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CRIME, CONFLICT, AND REGIME TRANSITIONS: COLOMBIA, NIGERIA, AND MYANMAR

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. PICCONE: Good morning. Can people hear me? Are we on?

SPEAKER: They said you are.

MR. PICCONE: Okay, good. Hi, I'm Ted Piccone. I'm a senior fellow with the Foreign Policy program here at Brookings and our Latin American Initiative. Good morning. Thanks for coming here. We have a very rich conversation this morning on a topic that's remarkably complex. What's so exciting about today's event is we're going to hear from experts who worked for many years and looked deeply at the questions of this intersection between conflict, crime, illicit economies in different settings, post conflict, and in regime transition situations. And we're going to hear specifically about countries including Nigeria, Colombia, and Myanmar.

So let me introduce our speakers and the order that they're going to speak, and then we'll have a little bit of a conversation upon the stage, and then we'll open it up to questions and answers to all of you.

We're going to start with John de Boer, who is the managing director at SecDev Group in Ottawa and has been managing the project for the United Nations University Center for Policy Research. This group and others have done series of case studies with policy recommendations, and that's going to be the main focus of today's discussion. The project is called "The Crime-Conflict Nexus: Assessing the Threat and Developing Solutions." John has been with this group for some time, he's also been involved in various efforts focused on these issues, leading the government of Canada's development efforts on issues of anti corruption and democratic governance, teaching on these topics at Stanford and Berkeley, and publishing widely through various outlets, advising as an expert the International Federation of Red Cross, the OECD, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, the list on and on. So we welcome John, who's going to give a quick overview of the project and then speak specifically about Colombia.

We'll then hear from Sasha Jesperson. Sasha is the director of the Center for the Study of Modern Slavery at St. Mary's University Twickenham in England. She's done work for years before that on human rights and Amnesty International and research on organized crime at the Royal United Services Institute. So we'll hear from Sasha on the case of Nigeria and Boko Haram.

Then we will ask Vanda Felbab-Brown, who has pulled all of this together, senior fellow

with our Latin American initiative and our Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence at the Foreign Policy program. Vanda has been leading our work on among other things UN drug policy and on what we call reconstituting local orders, the variety of local authorities, both licit and illicit, in different countries around the world. Her field research has covered every region of the world, from the jungles of Indonesia to pirate groups in Somalia and drug cartels in Colombia and Mexico. And she has written various books that are either published by Brookings or will be coming out in the coming year on Mexico's cartels, on the wildlife trafficking issues, et cetera.

So, with no further ado, I will turn to John for his opening comments.

MR. DE BOAR: Great. Thanks very much, Ted. And really it's a pleasure to be here. Thank you also to Vanda for making this happen. I also want to publicly thank the U.K.'s Department of International Development which funded this study. In fact, Ian King, who is in the audience here, was instrumental in helping to make that happen.

The study, as Ted mentioned, is actually quite a wide ranging ambitious study that brought together what I like to call the dream team of researchers on organized crime, Vanda, Sasha, but also Mark Shaw, Tuesday Reitano from the Global Initiative on Transnational Organized Crime, James Cockayne, who heads UNU's Office in New York as well. So it was really a multi effort. We also have Louise Bosetti, who is my colleague in Japan.

What we tried to do was to assess the impact of organized crime in basically three contexts. As Ted mentioned, one was their impact on conflict dynamics, how do they exacerbate, you know, intensify, elongate conflicts. Also, looking at it in the context of peacemaking. What's their impact on peace negotiations, how do you deal not just with criminal groups but armed groups that are heavily engaged in this economies, how do you structure negotiations, what are the kinds of inducement strategies that work. And then the third context was in regime change or political transitions. How do you structure external interventions in particular to help rupture political criminal alliances in that strategic period when there is a window of opportunity to break those relationships.

And we tested this out. We undertook a series of case studies to ground our research. In the first instance, looking at the impact of global illicit flows on conflict dynamics in Libya, in Nigeria -- you'll hear about Nigeria today. In the case of the impact of criminal agendas and peace negotiations we

looked at Colombia, but we also looked at El Salvador, nontraditional peace negotiations, for instance, that are commonly referred to as gang truces. What are the lessons we can learn from there?

And then, finally, in terms of the impact of political criminal alliances on regimes change, on political transitions, Afghanistan and Myanmar. And Vanda will speak to that today.

You know, all of the instances, the lessons that are learned, are very particular. It's very difficult to draw generalized kind of lessons across the range of geographies that we studied, across the lessons. But if there were one I guess overriding message that we can take from this -- and you can learn more about this, the studies are published on our website -- the one overriding message is that dealing with criminal agendas is not a technical issue, it's not just about law enforcement. It is profoundly political enterprise. And I think that was our departure point for this study, that we need to look at criminal agendas, criminal organizations, as operating in the same strategic space as political actors. In fact, in many of the instances and in many of the geographies that we look at you saw criminal entities, armed groups with criminal agendas, as well as state actors competing for governance and government in many of these locales.

