

## **Drug Control Committee, PRAMUN 2017**

### **Synopsis**

#### **Topic #1: The War on Drugs in the Philippines**

##### **I. Background Information**

The ongoing Filipino Drug War (FDW), spearheaded by the controversial President of the Philippines, Rodrigo Duterte, has recently made international headlines and has also been a large topic of discussion within human rights organizations spanning the globe. The two most common/accessible illegal narcotics in the country are methamphetamine hydrochloride (meth) and marijuana. Rodrigo Duterte had said during his campaign for the presidency that the Philippines would become a 'narco-state' if the issue of drug abuse was not readily met. The U.S. State Department recently reported that 2.1% of Filipinos aged 16-64 are users of meth and marijuana, and according to a 2011 UN drug report, the Philippines has the highest rate of methamphetamine abuse in the world.

The FDW has made such a splash due to its various human rights violations, with thousands of people having been killed outside the law. Duterte has admitted that children and innocent people have been killed in the campaign, but he has called them "collateral damage" and said, "If it involves human rights, I don't give a s\*\*t.". Vigilante groups are supposedly involved with then FDW and the thousands of extra-judicial killings plaguing the country, such as the so called "Davao Death Squad" (DDS), a group with which Duterte was allegedly involved in during his time as the Mayor of Davao. The DDS has claimed the death of hundreds of street children, petty criminals and drug users in recent months. Duterte has denied the existence of the DDS and he has also denied any involvement with the recent killings. Approximately 4,800 people have been killed so far in the FDW (including police officers, soldiers, drug dealers, and drug users).

## **II. United Nations Involvement**

The United Nations has not yet gotten deeply involved with the Filipino Drug War, except for releasing multiple statements against the FDW. The U.N. has called for an end to the killings which have stemmed from the FDW, to which Duterte has said he may leave the United Nations and form a new international organization with China and many African nations. Duterte has also verbally attacked the United States, saying that the U.S. could not fulfill their own mandates but were "worrying about the bones of criminals piling up" in the Philippines. Duterte has also criticized the U.N. for "not doing enough" to address world hunger and terrorism, and also "not doing anything" about the bombing of villages and slaughter of innocent civilians in Syria and Iraq by the Islamic State (IS). Although he has railed against the United Nations, Duterte has invited U.N. experts to investigate the extra-judicial killings as a way to help convince the international community that the government is not involved in the killings.

## **III. Bloc Positions**

Two main positions have been taken on the topic of the Filipino Drug War. One praising the war, and one absolutely opposing the war. The praise has come mainly from Filipino nationalists and nationalists of many other countries, seeing the current drug problem as a plague to their nation. These nationalists see the killings of people involved with drugs as a way of cleansing their nation. Many have negatively compared this idea of 'national cleansing' to the holocaust in which over 7 million people were killed, including Duterte (although in admiration). The second position is mainly taken by international superpowers such as the United States of America, and human rights activist groups such as Amnesty International. These organizations mainly oppose the illegal killings of thousands of people and call for a traditional trial and imprisonment of the criminals.

## **IV. Questions to Consider**

When writing your Policy Papers and Resolutions, concentrate on the following questions:

- What is my country's current financial situation? How will this determine my effectiveness when dealing with this issue?
- What is my country's official policy/stance regarding the issue of narcotics?
- Is my country able to affect the Philippines and its drug war directly or indirectly?
- Would my country's government want to become involved in the drug war at all?
- What position does my country take on the drug war?
- Is my country currently involved in any drug war? Is it internal or external?

Sources:

1. Mollman, Steve. "Rodrigo Duterte's War on Drugs Has Killed Thousands in the Philippines, but It's Winning Praise from China." *Quartz*. Quartz Magazine, 2016. Web. 22 Nov. 2016
2. "Philippine Drug War." *Wikipedia*. Wikimedia Foundation, n.d. Web. 22 Nov. 2016
3. "Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte to Extend Drug War as 'cannot Kill Them All'" *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 2016. Web. 22 Nov. 2016.