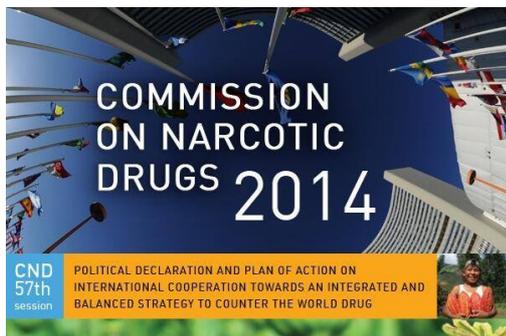


# Summary of Drugs & Democracy Activities January - March 2014



The most important drug policy event this quarter was undoubtedly the 57th Session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) in Vienna from 13 to 21 March, the first two days of which were dedicated to a high-level review of the past five years. The winds of drug policy change were clearly felt in the statements made by several Latin American countries – Colombia, Guatemala, Ecuador, Mexico and Uruguay – and some European countries – the Czech Republic, Norway and Switzerland, among others. Despite more and more countries opting to

prioritize the protection of human rights, health and safety over the drug law enforcement approach of the last decades, the CND concluded with a bland statement that merely reflects the broken consensus.

*".. The International Conventions for Drug Control, as any other outcome of human civilisation, face the daily challenge of how they work in practice, and must be discussed by the international community in order to advance towards more effective measures that take into account diverse approaches and respect the individual and collective rights of peoples."* **Rodrigo Vélez**, Head of the Ecuador delegation.

*"We must not shy away from discussing innovative ideas and perspectives"* **Jan Eliasson**, UN Deputy Secretary-General, CND Vienna, 13 March 2014.

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## EVENTS

March 27, TNI was invited to participate in a brainstorm session at the Ministry of Health in The Hague on the preparations for UNGASS 2016.



The Centre for Latin America Research and Documentation (CEDLA) invited Pien Metaal, TNI partners Ricardo Soberón (CIDDH Perú) and Jorge Hernández Tinajero (CUPIDH México) to make presentations in the conference [New Winds in Latin America Drug Policies](#), March 21, 2014.

The Centre for Information and Research on Organised Crime (CIROC) of Utrecht University invited Pien Metaal and TNI partner Ricardo Soberón to talk about "[Policies and trafficking in Latin America and Beyond](#)". March 19, 201.

March 18, at the 57<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, TNI and IDPC co-organised the side event "[Rethinking scheduling & taking on the challenge of NPS. Towards more effectiveness and consistency](#)". While often viewed merely as a technical issue, the effective scheduling of substances lies at the heart of the functioning of the international drug control system.



TNI also co-organised with the UNODC Sustainable Livelihoods Unit (SLU), the Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) of Germany/the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) a side event: "[Outreach to new Stakeholders in the Field of Alternative Development](#)". Mr. Yuri Fedotov, the Executive

Director of UNODC, was one of the speakers, along with Tom Kramer from TNI. The goal of this side event was to help identify policy priorities for the upcoming Special Session of the UN General Assembly on Drugs in 2016.

Finally, TNI, together with IDPC, WOLA and the Junta Nacional de Drogas (Uruguay) co-organised the side event, "[Monitoring and evaluating Uruguay's new law regulating cannabis](#)." This side event enabled Uruguay to present to the international community its new legislation on cannabis. The event also featured representatives from the US states of Washington and Colorado, and TNI presented its new report, [The Rise and Decline of Cannabis Prohibition](#). [More on this event](#).

On January 21st, Tom Blickman attended a meeting organised by the Dutch political party D66, on the issue of political action on cannabis regulation in the Netherlands.

