

Committee: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

Topic: The Question of Developing Strategies to Address Money Laundering in Drug Trafficking Networks

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Introduction

Currently, following the advancement of transportation and technology, increased interconnection has caused more cases of transnational crimes such as drug trafficking. A number of people from diverse nations have engaged in the trade of illegal drugs such as heroin, opium, cocaine, and so on, not only for their profit, but also for the euphoria of consuming the drugs. However, the international bartering of drugs has had severe watchdogs, who strictly regulated the trade, as many countries were reluctant to let their citizens become addicted to the drugs. To avoid inspection by various regulatory bodies, one method of concealing the trace of trade has emerged, which the world calls 'Money Laundering'.

As drug trafficking accompanies the massive trade of money, money laundering has been considered an essential process of committing illicit activities. Money laundering has been utilized for more than 100 years, and as a result, the methods for laundering money have evolved significantly, becoming more sophisticated and difficult for regulatory institutions to detect. For example, money laundering takes various forms, such as using complex bank transactions, using shell companies, visiting casinos to gamble, and transforming money into cryptocurrency, all of which aim to complicate the exchange route of dirty money. Besides the previous cases, there are far more methods of laundering money.

Money laundering has remained a serious problem in recent decades since it is widely used on a global scale to conceal the traces of illegal activities. Since money laundering has intense repercussions in our world and facilitates the proliferation of drug trafficking, nations should make an effort to seek pragmatic solutions to address this issue.

Definition of Key Terms

Money Laundering

Money laundering is the process of disguising illegally obtained money to make it appear legitimate. It typically involves three main stages: Placement (Introducing dirty money into the financial system), Layering (Making complex transactions to obscure its origin), and integration (returning the money to the criminal in a seemingly legal form). Money launderers often employ money laundering techniques to conceal evidence of illegal activities.

Drug Trafficking

Drug trafficking is the illegal trade of controlled substances, such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, and synthetic drugs. It involves the production, transportation, distribution, and sale of these drugs, often across international borders. Drug trafficking causes significant social problems, including addiction, violence, and public health crises worldwide.

Corruption

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FIU

An FIU (Financial Intelligence Unit) is a government agency responsible for detecting and preventing money laundering, terrorist financing, and other financial crimes. It receives, analyzes, and disseminates suspicious transaction reports from banks, casinos, and other financial institutions. FIUs act as intermediaries between the private financial sector and law enforcement authorities. Their role is crucial in tracking illegal money flows and supporting investigations with financial intelligence. FIUs are involved in the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units to share information with FIUs from diverse countries.

Dirty Money

Dirty money is an asset earned in illicit ways or by crimes, such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, corruption, tax evasion, and fraud. In order to make the dirty money appear legitimate, criminals utilize money laundering.

Cryptocurrency

Cryptocurrency is a digital currency that operates on blockchain technology. The most well-known cryptocurrencies include Bitcoin, Ethereum, and Tether. Cryptocurrencies allow peer-to-peer transactions without the need for banks. Since the trade with cryptocurrencies assures anonymity and is out of the intervention of central banks, it remains one of the major methods of money laundering.

Shell Company

A shell company is a company that legally exists, but has no actual business operation. Shell companies are often used as a primary source to launder money. When launderers send their dirty assets to the company and receive them back, launderers can act like they earned the money through legitimate business activities.

Casino

A casino is a facility where people can gamble by playing various games. It is also an appropriate place to launder money, in that a large amount of cash is transferred among gamblers. By numerous transactions in casinos, money launderers are able to disguise the origins of dirty money effectively.

Drug Cartel

A drug cartel is a criminal organization that controls the production, transportation, and distribution of illegal drugs, often on an international scale. Drug cartels are one of the major parties that engage in money laundering in order to trade banned drugs without being detected by regulatory

bodies. They also tend to use extreme methods, such as murder, to protect their drug trafficking operations, and also to be a dominant cartel among a number of cartels.

