

The Use of Drugs in Terrorism

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Human History with Drugs

1. The cultivation and manufacturing of drugs has been done by humans all over the world for millennia



2. The production of drugs by particular societies and nations for the purpose of economical gains is a well recorded phenomena throughout human history.

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Drugs in the Funding of Terrorism

3. With the rise of terrorism in the 20th Century as a prevalent form of armed struggle for the purpose of obtaining political gains, terrorist organizations required funding for campaigns that lasted decades.



A. In 1982 Iran established in Lebanon an unofficial financial institute that identifies as a "charity organization" and goes by the name of "al Qard al Hasan" (AQAH). While it's declared purpose was to help finance the religious activities of Shiites in Lebanon, it is in reality a front for the centralized terror banking system of Iran and it's proxy terrorist organizations around the world.

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The Funding Mechanism

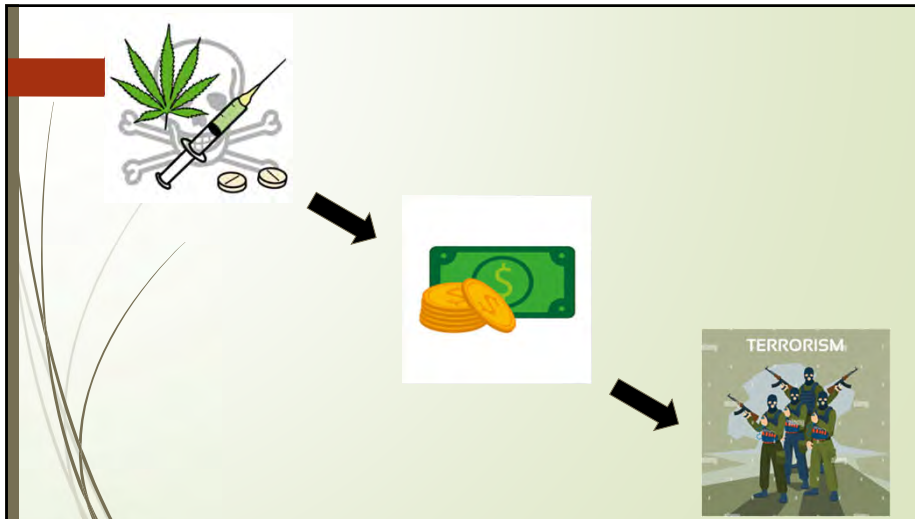
1) AQAH provides financial backing for Hezbollah in Lebanon by circumventing the official national banking system (in Lebanon) and by evading international scrutiny through U.S. imposed sanctions.



2) In 2020 hackers from the Anonymous group revealed that AQAH held over 400,000 accounts of the leadership of the Radwan Military Brigade of the Hezbollah, as well as accounts of the Iranian leadership (including Hamenai himself) and it funnels billions of dollars for the organization's terrorist activity.

3) The fund receives "donations" from all over the world and manages the business activity of Hezbollah, primarily by handling monetary transactions via cash, precious metals, and bitcoin, thereby evading international financial controls.

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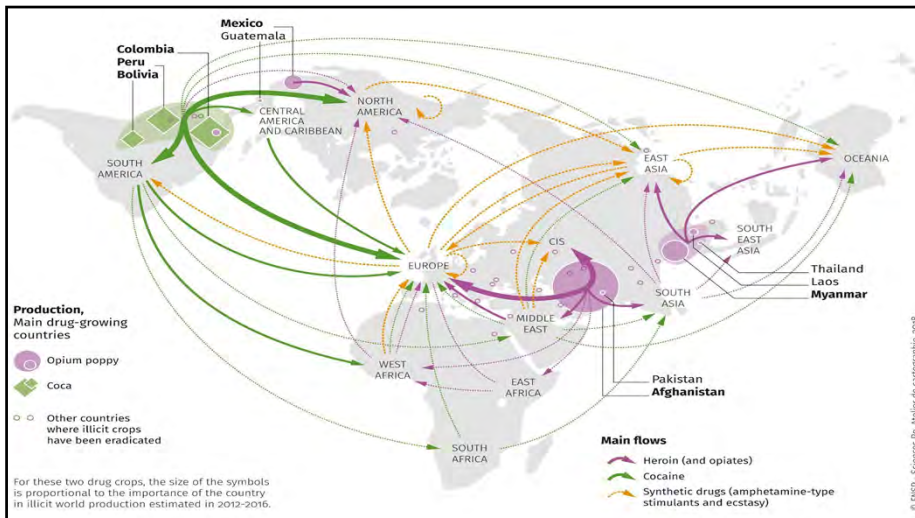


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More on the Mechanism

- 4) Among the primary sources of funding to the “charity” organization are international drug smuggling operations by international drug cartels from Central Asia (Afghanistan, Iran), South America (Colombia, Paraguay), and Africa (Somalia, Djibouti), with distribution of drugs to markets in Europe and North America.
- 5) **Hezbollah** controls the airport in Beirut, Lebanon, through which the majority of the cash and precious metals (gold, silver) transactions are handled, and through which the majority of the drugs are trafficked to the rest of the world.
- 6) Transportation of drugs from South America arrives via air directly to the Beirut airport, or through other remote ports, such as the Damascus airport in Syria or to Lebanese and Syrian sea ports on the Mediterranean Sea.

