

ON THE OCCASION OF THE 60<sup>TH</sup> REGULAR SESSION OF THE  
INTER-AMERICAN DRUG ABUSE CONTROL COMMISSION (CICAD)  
SECRETARIAT FOR MULTIDIMENSIONAL SECURITY  
ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES (OAS)

# CIVIL SOCIETY ENGAGEMENT & THE BASIS OF **DRUG POLICY** FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

November 3, 2016  
Atlantis Conference Center, The Bahamas  
12:00-15:00

The inclusion of a Side Event to the regular sessions of CICAD/OAS started at the 54th regular session, held in Bogota, Colombia in 2013. This practice has continued in the following CICAD sessions to date. These sessions, while they are not part of the CICAD Regular Sessions and not binding in character for the Commission, without a doubt serve as a mechanism for presenting promising experiences, actions, and investigations undertaken by civil society actors, as well as encouraging feedback and the exchange of ideas. In this way, these sessions aim to promote and strengthen the relationship between Commissioners and civil society, supporting the corresponding discussions and follow-up actions in the CICAD framework. The content of these sessions does not necessarily reflect the position of the OAS, or of the governments and institutions that sponsor these sessions.

## SOME REFLECTIONS AS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SESSION

Every facet of the drug problem influences development prospects for the countries of the hemisphere. For that reason, it is imperative to bring global drug policy in line with the new, internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which came into effect in January 2016. These are the new, universal set of economic, social and environmental goals countries are expected to achieve by 2030<sup>1</sup>. In this context, it is essential that the global response to the drugs phenomenon aligns with, and contributes to, the SDGs and that the development community pays greater attention to the role of drug policy in this agenda. Nearly every aspect of the 2030 agenda concerns drug policy: food security, education, employment, justice, gender and youth, among others. For that reason, it is crucial to address the connections between drug policy and sustainable development.

There has already been much debate about how the SDGs will be achieved, but there is still a great need to coordinate and harmonize drug policy efforts at the local, national and international levels with those efforts. Given the scope and challenges of drug policy and the ambition of the SDGs, it is clear that governments alone cannot achieve the agenda. This meeting will allow participants to discuss the roles and responsibilities that different stakeholders, including civil society organizations, the private sector and the general public, should take in achieving these goals – in particular, how to best implement this universal framework at the local level.

The inclusion of civil society organizations working with drug related issues in these processes is imperative. It is, therefore, essential to highlight their potential roles in the effective implementation of the SDGs as well as to enhance their engagement, impact and effectiveness in drug policy oriented efforts.

Mass incarceration has had discernible impacts on populations in vulnerable situations and minority communities which have been disproportionately impacted by drug enforcement strategies. With that in mind, some civil society actions are already aligned with the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda, reflecting the importance of providing people-centered, rights-based and gender-sensitive solutions. Some of these organizations are also supporting OAS Member States with criminal justice system reform efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> See: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/>

There is some momentum building for reform, focusing efforts and resources on key activities and policy issues that will advance an effective and efficient criminal justice system. The goal should be to integrate these approaches throughout the judicial process (arrest, jail and pre-trial to sentencing, incarceration and release) with the key objective of matching the intensity of the intervention to the offender's needs and criminal behavior.

By working towards the accomplishment of the 17 SDGs and their 169 targets, most of the structural conditions driving thousands of people to join the group of drug related offenders can be addressed from a sustainable perspective. This is particularly true of the goals related to poverty and food security, gender equality, health protection, environmental sustainability, access to justice for all, building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions and the promotion of pacific societies.

Smarter drug policies can help accomplish these goals by focusing on the well-being of affected populations. By reforming our approach to criminal justice related with drugs, we can pave the way for more sustainable development for everyone

## AGENDA

Thursday, November 3 • 2016

**12:00 - 12:05** **Welcome**  
Delegates take their seats and the food service starts

**12:05 - 12:20** **Opening Remarks**

- Civil Society Representative.
- Representative of OAS.
- Representative Government of Bahamas

**Brief explanation of the methodology of the session**

**12:20 - 12:35** **Introduction to the debate**

- **Lisa Sánchez**, Mexico United against Crime, MUCD (Mexico)

**12:35 - 13:35** **Panel I. Drug Policy and the Sustainable Development Goals.**  
Moderator: Lisa Sánchez, Mexico United against Crime, MUCD (Mexico)  
Speakers:

- Natasha Horsfield, Christian Aid (UK) (pre-recorded broadcast)
- Sandra Yanneth Bermudez Marin, Indepaz (Colombia)
- Juliana Tibau, Luta pela Paz (Brazil)
- Leonard Archer, Vice President, Civil Society Bahamas Organization (The Bahamas)

**13:15 - 14:15** **Panel II. Effective Drug Policy Approaches to Criminal Justice Reforms**  
Moderator: Pablo Cymerman, Intercambios (Argentina)  
Speakers:

- Ernesto Cortés, Colectivo de Estudios Drogas y Derecho CEDD and and International Drug Policy Consortium, IDPC (Costa Rica)
- Luz Piedad Caicedo, Corporación Humanas (Colombia)
- Daphne Baille, TASC, Inc. Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (United States)
- Wayne Munroe, Probation and Parole Committee (Member), The Bahamas Bar Council Organization (The Bahamas)

**14:15 - 15:00** **Working tables. Group debate**

**Closing remarks**