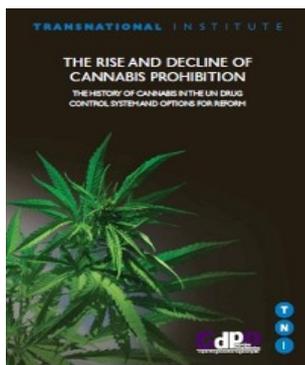
Between 23-25 of January, TNI organised the 11th Informal Drug Policy Dialogue in Athens, hosted by the Diogenis Foundation. The meeting was attended by forty people from eighteen different countries and from various multilateral agencies. The agenda included: The High Level Review of the 2009 Political Declaration (6-7 March 2014); the 2016 United Nations General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS), developments regarding policy and legislation on New Psychoactive Substances (NPS); relevant issues on the agenda of the 57th session of the CND (10-14 March 2014). Representatives of the Greek government presented the Greek national drugs policy and organised visits to harm reduction services in Athens. A comprehensive report of the meeting will be published in April.

On January, Pien Metaal, Martin Jelsma and Tom Blickman met the president of the [Ecuadorian drug control agency CONSEP](#). The government of Ecuador agreed to host the next TNI/WOLA Latin American drug policy dialogue in April this year.

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## PUBLICATIONS

Tom Kramer contributed to the draft of the document [Outreach to new Stakeholders in the Field of Alternative Development](#). The document was discussed during a CND 2014 side event on 18 March, co-organised by TNI. (See above)



[The Rise and Decline of Cannabis Prohibition](#). The History of Cannabis in the UN Drug Control System and Options For Reform. Report by Dave Bewley-Taylor, Tom Blickman and Martin Jelsma, March 2014.

[INCB speaks out against death penalty](#) – The Board does not decide whether cannabis should be downgraded in the schedules, Article by Martin Jelsma, March 5, 2014.

For the preparations of the CND 2014, TNI/GDPO published the Press Release, [Time for UN to open up dialogue on drug policy reform](#), March 3, 2014.

[Cocaine: towards a self-regulation model. New developments in Harm Reduction](#), by Grazia Zuffa. Briefing in the *Series on Legislative Reform of Drug Policies* Nr. 24, February 2014.

[Fumigaciones aéreas v paz territorial. ¿Hay alternativas?](#) By TNI associate fellow Ricardo Vargas, in *Razón Pública* (Colombia) February 23, 2014.

[Minister Opstelten en de burgemeesterlijke ongehoorzaamheid. Commentaar op de brief van de minister aan de Tweede Kamer over 'toezeggingen coffeeshopbeleid'](#) Article on the Dutch cannabis debate. By Martin Jelsma. January 2014.

[Obama pronuncia las palabras mágicas sobre el cannabis](#), Article by Amira Armenta, January 22, 2014.

The Spanish version of Ross Eventon's Report "Haciendo la vista gorda". This publication is part of our new series on Drug Markets and Violence. <http://www.druglawreform.info/images/stories/dmv1-s.pdf>

We have expanded and updated the "Country Information" section of the [Drug Law Reform in Latin America](#) website. The objective of the country pages is to present an overview of drug laws, drug policies, and legislative trends in the different Latin American countries. Hijke Schennink worked on the [Guatemala](#) page. Amira Armenta worked on the [Uruguay](#), [México](#), [Chile](#) pages.

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## IN THE MEDIA

[Entrevista del Transnational Institute con The Hash Marihuana and Hemp Museum](#). Sensi Seeds, March 21, 2014. In the article, Tom Blickman and Martin Jelsma answer questions related to the new TNI cannabis report [The Rise and Decline of Cannabis Prohibition](#).

[OPINIÓN: No, la iniciativa de marihuana del DF no viola tratados de la ONU](#) – CNN Mexico, March 20, 2014. TNI is quoted in relation to the drug international treaties.

[Hoy inicia el debate de la ONU en torno a la despenalización del consumo de drogas](#), Magazine Pulzo highlighted TNI's new report on cannabis, March 13, 2014.

