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SHIFTING STRATEGIES ON DRUG POLICY: A COMPARATIVE APPROACH

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. TRINKUNAS: Good morning, everybody. My name is Harold Trinkunas. I'm the Director of the Latin American Initiative in the Foreign Policy Program at the Brookings Institution. It's my pleasure to welcome you here today on this beautiful fall morning for a discussion of shifting strategies on global drug policy. We have an opportunity here today to discuss the changes, the opportunities, the alternatives that are beginning to be discussed in the international system today. After four or five decades of a fairly orthodox approach to kind of a narcotics policy we see countries and states looking at alternatives, discussing alternatives, and we thought today would be an excellent opportunity to have a discussion here at Brookings with some of our colleagues that have been working on this issue as well.

I'd like to welcome today our panelists. And John Collins, who's the International Drug Policy Project Coordinator as LSE IDEAS, has joined us. This is the U.S. launch for his new report on ending the drug wars. This is a project that my colleagues Daniel Mejia and Vanda Felbab-Brown have been working on together with support from the Open Society Foundations, represented here by Jasmine Tyler, Senior Policy Analyst. We'll be discussing various different aspects of this report including security, public policy, health, incarceration policies, as well as taking an opportunity to discuss an actual case in the field, the case of Colombia which I think obviously is an interesting way to look at how these different trends are coming together in a very concrete way. Colombia, a country which in many ways had been at the forefront of the traditional kind of narcotics policy approaches to this issue and now is part of the negotiations with the FARC Rebels is beginning to consider some alternatives as part of

those discussions. So I think we'll really be able to have a very full discussion.

I won't take too much time to introduce each of our colleagues; you have some of the biographical materials in front of you, but I believe we'll begin with John Collins from LSE IDEAS followed by Jasmine Tyler, Senior Policy Analyst with Open Society Foundations, then Vanda Felbab-Brown from the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence here at the Brookings Institution, and we'll be concluding with some comments from Daniel Mejia, an Associate Professor and Director of the Research Center on Drugs and Security at Universidad de los Andes, Colombia.

Thank you. John?

MR. COLLINS: Okay. Well, thank you, Harold, and thank you, Vanda. It's a real pleasure to be here at Brookings. I also just want to say a quick thank you to Brad and the rest of the team at Brookings for putting this event on. It is a real pleasure to be here. But also, Jasmine, for Open Society's continued support with our work at the LSE and also Daniel for being such an integral part of the report.

The idea behind the LSE report was can we come up with a more effective way to manage global drug issues at the international level, what is a more effective multilateral strategy around drug policy? And the basic premise that this started from is that the current framework is no longer sustainable. If you look at it on its own goals what are the goals of the current international drug strategy? It has failed. The idea underpinning it is that by controlling supply you can control demand. So member states need to work together to restrict supply internationally. And then consumer countries need to institute repressive policies around demand and thereby we can shrink the global market. That has not worked. And if you look at all indicators we have over the last few decades it is failing on its own terms. The level of enforcement intensity has

been going up over the last four decades. Political will has been going up over the last four decades. States have been working harder at the same strategy. And yet what we see it the general trend for illicit drug prices is that they're going down while purity is going up. So it's on its own terms. It is not a case of we just need to do more of the same. We require more political resolve or more effort to be successful. It is failing on its own strategic terms.

Then if we look at the issue of costs around current drug policies they are pretty astronomical no matter really where you look at it. The costs of continuing the war on drugs are huge. Jasmine can talk about it in the U.S. context and Daniel can talk about it the producer country, transit country context. But I think one of the figures that was put out at our conference when we discussed what are the direct social costs to say the U.S. for continuing a war on drugs; you could be talking $500 billion a year. This is in terms of incarceration, in terms of violence, in terms of all these other costs that accrue from the war on drugs. And then you look at producer and transit countries and it is this issue of corruption and violence and higher homicide rates. And in pursuit of policies that at best shift around global drug commodity chains but have never actually been shown to be effective at putting out these or snuffing out these policy chains. Then you look at the issue of disproportionalities. Who actually bears the burden of fighting the war on drugs? It is producer and transit countries, it is the globe south. So we have an issue where the global north is essentially exporting or forcibly outsourcing the cost of fighting the war on drugs to the global south via an international system through the United Nations. And then you look at some consumer countries like the United States, but even European countries you see who are the ones who get arrested and incarcerated for drug offenses, it is generally poor and minority communities. So in all these indicators, the current

strategy is not working the way it was supposed to.

Then you look at the issue around political sustainability and what we've clearly seen is that the global south is no longer -- well, particularly Latin America is no longer willing to bear the burden of fighting the war on drugs. I've just come from the meeting in Guatemala, the OAS Special Session on Drugs, and I was quite amazed to see the level of uniformity. There wasn't consensus but there was a pretty clear uniformity that this is a health issue, we're not going to continue treating this as a criminal issue, and the war on drugs is not an effective way to really pursue this. We need to start looking at alternatives. I don't see a situation where Latin American reverts to the old policy of pursuing a war on drugs at all costs. So the current framework is just no longer politically sustainable. And so this is the idea that underpinned the report, is that if we can accept that the current framework is not going to continue how do we move towards making it more rational? How do we move towards making it more effective?

And so I think there were a few key points that came out of our report. And particularly I think Vanda's piece was particularly illuminating in highlighting how to -- if prohibition remains the default policy and this I think follows on from Jonathan Caulkins' paper where he highlights that look, a rational implementation of prohibition is very effective in raising pricing in consumer countries and we have to assume that's diminishing consumption, and then there's public health outcomes. So then it's about well how do we have a rational implementation of prohibition, and particularly from a producer and transit country perspective? And I think it is this idea of we drastically roll it back. It is about taking resources out of policy and military enforcement and directing them towards things that actually work. At the current level of academic understanding all we know is that prohibition raises prices. Marginal spend on prohibition has no effect

on prices and therefore has no proven effect on consumption. So every additional $10 we spend on military and police enforcement has no proven value. And so this is why we should be rolling that back; that this is not a continued case of states need to just cooperate more effectively or put more resources into fighting this, it is about actually rolling back from that paradigm. And then it's about shifting the global strategic focus. So it's not about we just need to all cooperate and put more effort into tackling supply or tackling money laundering, or tackling cartels, it is about shifting the global strategic focus to one based on public health, population security, and protecting human rights and institutions. Those are the core focuses, not how much quantities of drugs are reaching consumer countries, how many people have been arrested, how many people -- we want to focus on the murder rate, we want to bring down violence, but not how many capos have been knocked out, things like that. The Mexican case has shown that that's not effective in actually managing this issue.

