

# HOMMUNC XXXVIII

## October 21st, 2023 38th Annual Horace Mann Model United Nations Conference

# UNODC

LILI FRANGENBERG CHAIR



# HOMMUNC XXXVIII TABLE OF CONTENTS

LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT Committee Procedure:	3
	4
TOPIC: TAX EVASION	5
Overview	5
History	7
Current Situation	9
Possible Solutions	12
Bloc Positions	14
Questions to Consider	17
BIBLIOGRAPHY	19

# LETTER FROM THE SECRETARIAT

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#### **DEAR DELEGATES,**

It is our pleasure to welcome you to Horace Mann's 38th Annual Model United Nations Conference, HoMMUNC XXXVIII! Since 1985, HoMMUNC has brought together future world leaders to discuss pressing global issues. We hope that this day can be full of meaningful and didactic debate, discourse, and collaboration. We are honored to be able to organize this conference for all of you, and hopefully provide you with an enjoyable Model UN experience. We hope you are as excited as we are!

We encourage you to deeply explore your topics and arrive at HoMMUNC prepared to engage with others and involve yourself in debate, regardless of your age or experience with Model UN. Each committee is composed of a diverse group of delegates and will address a unique set of topics ranging from protecting freedom of the press to the weaponization of smallpox and the preservation of indigenous culture. We challenge you to delve deep into research and think creatively about how to address these complicated issues. Take this opportunity to learn as much as you can, work collaboratively, and be a leader in your committee.

Model United Nations has played a massive role in our lives over the past three years, and we are thrilled to share it with all of you. It has been our pleasure preparing HoMMUNC XXXVIII along with our dedicated junior and senior staff over the past six months. We hope you have an enriching and enjoyable experience at the conference!

Sincerely, NATE CHIANG AND LILY WENDER Secretaries-General of HoMMUNC XXXVIII

Horace Mann Model United Nations Conference

### **COMMITTEE PROCEDURE:**

**Roll Call**: at the beginning of every committee session, the chair will take attendance, and every delegate must respond "present." If you are late coming to committee, send a note to the dais to let them know you are present.

**Motions**: used to open and close debate, decide to move to voting procedure, to propose a speakers list, moderated or unmoderated caucus. The chair will entertain several motions at one time, then will have all delegates vote on each motion in order of most to least disruptive, and the motion with the majority passes.

**Speaker's List**: a type of debate used to start committee, often meant to set the agenda, in which the chair would create a list of speakers.

Moderated Caucus: another form of debate, used most often during

committee, that has a set time, speaking time, and specific topic to debate. Your chair will call upon countries to speak. When a delegate wishes to speak, they will raise their placard when told.

Unmoderated Caucus: a time when the rules of formal debate are suspended, during which delegates can leave their seats. This time is used for delegates to build blocs and write draft resolutions.

**Resolutions**: require a set number of sponsors who worked on drafting the resolution, and a list of signatories who would like to see the resolution debated. Resolutions are presented by the sponsors of the draft resolution, after which a Q&A session will be held.

### **TOPIC: TAX EVASION**

#### Overview

Tax evasion is the intentional. illegal practice of avoiding or evading the payment of taxes by people, corporations, or other entities. Characterized by underreporting income, using offshore tax havens, engaging in fraudulent schemes, manipulating financial transactions to conceal wealth, and countless other loopholes, tax evasion undermines public trust in tax systems while simultaneously eroding government revenues. In turn, tax evasion affects the provision of essential services, public infrastructure, and social programs. In depriving governments of developmentally vital resources and thwarting efforts at sustainability, both environmental and otherwise, tax evasion poses an exigent threat to the nations of the world.

This analysis will detail how the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) combats tax evasion

through its role in fostering global collaboration, capacity-building projects, and stronger legal frameworks. The UNODC recognizes that tackling tax evasion requires a comprehensive, multifaceted approach to adhere to different regions, nations, and economies, so it engenders international cooperation by incentivizing countries to adopt preventive and investigational measures against all forms of tax fraud. In collaboration with governments and NGOs, the UNODC helps nations detect illicit financial flows and ensure the integrity of financial systems, ultimately recovering stolen assets and bettering the world economy. In order to facilitate both safety and efficiency, the UNODC encourages informational exchange between nations, particularly in the context of investigations and asset recovery.

