellence Teamwork Innovation

TRUSTED INFORMATION FOR ACTION
Serve as the trusted global law enforcement hub for the exchange of actionable information and analysis.

ENRICH POLICING THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS
Maximize resources, knowledge and operations through cooperation and strategic partnerships.

ADVANCE AND INNOVATE POLICING
Advance the global law enforcement community through research and innovative solutions.

ENHANCE ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND DELIVERY
Be an organization of excellence that is accountable, transparent and agile.

The Strategic Framework 2022-2025 is composed of four Strategic Goals and 17 corresponding Strategic Objectives highlighting where the Organization intends to be in 2025.

At the core of INTERPOL's mandate is the facilitation of international cooperation among law enforcement agencies. INTERPOL's secure global police communications system, known as I-24/7, enables the rapid exchange of information and intelligence. This system connects police forces worldwide, allowing them to share critical data on criminal activities, suspects, and ongoing investigations. INTERPOL also issues notices, including Red Notices for wanted persons, Blue Notices for collecting additional information, and Green Notices for providing warnings about potential threats. These tools help member countries to collaborate effectively and address transnational crime more efficiently. This neutrality allows INTERPOL to serve as an unbiased intermediary that supports law enforcement agencies in their efforts

to tackle crimes that transcend borders, such as terrorism, human trafficking, drug trafficking, and cybercrime.

Functions of the Interpol

The functions of INTERPOL are diverse and comprehensive. It manages a secure global police communications system known as I-24/7, which facilitates the swift exchange of information between member countries. INTERPOL also maintains extensive databases that store information on criminals, stolen property, and missing persons, accessible to authorised law enforcement agencies worldwide. Additionally, INTERPOL issues colour-coded notices, such as Red Notices for wanted persons and Blue Notices for collecting information on suspects, to assist in the international apprehension of criminals. These functions support member countries in their investigations and help streamline the coordination of cross-border operations.

Powers of the Interpol

INTERPOL's powers are primarily advisory and coordinative rather than executive. It does not have the authority to make arrests or conduct investigations independently but supports member countries by providing crucial intelligence, forensic expertise, and operational support. INTERPOL can deploy response teams to assist in crises, such as natural disasters or terrorist attacks, offering expertise and resources to local law enforcement. Through initiatives like capacity building and training programs, INTERPOL enhances the skills and knowledge of police forces globally. By fostering international collaboration and providing vital resources, INTERPOL plays a pivotal role in strengthening global security and addressing the challenges of transnational crime.

INTERPOL AND THE UN

INTERPOL has been referenced in numerous United Nations General Assembly resolutions addressing a variety of issues such as terrorism, human trafficking, weapons trafficking, corruption, environmental crime, and cultural heritage crime. The cooperation between INTERPOL and the UN evolved significantly in November 2016 with the unanimous adoption of Resolution 71/19 by the General Assembly. This resolution recognized the need for greater coordination and collaboration between the two organisations, particularly in areas such as counter-terrorism, transnational crime, cybercrime, corruption, financial crime, and environmental crime.

In November 2018, Resolution 71/19 was reviewed and unanimously adopted as Resolution 73/11, incorporating more detailed operational language on key areas of cooperation, especially counter-terrorism. The resolution was reviewed again in November 2020 and adopted as Resolution 75/10, with additional operational language on areas such as cybercrime, the Global Policing Goals, gender mainstreaming in law enforcement and peacekeeping. It also included a special paragraph addressing the impact of COVID-19 on global criminal activity.

In 2022, the General Assembly reviewed and unanimously adopted the resolution once more as Resolution 77/20. This third review expanded the cooperation between INTERPOL and various UN entities and specialised agencies, adding new language on the three INTERPOL Global Crime Programmes, emerging technologies, financial crime and corruption, cultural heritage crime, global health, and maritime security.

OVERVIEW OF
TRANSNATIONAL CRIME

Transnational crime refers to criminal activities that cross national borders, involving the planning, execution, or impact of offences that occur in more than one country. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) defines transnational organised crime as "offences that have actual or potential transborder effects, and crimes which are intrastate but offend fundamental values of the international community." This broad category includes crimes such as human trafficking, drug trafficking, arms trafficking, money laundering, terrorism, cybercrime, and environmental crime.

