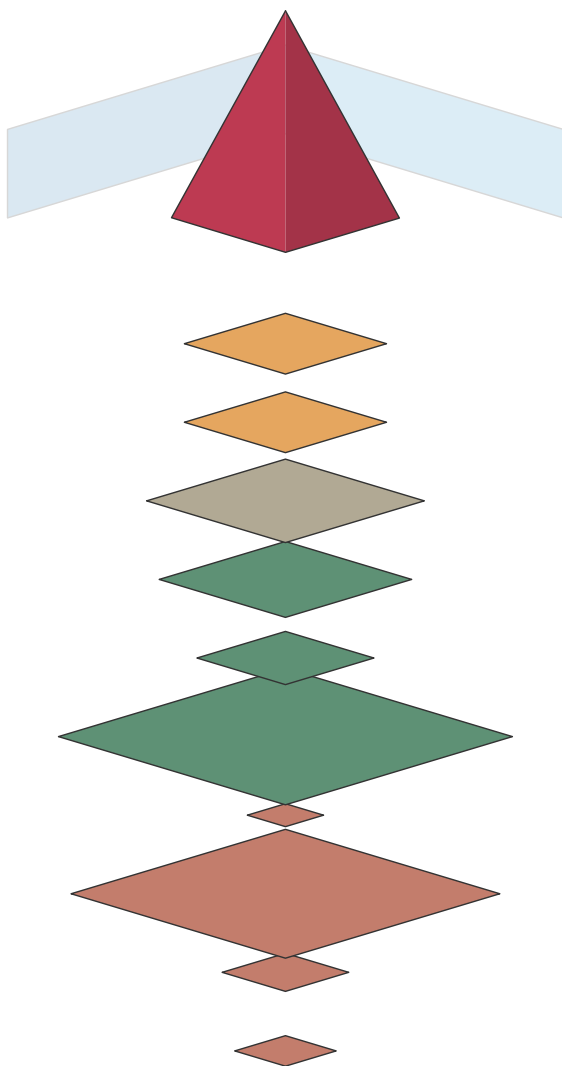




SURINAME



4.90 CRIMINALITY SCORE

95th of 193 countries
20th of 35 American countries
8th of 12 South American countries



CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.55

HUMAN TRAFFICKING	4.00
HUMAN SMUGGLING	4.00
ARMS TRAFFICKING	5.50
FLORA CRIMES	5.00
FAUNA CRIMES	3.50
NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCE CRIMES	9.00
HEROIN TRADE	1.50
COCAINE TRADE	8.50
CANNABIS TRADE	2.50
SYNTHETIC DRUG TRADE	2.00



CRIMINAL ACTORS 5.25

MAFIA-STYLE GROUPS	2.50
CRIMINAL NETWORKS	5.00
STATE-EMBEDDED ACTORS	8.00
FOREIGN ACTORS	5.50



2.25 RESILIENCE SCORE

182nd of 193 countries
34th of 35 American countries
11th of 12 South American countries



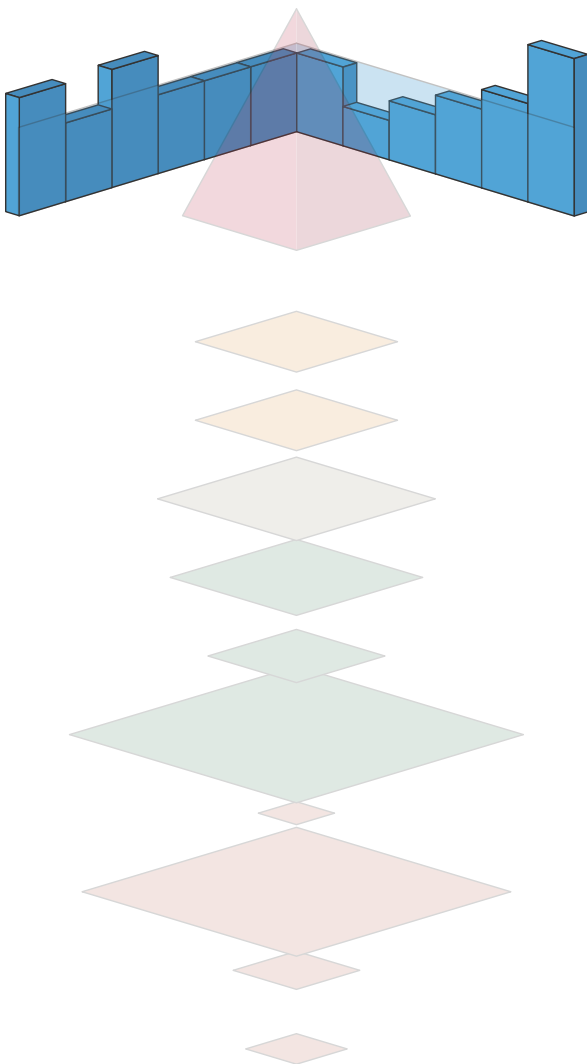
Funding provided by the United States Government.