As far as the legal side, the UNODC supports the implementation of multitudinous legal frameworks and initiatives, some of which include the United Nations Convention against Corruption and the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. These entities serve as forums for knowledge and technology exchange, benefiting developed and developing nations alike. Although the UN is an international body and has no national allegiance or authority, the UNODC recognizes the necessity of national safeguards against tax evasion as well. Accordingly, the UNODC assists individual countries in preventing and contending with tax evasion. It provides technological and physical training programs to bolster law enforcement as well as tax administrations and judicial systems. On the national front, the UNODC focuses on improving fintech and financial investigations and optimizing legal frameworks to effectively prosecute tax evaders. As the UNODC does not dictate punishment for tax evaders, it mainly focuses on prosecution and asset recovery. After

that, each case falls completely into the hands of individual governments. Furthermore, the UNODC understands the gravity of underlying factors facilitating tax evasion. To truly root out the vile weed that is tax evasion, it is the obligation of every nation to uphold the pillars of good governance, transparency, and accountability. Consequently, the UNODC advocates integrity and accountability in the public sector and even the private one. In the context of tax evasion, this advocacy is mostly centered around anti-corruption frameworks and antimoney laundering mechanisms. In addressing these systemic issues, the UNODC aims to discourage tax evasion more so than ever before and to foster an international ecosystem of compliance with tax obligations. The UNODC also funds data-driven, analytical research to better understand the patterns and dynamics of tax evasion, though this requires national consent. Through its comprehensive studies and reports, the UNODC

pushes the envelope in the struggle against tax evasion. UNODC reports have proven instrumental in identifying emerging trends and successful countermeasures.

Although tax evasion remains clamant in itself, it is also inextricably intertwined with other, oftentimes more violent forms of fraud, including money laundering, corruption, and organized crime. Considering the broader context of illicit financial activities and their impact on social and economic development, the UNODC takes a holistic approach toward tax fraud. While this committee will focus on tax evasion, delegates will not be asked to ignore the intricacies of and overlap between tax evasion and other criminal activity. As we look to address these issues collectively, this committee will aim to disrupt the networks and structures that facilitate tax evasion and other illicit financial flows. By engendering a more transparent, accountable world economy, the UNODC strives to deter

tax evasion and realize fair and efficient taxation systems for all the citizens of the world. This committee will take another step forward in pursuit of that goal.

#### History

For countless years, tax evasion has hindered global development, and tax evaders have stolen from the people. By examining key historical developments, challenges faced by governments, and evolving strategies to combat tax evasion, we can better understand and approach it. Even in ancient civilizations, individuals and businesses evaded taxes. Historical records reveal instances of underreporting income, concealing assets, and engaging in fraudulent schemes. As taxation systems became more complex, tax evasion techniques evolved in turn. The advent of commerce, international trade, and banking metamorphosed tax evasion into a different animal. Then, in the twentieth century, tax evasion further

evolved to an international level, taking on new dimensions with the globalization of financial systems, and consequently the emergence of offshore tax havens. Providing taxpayers with the ability to camouflage their wealth, tax havens facilitated the creation of complex corporate structures and shell companies (inactive companies used in various financial capacities, often with tax purposes). As if that was not enough, electronic banking and digital transactions further complicated efforts to track and detect tax evasion.

As tax evasion evolves and devastates new governments each year, the UN has redoubled its efforts. In 1997, the United Nations Drug Control Programme merged with the Centre for International Crime Prevention(CICP), and the UNODC was born. As per its mandate, the infantile UNODC became wholly responsible for international tax evasion and illicit financial flows. Though this was a lot for the young office to take on, the amalgamation of two split offices was a milestone for the globalization of international tax law enforcement. Seminal to global anti-corruption initiatives, the UNODC engendered the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) in 2003. The UNODC actively supports international tax cooperation efforts, such as the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes. This forum facilitates the exchange of tax information among countries, strengthening transparency and helping to uncover hidden assets. To effectively hinder tax evasion, the UNODC seeks to emulate international standards in national legislation, particularly in developing nations with little legal infrastructure. Many of those international standards are derived from those of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). Aside from legal standards, the UNODC provides technical assistance, training programs, and knowledge-sharing platforms. This aid, while sometimes geared toward

the public, mostly strengthens the capabilities of law enforcement agencies, tax administrations, and judicial systems. Not all of the UNODC's aid is tangible, however. It also cultivates transparency and accountability, especially with megacorporations and conglomerates (big, generally less manageable companies).