The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNTOC), also known as the Palermo Convention, further refines the definition. According to UNTOC, organised criminal groups are "structured groups of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offences in order to obtain, directly or indirectly, a financial or other material benefit." This convention has been instrumental in setting the legal framework for international cooperation against transnational crime.

Impact
Transnational crime poses significant threats to global security, economic stability, and social development.
1. **Economic Impact:** The global economic cost of transnational crime is staggering. According to the World Economic Forum, the cost of cybercrime alone is estimated to reach $10.5 trillion annually by 2025. The illicit drug trade, as reported by UNODC, generates around $320 billion per year, undermining legal economies and funding further criminal activities.

2. Security Impact: Transnational crime networks often intersect with terrorist organisations, creating a nexus that exacerbates global security threats. Terrorist groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda have been known to engage in drug trafficking, human trafficking, and arms smuggling to finance their operations. This convergence complicates efforts to combat both terrorism and organised crime.

3. Social Impact: The human cost of transnational crime is profound. Human trafficking, for instance, affects millions of people worldwide, with an estimated 25 million victims of forced labour and sexual exploitation, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO). These crimes violate fundamental human rights and disrupt communities.

4. Environmental Impact: Environmental crimes, including illegal logging, wildlife trafficking, and pollution, have devastating effects on biodiversity and ecosystems. INTERPOL reports that environmental crime is the fourth largest criminal activity in the world, generating up to $258 billion annually.

Extent

Transnational crime is a pervasive issue that affects nearly every country.

- **1. Global Organized Crime Index:** This index, developed by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime, provides a comprehensive assessment of the levels of organised crime and resilience in countries around the world. The 2021 report highlights that nearly every country experiences some form of organised crime, with regions like Africa, Asia, and the Americas showing particularly high levels of criminal activity

- **2. UNODC Reports:** The UNODC's annual World Drug Report and Global   Report on Trafficking in Persons offer detailed insights into the prevalence of drug trafficking and human trafficking. For example, the 2020 World Drug Report noted an increase in drug use and trafficking, with opioids being the most significant contributors to drug-related deaths

- **3. Conflict Zones:** Ongoing conflicts create fertile ground for transnational crime. In regions like the Middle East, Africa, and Southeast Asia, non-state actors (NSAs) and insurgent groups exploit the chaos of war to engage in various illicit activities. In Syria, for instance, both ISIS and other armed groups have been involved in oil smuggling and artefact trafficking, generating significant revenue to fund their operations.

Transnational crime involves a variety of actors, including states, non-state actors (NSAs), and criminal networks.

1. **Non-State Actors and Insurgents:** In Afghanistan, the Taliban has long been involved in the opium trade, using drug trafficking to finance its insurgency. Similarly, in Colombia, the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) engaged in drug trafficking, kidnapping, and extortion to support their activities.
2. **Criminal Syndicates:** Mexican drug cartels, such as the Sinaloa Cartel and the Jalisco New Generation Cartel (CJNG), control significant portions of the global drug trade. These cartels operate transnationally, smuggling drugs across borders and laundering money through complex financial networks.
3. **Terrorist Organisations:** Al-Qaeda and ISIS have diversified their sources of funding to include human trafficking, extortion, and the illegal sale of oil and cultural artefacts. These activities not only finance terrorism but also destabilise regions and contribute to ongoing conflicts
4. **State-Sponsored Activities:** In some instances, state actors engage in or facilitate transnational crime. North Korea, for example, has been implicated in various illicit activities, including counterfeiting currency, drug trafficking, and cybercrime, as means to circumvent international sanctions.

INTRODUCTION TO
TERROR FINANCING

Terrorist organisations require significant funding, both for the actual undertaking of terrorist acts, but also to other issues: to maintain the functioning of the organisation, to provide for its basic technical necessities, as well as to cover costs related to spreading related ideologies.

Terrorist financing encompasses the means and methods used by terrorist organisations to finance their activities. Sources of terrorist funding include, but are not limited to, low-level fraud, kidnapping for ransom, the misuse of non-profit organisations, the illicit trade in commodities (such as oil, charcoal, diamonds, gold and the narcotic "captagon"), and digital currencies. Funds may originate from illegal activities or legitimate ones.

