

COCAINE TRAFFICKING AND ORGANISED CRIME IN PERU

Perspective of the national anti-drug policy until 2030



Javier Gamero Kinosita / IPA Peru

In recent decades, illicit drug trafficking, in particular cocaine trafficking and organized crime, has been one of the biggest problems for the international community, states and society and one of the biggest challenges for international criminal policy in the 21st century, as it promotes criminal violence and affects public health, national security and democratic governance.

At a recent National Forum on Organized Transnational Crime organized by the Ministry of the Interior, General Zenón Loayza Díaz, the head of counter-narcotics of the National Police of Peru, explained that the illicit cocaine trade in Peru is considered a value chain that includes different phases: Coca leaf cultivation, trafficking and diversion of chemical raw materials, cocaine production, money laundering, low development rates, narcoterrorism in the Apurímac, Ene and Mantaro river valleys (VRAEM), the presence of foreign criminal organizations (the "Choneros", the "Tiguerones" and the "Lobos" from Ecuador), the "Comandos de la Frontera", the "Clan del Golfo" and the "Frente Carolina Ramírez" from Colombia, the "Comando Vermehlo", the "Primer Comando Capital" and "Os Cría TPCL" from Brazil, to name but a few), the systemic corruption of the authorities in connection with the illegal drug trade and the lack of state presence in certain high Andean and Amazonian regions of the country.

Dr Ricardo Soberon Garrido, Executive President of the Peruvian National Commission for Development and Life without Drugs (DEVIDA), argues that this criminal phenomenon has influenced international relations to control the dynamics of demand and supply of drugs, especially cocaine substances, and highlights the international projection and enormous pressure that this exogenous phenomenon exerts on the global drug economy and local economies in the Andean region. As we know, adds Dr. Soberon, in a large part of the Amazon there is a central hub for the illicit production and commercialization of cocaine derivatives, which supplies the international market and influences the production, prices of coca leaves and the illicit commercialization of their derivatives, causing serious damage to communities, deforestation of protected areas and desecration of the territories of indigenous Amazonian communities.

National anti-drug policy 2030 in Peru

With Supreme Decree No. 192-2020-PCM of 10 December 2020, the Peruvian government approved the National Anti-Drug Policy until 2030 and entrusted the Presidency of the Council of Ministers with the management of the National Anti-Drug Policy until 2030 and its administration by the National Commission for Development and Life without Drugs (DEVIDA). This policy reflects the commitment of the Peruvian State and its response to this scourge within the national and international legal framework. This policy is the State's response to the fight against illicit drug trafficking, which is not limited to the control of production and commercial activities but focuses on the reduction of coca cultivation in exchange for the socio-economic development of coca-growing areas and the prevention and treatment of drug use.

Situation diagnosis of the illegal cocaine trade

In the international drug market, especially in the Andean region, the illegal cocaine trade has led to a diversification of criminal structures, modus operandi, new criminal scenarios, a multitude of actors, a multiplication of transport routes and new forms of violence in recent years. According to the Ministry of the Interior, the Andean countries where coca leaves are grown and which belong to the so-called “white triangle” – Peru, Colombia, and Bolivia – are affected by the pressure caused by the global demand for cocaine, as cocaine consumption in these countries is among the lowest in the region, which means that almost all cocaine production is exported to supply the world market.

The National Drug Policy 2030 points out that the exogenous factor is the main cause of the expansion of coca plantations and cocaine production and trafficking in the country. Cocaine trafficking and organized crime carried out by drug cartels and companies threaten people's freedoms and fundamental rights and endanger security, the economy, the environment, health, and governance, making these countries, which have a high international demand for cocaine, a major source of drug trafficking.

High international demand for cocaine

According to DEVIDA, the drug problem in the world responds to a dynamic of economic demand and supply. In the case of Peru, the functioning of different drug markets - such as cocaine, marijuana, heroin, alcohol, tobacco, etc. - It can be observed that the cocaine market, unlike drugs whose dynamics respond to a national demand for consumption, reacts mainly to strong external pressure generated by high international demand.

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), global demand is exerting strong pressure on supply in the countries of the region. This international pressure leads to a distortion of supply in the traditional market for coca leaves and encourages an increase in the country's production capacity and the illegal cocaine trade with European countries, North America and, in recent years, Asia and the Common Market of the South.

According to DEVIDA, when cultivating coca leaves, the plant product from which the alkaloid is extracted, it is particularly important to bear in mind that the Peruvian state values and defends coca leaves for traditional consumption and industrial use.

Harms associated with the drug market supply chain.

The National Drug Policy 2030 refers to the harms caused by the illicit drug trade in the country and identifies harms to security, the economy, health, the environment and democratic governance.