Black Market

A black market is an illegal economic system where goods and services are traded without government oversight. A large portion of drug trafficking takes place within the black market. Besides drugs, a lot of illicit goods such as weapons, counterfeit products, and human organs are principally traded on the black market. Therefore, it often generates large amounts of dirty money, making it a key source of money laundering.

Offshore Account

An offshore account is a bank account opened in a country other than the account holder's residence. These accounts are often located in jurisdictions with low taxes and strict financial secrecy laws. They are frequently misused for money laundering, hiding illicit funds, and evading taxes. Because of this secrecy, they are a key tool for drug cartels and corrupt officials to conceal illegal money.

Corruption-Government Corruption Associated with Cartels

Government corruption associated with drug cartels occurs when public officials accept bribes or collaborate with cartels. Police, customs officers, and judges may ignore crimes, release suspects, or block investigations in exchange for money or favors. Politicians may also receive campaign financing or benefits that protect cartel interests at the policy level. This corruption allows cartels to avoid punishment, launder money more easily, and expand their power.

Background Information

The History of Money Laundering

While money laundering appears to be a strategy that has emerged recently as transactional skills have developed, the first recorded case of money laundering was found in China around 2,000 B.C. During this period, ancient Chinese merchants who had amassed considerable wealth from commercial activities often hid their wealth from the rulers by storing their gold and silver in remote locations. Apart from the previous case, every trivial practice that was conducted to hide the origins of money is considered money laundering.

However, the actual, serious money laundering that has arisen as a global problem started around the 20th century. In the 1920s, the National Prohibition Act was enacted in the United States of America. As alcoholic drinks were strictly prohibited, a black market developed, which aimed to sell the drinks in secret and illegal ways. Al Capone was a man who engaged in trading alcoholic drinks, and he eventually earned a profit through selling them. However, he needed to conceal the source of the money, as the assets had been procured through illicit means. To fulfill this, Al Capone used front businesses, such as laundromats. This is why the act of disguising the source of money was named 'Money Laundering'. By exploiting these front businesses, he was able to make the money appear legitimate, just as it had been generated through the commercial activities of these businesses.

Money laundering, however, has risen to become a serious problem during 1970s-1980s. The main reason for this is the prosperity of drug cartels during that period (the period is renowned as the name 'War on Drugs'). As drug cartels in Mexico and Colombia flourished with drug trafficking, they engaged in money laundering. Especially, Pablo Escobar was historically known as one of the most notorious figures in the world of drug trafficking, and his involvement in money laundering was a defining feature of how his cartel operated. He prospered with the Medellin Cartel and received a large amount of dirty money. In order to disguise the money, he often employed front businesses or even used techniques such as smuggling and offshore banking.

Accordingly, money laundering received its first regulation in 1986, when the United States of America enacted the 'Money Laundering Control Act', which was primarily aimed at combating money laundering. The law is entitled as the first-ever law to consider money laundering a crime. Reaching 1989, the severity of it accelerated the counteraction of global society. Hence, through the

summit conference among G7 nations, the nations instituted FATF(Financial Action Task Force). In 1990, the FATF declared '40 recommendations', which embedded guidelines in how governments should prevent and tackle money laundering.

