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# Trends. Necessity as the Mother of Invention: International Crime in an Era of Globalization

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The increasing reach and efficiency of telecommunications and mass transport in an era of globalization pose new opportunity for international crime. (1) The various oldest professions and underground economies--e.g., prostitution, gambling, extortion, contract murders, boosting, embezzlement--can more easily function internationally as well as locally, regionally, and nationally. (2) Illicit trafficking in otherwise legal products, e.g., cigarettes, can more easily exploit tax differentials across international borders. (3) Counterfeiting of currency and the introduction of bogus currency can more easily occur outside a national border and distal from that nation's concentration of law enforcement representatives. (4) A specific target's vulnerability to terrorism increases as representations and representatives of that target become further scattered throughout the world and terrorist techniques that wouldn't work on the target's home territory may well work elsewhere. (5) The wealth of information now globally available can be considered a sea in which criminals can swim--especially when different international jurisdictions have different approaches to information management including political and technical constraints for encryption and counterencryption. (6) The introduction of new, strong currencies in large denominations, e.g., the Euro, will increase the ease of illicit money transfers and of money laundering. (7) The facilitation of border crossings in various international unions, e.g., the European Union, also facilitates opportunities for criminals and criminal enterprises. In contrast, the increasing ease of international transport allows criminals and criminal enterprises to take advantage of differences in criminal justice systems among countries. (8) The covert and deceptive exporting of imports is being facilitated. This increases the opportunity for proscribed weapons and weapons materiel and technology and for so-called dual use materiel and technology to end up in criminal hands. Also, there is greater criminal opportunity to exploit legitimate business practices--e.g., wherein products are legally exported at a marked-down price and then illegally exported back to the country of origin at slightly under the original price. (9) Trafficking organizations continue to become more and more sophisticated and can take almost instantaneous advantage of the flux of products becoming proscribed and proscribed--from endangered fish, CDs, to works of art. (10) Supply, demand, and differential constraints are more often putting international criminals ahead of law enforcement and security authorities as to the sophistication of weapons, transport, and monitoring technologies.

In a new era, a very old story is being rewritten. Scientific, technological, cultural, social, and political change bring necessary changes in criminal inventiveness. But don't tell mother. (See Andrews, E.L. (November 21, 1997). 29 nations agree to outlaw bribes to foreign aides. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Bonner, R. (November 22, 1997). Rival asserts Philip Morris smuggles in South Africa. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Bonner, R. (April 25, 1998). U.S. now backs U.N. move to curb illicit trade in guns. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Faison, S. (December 31, 1997). In South Korea, underground banking thrives as other lenders say 'No'. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Giussani, B. (April 14, 1998). Dutch law goes beyond enabling wiretapping to make it a requirement. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Nasar, S. (April 26, 1998). Crime's newest cash of choice. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Psychopolitics of international crime: An introduction. (March 21, 1997). *IBPP*, 1(16); Pulley, B. (January 31, 1998). On Antigua, it's sun, sand, and 1-800 betting. *The New York Times*, <http://www.nytimes.com>; Stout, D. (March 12, 1998). Modern counterfeiting alarms federal officials. *The New York Times*,

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<http://www.nytimes.com>; Vogel, C. (April 23, 1997). Tracing paths of artworks smuggled out of Asia. The New York Times, <http://www.nytimes.com>.) (Keywords Crime, Globalization, International Crime, Inventiveness, Telecommunications.)