ENACT is funded by the European Union and implemented by the Institute for Security Studies and INTERPOL, in affiliation with the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime.



SURINAME



2.25

RESILIENCE SCORE

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POLITICAL LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE	3.00
GOVERNMENT TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY	2.00
INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION	3.00
NATIONAL POLICIES AND LAWS	2.00
JUDICIAL SYSTEM AND DETENTION	2.00
LAW ENFORCEMENT	2.00
TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY	2.00
ANTI-MONEY LAUNDERING	1.00
ECONOMIC REGULATORY CAPACITY	1.50
VICTIM AND WITNESS SUPPORT	2.00
PREVENTION	2.50
NON-STATE ACTORS	4.00



4.90

CRIMINALITY SCORE

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CRIMINAL MARKETS 4.55



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CRIMINALITY

CRIMINAL MARKETS

PEOPLE

Suriname is a waypoint and destination market for human trafficking. The increasing influx of irregular migrants, especially from the Caribbean and Brazil's poor northern regions, Haiti and Venezuela, yields a steady supply of potential victims. The latter are mostly recruited in clubs in the capital, Paramaribo. Once sold to a club owner, victims struggle to pay 'debts' (for example, for food and lodging), and are subjected to forced labour and prostitution – often in remote parts of the jungle, including in illegal gold-mining camps. Children are also vulnerable to labour trafficking, especially in small-scale gold mines, with some being trafficked to informal mining camps and sexually exploited there. Human-trafficking networks are believed to be international, working through local, small ethnic groups. There have also been reports of Chinese and Hong Kong-based groups trafficking migrant workers to Suriname for forced labour in gold mines, as well as in service-based professions.

The country's human-smuggling market is often intertwined with the human-trafficking market because irregular migrants are more vulnerable to trafficking. As Chinese investments in Suriname have largely faded and migrant workers have left the country, the human-smuggling channels from Hong Kong and China have dissipated, giving way to Dutch Caribbean criminal actors. There is limited data, however it is believed that officials are facilitating human smuggling.

TRADE

Suriname is a transit hub for arms trafficking, with the trade mostly being controlled by Brazilian organized groups: Primeiro Comando da Capital (PCC) and Comando Vermelho (CV), among others. Reportedly, criminal actors involved in arms trafficking are likely to be part of international networks, relying on local connections and corrupt government officials. Notably, arms smuggling is closely related to drug trafficking, and is likely to be enabled by the same actors, including members of the now former government. Weapons from Venezuela are also known to end up in Suriname through intermediaries involved in cocaine and gold trafficking.

ENVIRONMENT

Illicit logging appears to be a significant issue in Suriname. It is largely perpetrated by tribal communities rather than organized-crime groups, and is, for the most part, motivated

by poverty. Multinational and medium-sized domestic companies that are not part of organized-crime structures have also been known to fell timber illegally and harvest protected flora species for export to China and Hong Kong. Much of the illicit logging was reportedly controlled by the former government, more specifically the inner circle of former president Dési Bouterse, who granted concessions to corporations at the expense of indigenous tribes. People are rarely dependent on animals as a source of revenue or food, but they kill them opportunistically because, due to habitat loss, animals are forced to come into contact with humans. Nevertheless, Suriname appears to be a source, destination and transit country for fauna-related crimes, especially jaguar poaching and trading in jaguar parts, but also poaching of songbirds and turtle eggs. Allegedly, international networks (mostly Chinese) work with tribal populations on a kill-to-order basis, or purchase jaguars already killed by locals. In addition, hunters from Brazil and Guyana cross into Suriname to poach jaguars. Suriname is also an entrepôt for illegal wildlife from the Guianas.