And then I think thirdly we need to push ahead with regulatory experimentation. This is happening regardless. We're seeing it here in the U.S. Two states have legalized marijuana, Uruguay has legalized marijuana. I think you hear rumblings of other countries particularly in Caribbean starting to look at this idea. We will learn an awful lot from what happens with these regulatory experimentations. They will not be perfect but we will learn from them and they will build the evidence based around this issue and then we can extrapolate that and apply that to other drug issues.

So I think then to think about the multilateral framework then going forward in a coherent perspective is we had a one-size-fits-all model. In fact when the conventions were written there was a sense we know how to solve this issue, it is therefore a political will issue. We need to just crack down on supply, we need to crack

down on consumption, and then eventually we can shrink the markets until they're no longer a problem. That didn't work. And so instead of continuing to try to push for this one-size-fits-all model it's about moving what I think towards an idea of policy pluralism. Different things work for different areas at different times in different contexts and accepting that in the immediate future. And that's the only way you're going to get states cooperating on this issue going forward. I think a an example the discussions that are going on in Guatemala right now is that the government says under our current obligations we should go into the border regions and knock out everybody who is producing opium. There is no governmental capacity to do that. And what they recognize the actual end point of that policy is military conflict in that region. So there are discussions now about well maybe there's an effort to try and bring this under a regulated framework. We supply our own domestic pain medicine market through this illicit opium. And there's all sorts of questions and issues around that but I think we should push ahead and be thinking in those terms that different countries are going to try different things in these regard.

And so, you know, I've personally been someone who's quite critical of U.S. drug policy over the last decades at an international level, but I think the best elaboration in the short term for what an international framework could look like for drug policy at the UN and other institutions has been elaborated by Ambassador William Brownfield at the State Department. And he's come up with what I think you can call the Brownfield duck. It's that okay, we accept all of these things, that's there's all sorts of issues with drug policy and member states and there's no consensus on the way forward, but there is things that we can coalesce around a certain framework and he outlines four core tenants. And the first one is you defend the integrity of the conventions. That is

nothing to do with cannabis cultivation or coca leaves. When the conventions were written it was all about creating this illicit market around pain medicines. Cannabis and coca were so peripheral at that point in time that it was just kind of okay, we prohibit those also and that solves that issue. To think that member states are bound by that as we go forward now and that every aspect of the conventions has to be adhered to in the letter of its word is just -- it just doesn't make sense under the current political paradigm. And so this is where you get the second point. We allow flexible interpretations or reinterpretations of conventions based on science and evidence. You know, there's all sorts of concerns around well are we therefore allowing flexible interpretation around all conventions and human rights conventions? No, those are different matters altogether, but when we're talking about peripheral aspects of the drug conventions we have to allow certain sort of reinterpretations and flexible interpretations around that. And then it's about allowing -- as I was saying his third tenant is about allowing differentiated national and regional strategies because different things work in different regions. And then fourth, which I think everyone would agree on, we tackle organized crime. Now the key proviso there is how effectively do we attack organized crime? What metrics do we focus on? So it's not on quantity seized, it's on the levels of violence or something, it's on other metrics like that. What are the levels of political corruption, things like that?

So I'll close by saying I think far too much of the discussion at the moment centers around well what is technically permissible under, you know, the third clause of the 1961 single convention, what does that allow member states to do? I think we should not get bogged down in those kinds of discussions. The key at the moment is around building a strategic plan for drug policy at the international level. And it's around changing the narrative around that. And the conventions are documents that can be

made to work in those terms. They are not biblical text. They were written 50 years ago by people who didn't understand drug policy, didn't understand addiction. You know, I've read documents from the 1950s where you would literally delegates at CND saying we have zero evidence that we're basing our policy on. We have done no research on addiction but we're pushing ahead with this regardless. So the idea that these are biblical texts that prevent us doing better in this issue is just something I flatly reject. I think we have to reinterpret and reutilize the conventions to make them more suited to current situations. And then eventually when we change the political reality around drug policy we will need to reform these conventions, we will need to modernize these conventions. That has to happen. I think that actual process has already started, but we shouldn't look at them as a barrier.

So I think I'll leave it there and just pass on, but thank you for listening.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Good job. Jasmine?

MS. TYLER: So keeping with the theme of today's event called Shifting Strategies on Drug Policy, I usually would join John in being very critical of the U.S. government's drug policy, both domestically and internationally. But in putting my remarks together for this morning I really had to scratch my head and say, you know, I'm becoming pleasantly surprised by where drug policy is moving to in this day and age. I think the phrase that will sum it up for me in my remarks is there's really no better time than now. And what I mean by that is that right now when you hear about gridlock to D.C. and partisan politicians and the do-nothing Congress that really doesn't apply to drug policy reform, it really doesn't apply to criminal justice reform. Right now you see the U.S. Congress moving marijuana reform, moving sentencing reform, addressing overdose crises and taking on a better public health approach, you see the administration

really leading and trying to turn a corner as well. And I think that the public has been so sharp on these issues. You know, for years and years the public has really decried the continued punitive approach of the drug war not just because it costs tax payers so much money but because it really cost communities every day. The way communities are policed, the lack of services that are provided to communities. I mean communities are really hurting and so politicians, you know, usually are about five years behind, you know the public or so. And I think we've gotten to the point now where the politicians have caught up and drug policy reform is no longer, you know, the third rail issue. In fact it's almost the third rail if you're a politician and you're not talking about drug policy from whatever context you're interested in, whether it's just form the health context or just from the criminal justice context, or just from the marijuana context. So these are really new and exciting days for folks who are studying and working in this area. I think it's important to think too that these changes are not just happening at the Federal level. I mean in fact they really started in the states. Criminal justice policies, states have really felt the pinch at the end of the year when they're balancing their budget because of the cost of incarceration in their states. And so, you know, you have states from Oklahoma to Florida to Texas who have really reformed their use of the criminal justice system in terms of reducing the use of mandatory minimums which you know treat individuals the exact same regardless of any mitigating or aggravating factors in any cases that are present and restrict a judge from being able to determine an appropriate proportionment sentence. And the Federal government followed suit. The Fair Sentencing Act really was the first in a series of attempts to really change the way in which the Federal criminal justice system is used. We know now that half of all Federal prisoners are there for drug offenses and the cost of operating the Bureau of Prisons is really, really unmanageable.

It costs about a fourth and is on track to cost about a third of the DOJ budget just to run the Bureau of Prisons. And it really has larger national security implications and we're trying to think through how are Americans most -- able to be kept as safe as possible at home and abroad when we're spending all this money on warehousing individuals.

I think also when you look at the house who has largely been made to blame for the do-nothing Congress you see a very different approach to marijuana policy reform with two very recent votes, one to restrict the Department of Justice from undermining medical marijuana laws in states. Now there are 23 medical marijuana states and about 5 states who allow the use of CBD oil, so we're talking more than half of the states allowing some form of medical marijuana access and the House really stood up to support the states' rights to really implement their own policies. But also a subsequent vote about a month or two later in which the House voted to allow banking entities to accept money from marijuana businesses, legitimate marijuana businesses. And this is a huge change in policy. To date those businesses have had to operate as cash only businesses. Very, very unsafe practices for those folks engaged in the industry.