At the heart of many of these projects, many of these criminal projects, was the quest for power. And so that was the departing point for our study, writ large. What we wanted to get to was how can external actors make a difference, what are some of the key approaches and interventions, maybe even changes, that we need to make in order to deal with these issues, an issue which we believe is probably growing in scale, growing in impact, and something that not just security actors but development actors, the private sector, et cetera, need to wake up to.

Now, over to Colombia, which was our case study, as I mentioned, with regard to how do criminal agendas impact peace negotiations themselves. This involved field work in Colombia in November. Very exciting time. In fact, just after obviously the plebiscite, the referendum was defeated, when people went back to the negotiating table. We were also there just in the wake of Congress actually approving the second iteration of the peace agreement. So a very interesting yet tense time in Colombia.

Obviously we're in Bogotá, also Medellin, and had the opportunity to go to Apartadó, which is in a strategic corridor in fact where the Clan del Golfo, some of them called Autodefensas

Gaitanistas, AGC, operate, have their main kind of operations, and where there's a huge military led operation against them, called Projecto Agamemnon, which has been trying to find the leader of the Clan del Golfo for the past three years unsuccessfully.

Now, everybody knows that beyond a shadow of a doubt criminal agendas were heavily involved and intertwined in the conflict, the 52 year conflict. We know that the FARC gained significant input, investment, material gain, and sometimes social and political gain as well from engaging in illicit economies. In fact, at one point many started to question whether or not the FARC's political cause had been compromised by its criminal agendas, particularly amongst low ranking or middle ranking officials, or within some fronts around Colombia itself.

Thus when a peace agreement was struck, as I mentioned, in November 2016 after the series of challenges that existed, it represented actually a tremendous breakthrough. Not just a breakthrough in terms of bringing the conflict to an end, but what we discern from looking at the agreement itself, the text, the whole negotiation process, was that there were significant lessons that can be learned from that process to deal with criminal agendas.

And I'm going to highlight a number of them today. More are available. An in depth study is available at the website CPR.UNU.edu. I'll happily disseminate it later. I'm going to touch on four key lessons that we discerned and then highlight a number of concerns I think that still linger.

The first key lesson I think is, for negotiators in particular, is that dealing with criminal agendas perhaps needs to start with a truce or some sort of ceasefire. That's the beginning point. In essence, required is a commitment to end or dramatically reduce the violence. And what you saw in the context of Colombia was the FARC starting with unilateral cease-fires. The government, its starting position in these negotiations was that we're going to continue our operation, but we have to see you stop your attacks against the state. Why? Well, there were serious doubts about whether or not FARC leadership, which had been weakened significantly after years of bombardment, assassinations, et cetera, were able to maintain unity of command amongst its rank and file. Worse yet, there were serious concerns that particularly those middle ranking officers, low ranking officers that were heavily involved in illicit economies, would actually want to opt out of what had become a lucrative engagement. Also, an engagement that gave them considerable social and political capital. So there was serious concern about

whether or not the leadership would be able to convince its members to support the peace process itself. And one of the main convincing arguments for the government was the ability of FARC to abide by six unilateral cease-fires, reduce the number of attacks against the State between November 2012 to August 2016 by some 90 percent. Essential.

Second key lesson was about security guarantees. The government agreed within the content of the peace negotiations to provide security guarantees not just to FARC members, their families, and the communities as well. From what was the key question that the government asked. The answer was from criminal entities, or what many FARC members and FARC leadership called successors of paramilitary organizations.

And the threats were particularly stark in trafficking, along trafficking routes, as well as border zones where obviously, as I mentioned earlier, illicit economies tended to thrive. And for peace to succeed, these guarantees that the government would shift from being a sworn enemy of the FARC to actually stand by said protecting the FARC, its members, its families, its communities, was absolutely essential. That was the second lesson.

The third lesson, a paradigm shift in terms of how to deal with illicit economies. There was an entire chapter, as many of you know, dealing with illicit drugs within the peace negotiations. And if I were to resume perhaps for us the most important lesson from that was to shift from a law enforcement, crime based, military driven approach to combat illicit drugs to one that shifted to a public health first based approach to deal with illicit economies. That was essential. The second aspect of that was FARC's agreement to actually work side by side with the government to actually combat the problem of illicit drugs. That included very late on agreement to declare its assets -- it still has yet to do that fully -- but also to use its criminal insight, to leverage that insight to deal with illicit economies, and participating crop substitution programs.