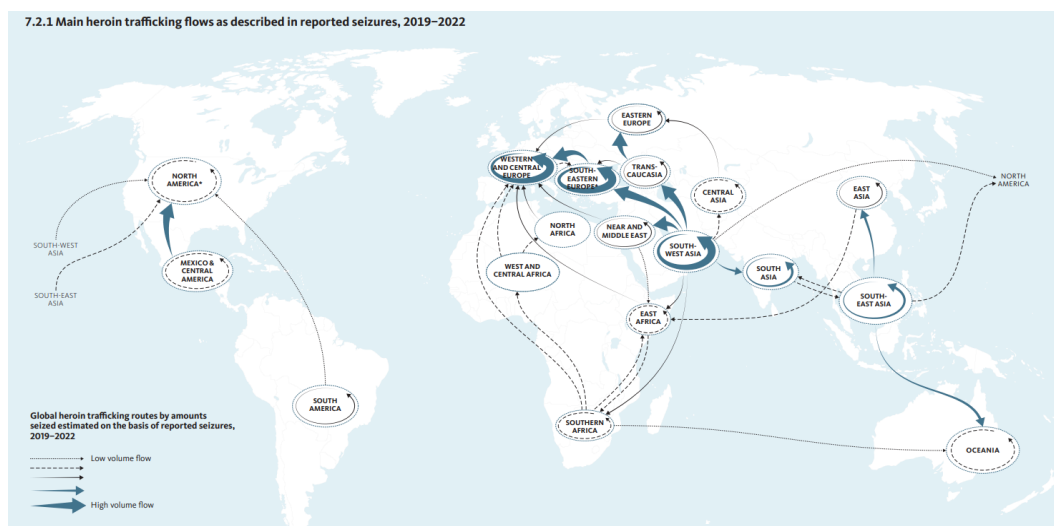
Entering the 2000s, as bank transaction technology and various forms of currency emerged globally, the process of money laundering became increasingly sophisticated. Compared to the past, a wider variety of methods has become available to illicit traders to clean their dirty money. Even though nations have put much effort into combating money laundering, those efforts are still failing to limit all of it.

The Process of Money Laundering

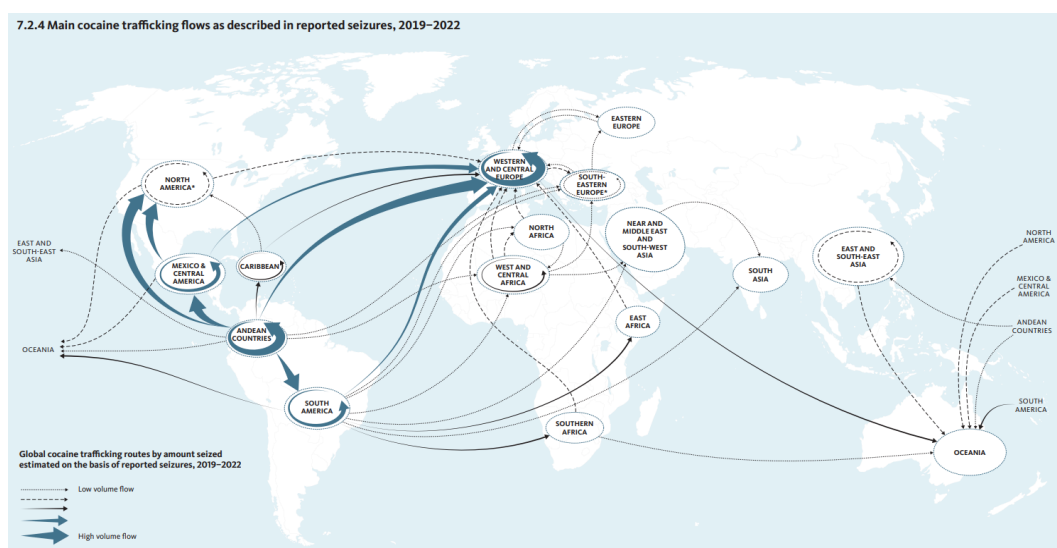
Although modern money laundering methods vary considerably, money laundering can be basically divided into 3 stages. The first stage is 'Placement'. This is the initial stage where illicit money is introduced into the financial system. There are diverse strategies for conducting 'placement'. For example, money launderers put the money in their front businesses to make it appear legitimate. They even break up large amounts of money into smaller deposits and store them in several bank accounts. The second stage is 'Layering'. This is a stage where the launderers obscure the source of the money by moving it around through complex transactions or trades. Money launderers often spend their money on luxury items, casinos, or real estate, and they also convert the money into cryptocurrency to trade it with anonymity. They utilize shell companies or transfer the money to multiple accounts in order to remit money on an international scale. The third stage is 'Integration'. It is a stage to use laundered money, as if it were from a legal source. Completed in these complicated phases, money laundering is currently one of the most serious problems that hinders the regulatory bodies from detecting illegal trade.