And then I will also say that when you look at the administration and you see the changes that are being made not only from the attorney general but also to the drugs czar's office you can't help but recognize that a new day has dawned, that a corner really has changed. The attorney general himself changing practices to make sure that the criminal justice system is used much more effectively. But also we have a new drug czar who is not a top cop. You know, that position has largely been occupied by military or law enforcement representatives. We are talking about a new bureaucrat who is a public health person, who dealt with the Massachusetts Public Health Department. And

Michael Botticelli has his own addiction issues and his own personal story and has really not just changed the rhetoric from the drug czar's office moving it away from a war on drugs and a war on people to really embracing what he means by a better public health approach. And you can look to the response from not just the drug czar's office but also Congress on the overdose crisis that, you know, is occurring right now. And we see that this idea that John is talking about, shifting from the punitive approach to really embracing these different strategies that offer -- what did you say, a policy pluralism? You know, that making better opportunities available for stakeholders to have to pick the tools from the toolbox is just getting us to a better, smarter approach to taking on this issue that really confronts all communities. You know, historically we've talked about black and brown communities and the scourge of drugs in the urban city, but today we're talking about, you know, the heroin crisis in rural and suburban America and so there's this recognition that the drug policy regime that we've been operating under for the last 40 years, 40+ years is really over and a new day has dawned.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Turning now to Vanda Felbab-Brown.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Good morning. My role in the report and indeed what I frequently work on is supply side policies and law enforcement issues. And what I did in the report was to think through the level of effectiveness so far and ways to improve them. And indeed I approached this very much with the core assumption that law enforcement is critical and will be necessary even in legal markets such as in the legal markets in marijuana in Colorado. Nor do I believe that it's a matter of taking money away from police or law enforcement. In some parts of the world it is in fact very important to strengthen the resources of law enforcement institutions, not just for dealing with those who violate rules including rules in legal markets. However the question is

arriving both at the optimal level of funding and at the optimal objective and strategies for an indispensable role in law enforcement in deal with drugs even as to context. Indeed is more and more looking at drugs as a public health issue, even so there will remain criminal aspects even in legal markets that law enforcement and security institutions will need to deal with because after all the drug trade is associated with terrorism, with insurgency, and with organized crime. And that's not simply a function of the fact that drugs have been illegal. We see equivalent problems, corruption, terrorism, insurgency, violence in markets such as with timber, legal commodity, in markets such as wildlife can be a legal commodity, in markets such as minerals. And indeed what is striking about drugs is the one area where the regime is moving toward less criminalization, appropriately so, but as all the other markets are moving toward great criminalization, greater setting of international norms that say that some of these commodities are legal only under some circumstances and others are illegal and when the push is in fact to strengthen law enforcement.

And they also said as a context, an important caveat, that while there is this major push from Latin America very much embraced in at least parts of Western Europe and increasing towards liberalization, toward a rejection of the implementation and perhaps the very regime in the way that existed, there is not equivalent push among some key state holders. Certainly Russia, China, and important countries in East Asia believe that the regime is not problematic and in fact that the regime needs to be strengthened. It's partially a factor or partially a function of the fact that they do not experience the same criminal violence rates that Latin America does. The volumes of illicit drugs flowing through East Asia are at least large as in Latin America yet the murder rates are essentially on par with Western Europe, around two to three per hundred

thousand. So very low numbers -- order of magnitude difference between Latin America.

Nonetheless my chapter focuses on what are the key problematic assumptions with the way supply side policies have been implemented, law enforcement policies have been implemented and how to improve them. Well, the first one that I want to highlight is the notion that forced premature eradication is the (inaudible) one or the starting approach for supply side policies, and that the way to limit funding for terrorist groups, the way to stop the supply is to eradicate, and that eradication needs to take place either simultaneously or press alternative livelihoods. This policy is ineffective. There is overwhelming evidenced to it and it's counterproductive both with the respect of political stability as well as ineffective with respect to decreasing funding to dangerous groups. And of course it has very negative implications on human security and human rights of often very marginalized populations dependent on the cultivation of dry crops.

The second key supply side assumption has been that the overarching goal is to limit volumes and to break up criminal organization. I would pose that particularly the goal of limiting volumes is extremely problematic and has been at the source of many ineffective aspects of the policies, as is the generate assumption that simple break up of criminal organizations means weakening their capacity for violence and their capacity for production. Again wrong assumption having produced many a bad policy across the world. And the third set of policies relates to alternative livelihoods both with the notion that alternative livelihoods can stop in the same way that eradication can stop drugs. It will not. But also the basic goal or the basic tactic of alternative livelihoods is to chase the replacement crop.

So what are alternatives that will be more effective at reducing the threat that drug trade, legal or illegal, either poses or can pose? And what kind of enforcement

objectives and enforcement strategies can we instead focus on? And let me say that there is no consensus at the international level or in fact even among experts on that. While there is very strong consensus with respect to use the appropriate change is toward public health approach, is toward access to medication, treatment, not criminalizing users. There is no equivalent consensus on how to deal with enforcement and how to deal with security, corruption, and other threats associated with the trade.

I would pose that a first important change is to make the goal to minimize the threat, minimize the political instability that drug trade and drug policies produce, to minimize violence associated with it. Again when it's greatly across region we want the drug market, legal or illegal, to be non violent as opposed to violent, to delink as much as possible this form of funding from terrorist groups, from dangerous militant groups, and to enhance human rights and human security of people involved in the drug trade as well as communities among which they exist. That's a very different goal than saying that the primary objective is to drive the volume down.

Second recommendation I make in the report is that we need to get away from eradication as being the default -- the primary tool, eradication of illicit drugs, and instead eradication should only be implemented when conflicts have ended and when alternative livelihoods are in fact producing alternative livelihoods, not when these policies are promised or where they are being implemented. That means that we're essentially talking about the reversal of sequencing. Instead of eradication being the first step eradication should only begin several years when we are actually seeing results of alternative livelihoods. It needs to be said, however, that there are parts of the world where no alternative livelihoods will work. And one of the very difficult policy dilemmas that the policy makers need to grapple with is what happens with those areas. Do we

simply allow cultivation or at least do we not do enforcement in cultivation in those areas? Can we think about how to move without coercion, without threats, people into other areas, or will there be these pockets where cultivation will simply not disappear? And the question is complicated even if we move toward legal markets because there is a very high chance if there is legal cultivation many people who are currently relying on the illicit crops for their basic human security will not be able to participate in the legal market. So we will again face the issue of how do we deal, how do we address their needs, their security.