HOTSPOTS OF CONFLICT

Geographic locations that have an increased priori probability of being subject to competition and therefore hosting a conflict are known as hotspots of conflict.

These competitions, due to the decisions of target selection for the use of force as well as fortunes of these forces, are partly dependent upon the presence or absence of particular interests and resources at specific locations.

Tensions and violence are particularly intense or frequent in such areas. These conflicts can arise from a variety of issues, including political disputes, territorial disagreements, ethnic or religious tensions, and resource competition.

Some of the world's current political hotspots are Syria, Iraq, The Gaza Strip, Ukraine, Libya, Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan, Ukraine, the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Central African Republic — not forgetting West Africa, which is battling the spread of the deadly disease Ebola.

Major areas of conflict:

- **Palestine:** Violence and other cruelties are expected to continue across the Palestinian territories, including after the current high-intensity fighting in Gaza ends.

- **Yemen and the Red Sea:** The domestic situation in Yemen remains tense; regional escalation in the Red Sea could nevertheless derail ongoing peace efforts and lead to a resurgence of the conflict.

- **Ukraine:** Although embroiled in a stalemate, Ukraine and Russia are rapidly evolving their weapon use and tactics.

IMPACT OF TERROR FINANCING

Often clandestine, but always insidious, transnational crimes bring about threat to security, peace and development. The impact of Transnational crimes are multidimensional, manifesting in different forms whether it be humanitarian, economic or political. Crimes like human trafficking, drugs trafficking and arms trafficking not only pose a huge threat to the States but also inflict severe suffering on individuals and communities. Transnational crimes also pose a threat to the economic developments of a State, resulting in decreased foreign investments and economic stability. Politically, it fosters corruption and erodes trust in governmental organisations, leading to weakening of rule of law, destabilising regions and hence posing serious threats to national and global security.

One of the major impacts of these conflicts include Terrorism/Illicit Financing. Terrorism financing is a global phenomenon that not only threatens a State's security but can also undermine economic development and financial market stability. Sources of terrorist funding include, but are not limited to, low-level fraud, kidnapping for ransom, the misuse of non-profit organisations, the illicit trade in commodities (such as oil, charcoal, diamonds, gold and the narcotic "captagon"), and digital currencies. Illicit financing accounts for billions of lost developmental opportunities, worsened livelihoods and poverty. Illicit financing channels funds towards the purchase of weapons, equipment and services. This forces the targeted State's Government to divert resources to counter-terrorism, detracting resources from public assets and other crucial areas.

References to Indices:
- *https://www.unodc.org/toc/en/crimes/organized-crime.html*
- *https://www.un.org/en/un75/new-era-conflict-and-violence*
- *https://www.un.org/law/cod/finterr.htm*

ACTIONS OF THE INTERPOL

Interpol maintains relationships with a number of bodies to help drive high-level policies and cooperation to counter terrorist financing. Interpol also works hands-on in a lot of areas to encourage better cooperation between financial intelligence units (FIUs) and police in our member countries, to encourage the sharing of intelligence and analysis.

Project Millennium

The primary objective of Project Millennium is to identify and dismantle major criminal groups, their associated criminal networks and their activities.While originally centred in Eurasia, Millennium is gradually extending to Nigeria and the Western Balkans.

They have been identified by Project Millennium countries as a priority area of investigation.

"Thieves in Law" or "Thieves professing the code" are at the top of the criminal hierarchy, with influence and control that extends across groups engaging in crimes such as:

- Trafficking in drugs, human beings, motor vehicles and firearms;
- Contract murder;
- Extortion;
- Financial crime and money laundering

Project Millennium is also geared towards proactively sharing and contributing intelligence to the analysis file that it provides to member countries, police are empowered to act locally, with the support of global data

The Financial Action Task Force(FATF)

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is crucial in global efforts against terrorist financing. It sets international standards, helps jurisdictions implement UN Security Council financial provisions on terrorism, and evaluates countries' abilities to prevent, detect, investigate, and prosecute terrorist financing.

The FATF has made recommendations that set out a comprehensive and consistent framework of measures which countries should implement in order to combat money laundering and terrorist financing, as well as the financing of proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The Recommendations, together with their interpretative notes, provide the international standards for combating money laundering and terrorist financing.

European Union

Countering the financing of terrorism is a core component of the EU's strategy in the fight against terrorism.

