

**international
seminar**

july 20-21, 2015

**Universidad
Torcuato Di Tella
Buenos Aires**

Drugs: from prohibition to regulation

Policies prohibiting the production, trafficking and use of drugs have had a major impact on Latin America's security, justice and prisons systems. In the last five decades, the insistence upon waging a "War on Drugs," and its militarized approach, has caused high levels of violence and served to justify heavy-handed policies. Meanwhile, the criminal organizations that dominate the trafficking of illegal substances have not been weakened and have shown they are capable of penetrating key areas of state institutions.

Despite this scenario, for years the consequences of these policies were not analyzed from a human rights perspective. At present nearly one third of the region's prison population is incarcerated for non-violent drug-related crimes; laws produce a direct association between drugs and crime that justifies the criminalization of users; the violence linked to these policies is played out in poor neighborhoods and further deteriorates inhabitants' living conditions; and effective strategies for combating more complex criminal networks have yet to be implemented. As a result, the impacts of the "War on Drugs" are much more harmful than the danger it purports to prevent.

This seminar seeks to contribute to current debates about drug policies in the region and on the global scene. It will also analyze in-depth the human rights impacts of the prohibitionist policies in force and the role that some Latin American countries are taking at present to question them, due to the consequences of the "War on Drugs" in their territories. At the seminar, participants will also explore alternative experiences that are being developed in the region: drug law reforms and their impacts on penal systems; the decriminalization of consumption; the regulation of markets; and new approaches in the field of health care.

Drugs: from prohibition to regulation

Monday 20

9.30

Welcome remarks

Gastón Chillier executive director of CELS
Dörte Wollrad representative of FES Argentina
Rubén Ramírez representative director of CAF Argentina
Catalina Smulovitz vice-rector of UTDT

10.00

The failure of the “War on Drugs”

Horacio Verbitsky president of CELS’ board of directors
Juan Gabriel Tokatlian director of UTDT’s Political Science and International Studies Department

11.00

Drug policies in the international arena

CORE DISCUSSION TOPICS

- The role of United Nations (UN) bodies and the debates on drug policy leading up to UNGASS 2016
- New developments and proposals in the framework of the OAS, UNASUR and other sub-regional forums
- Positioning of Latin American countries and other regional blocs and actors

SPEAKERS

Francisco Thoumi member of the International Narcotics Control Board
Julio Calzada Mazzei secretary of Uruguay’s National Drugs Board (2010-2015) and adviser to FES
Robert Husbands human rights officer at the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
Julia Buxton professor of comparative politics at the Central European University, Hungary
Moderator
Luciana Pol senior fellow on security policy and human rights at CELS

13.00

Lunch

14.15

Impact of drug policies on human rights

CORE DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Selectivity of the penal system and impact on incarceration rates
- Stigmatization and criminalization of users, producers and micro-trafficking
- Differential impact on women and other groups (peasants, indigenous peoples)
- Serious human rights violations
- Police practices and institutional violence

SPEAKERS

José Guevara executive director of CMDPDH, Mexico, member of the UN WG on Arbitrary Detention
Gastón Chillier executive director of CELS
Coletta Youngers senior fellow at the Washington Office on Latin America, WOLA
Julita Lemgruber coordinator of CESeC, Candido Mendes University, Brazil

Tuesday 21

10.00

Criminal and security policies related to drug trafficking

CORE DISCUSSION TOPICS

- The militarization of security policies in Latin America
- Territorial dynamics of violence, illegal trafficking and gangs
- Control policies and the role of security agencies in the spread of violence associated with drug trafficking
- State capacities for the investigation of complex networks and crimes
- Production of public information to define and assess drug policies

SPEAKERS

Juan Garzón Vergara global fellow at the Wilson Center, US

Paula Miraglia independent consultant

Enrique Font professor of criminology and criminal justice policy at the National University of Rosario, member of the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture

Sebastián Fernández Ciatti undersecretary for the Investigation of Organized and Complex Crime at Argentina's Security Ministry

Moderator

Paula Litvachky director of the justice and security program at CELS

12.30

Lunch

14.00

Alternative approaches and new focuses with regard to drug policies

CORE DISCUSSION TOPICS

- Models of drug law reform and their impact on penal systems:
- Legal regulation of cannabis markets. The case of Uruguay.
- Models of legalization, medicinal and recreational uses. Experiences in the United States.
- Reform of the Criminal Code in Ecuador.

SPEAKERS

Ernesto Pazmiño public defender, Ecuador

Milton Romani president of Uruguay's National Drugs Board

Niamh Eastwood executive director of Release, UK

Moderator

Graciela Touzé executive director of Intercambios

16.45

Closing remarks by Juan Gabriel Tokatlian

director of UTDT's Political Science and International Studies Department