Second recommendation is to move toward a very different interdiction posture where the goal is not -- or the primary tactic is not break up per se. The goal is to limit the threats, the violence, and the corruption capacity, and linkages to terrorist group of criminal organization. So that means prioritized targeting but very much thinks about if the arrest or kill this cop or what kind of violence repercussion, what kind of wars will it set off? Is the interdiction, is the arrest worth it? What is the most violent group that we want to target? What is the group among the set of organized crime that is most likely to cooperate with dangerous terrorists like Al Qaeda or ISIS?

Third, to think of socioeconomic policies of being an integral part of the approach with the goal of linking marginalized communities with the state and delinking them from organized crime groups. We want to get away from the situation where basic public goods, basic human security is dependent for large segments of population on criminals as opposed to provided by state. And that links again to when eradication kicks in or when that does not kick in. Now in the nuance methods not all socioeconomic policies are effective. Some are woefully ineffective. The report gets a little bit into details. We can talk about that in conversation.

And so lastly I want to highlight again that we will not get to a situation where we eliminate production or where we eliminate problems associated with production simply because production has become legal. Even in legal markets there is need for enforcement. What we want to do is to minimize the most dangerous threats and maximize the human security and human rights of population. Law enforcement will state it needs to get smart. What we want to get away is law enforcement domestically and internationally being the default, and particularly in the way that is counterproductive.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Thank you. Turning now to Daniel Mejia.

MR. MEJIA: Thank you, Howard, and thanks to the organizers, to Brookings, to OSF, and to the LSE IDEAS for inviting me to reflect on my contribution to the report which was basically an attempt to organize a current debate that is taking shape in Latin America around drug policy. If we look at the last five years we've seen the Latin American Commission Report, then the Global Commission Report, the OES Report, then the meeting in Guatemala. And all these meetings and reports and statements by not only former presidents but acting presidents are basically a reflection of the frustration of Latin American leaders with the current war on drugs.

So what I tried to do in my contribution to the report was to organize the question of why are we seeing this debate in Latin America and what explains the debate. And basically what I do, I'm going to try to be very schematic in my short time, is basically I build a small theory, a very simple theory to understand prohibition from a producer and transit country's perspective and then try to understand what was it that failed with the theory of prohibition that led Latin American leaders and acting presidents to ask for a change in drug policy.

So there are many theories that one can come up about prohibition, but

from a producer and transit country's perspective one can understand prohibition as a transfer of the cost of the so called drugs problem from consumer countries to producer and transit nations. Let me explain myself. If we have complete legalization of drugs most of the costs of the drug problem would be paid by consumer countries through their health system, through productivity losses, et cetera. With prohibition on the other end of the spectrum we see basically that through the conventions, through the U.S. certification process, consumer countries end up pushing producing and transit nations to restrict to attack the supply of drugs by implementing plans such as Plan Colombia, the Merida Initiative, et cetera, to basically reduce the supply of drugs so that makes the price of drugs reaching consumer countries higher and ends up reducing the costs that consumer countries have to pay for the drug problem. So if we understand the theory of prohibition in that way it shouldn't be a surprise that many consumer countries end up funding plans such as Plan Colombia, the Merida Initiative, and this is basically -- it's about some countries compensating others for having transferred part of the cast that they would have to pay in their region. So that's a basic, simple theory of prohibition again from a producer and transit country's nation. A transfer of the cost with some partial funding to implement the strategies that needs to be implemented to fight the supply of drugs.

So what was it that failed with that so called theory of prohibition that led Latin American leaders and Latin American presidents to ask for a change? So the theory in my view rested on many assumptions but on three main assumptions. One was a high effectiveness of supply reduction efforts. A second assumption was a low cost for implementing these policies. So the supply reduction programs. And the third pillar of the theory of prohibition was a sustained willingness of producer and transit nations to continue doing this and receive funding to do it, okay. So let me go one by one of this

assumption.

So the first assumption was the assumption that if sufficiently large amount of resources were invested in supply reduction efforts, producer and transit countries were going to be able to actually restrict and significantly reduced the amount of drugs reaching consumer countries. If we go into the details of these supply reduction efforts that have been implemented in the region we see that most if not all the important evaluations that have been done around aerial spraying programs, manual eradication, even alternative development products, they all reach the same conclusion which is they have tended to be extremely ineffective in reducing the amount of drugs reaching consumer countries. The most relevant case under this assumption is Plan Colombia. This is a joint effort all of, you know, between the Colombian government and the U.S. government where about $1.2 billion have been invested in supply reduction efforts each year. This is 1.1 percent of Colombia's GDP. This is the largest supply reduction program ever implemented in a producer country. Just to give you a sense of the size of this program Familias en Accion, which is the largest cash transfer program in Colombia, the largest social program in Colombia, owned four percent of GDP. And the military component of Plan Colombia is 1.1 percent of GDP, about three times larger, the military component of Plan Colombia compared to the largest social product. Most of the evaluations that we have say that aerial spraying has been extremely ineffective, has produced a huge amount of collateral damage in terms of health, in terms of environment, in terms of trusting in the institutions of the state, and hasn't been effective in reducing the supply of drugs. Basically what we have found in the most conservative evaluation of the spraying program is that for each hectare sprayed with a glyphosate the amount of coca crops is reduced by .04 hectares. In other words that means in order to

destroy one hectare of land with coca crops you have to spray 32 hectares. It's quite ineffective. And the cost of reducing by one hectare the amount of coca plantations is $57,000. That's a huge cost to reduce the supply of drugs.

The other attempts to reduce the supplies interdiction, that is going after the drug shipments and after the labs that are used to process coca leaf into cocaine and basically that has been more effective, but the few success stories, which is the Colombian story after 2008, that we've seen and that reducing the amount of trafficking in Colombia, but just displaced the problem somewhere else. After 2008 we saw again an increase in coca cultivation in Peru and Bolivia. The basis of operation of drug cartels moved to Central America and Mexico and basically in a recent study that we did we find that the successful interdiction policies in Colombia after 2008 are able to explain between 20 and 40 percent of the increase in violence in Mexico. That's a ballooning effect at work, okay. So that's the first assumption of the theory which is a high effectiveness of supply reduction efforts and reducing the amount of drugs reaching consumer countries. And that has failed to be true.

The second assumption was that producer and transit countries, the cost of producer and transit counties in implementing these supply reduction efforts was not going to be too high. And the most emblematic cases are Colombia and Mexico. Let me refer to the case of Mexico. After President Calderon took office basically the homicide rate in Mexico tripled in just a period of three years, from 8 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants to more than 24. So this is a huge cost that producer and transit countries have had to pay in order to reduce the supply of drugs. The same is the case for Colombia in the fight against the managing cartel and for other countries in the region. Not to talk about corruption and other things that are harder to measure, institutionalized

stability, corrupt politicians, et cetera.