The European Union has implemented several measures to combat terrorist financing, including a comprehensive action plan for strengthening the fight against terrorist financing aimed at detecting and preventing the movement of funds and other assets, helping law enforcement trace financial movements and disrupting the sources of revenue.

International Monetary Fund

Effective anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT) policies and measures are key to the integrity and stability of the international financial system and member countries' economies. Over the past 20 years, the Fund has helped shape AML/CFT policies globally, and within its members' national frameworks.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) plays a significant role in preventing terrorist financing through the following actions:
- The IMF assists in the development of global standards and best practices for combating terrorist financing.
- It provides technical assistance and training to member countries to enhance their legal and institutional frameworks.
- The IMF conducts assessments of countries' compliance with anti-terrorist financing standards and monitors their implementation.
- It collaborates with international bodies such as the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) to ensure coordinated global efforts.

THE ROLE OF
GLOBALIZATION AND TECHNOLOGY

Globalisation and technological advancements have significantly impacted the landscape of transnational crime and terror financing. The ease of global travel, communication, and financial transactions has facilitated the operations of criminal and terrorist networks. The internet and social media platforms have become vital tools for recruitment, propaganda, and fundraising, allowing these groups to reach a global audience.

Cryptocurrencies and encrypted communication channels provide anonymity and security, making it harder for law enforcement agencies to track financial transactions and communications. As a result, combating transnational crime and terror financing requires a coordinated and innovative approach that leverages technology and international cooperation.

Importance of Addressing Terror Financing

Addressing terror financing is critical to weakening the operational capabilities of terrorist organisations and reducing their impact on global security. By cutting off their financial resources, we can limit their ability to plan and execute attacks, recruit new members, and sustain their operations. Effective strategies to combat terror financing involve a multi-faceted approach, including enhancing international cooperation, strengthening legal frameworks, and leveraging technological innovations. Furthermore, addressing the root causes of terrorism, such as political instability, economic disparity, and social injustice, is essential in creating a comprehensive solution. International organisations like INTERPOL play a vital role in coordinating these efforts and providing the necessary support to member countries in their fight against terror financing.

RED SEA CONFLICT

The Israel-Palestine conflict is one of the most enduring and complex disputes in modern history, rooted in overlapping national, religious, and historical claims. The conflict intensified significantly with the establishment of the State of Israel in 1948, leading to the first Arab-Israeli war and the subsequent displacement of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians, known as the Nakba. The 1967 Six-Day War saw Israel capturing the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, areas with significant Palestinian populations and historical importance. The Oslo Accords in the 1990s aimed to pave the way for a two-state solution but failed to resolve key issues such as borders, the status of Jerusalem, and the right of return for Palestinian refugees. The Gaza Strip, controlled by Hamas since 2007, has been a focal point of conflict, characterised by frequent military engagements with Israel, rocket attacks, and severe humanitarian crises.

Numerous reports highlight the extensive networks that finance terrorism in the region. The U.S. Department of State has identified Iran as a principal sponsor of Hamas, providing substantial financial aid, weapons, and training. According to the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), these funds often move through complex channels, including charities, front companies, and smuggling tunnels under the Gaza-Egypt border. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) also underscores the role of illicit trade and money laundering in sustaining these operations.

The United Nations has repeatedly called for peace and negotiated settlements through resolutions such as UNSC Resolution 242 and 338, which emphasise the "land for peace" principle. However, the UN's role

has been largely limited to mediation and humanitarian aid. INTERPOL has been active in tracking and disrupting terror financing networks. For example, INTERPOL's Operation Trigger V targeted illegal arms trafficking, which indirectly supports terror financing. The European Union has imposed sanctions on entities linked to terrorism and has funded projects to improve the socio-economic conditions in Palestinian territories, aiming to undermine the root causes of militancy.

Key non-state actors include Hamas, which governs the Gaza Strip and is responsible for numerous attacks against Israel, and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad, another militant group operating in Gaza. Both groups receive funding and support from external actors, notably Iran. Additionally, various local factions and militant cells contribute to the instability and violence in the region.