Suriname is mainly a source country for illegally mined gold. In general, there are two types of operations – informal, small-scale operations often facilitated by state actors, and larger, formal actors that subcontract artisanal miners to work on legal concessions. For the most part, miners are of Brazilian origin, although local tribes are known to participate as well. Moreover, a significant percentage of artisanal gold from nearby countries is trafficked and sold in Suriname, laundered and then exported abroad, mainly because Surinamese traders require no paperwork but also because tax/royalties in the country are lower than elsewhere. Since 2020, however, foreign currencies in Suriname have been sold at controlled and expensive exchange rates, which has prompted traders to sell gold in Guyana. Violence is not uncommon in the sector, as miners working illegally often clash with workers from larger companies. The environmental effect of illegal gold-mining operations is severe as it leads to deforestation and pollution caused by mercury used in artisanal mining. Importantly, mercury is trafficked from Guyana to Suriname, or in containers with mining equipment, most likely from China.

DRUGS

Heroin makes up a small percentage of the drugs consumed in Suriname, which indicates that the domestic market for heroin is small or non-existent. There is no evidence of heroin transiting Suriname either. Conversely, while cocaine use in the country is low, Suriname is among the preferred transit points for cocaine shipped from Latin America to Europe, and allegedly serves as a distribution hub. Although airways are still used, most cocaine is trafficked via maritime routes, going out of the port of Paramaribo.

Actors involved in the cocaine trade are believed to be highly organized mafia-style groups, operating as part of larger international networks and involving high levels of government corruption. Most cocaine comes from Brazil, although Colombian actors – the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN) – are involved as well. In addition, Surinamese groups are alleged to collaborate with counterparts in the Guianas, trafficking drugs to France and the UK. The cocaine trade also has underprivileged local populations from poorer border regions involved, looking for ways to earn a living.

Suriname is a country of origin as well as a key transshipment point for cannabis, which is trafficked to Europe. Estimates point to 80% of domestic cannabis production being smuggled into French Guiana, while the remainder is consumed locally. Notably, although cannabis is illegal, authorities do not generally enforce regulations against its use in public. In a similar fashion, the country is a transit point for MDMA (Ecstasy) produced in the Netherlands and destined for the US, the Dutch Antilles, Aruba and French Guiana. Arguably, however, Suriname is not believed to be a particularly attractive synthetic-drug transit point or to hold a competitive advantage over other Caribbean countries in that respect.

CRIMINAL ACTORS

Given the involvement of former president Bouterse and his inner circle in organized crime, their support for terrorism as well as their alleged provision of multiple avenues for the political, economic and military elites to access profits obtained illegally, the degree to which the Surinamese state

has patronage and control over criminal markets is assessed as high. Evidence suggests corruption permeates all levels of government, up to the highest echelons of the Bouterse administration before it was replaced in July 2020, allowing gangs to collaborate closely with the state. In addition, the previous administration was, to a large extent, able to exert its criminal influence over the democratic process. It is yet to be determined whether the new administration will be able to change that perception. As a major drug hub, Suriname is a place of convergence for foreign criminal organizations, including those originating in the Guianas, Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Brazil. While foreign actors do not exert complete control over any criminal markets, they are an important part of the drug and human trades, as well as environmental crime, all of which maintain their presence in Suriname. Among the foreign groups active in Suriname are demobilized FARC elements, the Brazilian PCC and CV groups, as well as the growing Chinese diaspora, members of which are predominately involved in fauna-related crime. The borderlands and the surrounding towns are among the hotspots where such groups are concentrated, as are the port areas of Paramaribo.

Arguably two types of domestic criminal networks operate in Suriname: groups built on connections between smaller groups who collaborate as part of a larger illicit supply chain, and networks characterized by friend-to-friend relations. The former might operate abroad or collaborate with counterparts in Brazil or the Guianas, while the latter smuggle illegal commodities out of Suriname on a small scale in order to sell them. There are not any significant, well-structured mafia-style groups dominating over large areas in Suriname. Insofar as such structures exist, they are small and hierarchical, but controlled by government, military and police leaders.