The fourth key lesson that we can draw from this process was the shift from an emphasis on criminal justice to restorative justice. Not just in a broad sense, but also I think for us, was about how do you deal with crimes committed in the context of a war that involved, whether it be kidnapping, ransom, drug trafficking, et cetera, with the question of amnesty, or alternative sentencing. And so here the term of delitos conexos, connected crimes, was inserted into the negotiation as well as into the final

agreement.

Now, a lot of controversy about this. Many details need to be discussed. It's on a case by case basis, where the tribunal will actually determine whether a certain crime was either politically motivated to support the FARC's revolution, or individually motivated. But that was a critical element that was inserted there which helps us deal with criminal agendas within the context.

Now, as I mentioned, I want to talk also about the significant challenges that remain. And one of them is the threat of recidivism. That is a key concern. Now, there hasn't been as much recidivism today as was feared by many commentary analysts, but that threat is likely increasing, particularly with the delays that are happening in terms of the demobilization process. And one of the key factors related to that is the fact that most of the zones of deconcentration or demobilization are taking place in areas where there is a strong presence of criminal groups, illicit economies. And many FARC members, particularly the mid ranking members, are in high demand from a lot of criminal organizations, Clan del Golfo, others, for their intimate knowledge of illicit economies. In fact, Clan del Golfo is on record providing or offering double the amount of money what FARC members would receive from demobilization on a monthly basis if they join them. So serious threats of recidivism. We've already seen four front, FARC fronts go rogue, if you will, another five, representing about 300 soldiers are at high risk. And we're also seeing in a number of reports, particularly from the UN, talking about increasing incursions of criminal entities within these zones of concentrations.

This links to another key risk, which is about security guarantees and the capacity of the state to actually deliver on that. As I mentioned, many of these zones are located in strategic corridors of trafficking, where criminal structures are embedded. Already the UN since January ahs reported that 900 families have been displaced due to new armed groups. You also see a number of human rights or social leaders being assassinated, all questioning the capacity of the state to be able to deliver on these security guarantees. A key concern.

Two more concerns that relate to perverse incentives. I think on Monday you will have another talk here talking about perhaps the fact that the drug coca production in Colombia has skyrocketed.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Indeed. So we're doing an entire event on how to deal with the

drug issue, including claims that the peace process enabled coca cultivation claims that coca is now changing U.S. consumption market. We'll have a fantastic team look forward what to do, dissecting some of these claims, and perhaps showing the flimsiness in some cases, but also thinking about how to deal with the problem. Ted will again be kindly moderating. I'll be one of the panelists. Beau Kilmer and Adam Isacson, so very powerful team. Please come on Monday at 10:00 a.m.

MR. DE BOAR: Indeed. So this is a key concern, why has coca production skyrocketed. Numerous probably theories around that, but it's a reality. And so serious thought needs to go into how do you deal with the criminal economies, what happens if the coca substitution programs don't work, et cetera.

And then, finally, a perverse incentive deals with the fact that now the Colombian government is being approached by numerous criminal entities for negotiations of their own. Now this poses moral, ethical, legal, practical dilemmas for the government of Colombia to engage in political negotiations with entities that have clearly criminal ambitions. But the alternative doesn't look positive either in terms of the military approach. So how do you deal with criminal agendas, how do you deal with criminal entities that are not only trying to take opportunities left by the FARC, grow their business, but also controlling vast territories and populations in the wake of some of the governance vacuums that exist.

So these are some of the key concerns that remain. In the question and answer period I'd be happy to talk about some of the key recommendations that we put forward in the report in terms of how to deal with some of these challenges, but that's just a teaser perhaps for you to get to read more of our work and also to engage in a conversation here.

Thank you.

MR. PICCONE: Great. Perfect. Thank you, John.

Sasha, let's hear about Nigeria.

MS. JESPERSON: Okay, great. Well, thank you for inviting me to be part of this event, and also I guess thanks to DFID for supporting this project, because it was a really interesting opportunity to look in depth at how crime and conflict intersect.

So my part of the project was understanding under what conditions and through what

mechanisms global illicit flows influence local conflict dynamics, with a focus on Nigeria. And this is a really interesting case study just given the entrenchment of both conflict and crime in Nigeria. Since independence there has rarely been a period without some form of conflict in the country, primarily stemming from regional differences, inequality, and a lack of representative government throughout the region, or throughout the country. And perhaps most notoriously the Biafra War from '67-70 where the Biafra movement sought to secede from the rest of the country. And although that was unsuccessful you can see a lot of similar trends in the three conflicts that are underway today. So Boko Haram in the North in 2015 was ranked as the fourth -- no, the deadliest violent extremist group globally. And although that has decreased since it is still one of the most prominent violent extremist groups globally.

There is also the emergence of new militant groups in the Niger Delta that have a similar approach to mend the movement for their emancipation of the Niger Delta and they've come out of a similar background, but they're a bit more fragmented. And there's also a conflict in the middle belt between pastoralists and herdsmen. And I'm primarily focused on Boko Haram and the Niger Delta in this study, but there are similar dynamics going on in the middle belt.

