Globalization: a Windfall for Criminal Organizations

According to the Financial Task Force (FATF) and the IMF, between US$ 600 billion and US$ 1.8 trillion are laundered annually worldwide.

Drug trafficking (US$ 500 billion a year) and prostitution have been added to the trafficking of counterfeit goods (US$ 250 billion a year, according to the OECD in 2008 – USD 775 billion a year, according to the International Chamber of Commerce), of illegal workers, protected natural species, precious metals, toxic waste, organs, invoicing (VAT fraud) and even CO₂ quotas.

The principle is simple: when the demand is much greater, on a global scale, than the supply of the legal economy, criminal organizations quickly react to it in order to benefit from the significant price differential created by this imbalance. They have benefited from the new development of new technologies, which make it possible to dematerialize and accelerate international money transfers, and benefit especially from the markets’ deregulation and liberalization.

The globalization of capitalization since 1980 has been a great windfall for all the mafias.

However, these criminal markets need legal economy in order to survive: the large amount of banknotes accumulated by basic dealers, smugglers, traffickers, must be recycled through companies and bank accounts that enable their dematerialization and generate profits, this time "legally." The scarcity of bank credit during the 2008-2009 financial crisis was a "magnet effect" for dirty money.
Crime environnemental : la plus importante source de financements de conflits

Le terme « crime environnemental » est souvent utilisé pour décrire un ensemble d'activités illégales portant atteinte à l'environnement et qui profitent à certains individus, groupes ou entreprises grâce à l'exploitation et le vol ou le commerce de ressources naturelles. Ce terme regroupe les infractions graves et la criminalité organisée transnationale, souvent liée à d'autres formes de crime, la fraude fiscale, la corruption et le financement des organisations armées. Dans tous ces cas de figure, le crime environnemental représente des coûts massifs pour nombre de pays du monde.

Aujourd'hui, on estime que la valeur annuelle du crime environnemental est comprise entre 110 et 281 milliards de dollars (d'après les chiffres de 2013), soit un accroissement d'environ 14% (9-20%) depuis les précédentes estimations en 2016, et 44% au-dessus des précédentes estimations en 2014, hors inflation. Ceci s'explique principalement par une amélioration des estimations et du renseignement criminel, parallèlement à l'ajout des données sur la contrebande de pétrole (qui représente 9% de la valeur totale).

Le crime environnemental est devenu un peu plus lucratif que la traite d'êtres humains, et se place non plus en quatrième mais en troisième position des activités criminelles les plus conséquentes à l'échelle mondiale, après le trafic de drogue et de contrebandes.

Le coût de l'impact du crime environnemental progresse de 5 à 7% tous les ans, soit deux à trois fois le taux de l'économie mondiale.

La pêche illégale : estimée entre 11 et 24 milliards de dollars.

L'exploitation minière illégale : estimée entre 12 et 48 milliards de dollars.

Le commerce illégal d'espèces sauvages : estimé entre 7 et 23 milliards de dollars.
Flight of Capital from Africa

Volumes of Cash
- Over US$ 50 billion per year illegally transferred from Africa
- Against US$ 25 billion received in international aid
- Since 1970, US$ 700 billion transferred overseas
- While the global debt rises to US$ 175 billion

Channels
- Artificially inflated contracts
- Kickbacks on contracts closed with international companies
- Development aid and public funds diversion

Destinations
- Private accounts of influential African and foreign politicians
- Banks which then grant loans to African State
LIPTAKO-GOURMA OR "THE THREE BORDERS REGION:" A study by the Institute for Security (Pretoria) conducted over the past two years shows the links between violent extremist groups and illicit activities in the border areas of Liptako-Gourma. These illicit activities cover trafficking in arms, drugs, motorcycles and oil, as well as theft of livestock, artisanal gold mining and poaching. These activities are the core survival of these groups. They also finance their establishment and expansion.

FINANCES OF TERRORIST GROUPS AND REBELS: TAXES, DRUGS, COUNTERFEITING, NATURAL RESOURCES AND MIGRANTS
TRAFFIC FLOW THROUGH WEST AFRICA AND THE SAHEL


Undeclared Economy in Mali

Communities’ perceptions of the type of goods crossing the border illegally
Factors Increasing Vulnerability to Human Trafficking in Armed Conflicts

Number of victims detected according to the form of exploitation and by detection (2016 or more recently)

Source: UNODC

Causes:
- State collapse, weak Rule of Law and impunity
- Forced displacements
- Humanitarian needs and socio-economic stress
- Social fragmentation and family breakdown

Victims exploited while in conflict areas and when fleeing conflict areas

Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.
In Palermo, in December 2000, the 120 countries signatories to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime agreed to define groups of organized crime as "structured groups of three or more persons, existing for a period of time and acting in concert with the aim of committing one or more serious crimes or offenses established in accordance with this Convention, in order to obtain, directly or indirectly a financial or other material benefit." (United Nations, General Assembly, 2000, p. 4).

The Convention is supplemented by three Protocols, which target specific activities and manifestations of organized crime:

- Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish Human Trafficking, especially Women and Children;
- Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants par land, air an sea;
- Protocol against the Manufacturing and Illicit Firearms Trafficking, their parts and components and ammunition.
Fake Medicine Trafficking (including antimalarials): Distribution Worldwide and Health Impact
Decriminalization or Legalization?
A Public Health Policy Choice Against the Criminalization of Cannabis Users
Example of Portugal (2013)