And the third pillar or assumption of the theory of prohibition that filed to be true was a continued willingness of producer and transit nations to do these supply reduction programs in exchange for $500 million per year. And what we've seen in the region is that Mexico has taken the lead in saying we don't accept this foreign aid. Colombia has started a process of nationalization of these programs to have more policy, more independence on policy, space to implement programs that actually don't go after the flows as Vanda said, but going after violence, with the aim of reducing violence. And I think the U.S. -- at least the U.S. embassy in Colombia is starting to realize that the main policy goal in the future should be to reduce violence, even if that comes at the cost of not reducing the flows.

So these are the three assumptions that failed to be true in that what I call a simple theory of prohibition in the chapter that I wrote for the LSE report. And if we take part of that theory of prohibition to be helpful in explaining the current debate in Latin America we can understand the recent claims by Latin American President, former presidents, leaders, as a desperate plea to consumer countries to start carrying their own borders, fighting their own wars.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Thank you very much, Daniel, for the very interesting remarks. We're going to turn now some opportunity for questions and answers, but I think I'll take the moderator's privilege and lead off with the initial question. I found it very interesting the discussion I picked up on by several of the panelists on increasing pluralism when it comes to approaches, strategies, for dealing with drug policy. And it strikes me that -- we also heard about the way that harms and costs borne by countries and societies are highly differentiated around the globe from Latin America where the

cost of producing transit countries have been quite high, as the examples that Daniel just gave, to as Vanda pointed out East Asia where at least in terms of violence the harms and costs are much more under control. I'd just ask maybe starting with John, but whoever wants to play with this question, to reflect how this might affect approaches to drug policy pluralism and whether there's still enough of a core among the different countries that leads us to still be able to talk about a global drug policy, or is there enough pluralism and enough differentiation of harms and costs that inevitably you're going to see some fragmentation of the (audio skips)?

MR. COLLINS: Well, I think the future shape of what the regime has to become is a forum for dissemination of evidenced, research, understanding. What we had was a forum for a few very single minded states to push a specific view of drug policy, to push a specific way of approaching this issue which was rooted in prohibition. And so what we need to see is the UN framework and then other multilateral institutions become framework where states get together and discuss best practice, best evidence on this issue with a much greater understanding that we don't have a single one-size-fits-all solution. You know, in Latin America I think part of the key is now shifting as Vanda was saying away from this idea of supply reduction and focusing on quantities towards institution building. Like fit drug policy into regular developmental processes, make illicit drug markets part of all other illicit markets, not something that needs to be securitized and seen in terms of we are going to get to an end point where we've significantly shrunk or eradicated these markets. It's about managing the markets, it's about minimizing the harms of the markets. So I think there is a role for the UN in newer forms. I think it's just very different from it has traditionally been which has, to be frank, been quite a bullying institution to states in the past. And I know we have a member of the International

Narcotics Control Board in the audience, but I think this is also a body which traditionally has seen its role as going around the world and telling states how to do drug policy, and there is one approach to drug policy. It is instituting supply restrictions; it is instituting repressive policies, and in fact even pushing back against health approaches because they were seen as encouraging drug use. So I think it's rolling back from that perspective and moving to a perspective of we don't have a single solution but let's work together to try to find better approaches at different levels.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Yes, I think that the most fundamental question facing today drug policy is what is the need and the appropriateness of insisting on uniformity of a regime which was as much the core underlying assumption as was prohibition. And of course this question very much coming to a head with the UN Special Assembly on Drugs in 2016 where if uniformity is the definition then the session will be very challenged in my view.

Now there are difficulties with moving toward a regime where policies are very individualized. And although that might be highly appropriate and indeed the very necessary reform to increase effectiveness of minimizing threat and minimizing harms it will be produce spillover effects. Now the flip side of course is that the current policy also produces very dangerous, very negative spillover effects as Daniel mentioned. The real issue is the one that Harold pointed out that the spread of costs and the spread of harms is highly context dependent and highly different, not just across categories that are breaking down anyway such as producing and consumption countries, Brazil and Argentina now likely have consumption on par with the United States, but also across regions that through a cultural and institutional context greatly influences the effectiveness of policies. And that has implications for spillover effects.

I would also like to take this opportunity to mention that this is indeed the thinking context specificity institutional cultural settings of a drug project that Brookings is undertaking that Harold and I are the Co-Directors, Daniel is one of the members. So please watch our website for events, for papers that we have commissioned that we will be unrolling that look at what reforms should take place in what specific regions if we in fact move away from the policy that one supposedly fit all and it really doesn't, what are the implications, what specific changes should place, and what are the implications for the regimes and for the international management of the drug market.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Thank you, Vanda, for pointing that out. I think that one of the interesting aspects of the increasing pluralism, the increasing debate about the global drug policy regime, something that is a focus of our future project is precisely how different countries, different institutional settings, different contacts address the different kinds of harms and costs that are imposed by the problem of production, trafficking, and consumption. Though please keep an eye on your emails. We'll be sending out further information about this project as it develops.

Now I'd like to take a chance to take some questions. I have one here, one there, one in the -- I have about four or five questions so far so let me take a list and I'll go back and forth between the two sides. We have a microphone we'd like you to use and also if you could just briefly identify yourself and your affiliation if you have one before starting you question. I think we'll start over here.

MR. THOUMI: Thank you. Since John referred to me I guess I should make a few comments. John, when I wrote my first paper criticizing drug policies 28 year ago, before any one of you were at school, okay. And I'm a member of the --

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Francisco Thoumi, currently of the International

Narcotics Control Board.

MR. THOUMI: Okay. As we say in Spanish, the Board I'm (speaking Spanish), okay, the fly in the milk glass. Now, John, I agree with the position that we have to have pluralism in policies and I have said that for many, many years, however I do differ with some of the interpretations that we have here in the panel. John argues that we have to have policies based on evidence and science. That's correct, that's a goal, except that that is impossible because there is no agreement on what is evidence and science. And the epistemology of medicine of raw economics, biology, and so on it's different. And what I find for example within the Board is that the physicians who work with drug addicts they want evidence and science and it's their evidence and science. In the case that you suggest, I mean what you argue is that drug policies have been an absolute failure on its own merits. I disagree with that. You have never proved that other factors that have affected Latin American and American society in the last 40 years by globalization of the discrimination that has taken place in many of the countries. In Colombia for example there was no land reform, people were frustrated. There's also the problem of governability. And with globalizations that have become increasingly important. So I agree with you that the drug issue has not declined in importance, but you have never prove is that the counter factual that without foreign policies things would have not been worse. And that is the counter factual argument that has to be argued.