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Where it Ends

- 7) Transportation of drugs from Central Asia is funneled through Iran, or from Iran through Syria by land and from there either by air-transport or sea transport to the rest of the world for distribution.
 - 8) The billions of dollars produced by this criminal enterprise is “white-washed” by becoming “legitimized” funds in seemingly bona-fide accounts which then serve to finance terrorist organizations such as **Hamas** in Gaza, **Hezbollah** in Lebanon, the **Houthi Rebels** in Yemen, and others all over the world.
 - 9) The money from this organization also helps sustain the ongoing “presence” of the drug cartels in the countries of operation through hefty bribes to government officials in European ports of entry (Italy, Greece, Albania, etc.), in South America, and in Africa.
- (N12, Globes, February 11, 2024; Foundation for Defense of Democracies Report, 2024).

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Unholy Alliances



4. Unholy alliances were thus formed in many places between terrorist organizations and drug manufacturing entities, which provide funding from trafficking of drugs to support terrorism campaigns.

A. Italian criminal syndicates are some of the European **gate-keepers** and **drug conduits** known to maintain economical ties and common drug-smuggling operations that are directly connected to **terrorist organizations** in the Middle East. They also facilitate **human trafficking** operations for same organizations originating from Africa.

- 1) Sicily's Cosa Nostra.
- 2) The Camorra in Campania.
- 3) The Sacra Corona Unita of Puglia.
- 4) The 'Ndrangheta of Calabria.

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Merger of Interests

5. These alliances often times create a convergence of interests of terrorist organizations and drug cartels which merged their interests in the execution of their goals.



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Convergence of Interests

- ▣ A prime example was the convergence of interests between the Haqqani network in Afghanistan, to the Taliban and to Al-Qaeda (Despite objections to the use of Heroin on religious grounds) for distribution of Heroin from Afghanistan.

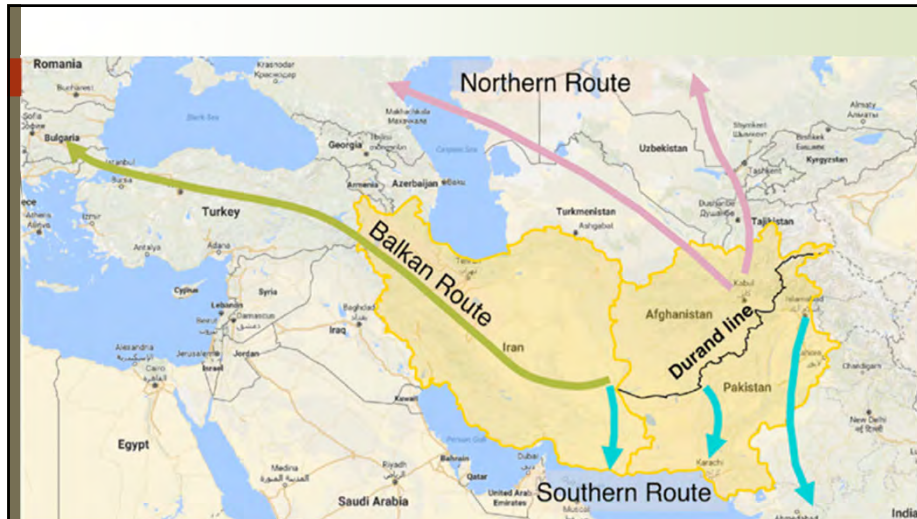


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Heroin for Weapons

- ▣ 1) The **Haqqani network** of war-lords is primarily dedicated to control over poppy-flower cultivation and to the distribution of heroin from Afghanistan to the world.
- ▣ 2) They need the distribution corridors to go through Pakistan (Waziristan Region) to the south and Tajikistan to the north for their drug-smuggling operations.
- ▣ 3) The **Taliban** and **Al-Qaeda** needed the smuggling corridors for the flow of weapons and munitions into Afghanistan from Pakistan and from Tajikistan.
- ▣ 4) The Chinese and the Russians have been also buying large quantities of Heroin (to distribute to the rest of the world) from these organizations.
- ▣ 5) In exchange, they gain increased influence in Central Asia by selling weapons and technology to terrorist organizations in and around Afghanistan.