Prevalence of Money Laundering by Drug Trafficking

As money laundering for drug trafficking usually occurs on an international scale, it has a significant impact on global society. The images below show the trafficking flow of heroin and cocaine, which are major detrimental drugs, from 2019 to 2022. As shown, illegal drugs continue to be transported through various countries, causing numerous problems across the world. This is the evidence that money laundering is also occurring beyond national borders, following the trafficking of drugs.

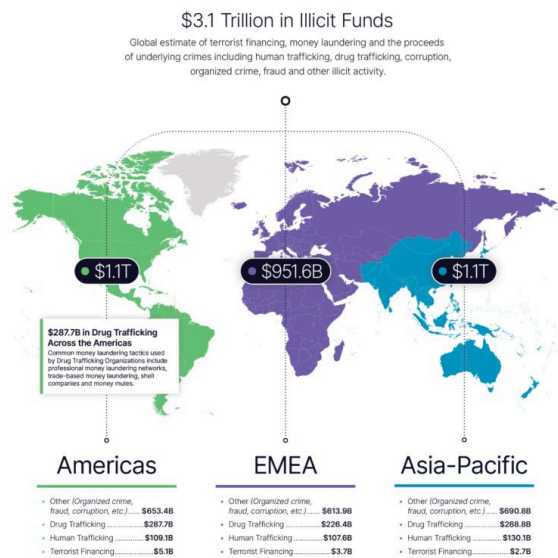


Main heroin trafficking flows as described by reported seizures (UNODC, 2019-2022)



Main cocaine trafficking flows as described by reported seizures (UNODC, 2019-2022)

In addition, according to AML Intelligence, in 2023 alone, the dirty money spent on illicit flows and money laundering in drug trafficking was estimated to be \$782.9 billion, which is the highest figure among prevalent crimes, such as human trafficking, terrorist finance, and various transnational crimes.



LATEST: More than \$3trillion in illicit funds flowed through the global financial system in 2023; banks call for more regulatory guidance to tackle endemic (AML intelligence, 2023)

Efforts of Organizations, National Governments to Tackle Money Laundering

Nowadays, as money laundering still occupies a large portion of the global crime, and is not only confusing the regulatory bodies to track the illegal trade records, but also hampering the economic enhancement, the governments' counteraction has become urgent. Thus, over time, most nations have cooperated with other nations, enacted more institutions, introduced up-to-date technologies, and installed regulatory bodies aimed at effectively detecting the traces of money laundering.

The most representative cooperation case can be found in the establishment of the FATF(Financial Action Task Force). As mentioned earlier in the Key Term section, FATF was established by the G7 countries, intended to regulate the illicit flow of money. The organization published '40 Recommendations' that give the guidelines for preventing and dealing with money laundering incidents. Moreover, the representatives in nations that belong to the FATF participate in conferences hosted 3 times each year. They conduct mutual evaluation regarding each nation's institutions, actions toward addressing money laundering based on '40 Recommendations'. Nations that didn't comply with them are marked as either 'Gray List(Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring)' or 'Black List(High-Risk Jurisdictions subject to a Call for Action)', depending on the severity. Nations with those titles often get more inspections from the other member states of FATF.

Besides FATF, several organizations have emerged accordingly, including APG(Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering) and CFATF(Caribbean Financial Action Task Force) to counter money laundering.

Nations have also encouraged the introduction of modern technologies to inspect the actions of money laundering. One major technology is undoubtedly AI-Driven Transaction Monitoring. Once artificial intelligence is educated through Machine Learning, it becomes capable of detecting and reporting suspicious transactions, as it learns the previous patterns of transactions and reports if the trade pattern differs from the past ones. Artificial Intelligence is also in charge of detecting immense money changes. This application of new technology enabled nations and banks to effectively prevent suspicious trades from being successful, diminishing the likelihood of money laundering. Another technology is the technology of analytics. This primarily incorporates Blockchain Analytics. Generally, every digital transaction is recorded in a blockchain permanently. Therefore, by analyzing the blockchain records, governments and regulatory organizations are able to gain more clues about money laundering.

