



**The Winchester School Jebel Ali
United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime
Background Guide**

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Letter from the Dais

Dear Delegates,

Greetings, and welcome to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime at WINMUN 2024!

Model United Nations conferences are a microcosm of the global community. These conferences offer such an enriching learning opportunity and hone a wide range of crucial skills, from research skills, to communication, to diplomacy, to organisational skills, to critical thinking, in addition to making you aware of current global issues. MUNs broaden your perspective, and therefore, we sincerely hope you enjoy your time at this conference and find it to be an empowering learning experience.

The agendas that the UNODC committee will be tackling are “Addressing the legal and regulatory challenges posed by space tourism, space mining, and potential extraterrestrial criminal activities”, and “Evaluating the potential benefits of shifting from punitive drug policies to harm reduction and decriminalisation strategies, with an emphasis on public health”. We hope you understand just how crucial our discussions in the conference are going to be, and we look forward to the ingenious resolutions that you will come up with when your brilliant minds come together.

So whether this is your first-ever MUN, your second, your third, or whether you’re a seasoned delegate with 20+ conferences under your belt, we reiterate that we hope you take something away from this experience, and most importantly, enjoy yourself.

Looking forward to seeing you all at the conference! All the best, delegates!

Sincerely,
Mishal Faraz, Head Chair of UNODC
Aaron Philip, Co-Chair of UNODC
Ebrahim Aljabal, Co-Chair of UNODC

Agenda 1: Addressing the legal and regulatory challenges posed by space tourism, space mining, and potential extraterrestrial criminal activities

Author: Mishal Faraz

Vocabulary

1. Space Tourism

Space tourism refers to the commercial activity of sending private individuals into space for recreational, leisure, or adventure purposes. This emerging industry involves the provision of space travel experiences, typically facilitated by private space companies. Participants, or "space tourists," embark on suborbital or orbital flights, experiencing microgravity and the overview effect—a profound shift in perspective afforded by viewing Earth from space.

2. Space Mining

Space mining involves the exploration, extraction, and utilization of valuable resources from celestial bodies such as asteroids, moons, and planets. This process aims to harness essential materials like minerals, water, and rare metals to support future space endeavours. As technology advances, space mining holds the potential to address resource scarcity on Earth and facilitate the sustained exploration and colonization of outer space.

3. Extraterrestrial Criminal Activities

Extraterrestrial criminal activities encompass illegal actions conducted in outer space or on celestial bodies. These activities may include theft, smuggling, sabotage, unauthorized resource extraction, or any actions that violate international space law. As human activities in space expand, the need for legal frameworks and mechanisms to prevent and address extraterrestrial criminal activities becomes increasingly critical.

4. Astropolitics

Astropolitics refers to the political, social, and economic considerations and interactions related to space exploration and activities. It encompasses the diplomatic relations between spacefaring nations, the negotiation of international agreements, and the geopolitical implications of space endeavours.

5. Celestial Property Rights

Celestial property rights involve the legal concepts and frameworks surrounding ownership and utilization of resources on celestial bodies. As space mining becomes a reality, defining property rights for extraterrestrial resources is a crucial aspect of international space law and governance.

Introduction to the Agenda

The contemporary landscape of space exploration is characterized by technological advancements and an increasing involvement of private entities. Two prominent aspects have emerged: space tourism and space mining. Space tourism involves the commercial provision of space travel experiences to private individuals, while space mining explores the extraction and utilization of resources from celestial bodies. These developments signify a departure from traditional, state-driven space endeavors, bringing forth a set of legal and regulatory challenges that demand international attention and cooperation.

As humanity extends its reach beyond Earth, the legal and regulatory considerations surrounding space activities become increasingly pertinent. The committee is convened to address the multifaceted challenges posed by space tourism, space mining, and the potential for extraterrestrial criminal activities. These challenges encompass a spectrum of issues, including the delineation of jurisdiction in space, the determination of ownership rights over extraterrestrial resources, and the establishment of effective regulatory frameworks to govern these activities.

