

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) - UPSC Notes

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) is an important body under the United Nations. Such international bodies and programmes are very relevant for the [IAS exam](#). In this article, you can read all about the UNODC, its functions and India's relations with it.

International organisations and groupings are an important part of the International Relations section of the General Studies paper-2 in the [UPSC Syllabus](#). International relations is a very dynamic part and is crucial for multiple papers in Prelims and Mains. Students preparing for UPSC 2020 and other Government Exams must be aware of the topic.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) was established in order to make the world a place without the dangers of [Drug Abuse](#) and the crimes following it. UNODC also works to improve crime prevention and to assist with criminal justice reform in a number of countries.

- It was formed in 1997 as the Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention by combining two UN offices as mentioned in the image below.
- It was renamed to its current name in 2002.
- It was established chiefly to aid the United Nations in addressing the issues of illicit drug trafficking, drug abuse, prevention of crime and criminal justice, political corruption and international terrorism, in a coordinated and comprehensive manner.
- It is also the chief UN body for delivering legal and technical assistance to prevent terrorism.
- The UNODC also works in disseminating information about the dangers of drug abuse.
- The UNODC releases the World Drug Report annually. The report gives valuable information relating to drug abuse worldwide, the trends in the production and use of illicit drugs of various types, etc.

Its main functions can be classified as mentioned in the table below:

Functions of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime	
Research and Policy Analysis	World Drug Report
	Surveys to Monitor Illicit Crops
	Regional Crime Studies
	Policy Reviews
Normative Activities [Conventions]	Anti-Drug Conventions
	Conventions against Organized Crime [UNTOC]
	Conventions against Corruption [UNCAC]
Technical Assistance	

UPSC PRELIMS FACTS - (UNODC)



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Name: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Year of Formation: 1997

Headquarters: Vienna, Austria

Sector: Drug Control

Combination of United Nations International Drug Control Program (UNDCP) and the Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Division in the United Nations Office

We have covered an RSTV programme on Fighting Drug Menace, click on the linked article to read more.

[Fighting Drug Menace: RSTV – The Big Picture](#)

UNODC and India

UNODC has a presence in India since 1987. The nodal ministries are:

1. Finance (Revenue Department)
2. Home
3. Health and Family Welfare
4. Social Justice and Empowerment
5. Women and Child Development
6. Overseas Indian Affairs

Geographically, India is very close to the **Golden Crescent** and the **Golden Triangle**, the superhighways of the Asian drug trade.



- The [Golden Crescent](#) overlaps between the mountain ranges of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan whose mountainous peripheries give the network its eponymous name.
- The [Golden Triangle](#) is located in the area where the borders of Thailand, Myanmar and Laos meet at the confluence of the Ruak and Mekong Rivers.
- It was regarded as one of the largest producers of opium in the world since the 1950s until it was overtaken by the Golden Crescent in the early 21st century.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Report said that India is one of the major hubs of trade for Illicit Drugs. The report also mentioned the global trend of purchasing drugs over the internet with the help of platforms available on the Dark Web.

- These uncontrolled trades have spread across the South Asian region with India being at the forefront of it. With the use of Cryptocurrencies like [Bitcoin](#), it becomes difficult to track the trade and contain it.
- India is also a transit point for opiates produced illegally, in particular heroin.
- The report has identified more than 1,000 drug listings from India published across 50 online crypto-market platforms.

COVID-19 and Drug Trade

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has released a report titled 'Synthetic Drugs in East and Southeast Asia'.

Details:

- According to the report, movement restrictions owing to the COVID-19 pandemic may lead to an initial statistical reduction in drug seizures, but without a real change in terms of supply in the East and Southeast Asia region.
- The UNODC said a large proportion of methamphetamine, the main synthetic drug of concern in the region, was manufactured, trafficked and consumed without the need for globalised supply chains.

Click on the link to read more about the effects of **Covid-19 on Illicit Drug Supply & Trade in India**: [CNA 20th May 2020](#).

Colombo Declaration

In 2016, 18 littoral states adopted a resolution to make the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR), a Drug-Free Zone**. It was held at a meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka and the declaration came to be known as the **Colombo Declaration**.

- The declaration emphasizes the need for cooperation amongst the coastal areas more closely in order to share information in narcotic drug trafficking, provide mutual legal assistance and enforce maritime law.

Click on the link to know more about the [Colombo Declaration](#).