Furthermore, most countries operate under the collaboration of three major parties to detect and prevent money laundering. The first layer involves financial institutions, such as commercial banks, which are required to monitor customer transactions. If a transaction appears suspicious based on behavioral patterns, amounts, or inconsistencies, the institution reports the record to the Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). The FIU analyzes the report, and if there are sufficient grounds for concern, it forwards the case to law enforcement agencies for investigation. Once law enforcement agencies confirm that the case is actual money laundering, money launderers are punished based on the laws in each nation. In these ways, nations are attempting to eradicate the root cause of money laundering. Nonetheless, money laundering cases remain a widespread issue in global society, as they are often conducted in various forms to avoid detection.

Challenges that Nations Struggle with in Tackling Money Laundering

Despite numerous efforts to eliminate money laundering cases, there are still a number of challenges that the national governments are struggling with. The degree of challenges that national governments face in addressing money laundering depends on the severity, frequency of the crime within nations. While MEDCs(More Economically Developed Countries) maintain stable regulation strategies, many LEDCs(Less Economically Developed Countries) are finding it difficult to regulate money laundering. According to the evaluation of FATA, in 2025 June, nations that are listed on the Black List(High-Risk Jurisdictions subject to a Call for Action), such as Iran, North Korea, and

Myanmar, or 'Gray List(Jurisdictions under Increased Monitoring)', including Lebanon, South Africa, Nigeria, Angola, Syria, Haiti, UAE, and Turkey are mostly comprised of LEDCs, and countries undergoing political instability. As their economies and politics are unstable, they are struggling with establishing an elaborate money laundering regulatory framework and instituting stable FIUs in turn. With the development of various forms of money laundering methods, the shortage of strict policies is worsening the vulnerable nations' situations. Moreover, a lot of LEDCs lack in basic financial system to monitor money laundering. As they are already struggling with an unstable financial system, inevitably, they aren't capable of monitoring money laundering cases.

Lack of transparency is also one of the biggest issues when it comes to money laundering. This problem especially expands when the money launderers trade through shell companies, cryptocurrency. When transactions are conducted through shell companies and cryptocurrency, anonymity is somewhat assured. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to identify the real people who did illicit money laundering. In addition, banks in some nations are even secretive about revealing the transaction records to other bodies. For example, banks in the Swiss Confederation are renowned for hiding transaction records, and therefore, they were once used as a key source of money laundering. As recognition of the profile of a money launderer and review of transaction records is a crucial part of detecting money laundering, a lack of transparency is a severe issue. Furthermore, FIUs in each nation aren't clear with their financial information. Even though they are engaged in the Egmont Group network to share their money laundering situations, several nations aren't participating and refusing to share pragmatic information.

Corruption is another factor that facilitates the money laundering process, which leads to an increase in money laundering cases. The corruption can be classified into 2 types. The first is the corruption between governments and cartels. Drug cartels infiltrate state power by bribing border guards, customs officers, police, and judges, while also funding politicians' campaigns and influencing court rulings to suppress evidence or dismiss charges. This corruption ensures that money laundering investigations are often paralyzed before they can even begin. A well-known example is seen in Mexico and Colombia, where cartels penetrated politics and the judiciary to shield their criminal operations, demonstrating how corruption became a systemic shield for illicit drug revenues. The second is the corruption between financial institutions and cartels. Cartels also rely heavily on corrupting financial institutions by bribing bank employees, exploiting offshore accounts in tax havens, and persuading compliance officers to ignore suspicious transactions. This allows them to disguise enormous drug profits as legitimate funds, often by filtering them through seemingly normal businesses. A notorious case occurred in 2012, when HSBC was fined for allowing Mexican cartels to

launder billions of dollars, highlighting how even global banks can become involved in cartel-driven corruption.