At the core of the matter lies a delicate balance between promoting innovation and safeguarding against potential misuses or conflicts. The committee's task is to navigate the complexities of governing activities in outer space, considering questions of resource allocation, international collaboration, and the overarching principles that should guide the responsible and sustainable use of the cosmic frontier.

This agenda prompts a deep dive into fundamental questions about the governance of space activities, recognizing the need for adaptable and comprehensive solutions. The discussions will delve into historical precedents, the roles of key stakeholders, and the implications of past United Nations actions in shaping the legal and regulatory landscape of outer space. The goal is to equip those involved with a nuanced understanding of the challenges at hand and encourage a pragmatic approach to finding viable solutions for the benefit of all nations involved in space exploration.

Background of the Agenda

The contemporary epoch of space exploration has witnessed a transformative departure from traditional state-driven endeavors, with the influx of private entities spearheading novel initiatives. Central to this evolution are two pivotal developments: the advent of space tourism and the burgeoning field of space mining. Space tourism, marked by the commercial provision of space travel experiences to private individuals, is facilitated by a cadre of private space companies. This shift in accessibility to space not only marks a milestone in democratizing space exploration but also introduces a slew of multifaceted legal and regulatory challenges.

Space mining, on the other hand, represents a paradigmatic shift in the utilization of outer space resources. This ambitious venture seeks to explore, extract, and harness valuable resources from celestial bodies, including asteroids, moons, and planets. The potential benefits are considerable, ranging from addressing resource scarcity on Earth to propelling sustained space exploration. However, the nascent nature of these activities and the absence of a comprehensive legal framework for outer space endeavors give rise to complex governance issues.

The historical model of space exploration, predominantly led by national space agencies, operated within a framework established by international treaties such as the Outer Space Treaty of 1967. However, the increasing involvement of private entities in space activities has introduced new dynamics, necessitating a reassessment of existing legal frameworks. The contemporary legal void poses challenges related to jurisdictional boundaries, property rights over extraterrestrial resources, and the imperative for regulatory oversight.

The emergence of space tourism introduces considerations beyond the technological and economic aspects, including the safety, liability, and environmental impact of private space travel. Space mining, driven by the promise of unlocking valuable extraterrestrial resources, prompts reflections on equitable resource allocation, sustainable extraction practices, and the potential for conflicts over resource ownership.

In navigating these intricate challenges, the committee is tasked with shaping a legal and regulatory framework that not only accommodates the surge in private-sector space activities but also upholds principles of fairness, sustainability, and international collaboration. The historical context of space exploration, coupled with the contemporary realities of private-sector involvement, forms the nuanced backdrop against which the committee must deliberate, contributing to the ongoing discourse on the future of space governance.

Key Stakeholders

1. National Space Agencies

Traditionally, national space agencies such as NASA (United States), Roscosmos (Russia), ESA (European Space Agency), JAXA (Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency), and others have been at the forefront of space exploration. These entities play a crucial role in advancing scientific knowledge, fostering international collaboration, and establishing the legal foundations for space activities within their respective jurisdictions.

2. Private Space Companies

The emergence of private space companies, including SpaceX, Blue Origin, and others, has ushered in a new era of commercial space endeavours. These entities are driving innovation in space technology and have become central players in space tourism and mining ventures. Their activities raise questions about liability, safety standards, and the delineation of responsibilities in the absence of a comprehensive legal framework.

3. International Telecommunication Union (ITU)

The ITU plays a pivotal role in managing global radio-frequency spectrum and satellite orbits, crucial components for space communication. As space activities proliferate, ensuring the equitable use of these resources becomes essential, requiring collaboration and coordination facilitated by the ITU.