I mean Daniel knows my arguments very well in the past. And I agree with him on the need to change policies, but when we focus on violence in both Mexico and Colombia for example -- well, I can only say that drugs were very good for them until violence increased. Colombians welcome the illegal drug industry. Mexico had the illegal drug industry for over 110 years now. And they became a big problem only when

violence rose in Colombia because of the confrontation between the drug traffickers and the state due to the extradition; in Mexico because of the lack of control on organized crime that pre had exerted for 70 or so years. So many ways -- I mean the difference I have with Daniel is that I would argue that drugs are a trigger that increase and magnified many of the social problems in societies that were very vulnerable and that because of globalization factors became a lot more vulnerable. If we focus on eliminating violence, I mean one of the solutions for Mexico would be to go back to the pre in which organized crime was very much a franchise of the state and I don't think that we agreed with that. I mean in the case of Medellin, in your city, Daniel, it was clear for example that Don Berna was a significant factor in the decline of Medellin. And when Don Berna was extradited in 2009 violence went up again. So in other words, unless we focus on the structural factors of the societies that make them vulnerable we are not going to solve the problem. And this is why Vanda emphasizes the socioeconomic aspects that are needed. But without substantial reforms both in Latin America and also in the United States -- by the way I'm a Colombian-American -- we are not going to solve the problem. We might lower some of the negative effects, but we will just continue with this problem of drugs, organized crime and corruption and so on. Thanks.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Thank you. Shall we take around of maybe two or three questions and then come back to the panel and let panelists? So why don't we do that? I think we have a gentleman in the fourth row, back on the left hand side of the.

MR. WOOLDRIDGE: Howard Wooldridge, co-founder of LEAP, Law Enforcement Against Prohibition. My question concerns prohibition. My question concerns funding for terrorists around the world. The last I read from the United Nations in 1994 the number one source of money for terrorists around the world was the sale of

illicit drugs. Eight years ago the Army War College Report came out saying that approximately to 60 to 70 percent of the Al Qaeda, Taliban operating budget was provided by the trafficking in hashish and heroin. My question is, is there any reports or research being done currently that would say that the '94 report is still correct, it's the number one sourced of funding, or is anyone doing research like that to show the world? Because as we see today in Europe, Germany, UK -- still the UK -- that they're concerned about terrorists coming back from the Middle East and causing havoc. And of course they do need some money and the question is that -- so there's more concern about this. So do you have any information about funding for terrorists?

MR. TRINKUNAS: Let's take one more from the right hand side of the room; and I think there was a question right here. Come back to the panel.

MS. O'DONNELL: Hi, I'm Glenda O'Donnell. My affiliation is with the University of Oxford. My question is based around John's discussion of how the narrative around drug policy is shifting and what constitutes success seems to be shifting. So I'm interested to know from the panel how we're starting to think about what constitutes success as we move ahead. How do you measure success in drug policy as we shift away from interdiction and scale?

MR. TRINKUNAS: Thank you. So let's come back to the panel before we take in a few more questions. Anybody who'd like (audio skips) wants to jump on one of those first.

MR. COLLINS: Well, if could address the counterfactual question because I think it is key. I come at this -- I'm a historian first and foremost. I look at the history of the international system. And if you look at the collapse of the monopoly system in the 1930s, as you move towards the kind of singular prohibitionist framework, it

was a simplistic solution to a very complex problem. And if you look at the goals that they elaborate it's that you had colonial administrations like the British saying look, if we prohibit opium smoking people switch to heroin. If we prohibit this we're going to get the rise of criminal gangs who will challenge our administration. We can't go into the foothills of Burma and eradicate crops there because we have no governance. Everything they said actually played out as the decades progressed, as we moved towards a prohibitionist model. So then the question is okay, they may have decreased the quantity of opium consumption over a multi decade period, but was that worth an increase in the homicide rate and the increase in the corruption of political institutions? So as Harold and Vanda pointed out Asia has a far less of a violence issue. That's because the illicit trade in my opinion grew up in tandem with the modern political institutions in Asia so they were integrated far more effectively than in Mexico, and then they never actually tried to decapitate them as Latin America did. So I think the counterfactual is an important question, but it is a case of would global consequences be worse if more people were -- you know, if we had a much larger opium smoking population, part of which would be problematic, or if we were witnessing wholesale corruption and political destabilization in Afghanistan and Latin America? And I think on cost benefit analysis the conclusion that states are coming to is it's not worth the cost. So I think the counterfactual is important. You can never prove the counterfactual but it's important to keep in mind. But I think on its own premises, when you look at what the system at it's very start when they said this is what our goal is, this is what we're going to achieve, it didn't work.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Let me -- sorry, did you want to go next?

MS. TYLER: No. Go ahead and I'll jump back in.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Well, let me pick up on several of the points. One of the reasons why there is such big difference in violence and the repercussions of drug trade and drug policy between Latin America and East Asia is indeed the strength of the state as well as the reality that in many Southeast Asian countries the state maintains a hold control, enough ropes on manipulating organized crime for its political purposes in a way that is analogous to the pre in Mexico. And so the big question is will that collapse really change? In some ways it collapsed in markets such as mining minerals, timber, and wild life. The state controlled organized crime has either collapsed or the state is fully complicit because it doesn't -- is not interested really in significantly enforcing the definition between legal and proper on these commodities. I would however not say that there is no decapitation policy in East Asia. There is tremendous amount of interdiction that is decapitation, that is very punitive sentencing, very harsh, very inappropriate sentencing toward users, arguably also very much toward low level dealers. And there is a whole history of very brutal policies of eradication be it in China, be it in Burma. So there is much reform that needs to take place in East Asia, but it's not because they adopted necessarily fundamentally different policies, but they have different outcomes.

On the issue of narco peace, that Francisco brought up without using the term, namely that while the goal might be to reduce violence the key goal is the appropriate mechanism of having this bargain where the state essentially allows all controls of the criminal groups. And that's fundamental. It also applies to East Asia and the way that I just highlighted. And I think what's absolutely critical is that the criminal groups can never be given license to do essentially what they want. The state needs to be strengthened. The preponderance of law enforcement, the deterrence capacity needs to lie with the state. Then the state can make discretion about who may interdict at what

point, whether we do high volume interdiction or mid level interdiction, but the state has the authority and has the deterrent capacity. Enhanced law enforcement is critical.

There is vast evidence, and in fact very many cases where militant groups, not just terrorist groups, but many militant groups participate in drug trade, whether it's in Colombia, the paramilitaries, debondus criminalists today which are sort of -- the Colombian government say they're not political actors but they really are political actors. The FARC obviously. In Afghanistan the Taliban derives probably 40 to 50 percent of its financing from drug trade. Al Qaeda really doesn't. But ISIS is clearly participating in drug trade, (speaking foreign language). Historically that's the case. The question is what does this mean then and what do we do in terms of policies? And the critical thing to understand is that militant groups by and large take anything and in areas where they operate. They become fairly indiscriminatory. Now the Taliban takes his sheep herds in northern Afghanistan where cultivation is not taking place in the same way that they tax drug trade through the north. They simply take anything that's available. The big issue is should we treat drugs normatively different than Shabaab's participation in ivory trafficking for example? And what other policies that we adopt? Is it one of repression? And in fact in a lot of my work I have argued that the goal that you repress the illicit economy means that you bankrupt the militant group is fundamentally flawed and by and large does not pan out. The group has to be defeated through military purposes. But the notion that it will be weakened because we take the money away from them by and large never pans out anyway and comes with very counterproductive costs of alienating populations that participate in the drug trade and depriving oneself of intelligence.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Jasmine?