Not to mention, the subtle routes and strategies of drug trafficking are aggravating the money laundering issue. Drug trafficking serves as the main cause of money laundering. Due to the advanced networks and routes for the drug trade, trafficking has become more vigorous, establishing an enormous black market. An expanded black market is boosting the demand for money laundering, thereby worsening its severity.

Possible solutions

Strengthening the Punishment of Money Laundering

In some countries, due to the critical absence of strict legal frameworks, drug traffickers are not alarmed by the punishment that they receive for money laundering. Not only drug traders, but also financial institutions, neglected their roles. In 2012, there was a reported case of one HSBC in the United States of America that was affiliated with Mexican drug cartels, so it didn't report cartel members' transaction records to FIUs. The key solution to this problem is strengthening the law enforcement agencies in each country, as strong punishment will enable people and public financial institutions to refrain from money laundering in advance.

Reinforcing Roles of FIUs (Financial Intelligence Units) and Promoting International Cooperation Among Them

Although FIUs are putting their efforts into combating money laundering by reviewing suspicious transactions, FIUs in certain countries are failing to counter it due to the disorder of society and a lack of expertise. Those FIUs mostly exist superficially, but aren't fulfilling their roles. Therefore, national governments should be responsible for supporting and reinforcing the role of FIUs in preventing money laundering. In addition, FIUs in each nation should be actively involved in the Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units to share information and expertise with FIUs from diverse nations, and enhance the ability to combat money laundering on a global scale.

Training Individuals with Expertise Within a Standardised Curriculum

A key way to strengthen the regulation of money laundering is to increase the number of professionals with expertise in this area. Forestalling money laundering requires professional knowledge not limited to finance, but also about law, computer engineering, and economics. Therefore, now it has become crucial for governments to subsidise this education so as to raise many individuals who are competent to counter money laundering, and employ them in monetary organizations.

Identifying Areas of Active Drug Trade and Allocating Strict Inspections Accordingly

Since drug trafficking remains the dominant cause of money laundering, it's important to regulate it in advance. There are diverse trade routes where drug trafficking often takes place, such as the Balkan Route, Atlantic Cocaine Highway, Golden Triangle, and Golden Crescent. If nations examine the routes with meticulous attention, it could prevent drug trafficking, leading to a reduction in money laundering.

Developing Technologies to Detect Money Laundering and Sharing Them with Other Nations

Even if various technologies are employed to detect suspicious trades, such as the Transaction Monitoring System(TMS) and artificial intelligence, they are still failing to report all of the cases due to frequent errors. Therefore, nations must enhance their technologies in order to monitor suspicious money transactions more accurately. Moreover, there are even some nations with a lack of technology. Thus, nations should share a modern version of technology with other countries to effectively mitigate the situation.

Analyzing Various Forms of Money Laundering and Supervising the Flow of Money in Places with Many Money Laundering Cases

As mentioned above, money laundering takes different forms, such as trading through shell companies, casinos, cryptocurrency, etc.. Countering the trade strategies, nations should strive to seek ways to prevent money laundering conducted in those ways. For example, nations can directly manage casinos and cryptocurrency to make the trade of money transparent, and strengthen the criteria to be formally permitted as a company to block shell companies from being created.

Major parties involved

Swiss Confederation

Banks in the Swiss Confederation are renowned for not revealing the money transaction records, according to *Article 47 of the Swiss Federal Act on Banks and Savings Banks*. Thanks to this nature, money launderers have actively utilized Swiss Banks to trade the massive amounts of money for their illicit activities. Although the degree has been lessened through the pressure of FATF and OECD, the Swiss Confederation remains one of the major contributors to money laundering.

Panama

Panama has long been a hub for offshore financial services, offering strict banking secrecy laws and a network of shell companies that make it easy to disguise illicit funds. Its geographic position as a trade and shipping hub (especially through the Panama Canal) also facilitates trade-based money laundering.