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Drugs as Terrorism Weapons

6. These alliances also gave rise to the increased use of drugs as the preferred weapons of terrorist organizations. This, because by and large, terrorism is the preferred mode of operation for totalitarian regimes' attempts to project power, whereas substance use and abuse are both the Achilles heel and the scourge of democratic and liberal countries and societies that are the natural enemies of totalitarian regimes.

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Jordan and Iran Proxies

A. An example was recently observed in Jordan, where **Iranian-backed militants and proxies**, including **Lebanese Hezbollah**, **Iraqi Hezbollah**, **Asa'ib Ahl al-Haq**, and others, attempted to destabilize Jordan, reported the pan-Arab newspaper Asharq al-Awsat on April 16, 2024.

B. The report accused Iran-backed militias of engaging in illicit arms and illicit drugs trade along the Jordan-Syria border, and through the Jordan-Iraq border.

C. Iran has sought to leverage its **Iranian-backed militias** in an intensive effort to destabilize security in the pro-western Hashemite Kingdom by flooding militias inside Jordan with drugs and weapons, Asharq al-Awsat noted on April 16, 2024.

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An Example From Ireland



- ▣ The Belfast Telegraph reported in May of this year (2024) that a ring of drug smugglers/suppliers from the Catholic side of Ireland flooded the Nationalist side with Cocaine supplied by the **Ulster Defense Association**.

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Drug Dealers Recruited by Terrorists

- 1) It illustrates that drug dealers can be recruited by terrorist organizations to carry out distribution of substances in order to weaken and terrorize the target society with the use of drugs.
- 2) Sometimes the convergence of interests between drug dealers and terrorist organizations do not necessarily conform to other interests of the parties (such as **nationalist** in this case).
- 3) It would be interesting to discover which provider organization (in the Middle East? Africa?) the drugs originated from, and which terrorist organization supplied the **UDA**.

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Substance Abuse/Addiction Treatment = Terrorism Prevention?

* In some ways, it could be suggested (without overstating) that the treatment of substance abuse and the treatment of addiction have become one of the ways, and in fact, one of the fronts in which free societies are defending from totalitarian promoted terrorism *



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Drugs in the Commission of Terrorism

7. Drugs have been used in the commission of terrorist acts in a few ways:
- A. Substance use can be the mechanism to **facilitate moral disengagement** in the commission of terrorist activity.
- 1) Substance use can help **resolve the dissonance** between self-sanctions regulating inhumane conduct, and actual engagement in detrimental and injurious consequences of terrorist behaviors.
 - 2) Substance use can facilitate the **displacement of responsibility** for reprehensible conduct or the diffusion of responsibility for the detrimental effects terrorism has on the target population (i.e., blame the victims). (Albert Bandura, 1998 - Mechanisms of moral disengagement).
 - 3) Substance use (particularly stimulants) can **enhance grandiose moralistic justifications** in inherently narcissistic or paranoid tendencies in terrorists, leading to moral justification of acts of terror.

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Drugs Enhanced Terrorism Brutality

B. Substance use (particularly stimulants) can be used to **energize and amplify violent terrorist behaviors**.

- 1) There is a United Nations report on sexual crimes and sexual violence committed against women in the October 7th Hamas attacks on Israel.
- 2) It details horrendous acts of violence against women (and some men as well) and acts of brutality rarely seen in modern times in any conflict (e.g., rape, group rape, beheading, mutilation before/during/after the sexual assault, torture, sexual torture, etc.).
- 3) There are documented (videos) instances where terrorists were given stimulants to take before the initiation of the attack on October 7th, in order to increase their resilience.
- 4) There seem to be some anecdotal evidence that for some of the captured terrorists that participated in these atrocities, the fact that they were under the influence of stimulants may have enhanced the viciousness of their crimes.

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A Moral Question to Ponder

* A question that borders on the legal and moral domains involves the degree of culpability of terrorists in commission of heinous crimes (crimes against humanity, genocidal crimes, etc.) when those crimes were committed while under the influence of very powerful stimulants *

* Does the use of substances in the commission of crimes (even domestic violence, DUI, etc.) is/or should result in **exculpatory** (i.e., reduces culpability) **attitude**, or does/should it **exacerbate** (i.e., magnifies heinousness) **culpability** *

* The answer may lie in the **intention** of substance use (was it purposefully used to enhance the **gravity** of the crimes committed, or "innocently" consumed) *

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