MS. TYLER: You know, I'll just respond very quickly and say I don't think that -- or at least I'm not naïve to think that without drug policy, the punitive regime for the last 40 years, that African-Americans would be better off. I mean drug policy, the drug war did not start race problems in the U.S. obviously but it certainly exacerbated them and built on a long lasting legacy. And so for me getting to your question around what are success measures, for me it seemed less black and brown locked up in cages. And I think to look toward Portugal for what their success models look like help us sort of shift our thinking in what a public health response is because, you know, almost 15 years ago Portugal as we all probably know decriminalized possession of all drugs up to a 10 day supply and has had some significant success since then in dealing with the issue of drug use and addiction in their society. Before then their prisons were overrun, overdose rates were high, HIV infection rates were high, and almost no one was getting treatment. Now that's totally different. There's greater access to treatment now because of a shift in resources which is extremely necessary and should happen also in the U.S. context, but, you know, even HIV rates and overdose rates have decreased because of the health focus. And law enforcement says that they are much better equipped to deal with everyday users and possessors and also have seen an increase in the quality of their drug seizures. And so they're really going after those big fish, not just purporting to be going after those big fish. And I think if we're looking at the U.S. context and we're trying to shift and see what are our success measures -- because I did say, you know, obviously U.S. drug policy on the up, but I don't want to paint too rosy of a picture, there's a lot more that needs to be done. And I think one is ending Federal funding streams that promote collars for dollars, you know, more money for more arrests that really aren't netting us anything in terms of public safety or public health outcomes.

So, you know, success means, you know, reducing rates of incarceration, especially the disproportionate incarceration of minorities, but also bringing down the overdose and Hepatitis C and HIV infection rates. It's just got to -- a health approach has to be, you know, taken full on.

MR. TRINKUNAS: (off mic).

MR. MEJIA: Yes, thank you. So let me take on Francisco's -- two of the points raised by Francisco. First of all we agree more than we disagree. And so 50 years ago when the conventions were put in place no one asked the counterfactual question. And I agree that the burden of the proof is still on those of us who think that we have to change things. I fully agree with this. But this has been slowly changing in a sense. That as more evidence comes of the high costs of the current prohibitionist regime I think the burden of the proof is starting to change to the point where we see for instance the aerial spraying program in Colombia where we have 10 or 12 impact evaluations of the program on its effectiveness, it's cost, et cetera, the burden of the proof now is on the government and on the U.S. Embassy to prove that aerial spraying is effective and doesn't create problems. So in a sense saying that drug policy is a failure I think is the wrong question. What we have to evaluate is programs. This program is a failure, this program is a success, this program is a failure. So I think we've been advancing in evaluating each program. And on the point on the structural factors, I fully agree with you that governments, especially the Colombian government, the Mexican government, all governments in Central America should focus on the structural factors, inequality, social exclusion, poverty. And I think that's a main reason behind the high levels of violence in Latin America. But that's going to take decades and generations to change and we cannot wait to start taking action for solving the structural problems. So

we have to start with smaller things such as changing for instance going after the flows of drugs. And that's going to help a little bit in reducing the levels of violence. Our estimates for instance suggest that 25 percent of the current homicide rate in Colombia is explained by drug trafficking and the war on drugs. That's up 70 percent, it's 25 percent; but if we manage to decrease the homicide rate in Colombia from 32 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants to 24 that's going to be a huge change. We're not going to drive it down to five but we might drive it down by 25 or 30 percent if we slightly start changing drug policies.

And on your point, Howard, as Vanda said there are efforts in Mexico and in Colombia. In Mexico Alejandro Opper recently, last year, wrote a report quantifying the amount of funding that different cartels get out of drug trafficking and he reaches a number. In Colombia we've done the same thing and our estimate suggests that criminal groups get about 2.3 percent of GDP from drug trafficking. Whether that's the total income they get we don't know because they also do extortion, illegal gold mining, kidnappings, but without having any specific calculation I would say that for the case of Colombia and Mexico between 60 and 70 percent of the income that these criminal organizations get is from drug trafficking. But I don't have a basis to say this is the exactly correct number.

MR. TRINKUNAS: We'll take another round of questions. I believe we had one here in the front row.

MR. KENNEDY: Yes, I'm Richard Kennedy. I'm a retired CIA Economic Analyst where I worked mainly on Europe. I would note in passing that the U.S. right now has more people in jail for drug crimes than all of Western Europe has in jail for any reason which I think is a very troubling fact. I got interested in drug policy in grad school

about 40-some years ago when a lot of high level studies were arguing for moving away from the prohibitionist model, Wootton Report in the UK, the National Commission here. And since then I pay attention to what other economists are writing. To my knowledge every economist who's written about drug policy since Milton Friedman in 1972 has also argued for moving away from the prohibition model, especially for marijuana. I'm just wondering if there's any exception -- either of you economists know of any exception to that rule, any economist that's written in recent years in support of current drug policy?

MR. BORDEN: Hi, I'm David Borden with StopTheDrugWar.org and the *Drug War Chronicle* newsletter. My question relates to Dr. Mejia's model of the transference of cost from producing and transit countries away from consumer countries, but is for any panelist. In Jonathan Caulkins' contribution to the LSE Report he noted that prohibition increases the harmfulness of drug consumption. He put it as an increase of the average harm per unit drug use. Though he didn't use this language one could also think of that as transference of cost from drug users who stop onto those who continue despite the prohibition. So my question is even though we have transference of cost in one way toward source countries might we be simply increasing costs on ourselves through the increased public health harms, other types of harms that result to users which would happen to some extent under any form of prohibition, even a better one than we have now as well as our own internal transit and distribution costs?

MR. TRINKUNAS: Desmond Barrius in the back and then we have the gentleman in the striped tie in the middle. We'll take those two more quick questions and I think then we'll have a lightening round of comments.

MR. BARRIUS: Well, I really enjoyed the presentations, I really appreciated the trans regional or cross regional perspective and particularly Vanda's

contributions about not overestimating the effects of decriminalization and the change in the drug regime in terms of its effects on arms groups.

What I'd like to pose to you is what I think is the big question here which is there's a lot -- there's been a big move in terms of marijuana, right, in a couple of states in the U.S. in Uruguay, but it seems that the core question, right, where there really isn't any consensus and we're quite far from consensus, but where the money really is, is ultimately a change in the regime around cocaine production and trafficking and also opium production and trafficking where there are really big public health issues that come to floor in actually dealing with them. And I was wondering if the panel could comment on some of the mechanics that are involved and I think dealing with what is ultimately this much bigger issue down the line of the transformation of the cocaine markets and the opium markets rather than what we've been experimenting with in baby steps which is the marijuana markets. Thank you very much.