United States of America

As the first country to recognize money laundering as a formal crime, the United States has implemented diverse policies to combat it, while also being significantly affected by it. Beginning with the Money Laundering Control Act of 1986, the U.S. initiated systematic efforts to tackle money laundering and has continued to enact and update laws against it in modern times. However, it is undeniable that the U.S. is also a major hub for drug trafficking, which increases its vulnerability to money laundering. Therefore, the country focuses not only on establishing institutions to detect and prevent money laundering but also on enacting strict drug trafficking regulations and strengthening punishments for drug-related crimes. Its Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU), known as FinCEN, plays a central role in identifying and analyzing suspicious financial transactions.

United Kingdom

The United Kingdom is one of the most prominent global centers for money laundering, particularly due to its extensive financial services industry. While the UK has not been a primary producer of illicit drugs, it faces substantial money laundering challenges from both domestic and

foreign-linked drug trafficking organizations. The country has enacted comprehensive anti-money laundering legislation, tightened management on real estate and corporate ownership, and strengthened cooperation with international partners. These efforts are directly reflected in the Sanctions and Anti-Money Laundering Act of 2018. Its FIU, the UK Financial Intelligence Unit under the National Crime Agency (NCA), is responsible for collecting and analyzing Suspicious Activity Reports (SARs) to disrupt laundering networks.

Iran

Iran is listed on the FATF blacklist due to its persistent deficiencies in combating money laundering and terrorist financing. Although the country has enacted some domestic anti-money laundering regulations, enforcement remains weak, and international cooperation is severely limited by political isolation and economic sanctions. Drug trafficking, particularly opium and heroin transiting from Afghanistan, contributes significantly to illicit financial flows.

Myanmar

Myanmar is also on the FATF blacklist, reflecting severe shortcomings in its anti-money laundering framework. The country is a key part of the Golden Triangle, one of the world's largest opium- and methamphetamine-producing regions, generating massive illicit profits laundered. Political instability following the 2021 military coup, widespread corruption, and weak regulatory institutions have severely undermined enforcement. The absence of effective supervision of its banking sector and the prevalence of informal money transfer systems, such as hundi, make it difficult to track money laundering activities.

Mexico

Mexico is home to some of the world's most powerful cartels, like the Sinaloa Cartel and CJNG (Jalisco New Generation Cartel), which generate billions from drug trafficking into the U.S. Because so much cash is earned in dollars, it must be laundered back into the system, often through Mexican banks, real estate, and front businesses. Mexico has also suffered from systemic corruption, where officials, bankers, and even politicians have been bribed or intimidated into enabling money laundering operations. The HSBC scandal of 2012, in which Mexican drug cartels laundered billions

through the bank, illustrates just how deeply corruption in Mexico's financial system fuels global laundering.

South America

South America is the world's main producer of coca leaves and cocaine, meaning vast drug profits originate there and need to be laundered into the global financial system. In Colombia, for instance, Pablo Escobar's Medellín Cartel pioneered the use of front businesses, real estate, and trade manipulation to recycle drug profits, practices that modern cartels still use. Weak governance and high corruption levels in parts of South America create an appropriate environment for laundering, as local institutions are often underfunded, infiltrated, or bribed by cartels. Additionally, the heavy reliance on cash-based informal economies across many South American countries makes it easier for traffickers to trade illicit money without drawing attention.

FATF

The FATF(Financial Action Task Force) is an international organization that combats money laundering and prevents various threats to the global financial system. The organization was founded in 1989 by the G7 countries: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom, and the United States. As for the past effort, it outlined 40 recommendations that provide nations with guidelines to counter money laundering. In addition, it periodically conducts mutual evaluations to ensure that money laundering is well-regulated in each country.

