

STRATEGY TO COMBAT TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME: DEFINITION

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Turnover of transnational organized crime is estimated at 870 billion U.S. dollars a year, which is higher sixfold official development assistance and is equal almost seven percent of world merchandise exports (2009).

Organized crime annually carries countless lives. Part of it is a medical issue and violence associated with the drug, murder with a firearm and unfair methods and motivation of traffickers and those involved in the smuggling of migrants.

There are many activities that can be characterized as transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, smuggling of migrants, human trafficking, money laundering, illicit trafficking in firearms, counterfeit goods, wildlife and cultural values and even some forms of cybercrime.

Transnational organized crime refers to those self-perpetuating associations of individuals who operate transnationally 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 a transnational organizational structure and the exploitation of transnational commerce or communication mechanisms. There is no single structure under which transnational organized criminals operate; they vary from hierarchies to clans, networks, and cells, and may evolve to other structures. The crimes they commit also vary. Transnational organized criminals act conspiratorially in their criminal activities and possess certain characteristics which may include, but are not limited to:

In at least part of their activities they commit violence or other acts which are likely to intimidate, or make actual or implicit threats to do so;

They exploit differences between countries to further their objectives, enriching their organization, expanding its power, and/or avoiding detection/apprehension;

They attempt to gain influence in government, politics, and commerce through corrupt as well as legitimate means;

They have economic gain as their primary goal, not only from patently illegal activities but also from investment in legitimate businesses; and

They attempt to insulate both their leadership and membership from detection, sanction, and/or prosecution through their organizational structure.