MR. TRINKUNAS: I think -- oh, it's a couple of more rows forward. That's all we'll have time for.

SPEAKER: Hi, my name is Alex; I have no particular affiliation so I guess I can say whatever I want. My question is based on Vanda's point that was just touched on which is that a lot of these armed groups needs to be engaged and destroyed militarily rather than cutting off their source of funding. My question is I guess a specific iteration of that which is when we look at a lot of these armed groups I guess the biggest dolphin is Mexico. They're generally nihilistic. I mean Los Zetas started as a group of assassins more than actual drug dealers. What do we expect to see happen if we have this unprecedented political momentum where we can kind of immaculately create a regulated market? What are they going to do, how are they going to respond when

they're prodded or when their sources of funding are taken away? What are they going to move to?

MR. TRINKUNAS: Thank you. Maybe we can just go down the panelists for some last quick reactions; if you could just keep your comments to about a minute each. That's about how much time we have left. John?

MR. COLLINS: I think I might pick up on the idea of modality towards reducing the harms to the cocaine and heroin markets. And I think it's the idea of shifting toward a grain market. It's that -- I don't want to be taken as saying that we should cut funding to law enforcement, what I mean is we should reprioritize resources. The resources should not be going towards incentivizing seizures and interdiction in the drug market. And it should be about -- we need to find a way of incentivizing -- pushing the drug market out of the mainstream, out of as much interaction with the population as possible. And I think that leads us to a conclusion that if that involves planes flying over head with cocaine, that's preferable to cocaine traveling over land because then it interacts with more political figures and more populations become involved in trade. And this is interacting with a lot of the research that's going on. I think Peter Reuter is doing a lot of this about what is the marginal benefit of enforcement spent, and his conclusion so far is that it's zero, that there is no marginal benefit to enforcement spent. When you prohibit a substance you raise the prices drastically. As Jonathan Caulkins has put it you can't send a kilo of cocaine via DHL from Colombia to America, but any additional spent on that it doesn't seem to have any effect on it. So it is about stopping the level of enforcement and bringing it down to a grain market and trying to take out the levels of violence. I think that's the way we need to be moving and towards that.

MS. TYLER: I think I'll take the question differently and apply it to the

public health model that we're all trying to embrace and move closer towards. And I think I'll say two things. One is there have been huge successes with the use of replacement therapy for opiates and even heroin assisted treatment in some countries directly by itself. And so I think we need to look more at the science and see what benefits can be used by expanding various modalities of treatment including replacement therapy or heroin assisted therapy when it comes to opiates. I think when it comes to cocaine though in the public health realm we are a little bit behind the eight ball because we don't have the same replacement therapy medications available that we do when it comes to opiates. And so we really need a lot more research on stimulant replacement therapy so that we can think through what it looks like to provide that as a modality of treatment, you know, as we're moving forward.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Let me start with the question of armed groups. So I would not actually use the term for the Mexican criminal groups. By armed groups I mean essentially insurgent and terrorist groups which is how one or two -- that doesn't imply however that we should not -- and we don't have to deal with both militants and with armed groups. So I think there is a quite fundamental difference into whether one suppresses or whether one manages and shapes behavior of terrorist and militant groups as opposed to criminal groups. Where in the case of armed groups such as militants and terrorist, the issue is to move to as much as of their weakening, their defeat as is possible and not in all cases will be possible. Just watch what's happening with ISIS and what the definition of success, evolving definition of success, shifting definition of success is. I would also very much highlight that there is a fundamental difference in criminal market in transactional crimes such as drug trafficking and in criminal market in predatory crimes such as murders and robberies and extortion. Where in predatory crimes the onus, the

key goal for law enforcement is very much to reduce incident, but as I would make the argument that in criminal market with transactional crimes in none of the treatable resources the goal should be management toward these threats and harms. I would not make that argument about something like wild life trafficking. Like I worry we simply cannot say all we do is to manage the market because in 10 years we will not have elephants. Clearly reducing incident in that kind of market in the highly depletable resource is as important as minimizing the threats. And minimizing the threat then is the goal with very difficult markets like cocaine, heroin, and meth where the public health costs abuse are much greater than in the case of marijuana. So you're absolutely right this one, that marijuana is the easy one from public health perspective and is also far easier with respect to the money associated. We don't really know what criminal groups will do if marijuana market becomes legal, I would however posit that many a criminal group will say okay, it was a good run, let's pack up and retire to a beach in the Caribbean, and that they will instead look how can we penetrate the legal market, what are the vulnerabilities in law enforcement, rule of law, how can we dominate, often through very brutal means, the legal market. And do we switch into predatory crime with a huge cost to society such as extortion for example. And obviously that's not a desirable outcome of policy either. That needs to be suppressed and limited.

MR. MEJIA: So let me pick on your question about the prohibition making more harmful the consumption of drugs. And this is completely true. I mean if you read carefully John's chapter you get this idea and let me give you example of this. One of the things that cocaine producers in Colombia use to deliver cocaine is something called Levamisole which is called which is a purging agent for cattle and that destroys the liver. The question is, are we taking into account when count the costs of changing

prohibition the fact that when cocaine is in the hands of the government or controlled private producers they're going to be diluting the cocaine with these things? I don't think we are doing that. The same thing for overdoses with heroin. Many of the reasons why there are people dying for overdose with heroin is the lack of information about the purity of heroin. If we have more information on this maybe we will have a lot less people dying from overdose.

And let me finish with one thing. I think with the conventions we got into the Stockholm syndrome. I think that's how it's called when captives fall in love with their captors. And we think that the only treaties that countries have signed are the conventions and we forget the fact that above the drug conventions are the human right treaties. And if drug policy is implemented under the force of the conventions, but you say they are in --

MR. TRINKUNAS: Conflict.

MR. MEJIA: -- conflict with the human right treaties, the human right treaties are above the drug conventions. And that's a reason, that's they're argument that Uruguay is using to claim we have to change it because we are violating human rights, basic human rights.

MR. TRINKUNAS: Well, thank you everybody for joining us today. I think we achieved our goal of looking at the global counter narcotics regime and looking at some of the critiques and suggestions for change and suggestions for shifts in strategies going forward. But we also thanks to our panelists and the great questions from the audience raised some questions about what the consequences of changing, shifting (audio skips) might be. And that's the goal of this ongoing conversation which we hope to continue in the next year or two. But we really appreciate our colleagues who

joined us here today from LSE and the Open Society Foundation, the Universidad Colombia, and thank you, Vanda, for helping bring us all together.

Thank you all. (Applause)

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