4. United Nations Office on Outer Space Affairs (UNOOSA)

UNOOSA serves as the central United Nations entity responsible for promoting international cooperation in the peaceful use and exploration of outer space. It plays a significant role in facilitating dialogue, coordinating efforts, and ensuring that space activities align with international agreements and principles.

5. Astropolitical Entities

Nations engaged in astropolitics, the geopolitical considerations of space activities, wield influence in shaping the regulatory landscape. Political dynamics, international agreements, and negotiations on space-related matters are critical factors that impact the governance of space endeavours.

6. Private Space Investors

Beyond individual companies, private investors and venture capital firms are increasingly influencing the direction of space activities. Their financial backing fuels technological advancements and entrepreneurial ventures, contributing to the diversification of stakeholders in the space sector.

Key Issues

1. Legal Void in Outer Space

The absence of a comprehensive and universally agreed-upon legal framework poses a significant challenge. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967 provides fundamental principles, but the rapid evolution of space activities requires an updated framework. Delegates must address the legal void by exploring avenues for international collaboration to establish clear guidelines governing space activities.

2. Resource Ownership and Utilization

With the advent of space mining, the question of ownership and utilization of extraterrestrial resources becomes paramount. Delegates need to grapple with the establishment of equitable frameworks that recognize the right to exploit resources while avoiding the exploitation of outer space for the benefit of a few, and ensuring benefits are shared globally.

3. Jurisdiction and Enforcement

Defining jurisdictional boundaries and mechanisms for enforcing laws and regulations in outer space present formidable challenges. Delegates must consider how to navigate conflicting national interests, prevent potential legal disputes, and establish effective enforcement mechanisms to ensure compliance with international agreements.

4. Safety and Liability in Space Tourism

The rapid rise of space tourism introduces new dimensions of safety and liability concerns. Delegates must address questions related to passenger safety, accident prevention, and the assignment of liability in the event of mishaps. Establishing international standards and cooperation to ensure the safety of space tourists is a critical aspect of the agenda.

5. Environmental Impact of Space Mining

As space mining activities advance, the potential environmental impact on celestial bodies and space itself becomes a pressing concern. Delegates must explore regulatory frameworks that address sustainable extraction practices, minimize environmental degradation, and establish guidelines for responsible resource utilization in space mining ventures.

6. Prevention of Extraterrestrial Criminal Activities

With the expansion of human activities in outer space, the potential for criminal activities, such as theft, smuggling, and unauthorized resource extraction, increases. Delegates need to consider measures to prevent and address extraterrestrial criminal activities, including the establishment of protocols for investigation, prosecution, and collaboration among spacefaring nations.

Questions to consider

- How can the international community update space laws to address current challenges, including those posed by space tourism and mining?
- What measures can be taken to determine and regulate ownership of extraterrestrial resources, ensuring fair global benefits and preventing monopolies in space mining?
- What international agreements can be established to clarify jurisdictional boundaries and enforce compliance with space laws?
- How can international standards be set to ensure the safety of space tourists and address liability concerns in the emerging space tourism industry?
- What guidelines should be developed to minimize the environmental impact of space mining and promote sustainable extraction practices?

Past UN Actions

- **Outer Space Treaty (1967)**

The cornerstone of international space law, the Outer Space Treaty establishes fundamental principles governing the exploration and use of outer space. It affirms that outer space is free for exploration by all states, prohibits national appropriation of celestial bodies, and emphasizes the peaceful use of outer space. Delegates should delve into the historical context and relevance of this treaty in the contemporary era of space activities.

- **Moon Agreement (1979)**

Building on the principles of the Outer Space Treaty, the Moon Agreement focuses specifically on the Moon and other celestial bodies, declaring them the common heritage of all humankind. It prohibits any national appropriation of these celestial bodies and outlines principles for their use. Despite not having achieved widespread ratification, the agreement holds significance in discussions around extraterrestrial resource utilization.

