Teacher: Dr. Hanane RABAHI – Specialty: Language Contact and Sociolinguistics Variation- English Language.

Part One: The drug problem

Lecture 1: The global context

Objectives

By the end of this lecture, the students should be able to:

1. Enhance International Cooperation: Foster global collaboration to create strategies for effectively combating drug trafficking and production.

2. Promote Economic Development and Stability: Implement policies to improve economic conditions in vulnerable regions, reducing reliance on the illicit drug trade.

3. Increase Awareness and Education: Develop educational programs to raise awareness about the dangers of illicit drugs and promote legal economic activities.

4. Strengthen Regulatory Frameworks: Advocate for robust regulations to prevent money laundering and integrate illicit drug profits into legitimate economies.

The global context

The worldwide rise in issues related to illegal drugs both mirrors and exacerbates global tensions. The roots of these tensions are evident: swift shifts in political affiliations, weakened family and community bonds, rising unemployment and underemployment, economic and social exclusion, and a surge in crime. While significant advancements are occurring in areas such as communications and technology, the enhancement of life quality for many individuals has not met the existing potential or the growing expectations of those who are aware that life can improve.

In an era marked by escalating social and political tensions, the macroeconomic landscape has undergone a significant transformation. Global trade and investment have surged, yielding considerable economic advantages for various regions in both the developed and developing worlds. The movement of capital, goods, and individuals across national borders is now more frequent and unrestricted than ever before. Many industries have seen multinational corporations operate on a global scale, optimizing production based on the comparative advantages of specific countries or regions, marketing to a wide range of geographical areas, and conducting financial transactions where they are most beneficial. As a result of these changes, financial markets have become increasingly transparent, characterized by substantial daily monetary transfers worldwide. Nation-states appear to have made a fundamental decision in favor of economic liberalization, believing that the advantages of enhanced trade and investment outweigh the potential loss of sovereignty over the movement of people, goods, and capital, due to the anticipated material gains.

The macroeconomic conditions that have supported the expansion of legitimate global enterprises have similarly enabled drug manufacturers and traffickers to establish a worldwide network. They can produce drugs in developing nations, distribute and sell them globally, easily transfer cartel members across borders, and invest their drug profits in financial hubs that provide confidentiality and appealing returns. The deregulation that has facilitated the electronic movement of money for legitimate businesses, with minimal national oversight, has also allowed drug producers and traffickers to launder their illegal profits, making these funds seem legitimate.

The global transformations that have facilitated the inexpensive and effortless movement of people, goods, and capital across borders have also led to additional repercussions. These changes have highlighted and intensified the disparities and inequalities present worldwide, making them increasingly intolerable. In many instances, the gap between the wealthy and the impoverished continues to widen. Furthermore, numerous developing nations, particularly those in Africa and certain regions of Latin America and Asia, have largely been excluded from the advantages of rising global trade, investment, and subsequent economic growth. This exclusion can often be attributed to factors such as political instability, ethnic strife, natural disasters, or poor economic management. Regardless of the specific circumstances in each country, the stagnation in economic development has placed these nations in a precarious financial situation, often severely limiting government services for the most vulnerable populations. In this environment, both the nation-state and its citizens have become increasingly susceptible to the allure of profits from illegal drug production and trafficking, as well as the acceptance of illicit drug money by financial institutions or as direct investments.

There is currently greater awareness of the issues surrounding illicit drugs and drug trafficking than ever before. A significant challenge lies in translating this awareness into effective action. In this lecture, the term "illicit drugs" refers to the narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances identified in the schedules of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, along with its amendments from the 1972 Protocol and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971. Among the over 200 controlled substances, the UNDCP highlights opium-heroin, coca-cocaine, cannabis, and amphetamine-type stimulants due to their relevance to both developing and industrialized nations. To prepare for an examination of the social consequences of drug abuse, the following section will first explore the production, distribution, and consumption of illicit drugs and other addictive substances.