

**Organization of American States**  
**President's Letter**  
**St. Bonaventure University Model United Nations**  
**March 24–25, 2017**

Hello delegates,

My name is Geoffrey Broadbent, and I will be the chair for the Organization of American States (OAS). I am a Biology and Political Science double major at St. Bonaventure University, and I have been doing Model United Nations since my freshman year of high school. As far as my chairing style, I consider myself moderately strict when it comes to the rules and procedure but open to any and all questions, as the main point of this conference is learning. I have some basic expectations in my committee the most important of which is coming prepared. Do research not only on the topics I proposed but also on your countries' foreign policies, especially their past positions in the OAS. This knowledge will help you advocate your countries' interests. Finally, I expect diplomacy and courtesy at all times. I expect disagreements during debate, but it is of the utmost importance that you treat your fellow delegates with respect. I look forward to seeing all of you at the conference, and I wish you the best of luck in your preparation.

**Small Arms Trafficking in the Americas**

The OAS has grown to recognize that arms trafficking both within and between member-states has become a growing issue in the region. The OAS has repeatedly addressed the problem of arms trafficking in the past but many of these solutions have been unsuccessful due to lack of cooperation among all member-states. By far, the most common form of illicit arms trafficking afflicting member-states is small arms and light weapons. It is OAS policy that each member-state should issue a report on small arms trafficking on an annual basis.

Weapons are illegally transported across borders for a variety of reasons in the Americas. In North America, small arms are often used in relation to gang activity and the growing drug trade. Solving these problems would help reduce the demand of illicit weaponry, but the OAS has failed to come up with a comprehensive solution that takes into consideration the important issue of national sovereignty. In Central and South America, the small arms trade is similarly driven by the drug trade and gang activity, but factors like rebel activity in countries like Colombia and Haiti contribute to this issue as well. The OAS did pass the Inter-American Convention Against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, Ammunition, Explosives, and other Related Materials (CIFTA) in 1997 which at the time was considered to be one of the most comprehensive documents in the fight against illicit arms trafficking. The document looked to accomplish a number of goals including defining illicit trafficking, describing ways that weapons can be marked for tracking purposes, and even addresses the controversial topic extradition.

Some things that were not mentioned in the document were measures addressing education in regards to the proliferation of the small arms trade. In addition to fighting against

illicit small arms trade, the OAS also supports transparency and cooperation among member-states when acquiring weapons for use for both their law enforcement officials and their military. This transparency is becoming increasingly imperative as gangs and cartels are able to obtain these military grade weapons making them more and more difficult to fight against. The OAS has recommended in the past that member-states document shipments of weapons and share reports amongst the organization to increase cooperation in combatting the interception and criminal use of these weapons. As member-states of the Organization of American States it is important to foster cooperation with one another while maintaining one's national interests

Questions for your consideration:

1. What forms of gun-related violence are in my country? What are the causes?
2. What has my country done to stop illegal import of weapons?
3. What steps has my country taken to reduce the flow of illegal weapons?
4. Does my country agree with CIFTA?
5. What other measures could be taken to reduce or eliminate arms trafficking?
6. Should the United Nations intervene? Should there be an international agreement on this issue? Would it help?

Resources:

<http://www.oas.org/juridico/english/treaties/a-63.htmloas>

<http://www.oas.org/csh/english/smallarms.asp>

<http://www.cfr.org/arms-industries-and-trade/strategy-reduce-gun-trafficking-violence-americas/p31155>

## **Safety in Tourism Regions**

Tourism is a vital part of the economies of many OAS member-states. When countries are unable to protect the tourists visiting their country, it often reflects poorly on the entire tourism sector, not only for that individual country but for the whole region. Crimes against tourists discourage tourists from coming and spending their money which can have a profound impact on the economies of many of the member-states.