International cooperation is a cornerstone of the UNODC's approach to combating tax evasion. The agency facilitates information exchange, encourages collaboration in investigations, and assists countries in recovering stolen assets. The UNODC supports initiatives like the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), part of its broader effort to halt tax evasion without respect to borders. The Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes serves as a platform for countries to come together, share experiences, and

strengthen cooperation in combating tax evasion.

The history of global tax evasion outlines the evolution of tax evasion. It is an adaptive, constantly mutating threat, making it all the more difficult to tackle. As tax evaders get smarter, so must the UNODC. Through the promotion of international cooperation, the strengthening of legal frameworks, capacity-building initiatives, and fostering transparency and good governance, the UNODC strives to address tax evasion comprehensively. Understanding the historical context empowers governments to work together in developing effective solutions and ensuring that taxation systems remain fair, transparent, and capable of supporting sustainable development in the face of evolving challenges.

#### **Current Situation**

Through a comprehensive analysis of prevailing trends, challenges, and the strategic framework employed by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) to counteract tax evasion, one can discern invaluable insights into the persistent endeavor against illicit financial outflows. Tax evasion, in its continual evolution, has consistently evolved into a more complex and common issue. This evolution is catalyzed by technological advancements, the processes of globalization, and the strategic leveraging of legal gaps. Generally, tax fraud, particularly tax evasion, is characterized by individuals and corporate entities resorting to practices such as income underreporting, the utilization of offshore fiscal sanctuaries, the orchestration of fraudulent schemes, and the employment of aggressive tax stratagems, all in an orchestrated bid to elude their fiscal obligations.

This systematic subversion undermines the principles of equity that underpin tax systems and, more significantly, depletes governments of the indispensable resources requisite for the provision of public services and the sustainable advancement of societies. Recognizing the urgency of this economic crisis, the UNODC plays a crucial role in encouraging international collaboration and advocating countermeasures. Collaborative partnerships are forged between the UNODC, governmental bodies, international entities, and assorted stakeholders, collectively aimed at engendering a comprehensive and sustainable approach to mitigating tax evasion.

Amidst the multifarious challenges born of tax evasion, the intricacies within the global financial matrix make any law enforcement all the more difficult. The labyrinth that is transnational transactions, intricate corporate architectures, and the pervasive use of tax havens collectively obfuscate the identification of any sort of fraud, especially when that fraud is only illegal in some countries. Further, the advent of technological innovations and the proliferation of digital currencies introduce fresh conundrums for tax enforcement authorities, necessitating innovative mechanisms for better surveillance.

The UNODC advocates for the establishment of stringent legal frameworks and universally accepted standards that proscribe tax evasion, while concurrently increasing the requisite tax transparency. This advocacy extends to the alignment of national legislative frameworks with established international norms, including the recommendations of the FATF and the UNCAC. These delineations provide guidelines for the prevention, investigation, and prosecution of tax evasion cases. Only a united front can expedite international collaboration and information exchange.

Also integral is the premise of international cooperation. The UNODC cultivates alliances between nations, fostering the exchange of pertinent fiscal data with the objective of unearthing and subsequently addressing cross-border tax evasion schemes. Initiatives such as the Global Forum on Transparency and Exchange of Information for Tax Purposes afford participating nations the opportunity to engage in the reciprocal exchange of tax-related information, ergo enabling more transparency and reinforcing each nation's capacity to identify concealed assets.

Of commensurate significance is the process of capacity-building, a linchpin of the UNODC's overarching tax enforcement strategy. Promoting awareness and engendering consensus amongst stakeholders remains imperative within the domain of combating tax evasion. The UNODC, in close collaboration with governments, civil society entities, and the private sector, undertakes concerted efforts to inform the citizens of the world of the dire consequences of tax evasion. Moreover, the UNODC underscores the importance of addressing the systemic underpinnings that prop up tax evaders. The promotion of good governance, transparency, and accountability emerges as a pivotal adjunct to any campaign against tax evasion. The UNODC envisions the creation of an environment that disincentivizes tax evasion and fosters unerring compliance with fiscal obligations.