Egmont Group of Financial Intelligence Units

The Egmont Group is an international organization of Financial Intelligence Units (FIUs) dedicated to combating money laundering. It facilitates information exchange, cooperation, and training among its member FIUs in each nation. The group does not conduct financial investigations itself, but rather supports its members in their national efforts.

Timeline Of Events

Date	Description of event
Prohibition Era, 1920s-1930s	During the Prohibition Era in the United States, organized crime syndicates (such as Al Capone's network) laundered proceeds from illegal alcohol sales. Although the crime was alcohol trafficking, this is the initial stage where criminals concealed illicit profits through laundromats, shell companies, and cash-intensive businesses, giving rise to the term money laundering.
U.S. Bank Secrecy Act, 1970	The U.S. Bank Secrecy Act (BSA) was enacted, requiring banks to report large cash transactions. This directly targeted drug cartels, as narcotics trafficking in the 1960s–70s generated massive volumes of unreported cash. Although this act wasn't a direct regulation of money laundering, it indirectly affected the activity.
Money Laundering Control Act, 1986	The Money Laundering Control Act (U.S.) was the first law to make money laundering a distinct federal crime. This was motivated largely by the drug war against cocaine cartels in Colombia and Mexico, which laundered an immense amount of money for drug trafficking.
Establishment of FATF, 1989	The G7 established the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Its mission was to set global anti-money laundering (AML) standards. Money laundering was identified as a serious criminal offense with far-reaching consequences, highlighting the need for international cooperation.
Expansion of FATF-Style Bodies, 1990s	During the 1990s, regional FATF-style bodies, such as CFATF(Caribbean Financial Action Task Force and APG(Asian Pacific Group on Money Laundering), have expanded to control money laundering.
Financial Crisis, 2008	The global financial crisis exposed weaknesses in banking oversight. Drug cartels, especially in Latin America, continued to exploit systemic gaps. For example, HSBC was fined in 2012 for failing to prevent billions in Mexican cartel money from being laundered through its U.S. operations.
Emergence of cryptocurrency and the advanced dark web, 2010s-2020s	Rise of cryptocurrencies and dark web marketplaces: cartels increasingly use Bitcoin and privacy coins to obscure drug profits. There have been calls for immediate counteraction to money laundering strategies by the black market and cryptocurrency.

UN Involvement, Resolutions, Treaties and Events

UN Resolution

- UNGA 20th Special Session (S-20/4 D), 21 October 1998 (A/RES/S-20/4) condemned money laundering linked to drug trafficking, urged all states to adopt legislation in line with the 1988 Vienna Convention, and set a target for countries to establish anti-money laundering laws and mechanisms by 2003.
- UNGA 30th Special Session (S-30/1), 4 May 2016 (A/RES/S-30/1) addresses contemporary drug challenges, reaffirms the need to strengthen AML, cyber surveillance, and judicial cooperation.
- UNSC Resolution 1373, 28 September 2001 (S/RES/1373) mandates all states to criminalize terrorist financing and money laundering, and to strengthen a global response to the issues.
- UNSC Resolution 2482, 19 July 2019 (S/RES/2482) emphasizes the need for the collection of relevant information and counteraction of any growing or potential links to money laundering. Accordingly, it demands the creation of an Anti-Money Laundering Framework for member states.

UN Convention

- United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols thereto, 2000 is the first global treaty on organized crime. It obligated states to criminalize money laundering from any serious crime and strengthen the legal assistance of money laundering.
- UN Convention Against Corruption, 2003, particularly focuses on anti-corruption efforts. While it is irrelevant to the prevention of drug trafficking, it still addresses the legal framework against money laundering.

UN Programmes & Initiatives

- Global Programme Against Money Laundering, 1997 was established to help states strengthen AML(Anti Money Laundering) systems. It provides legislative assistance, training, and capacity building in line with FATF recommendations.
- Stolen Asset Recovery Initiative, 2007 is a joint initiative with the World Bank to recover stolen assets hidden abroad, especially through money laundering. It supports asset tracing, freezing, confiscation, and repatriation of illicit proceeds.

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