

Summary of Drugs & Democracy Activities

NEWSLETTER

April - June 2013



The main highlight in this 2nd quarter of 2013 was the release of the [Organization of American States \(OAS\) reports](#) analysing the current drugs situation in the hemisphere and outlining different scenarios for policy developments over the coming decade. The OAS Secretary General [José Miguel Insulza presented the documents](#) on May 17, 2013 in Bogotá to Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos in a ceremony at the Casa de Nariño, the Presidential palace. TNI was represented in the OAS team

mandated to elaborate the policy scenarios and was invited to the launch ceremony. The reports were the main input for the political debate during the [OAS General Assembly](#), June 4-6, 2013, in Antigua (Guatemala). The OAS study and scenarios have been generally well received by governments, media and NGOs for providing an innovative new orientation for the drugs policy debate in the hemisphere and the world.

Sometimes we all feel that we have been pedaling on a stationary bicycle. We look out to the right and left, and we still see the same landscape.
Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos

EVENTS



April 2-4, TNI organised in Uruguay an Informal Expert Dialogue on cannabis regulation, hosted together with the [JND \(the national drugs agency of Uruguay\)](#), the [Washington Office on Latin America \(WOLA\)](#) and the [Friedrich Ebert Stiftung \(FESUR\)](#). TNI's Latin America drug law reform project coordinator Pien Metaal chaired the meeting which gathered experts and parliamentarians from Uruguay, the Latin American region, North America and Europe to discuss in detail legal regulation models for the cannabis market. The closed

dialogue was followed by a series of public events throughout the country with the participation of the experts from abroad. The goal of these events was to inform the general public about cannabis policy developments in other countries and to kick off a national debate on the merits of the Uruguayan proposal for cannabis regulation under strict state control.



April 11, Martin Jelsma participated in a public debate on international drug control organized by the [Central European University in Budapest](#), with Sandeep Chawla, Director of UNODC's Division for Policy Analysis and Public Affairs, and Niamh Eastwood, Executive Director of Release (UK), and moderated by Kasia Malinowska-Sempruch, Director of the Open Society Global Drug Policy Program.

April 14, [Presentation of the Chinese edition of 'Financing Dispossession – China's Opium Substitution Programme in Northern Burma'](#), in Kunming and on April 16 in Beijing. China's mainstream internet media reported or reproduced it, including Caixin online, China.com and

qq.com. The coverage introduced the main arguments of TNI's critique, triggering debates among Chinese internet users.

May 15-17, [Seventh Annual Conference of the International Society for the Study of Drug Policy \(ISSDP\)](#) - Universidad de los Andes, Bogotá, Colombia. One of the conference sessions presented new research and publications on proportionality by the CEDD legal research collective initiated by the TNI/WOLA Latin American Drug Law Reform project. In another session, Martin Jelsma gave a presentation on '[cannabis and the UN drug control regime](#)'.



May 17, OAS President José Miguel Insulza formally presented the results of the hemispheric review of drug policies to Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos. Martin Jelsma was one of the invitees present at the ceremony in the Presidential palace in Bogotá, as one of the experts in the OAS team that elaborated different scenarios regarding the future of drug policy in the Americas.

May 20-21, Meeting in Bogotá of the [CEDD Research Consortium on Drugs and the Law](#) of which TNI is a founding member. Pien Metaal and Martin Jelsma attended to discuss the progress of new research focused on the rights of drugs users under national laws in several Latin American countries, and on the availability and quality of treatment and harm

reduction services.

May 21, Pien Metaal attended a meeting with the Valencia based [Observatory of Crops Declared Illicit \(OCDI\)](#) to plan a national coca farmers' consultation in Colombia, to contribute to the next rounds of peace talks.

May 29, Tom Blickman attended a closed meeting with Dutch Ministries and NGOs about national and international drug policy developments.

June 6-9, [Transnational Institute Fellows' Meeting](#). Annual meeting with all TNI fellows and staff. Tom Kramer and consultants Kevin Woods AND Khin Zaw Win made a presentation on how Burma can manage its transition so that local people finally benefit and peace is sustained.

June 12-14, TNI collaborated in a joint GIZ-[Open Society Foundation](#)'s training on 'A Rural Development Oriented Approach to Address Illicit Drug Cultivation', at the [International Training Centre in Feldafing](#) (Germany); Martin Jelsma presented on 'The UN Guidelines on Alternative Development: the way ahead' and Tom Kramer facilitated one of the workshops.

June 20-21, TNI participated in an IDPC/SICAD seminar on 'Where next for Europe on Drug Policy Reform?' in Lisbon, part of a series of expert meetings of a European Commission funded project consortium led by TNI. Martin Jelsma presented on 'The role of Europe in global drug policy – towards the 2016 UNGASS'.

June 20-22, Pien Metaal participated in another expert seminar in the same series 'NADPI - New Approaches in Drug Policy & Interventions' in Florence (Italy), organised by [Forum Droghe](#), the Italian partner in the TNI-led European Commission project.

PUBLICATIONS

[Hacia un Mercado legal para la coca: el caso del coqueo argentino](#), Serie reforma legislativa en material de drogas No. 23. Junio 2013, por: Ricardo Abduca y Pien Metaal.

[De wankelende “Weense consensus” over drugs beleid](#), In depth article by Martin Jelsma in the Internationale Spectator, April 2013

[Cannabis to substitute crack](#), article by Amira Armenta and Tom Blickman

[Terapia con cannabis. Cuando los prejuicios obstaculizan la búsqueda de nuevos enfoques](#), article in Spanish by Tom Blickman

[Deficiencies in financial oversight enable money laundering](#), by Tom Blickman

Our monthly column in “Cáñamo” Magazine (Barcelona):

-*Marihuana por bazuco, una deshabituación paso a paso*

-*La reforma del cannabis. El obstáculo de las convenciones de la ONU*

-*Guatemala, entre el discurso y la práctica*

IN THE MEDIA

Al Jazeera, [Myanmar's fragile peace](#), April 12,

Vice Magazine, [What Is the Future of British Heroin Addiction?](#) By Danny McDonald, April 26,

Irin (Asia), [Prospects for Rakhine reconciliation dim](#) , May 2,

Thomson Reuters Foundation, [Ethnic minority land rights next hurdle for Myanmar peace](#), May 8,

The Irrawaddy, [Ethnic Activists Warn of Surge in Land Grabs After Ceasefires](#). By Paul Vrieze, May 9,

The Irrawaddy, [‘Rule of Law’ Will End Land Grabs in Ethnic Areas, Official Tells Activists](#), By Lawi Weng, May 12,

Drug Reporter, [Martin Jelsma participated at a public debate in Budapest](#), May 28,

Trouw (Dutch paper), 'War on drugs' heeft beste tijd gehad, by Edwin Koopman, June 4.

CNN, [In Mexico, guilty till proven innocent](#), by Maureen Meyer, June 5,

De Telegraaf (Dutch Newspaper), Zuid-Amerika wil af van War on Drugs.

Plaza Pública (Guatemala), [La declaración sobre drogas que hace dos años era imposible](#), June 16,

Asia Times, [Rain for Myanmar's peace parade](#) , By Bertil Lintner, June 25,

Coming up in the next quarter

- Mission to Burma, 30 June-14 July 2013

- Coca peasants' conference, La Paz (Bolivia), August 2013