Notwithstanding endeavors against tax evasion, it persists. The perpetual evolution of technology, coupled with the continued evolution of financial systems, engenders tax evasion. In response, the UNODC remains steadfast in its commitment to adapt, strategize, and implement initiatives in congruence with emergent challenges. By remaining at the vanguard of technological advancements and sustaining collaboration between each and every nation, the UNODC aspires to protect every citizen of the world from losing what is rightfully theirs.

Through the alignment of domestic legislation with universal benchmarks, transparency, and accountability, the UNODC underscores its commitment to the complete eradication of tax evasion. As we confront the intricacies of tax evasion, it becomes all the more evident that collaborative, persistent, and adaptive endeavors are sine qua non for the establishment of equitable and sustainable global fiscal systems.

#### **Possible Solutions**

Global tax evasion remains a persistent challenge, eroding essential resources and obstructing economic progress. This analysis delves into solutions presented by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), exploring multifaceted strategies to enhance tax transparency, fortify legal frameworks, and promote international collaboration. The imperative of international cooperation stands as a pivotal solution, where the UNODC champions information exchange to fortify cross-border investigations. By augmenting mechanisms like mutual legal assistance treaties and extradition agreements, nations can optimize collaboration, facilitating information sharing and harmonized prosecutions.

An essential strategy is the cultivation of tax transparency. The UNODC underscores the significance of adopting and strengthening globally recognized benchmarks, including the Common Reporting Standard (CRS), to facilitate automatic exchange of financial information among nations. This measure improves the detection of offshore assets and potential tax evasion instances. Financial intelligence units (FIUs) are also pivotal. The UNODC advocates for their universal establishment and empowerment, bolstering the analytical capability to scrutinize suspicious financial transactions and identify tax evasion patterns. This recommendation

includes calibrated reinforcement, ensuring operational independence, and synergizing cooperation between FIUs and law enforcement agencies. Important as these resources may be, the bedrock of effective response lies within robust legal frameworks. The UNODC's stance resonates with legislation that criminalizes tax evasion, in alignment with globally accepted norms such as the UNCAC and the FATF recommendations. These frameworks not only consolidate legal standing but also facilitate seamless international cooperation.

Still, Capacity building remains an important longer-term solution. UNODC's provision of technical support, structured training, and knowledge-sharing platforms enhance expertise in financial analysis, thus refining investigative methodologies, and expediting effective tax evasion detection and prosecution. It is also paramount that we, as the nations of the world, promote a culture of compliance and ethical conduct. The UNODC emphasizes the strategic importance of awareness campaigns, educational programs, and collaboration with civil society organizations to discourage tax evasion and foster voluntary tax compliance. Furthermore, hypothetical solutions could involve the development of a global tax evasion database, enabling real-time data sharing and advanced analytics for rapid identification of irregularities. Similarly, the establishment of an international tax court might expedite the adjudication of cross-border tax evasion cases, ensuring equitable outcomes. Leveraging blockchain technology for transparent and traceable financial transactions could also act as a hypothetical solution.

Addressing the multifaceted challenge of global tax evasion necessitates a comprehensive approach. By advancing international collaboration, adopting transparent frameworks, enhancing financial intelligence capabilities, refining legal structures, fostering compliance culture, and leveraging technology, governments can strengthen their ability to counter tax evasion effectively. Incorporating some solutions not yet realized adds dimension to this strategic spectrum, offering innovative avenues for future exploration and resolution. In committee, new, innovative solutions will prove essential. Tax evasion has existed for as long as modern economies, and it will take a complete strategic revolution to shut it down.

#### **Bloc Positions**

When addressing the global challenge of tax evasion, it's important to recognize that various factions within the United Nations hold distinct viewpoints and priorities. This guide delves into the stances of different groups from the perspective of the UNODC. By examining their approaches, we can gain insights into the diverse perspectives and priorities within the UN system, laying the groundwork for meaningful discussions and collaborations.

#### **Developed Nations Bloc:**

Developed countries often emphasize the enhancement of tax transparency and the fight against tax evasion as safeguards for their domestic revenue streams. These nations advocate for robust legal frameworks, international cooperation, and the exchange of information to efficiently identify and prosecute tax evaders. They endorse initiatives like the CRS and the Automatic Exchange of Information (AEoI) to boost transparency and close gaps that facilitate tax evasion. Developed nations also place a significant focus on capacity building, both within their own borders and in developing nations, to empower tax authorities and law enforcement agencies in the battle against tax evasion.