- **Declaration on International Cooperation in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space (1996)**

This declaration emphasizes the importance of international cooperation in space exploration. It encourages states to engage in joint efforts, share information, and promote peaceful uses of outer space. The committee should consider the impact and effectiveness of this declaration in fostering collaborative endeavours in the context of contemporary space activities.

- **UNISPACE Conferences**

The UNISPACE conferences, initiated by the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS), serve as forums for global dialogue on space-related matters. These conferences, held periodically, bring together representatives from member states, international organizations, and the private sector to discuss emerging issues and promote international cooperation in space activities.

- **Space2030 Agenda**

Adopted in 2018, the Space2030 Agenda outlines the UN's vision for the future of space activities. It emphasizes the role of space in achieving sustainable development goals and advocates for the peaceful use of outer space. Delegates should assess the relevance and implementation of the Space2030 Agenda in the context of the current agenda on space tourism, space mining, and potential extraterrestrial criminal activities.

Bibliography

Agenda 2: Evaluating the potential benefits of shifting from punitive drug policies to harm reduction and decriminalisation strategies, with an emphasis on public health

Authors: Aaron Philip and Ebrahim Aljabal

Vocabulary

1. Decriminalize

Refers to the process of removing criminal penalties or sanctions against certain behaviors or actions. When something is decriminalized, it means that while it may still be regulated or controlled, it is no longer considered a criminal offense. This often implies that individuals engaging in that behavior might face civil penalties or administrative consequences rather than being subject to criminal prosecution or imprisonment. Decriminalization is often considered as a way to shift the focus from punishment to harm reduction or alternative approaches in addressing certain societal issues.

2. Harm Reduction

A collection of pragmatic approaches and principles formulated to mitigate the adverse effects linked to drug consumption, without necessarily mandating complete abstinence. It encompasses interventions such as needle exchange programs, supervised consumption sites, and drug testing services.

3. Public Health Approach

A strategy focused on the health outcomes of entire populations, emphasizing prevention, intervention, and policies to promote overall well-being, often applied in addressing drug abuse and addiction.

4. Human Rights-Based Approach

Policies and strategies that prioritize the protection of individuals' human rights, especially in relation to fair treatment and dignity, irrespective of drug use.

5. Evidence-Based Policy

Policies that are formulated based on empirical research, data, and proven strategies rather than ideology or political beliefs.

Introduction to the Agenda

Over the course of history, numerous nations across the globe have dealt with different approaches to drug policies, ranging from severe punitive actions to more forward-thinking strategies focused on minimizing harm and emphasizing the welfare of individuals and communities. The ever-changing terrain of drug policies and their ramifications on public health has ignited fervent discourse, showcasing the intricacies and varied viewpoints surrounding this multifarious matter.

As the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the committee's objective is to thoroughly examine a vital and pressing global matter: assessing the potential advantages linked to shifting from punitive drug policies to the adoption of harm reduction and decriminalization strategies. This agenda strongly emphasizes the prioritization of public health concerns in the global strategy for drug control and management.

Despite substantial investments and policy backing for harm reduction measures such as naloxone, syringes, and medications for opioid use disorder, individuals who engage in drug use still face a particularly elevated risk of death from overdose and morbidity from infectious diseases. The criminalization of drug use has predominantly deteriorated these drug-related damages and placed additional burdens on already disenfranchised and vulnerable populations, both in both the short and long haul. Pharmacy professionals and students are susceptible to the consequences of drug criminalization, as a single conviction can result in the revocation of their license, termination of employment, or hindrance in their educational advancement. Communities deteriorate and become stagnant in punitive criminalization systems, which further diminishes opportunities for development. The urgent and effective strategy of decriminalizing drug use and possession reallocates resources from punitive measures to public welfare, resulting in an amelioration of the adverse consequences of drug use and the maintenance of safe and healthy communities.

Initially, the UNODC should actively advocate for and acknowledge the benefits of decriminalizing drug use and possession. These advantages include but are not limited to, decreased imprisonment rates for non-violent drug offenders, a transition towards a public health-oriented approach, and the redirection of resources from law enforcement to prevention and treatment initiatives.