[La ONU debate a partir de mañana política mundial sobre drogas](#), EFE Press Agency, March 12, 2014. "Las dificultades para negociar una declaración conjunta demuestran que el consenso de Viena basado en la prohibición está roto", said Martin Jelsma to EFE in Vienna.

[Martin Jelsma: "No llegaremos a un consenso para legalizar la droga"](#), Cadenaser.com (Spain), March 12, 2014. Audio interview with Martin Jelsma.

[El 'cannabis', centro de la discusión sobre un cambio en el régimen de control de estupefacientes. La hora del porro en la ONU](#), El Espectador (Colombia) March 12, 2014. Martin Jelsma was quoted on the CND 2014 and the UN Drug Conventions. "El desafío a mediano plazo es explorar opciones para modificar las obligaciones de los tratados para países individuales o para grupos...".

[ONU debate desde el jueves el rumbo de la política mundial sobre drogas](#), **El Universo** (Ecuador), March 12, 2014. Martin Jelsma was quoted: "... las diferencias en la comunidad internacional indican que el consenso sobre cómo abordar la situación se ha acabado".

[ONU, hacia la despenalización de la droga](#), El Espectador (Colombia), March 07, 2014, Martin Jelsma was quoted, "El 'consenso de Viena' está quebrado y está en crisis...".



[Drug-expert Jelsma pleit voor legalisering](#). MO Mondiaal Nieuws, March 07, 2013. Interview with Martin Jelsma on the UN Drugs Convention and the expectation of the CND-2014 in Vienna.

[VPRO, buitenlandpanel](#) spraak met Martin Jelsma on de internationale drugsproblematiek, VPRO (Dutch Radio/TV) March 06, 2014.

[VN-drugsrapport veroordeelt legalisering](#). MO Mondiaal Nieuws, March 04, 2014, Martin Jelsma discuss the last [INCB new report](#)

[UN's bullying tactics on drugs shows how scared it is of reform](#), Politics.co.uk, March 05, 2014, Mentions TNI's report on Cannabis.

[War of Words: The International Narcotics Control Board vs. A Changing World](#) - "We are at a tipping point now as increasing numbers of nations realize that cannabis prohibition has failed to reduce its use, filled prisons with young people, increased violence and fueled the rise of organized

crime," said Martin Jelsma. StopTheDrugWar.org Issue 824, March 2014.

[Legalizing cannabis poses grave danger - UN](#). RT Question More, March 4, 2014.

Tom Blickman contributed to an in-depth article, *Wietland Nederland is al lang ingehaald* in the Dutch newspaper [NRC Handelsblad](#), February 28, 2014. The article offers an overview of the cannabis in the world and what's new in Dutch cannabis policy.

[What is behind the problems in Latin America's prisons](#). The outbursts of violence in Latin American prisons are a direct consequence of severe prison overcrowding and a dysfunctional judicial administration. InterAmerican Dialogues – Latin America Advisor, Jan 23, 2014. The article highlighted also the results of the TNI-WOLA report *Systems Overload*. Pien Metal was quoted.

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#### **Our monthly column in Cádiz magazine (Barcelona)**

- El fracaso del carnet de cannabis en los Países Bajos
  - La reacción de la JIFE contra Uruguay por la regulación del cannabis
  - Obama pronuncia las palabras mágicas sobre el cannabis
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#### **Coming up the next quarter**

- Informal Dialogue on Drug Policy, Quito (Ecuador) 10-12 April.
- Expert seminar on global experiences with harm reduction for stimulants and new psychoactive substances, Rome, Italy, 20 May, 2014
- ISSDP Conference, 21 May, Rome
- Mind your Eye. Conference, 31st of May, Palm Beach, Aruba.
- Mission to Thailand and Burma (June)

#### *Publications*

- A report on Medellin, Colombia, in our new drug markets and violence briefing series
- Drug law reform briefing on Cannabis in Morocco and the EU
- And we are expecting a new glossy report on SE Asia: Bouncing Back