INTERPOL's operations, such as Operation Trigger V, have had some success in disrupting arms trafficking and terror financing networks. However, the entrenched nature of these networks and the ongoing conflict present significant challenges. The resilience of terror groups in adapting to countermeasures, combined with limited on-ground enforcement capabilities, hinders the long-term effectiveness of these operations. Continuous international cooperation and enhanced local enforcement are crucial for achieving more substantial results.

SOUTH CHINA SEA

The South China Sea is a highly contested region, with multiple countries claiming overlapping territories. These include China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei, and Taiwan. The area is of strategic importance due to its vital shipping lanes, rich fishing grounds, and potential underwater oil and gas reserves. China's extensive territorial claims, demarcated by the "Nine-Dash Line," encompass nearly the entire South China Sea and have led to significant tensions with other claimants. These tensions are exacerbated by China's construction of artificial islands and military installations, which are seen by other nations as attempts to assert dominance and control over the region. The Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague ruled in 2016 that China's claims had no legal basis, but China has rejected the ruling and continues its activities in the region .

Terror financing in the South China Sea region is facilitated by the complex and often lawless maritime environment. Groups such as Abu Sayyaf in the Philippines engage in piracy, kidnapping for ransom, and smuggling to finance their activities. According to the Global Terrorism Index, these groups have developed sophisticated networks to transfer funds and procure weapons. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia (ReCAAP) have documented numerous incidents of piracy and armed robbery, highlighting the persistent threat posed by these groups.

The United Nations has primarily sought to address the South China Sea conflict through diplomatic means, advocating for peaceful resolution and adherence to international maritime laws, particularly the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). INTERPOL has conducted operations such as Operation Maharlika III, which aimed to combat maritime piracy and illegal fishing, indirectly targeting terror financing activities. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) has been instrumental in promoting dialogue among claimant countries and developing a Code of Conduct to prevent conflicts and ensure freedom of navigation. The Council on Foreign Relations notes that nearly a third of global maritime trade passes through the South China Sea, making it a critical artery for international commerce. Persistent tensions and unresolved disputes undermine regional stability and economic development.

Key non-state actors in the region include militant groups like Abu Sayyaf and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, which engage in piracy, smuggling, and other illegal activities to fund their operations. These groups often collaborate with transnational criminal networks, making the maritime domain a hotspot for various illicit activities. The involvement of these non-state actors complicates the efforts to maintain security and stability in the region.

INTERPOL's operations in the South China Sea, such as Operation Maharlika III, have had mixed results. While they have succeeded in disrupting some illegal activities and improving maritime security, the vast and challenging maritime environment presents significant obstacles. The persistence of piracy and smuggling indicates that more robust and sustained efforts are necessary. Enhanced regional cooperation, better maritime surveillance technology, and continuous capacity-building for local law enforcement are essential for improving the effectiveness of these operations. The complex interplay of state and non-state actors, along with the strategic importance of the region, requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach to address the multifaceted challenges .

IMPORTANT
REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

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QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION
MUST ANSWER

- 1. What is the current state of transnational crime and terror financing in the identified regions of conflict?
- 2. What are the primary challenges faced by law enforcement agencies in combating these issues?
- 3. How do existing international and regional frameworks address (or fail to address) transnational crime and terror financing?
- 4. What legal frameworks and conventions should be strengthened or established to combat transnational crime and terror financing?
- 5. How can international cooperation be enhanced through these legal instruments?
- 6. What role should national legislation play in supporting international efforts?
- 7. What mechanisms can be implemented to improve intelligence sharing among member states and relevant international organisations?
- 8. How can INTERPOL's existing tools and resources be better utilised to facilitate information exchange?
- 9. What protocols need to be developed to ensure timely and secure sharing of intelligence?
- 10. How can technological advancements, such as blockchain and AI, be leveraged to track and prevent terror financing?
- 11. What financial regulations and monitoring systems should be put in place to track and disrupt terror financing channels?
- 12. What sanctions or punitive measures should be considered against individuals, organisations, and states involved in terror financing?
- 13. How can non-state actors, including NGOs and the private sector, contribute to combating transnational crime and terror financing?
- 14. How can civil society be mobilised to enhance awareness and reporting of suspicious activities?
- 15. What socio-economic factors contribute to the proliferation of transnational crime and terror financing in regions of conflict?

- 16. What metrics and indicators should be used to monitor the effectiveness of measures implemented to combat transnational crime and terror financing?