Furthermore, the representatives are obligated to participate in multilateral diplomacy, striving to reach a consensus and establish clear policy recommendations. This entails engaging in discussions and drafting resolutions that take into account a variety of perspectives, while also upholding the sovereignty of nations and fostering global collaboration when confronted with the intricacies of drug-related matters.

Delegates are urged to thoroughly examine every dimension of this issue, taking into account the social, economic, legal, medical, and ethical consequences involved. Moreover, the committee aims to discern optimal methods, draw insights from exemplary circumstances, and formulate all-encompassing approaches that protect public health while tackling the worldwide obstacles presented by drug-related matters.

Your contributions and nuanced insights as delegates are of utmost importance as The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime functions together to develop efficient regulations based on existing evidence. These policies aim to promote public health, protect human rights, and establish an orderly and equitable world.

Background of the Agenda

Over the past several decades, there has been a significant and fundamental change in the nature of drug policies in numerous countries. The implementation of harm-reduction drug policies is gaining momentum as a counterpart to traditional prohibitionist drug policies, prompting a demand for reforms in drug laws. Harm reduction policies prioritize public health and strive to minimize the negative consequences associated with drug use. Fostering effective drug policies necessitates a meticulous examination of international legal frameworks, national cultural norms, public health considerations, law enforcement, and individual freedoms. Striking a harmonious equilibrium among these factors poses a significant hurdle for jurisdictions worldwide. Presently, national drug policies typically lean towards either a public health or criminal justice approach.

In the past, disciplinary drug policies were primarily characterized by rigorous enforcement, with a concentration on penalization, imprisonment, and punitive actions intended to eliminate drug use and trafficking. Nevertheless, the practicality of these methods in reducing drug-related problems, as well as their unintended social, economic, and public health repercussions, has been subject to growing criticism.

Conversely, there has been a significant change in perspective, underlining the significance of allocating priority to public health parameters when contracting drug policies. This transformation entails adopting harm reduction strategies that highlight the reduction of negative health and social outcomes related to drug use, while also campaigning for the prohibition of specific drug offenses. The primary focus is to provide assistance, therapy, and instruction instead of criminal actions, aiming to alleviate the adverse consequences of drug consumption on individuals and communities.

The transition in national drug policies, shifting from prohibition to harm reduction, is primarily influenced by political and economic factors at the country level, along with international pressures exerted by organizations like the European Union (EU) and the United Nations (UN). The Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain, and Portugal have been implementing pragmatic public health and social inclusion policies to tackle drug use since the mid-1990s. Latin American countries started adopting similar approaches in the early 21st century.

An in-depth analysis is required to understand the intricacies of drug policies. The problems related to drugs are interconnected with wider socio-economic factors, the availability of healthcare, considerations of human rights, and international collaboration. The UNODC acknowledges the importance of striking a balance between regulatory measures and public health imperatives when formulating effective strategies based on evidence to tackle these challenges.

The purpose of convening the UNODC committee is to discuss the advantages of shifting from punitive drug policies to harm reduction and decriminalization strategies, specifically focusing on the promotion of public health. Delegates are responsible for carefully assessing the strengths and difficulties of different policy approaches, examining examples of successful implementation, and working together to create thorough suggestions that prioritize public health and tackle the global challenges presented by drug-related problems.

Key Stakeholders

Within the framework of the UNODC committee deliberating on the transition from punitive drug policies to harm reduction and decriminalization approaches with an emphasis on public health, a number of significant stakeholders would participate in these dialogues:

1) The World Health Organisation (WHO):

The World Health Organisation (WHO) provides specialized knowledge on health-related aspects of drug use, treatment, and strategies that mitigate harm, in line with the focus on public health.

2) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC):

The UNODC, the leading specialized agency within the UN system for drug-related matters, has a crucial role in offering expertise, guidance, and recommendations on global drug policy.