The OAS has taken steps to help member-states improve tourism security developing a Tourism Security Program, designed to help increase the security of OAS member states that depend on tourism. The program encourages cooperation between the public and private sector so they are better able to work together to protect tourists. There are three basic goals of this program including basic training courses on tourism security, the development of integrated tourism security plans through public/private partnerships, and specialized training courses on crisis management and crime prevention. The most common forms of crimes against tourists are petty crimes, such as pick-pocketing, confidence schemes, and robberies. Tourists are often unfamiliar with the area and are easy targets for criminal acts. The OAS has looked to train security personnel on innovative methods to protect tourists and ensure that should a tourist need assistance, they are able to readily get the help they need.

Also, the legal process varies widely across the Americas, so many of these crimes go unreported and fail to convict criminals allowing them to continue to commit these criminal acts. This failure of member-states to properly handle crimes associated with tourists has only further perpetuated the problem. As many tourists in the Americas are also citizens of the Americas, it is the duty of the OAS to ensure that member-states have access to the right resources to ensure that all citizens are kept safe, and to ensure that important economies are preserved.

Questions for your consideration:

1. How important is tourism to my country's economy?
2. Does my country take in a large number of tourists or, alternatively, does my country have a large number of tourists travelling to other OAS member-states?
3. What steps has my country taken to ensure the safety of tourists in my country?
4. Do tourists travel to my country for such things as sex or drug tourism?

Resources:

- 1 [http://www.oas.org/en/sms/cicte/programs\\_tourism.asp](http://www.oas.org/en/sms/cicte/programs_tourism.asp)
- 2 <https://www.osac.gov/pages/ContentReportDetails.aspx?cid=17138>
- 3 [http://www.popcenter.org/problems/crimes\\_against\\_tourists/](http://www.popcenter.org/problems/crimes_against_tourists/)
- 4 [http://www.oas.org/es/sms/cicte/docs/Neil\\_Klopfenstein.pdf](http://www.oas.org/es/sms/cicte/docs/Neil_Klopfenstein.pdf)

### **Illicit Drug Trade in the Americas**

The illicit drug trade has plagued the Americas for decades and the problem has only gotten worse in recent times. Not only do drugs pose a threat on their own, but often the drug trade is accompanied by high rates of violence. Latin America and the Caribbean has the world's highest murder rate reaching 32.6 per 100,000 of population in 2008. The problem affects all citizens: Women, men, the elderly, the young, the poor, the rich, etc...

As this committee moves forward, keep in mind that some goals of the Organization of American State for the combatting of illicit drug trade include the following: The Implementation of major policy change, a reduction of demand, and an increase in Institutional development.

Illicit drugs and their trade have cast an unfavorable image of this hemisphere. This problem poses a threat to the stability of law enforcement and civil societies. It leaves nothing but violence and destruction as it tears through our member countries. The OAS is very dedicated to combatting this problem and has many proposed and implemented different projects to combat it and lessen its deadly effects. It is also imperative that nations work together to stop drug cartels and limit the amount of illicit substances crossing borders. It is clear that without increased cooperation and the support of certain key nations, it is impossible to stop the largest drug trafficking routes in the world.

Questions to consider:

1. How is your nation affected by drug trafficking in the America's?
2. Are large amounts of illicit substances exported from your nation?

3. Are large amounts of illicit substances imported to your nation?
4. What has your nation done to combat the illicit drug trade domestically?
5. How can your nation cooperate with other member-states to stop the flow of drugs across borders?
6. Has your country signed treaties to combat the illicit drug problem?
7. Do you have any policy proposals?

Resources:

- 1 <https://www.oas.org/docs/publications/LayoutPubgAGDrogas-ENG-29-9.pdf>
- 2 [http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/reduccion\\_demanda/default\\_eng.asp](http://www.cicad.oas.org/Main/Template.asp?File=/reduccion_demanda/default_eng.asp)
- 3 <http://www.countthecosts.org/sites/default/the-full-OAS-introduction-and-analytical-report.pdf>