RESILIENCE

LEADERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Following the decade-long Bouterse rule that was characterized by rampant corruption and state involvement in organized-crime activities, Chan Santokhi took over the presidency in July 2020. While Santokhi helped disrupt cocaine flows and highlighted the importance of tackling corruption, he is likely to face considerable challenges in implementing policy changes. These include entrenched state corruption, limited coalition support, as well as a vice president who is a convicted drug trafficker and a fugitive, wanted by INTERPOL. Evidently, political will to tackle corruption is lacking because the country does not have adequate anti-corruption legislation in place, nor laws that require public officials to disclose their financial state.

Although the government publishes its yearly financial plans, access to information in Suriname is poor.

Suriname is party to a number of treaties and conventions pertaining to organized crime, with the exception of the United Nations Convention Against Corruption. The country has made use of significant capacity-building, financial and technical assistance, provided by international partners. Along with regional partners, it participates in counter-narcotics, rule-of-law and anti-corruption, as well as anti-financial-crime and anti-money-laundering initiatives organized by US law enforcement. In spite of that, the country is still not considered a trusted partner in the fight against organized crime because crucial mechanisms against it are lacking. Organized-crime-specific legislation is also missing from

the different forms of criminality covered by the penal code. Notably, while cannabis in Suriname remains illegal, police do not generally enforce regulations against its use in public places, and reform is being undertaken towards the drug's legalization. Overall, Suriname's legal framework is outdated, largely unenforced and very weak.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND SECURITY

No significant reforms in the judicial system have occurred in the past two decades either, with the judiciary being designed to protect the Bouterse circle more than anything else. Against this backdrop, the new governing coalition has promised to reform the judiciary and strengthen its independence by, among other things, granting it its own budget, improving prosecution services and appointing special prosecutors to focus on high-level corruption cases. The enormity of the task ahead, with corruption seemingly embedded in every aspect of the country, will make this commitment challenging at best. Although prisons in Suriname are crowded due to a high rate of pre-trial incarceration, and conditions are poor, they are not controlled by criminal organizations and gangs. Law enforcement in Suriname is severely under-resourced, with a general lack of personnel, low salaries, insufficient coordination (including with the armed forces), as well as inadequate training and equipment significantly impeding their ability to undertake operations to curb organized crime. The majority of units are based in Paramaribo, which allows criminal organizations, such as traffickers, to operate undisturbed across the vast jungle that covers most of the country. Importantly, Suriname's borders are virtually non-existent as the country's thick jungle covering renders borders almost impossible to protect. Indigenous people who travel by river between villages that now cross countries, including Guyana and Brazil, without the need for identification create further vulnerabilities and provide opportunities for organized-crime groups to exploit.

ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL ENVIRONMENT

Suriname's financial intelligence unit works as an independent unit of the justice ministry and cooperates with the financial investigations unit of the country's police force against money laundering. Established instruments for investigating money laundering exist, but mechanisms to establish transparency in the administration of seized assets are not developed. In addition, Suriname becoming a source of illicit gold and a gold-trafficking transit hub has created opportunities for laundering of criminal proceeds, which have been protected by highly influential people, including state-embedded actors. Moreover, Suriname is among the least free economies in the region, with powerful individuals being able to influence both business and legal processes in the country, thereby undermining rule of law and enabling organized-crime-related activities. In combination with the weak protections and economic regulatory capacity of the state, doing business is difficult. Legitimate businesses

are thus vulnerable to government influence and at risk of being infiltrated by organized crime.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND SOCIAL PROTECTION

Notable efforts in victim and witness support include financing an action plan, developing victim-referral mechanisms and providing training to law enforcement. In spite of that, Suriname falls short of meeting its responsibilities to tackle human trafficking and support victims adequately. In terms of prevention, Suriname has strategies covering prevention of drug use, human trafficking, money laundering and corruption. The country is also part of regional initiatives concerning themselves with prevention. Yet, these are yielding little result, as evidenced by the rampant corruption and organized-crime activity in the country. Civil society is strong, but due to their reliance on government approval and funding, only a few NGOs work on organized-crime-related issues. Against this backdrop, the media environment is generally free of political interference, although a harsh defamation law is in effect and some journalists have exercised self-censorship, particularly on issues related to Bouterse and his inner circle.

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