3) International Drug Control Conventions and Treaties:

In the context of formulating drug policies, discussions may involve an examination of the ramifications of international treaties like the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances.

4) Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs):

These organizations advocate for communities that are impacted, offer viewpoints from the local populace, and often present innovative approaches and hands-on experiences to mitigate damage and enhance public health.

5) Member States:

The perspectives of representatives hailing from diverse nations will be susceptible to the impact of drug regulations specific to their respective countries, cultural values, and public health objectives.

Key Issues

1) The dichotomy between Punitive action against drug users and harm reduction-

- Punitive measures ranging from: Criminalization, arresting drug users, stigmatization of consumption, and detention.
- Harm prevention, including, sterile and safe needle programs, decriminalization, and public mental health assistance.

2) The present advantages to harm reduction methods-

- Lowered rates of HIV/AIDS/Hep C transmission and reduced strain on medical facilities
- Lowered costs of policing on society, reduced ostracization of drug users leading to reintegration and increased labour force participation and economic advantages.
- Data driven approaches to drug use prevention, following previous examples over punitive action methods.

3) Opposition to harm reduction policies-

- Possible rise in drug use
- Increased public threats due to possible rise in criminal activity
- Difficulties in regulatory implementation of structured harm reduction approaches
- Possible increase in public spending
- Harm reduction policies still do not address underlying economic sources of drug use

4) Worldwide Illustrations-

- Portugal: All narcotics were decriminalized, which decreased drug-related mortality and HIV/AIDS cases.
- Positive results from treatment clinics supported by heroin in Switzerland.
- Uruguay: Enhanced regulation, increased tax income, and legalized cannabis for recreational use.

5) The UN's role-

- Encourages member state technical support and evidence-based policy reform.
- Argues for a well-rounded strategy that incorporates security, public health, and human rights.

Questions to Consider

1. How could harsh drug laws discourage people from getting the essential medical care, and how might harm-reduction tactics counteract this impact?
2. How can the decriminalization of drugs be in line with international human rights standards, and how do punitive drug policies relate to abuses of human rights, particularly with regard to vulnerable communities?
3. What evidence exists to compare the effectiveness of punitive measures versus harm reduction and decriminalization strategies in addressing drug-related harm, addiction, and public health concerns?
4. How can we address concerns about potential increases in drug use under decriminalization?
5. What are the potential ethical considerations when choosing between punitive and harm reduction approaches to drug use?

Past UN Actions

1. 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs:

Established the foundation for international drug control, primarily focusing on criminalizing possession and trafficking of most drugs.

2. 1998 World Ministerial Summit on Drug Policy:

Marked a shift towards acknowledging the need for a balanced approach, recognizing public health concerns alongside law enforcement efforts

3. 2009 Political Declaration on Drug Policy:

Emphasized evidence-based strategies, including harm reduction and prevention programs. This declaration signaled a growing acceptance of harm reduction approaches within the UN framework.

4. 2012 UN Guidelines on HIV/AIDS Prevention, Treatment, Care and Support for People Who Use Drugs:

Provided specific recommendations for integrating harm reduction into HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment programs.

5. 2016 UN General Assembly Special Session on the World Drug Problem (UNGASS 2016):

Called for comprehensive responses that go beyond punishment, including harm reduction measures like needle exchange programs and access to treatment.

6. 2018 World Drug Report:

Highlighted the positive impact of harm reduction interventions, such as reductions in HIV/AIDS transmission and overdose deaths. This report provided evidence-based support for harm reduction policies.

7. 2021 CND Resolution 65/1:

Supported increased access to controlled medicines for pain relief and palliative care, potentially paving the way for greater decriminalization of certain drugs in specific contexts.

8. 2023 World Health Organization recommendations on cannabis and cannabinoids:

The WHO recommended removing cannabis from Schedule IV of the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, acknowledging its potential for medical use and research.

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