#### **Developing Nations Bloc:**

**Developing nations** acknowledge the impact of tax evasion on their economies and the need to strengthen domestic revenue generation. They stress the significance of international cooperation in countering tax evasion, particularly through information exchange with developed countries. Developing nations often seek technical support, capacity building, and financial assistance from the global community to enhance their tax administration capabilities. They also underscore the necessity for fair and equitable global tax regulations to prevent the erosion of their tax bases due to aggressive tax planning and profit shifting by multinational corporations.

#### G77 and China Bloc:

Representing a coalition of developing nations, the G77 and China bloc spotlights the importance of addressing the root causes of tax evasion. They draw attention to the impact of global financial systems, tax

Horace Mann Model United Nations Conference

havens, and inequitable international tax practices on developing countries. This group strives to foster international cooperation against tax evasion, including the exchange of expertise and resources, to empower developing nations in combatting illicit financial flows. They advocate for measures targeting tax havens, the promotion of tax transparency, and reforms in global tax regulations to ensure a more balanced distribution of tax responsibilities.

#### Non-Aligned Movement (NAM):

The Non-Aligned Movement consists of countries not formally aligned with any major bloc. The NAM acknowledges the adverse effects of tax evasion on sustainable development and economic stability. They emphasize a well-rounded and inclusive approach to addressing tax evasion, considering the interests and priorities of both developed and developing nations. The NAM calls for support in capacity building to enhance the capabilities of developing nations in tackling tax evasion and advocates for international cooperation to guarantee the equitable exchange of tax-related information.

#### **European Union (EU):**

Within its member states and on a global scale, the European Union is dedicated to combating tax evasion. The EU backs initiatives that advance tax transparency, such as the implementation of the CRS and the fortification of its tax information exchange framework. The EU underscores the necessity for a coordinated strategy against tax evasion, including harmonizing tax policies and thwarting detrimental tax competition among its member states. The bloc advocates for intensified collaboration, both internally and worldwide, to ensure the effective detection, investigation, and prosecution of tax evasion cases.

Horace Mann Model United Nations Conference

#### African Union (AU):

The African Union is attuned to the adverse impact of tax evasion on the continent's development and economic stability. The AU emphasizes international cooperation and capacity building as cornerstones of effective tax evasion combat. They call for heightened support from the global community to enhance the capabilities of African countries in areas like tax administration, law enforcement, and asset recovery. The AU also advocates for reforms in global tax governance to address challenges faced by African nations, including illicit financial flows and the aggressive tax planning practiced by multinational corporations operating within the continent.

#### Questions to Consider

 What key initiatives has the UNODC undertaken to address international tax evasion, and how do these initiatives align with its broader mission and mandate?

- 2. What has the UNODC done in the nation you are representing, particularly with regard to tax evasion?
- 3. What has your nation done to address tax evasion, and is their strategy, if at all successful, scalable to the rest of the world?
- 4. How does the UNODC view the role of international cooperation in combating tax evasion? What measures has it proposed or supported to enhance cooperation among nations and other stakeholders?
- 5. What strategies does the UNODC advocate for in strengthening legal frameworks and regulations to effectively counter tax evasion on a global scale? How does it work to ensure harmonization of these frameworks across diverse legal systems?
- What steps has the UNODC taken to enhance the capacities of developing nations in

combating tax evasion? How does it address the disparities in resources and expertise between developed and developing countries?

- 7. How does the UNODC approach the challenge of promoting tax transparency and discouraging the use of tax havens? What initiatives or collaborations has it engaged in to curtail the creation and exploitation of offshore tax structures?
- 8. What innovative technological solutions has the UNODC explored or recommended to aid in the detection, prevention, and prosecution of tax evasion activities? How does it ensure that these technologies respect individual privacy and data security?
- 9. What is the UNODC's perspective on engaging with the private sector in its efforts to combat tax evasion? How does it facilitate partnerships and

collaborations with businesses to promote ethical tax practices and prevent illicit financial flows?

10.Looking ahead, what are the UNODC's anticipated future plans, strategies, and priorities in the ongoing battle against international tax evasion? How does it plan to adapt to evolving financial systems, emerging technologies, and changing patterns of tax evasion?

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