But what is really interesting is that although the differences in the Northeast, where Boko Haram is active, and the Niger Delta are very different. Both conflicts are informed by both political and economical grievances. So this suggests that groups are being quite strategic in what they're doing. But despite governance gaps in both regions and the pronouncement of these gaps by both groups, Boko Haram has been promoting the establishment of the caliphate to move away from what they call the social biases of the Nigerian government, and in the Delta the militant groups have been talking about bringing more benefits from the oil industry back to the region. Neither group are actually seeking to fill these governance gaps.

In comparison to these conflict actors organized crime groups are much more strategic and Nigeria is notorious for organized crime groups that have a very international reach. And in contrast to other parts of West Africa where organized crime groups have really taken advantage of fragility and weakness. This isn't the case in Nigeria. Organized crime in the country is much more long standing and sophisticated. It has established logistic networks, links to corrupt officials, and it predates the current conflicts that are underway. So in that sense there's no need to use conflict to disguise their activities.

But also there's no strategic geographical advantage to use the conflict affected regions, whether that's the Delta or the Northeast. For human trafficking people have moved generally North, but avoiding the Northeast, or through Benin. And drug trafficking FARC primarily uses sea or air conduits and other activities like (inaudible) based in the cities. So there's no direct link with the conflict affected regions.

Having said that though, Boko Haram would clearly like to tap into global illicit flows, and this became most evident with the kidnap of the Chibok girls in 2014 when Abubakar Shekau did say we could sell these women onto human trafficking networks. But from an organized crime perspective, at least for organized crime entities, Boko Haram as a group is an unreliable partner. Some of this comes about because of the structure. It's very cell based, so it's unclear exactly who you're working with at any one time. And also the leadership. Abubakar Shekau is very unpredictable, very violent, and his motives shift over time. So again, not necessarily someone you want to be working with to coordinate quite difficult activities. And also, the group is very sporadic and unpredictable, so that also challenges that relationship. And organized crime groups will supply Boko Haram though, so there has been arms flows into the region, there has been increasing reports of drug flows into the region. But this is in terms of activities, not necessarily entities. But crime does still influence the conflict and Boko Haram has established quite a large protection economy in the region. So a lot of this is connected to extortion and from very low level extortion of loans and payments that are given to supporters that would then naturally have an expectation of some kind of tax coming back to Boko Haram. And there's been payments to deter a tax. This could be at a very small level of militants calling residents in the area and just saying you need to pay us money, otherwise this is going to happen. Or a larger scale where governors or political leaders are asked for money to stop attacks in their region. And then also kidnapping for ransom. So that is a much larger scale and intends to target elites that have the money to pay for that. And there's also a lot of taxation of commodities that are passing through the region, and this could be illicit economies such as fish or petrol or just anything that is passing through the region. And cattle has been one particular area where this has happened. In 2014 and '15 Boko Haram controlled a lot of the cattle markets in the region. And this is a really interesting case because there was no recourse for herdsmen to actually do anything about it. So they were subject to taxation by Boko Haram.

Now this is a classic mafia technique, governing illicit flows and extracting rent from it.

But where it's different is that although residents in the region are getting something in return, whether that's loans, passage for goods, or refrain from the tax, there's not even the primitive state structures that mafia type organizations would provide. It is very extractive. Boko Haram is using the revenues to sustain their activities, whether that's financing attacks or paying soldiers. And so connected to that, that they're not actually providing any governance, there's also a lot of general criminality. So whether that's bank robbery or consuming drugs and arms.

The Delta is quite different from the Northeast and Boko Haram. They appear on the surface to be very similar MEND, the movement for the emancipation of the Niger Delta, in that they are -- the militant groups that are emerging now are the generation that missed out from the amnesty. So they're not getting the stipends that ended the violence in 2009. And so in response to that there's a lot of rent seeking because of the grievances, because although the amnesty process was put in place to stop the conflict in the region, there hasn't been anything done about the lack of economic opportunities.

But the global demand for oil means that this kind of criminality is more linked to global illicit flows. So there is a need for some kind of relationship with criminal actors and also with political actors. And the militants can be tapping and vandalizing oil pipelines, but when 75 percent of the oil that is taken from these pipelines is moving internationally this needs bigger networks than the militant groups can sustain themselves.

But what is becoming clear is that each of these groups, so the militants, criminals, and the political actors, are each using each other strategically to maximize profits from the region. This isn't new. There's been lots of linkages, particularly between political actors and militants in the region for decades. Politicians provide thugs with arms prior to elections to intimidate opponents. And this happened in the recent elections also. But what's different now is that Buhari is really cracking down on corruption, particularly oil corruption, even appointing himself to head up the oil ministry. And so the increase of the new militant groups has happened at the same time as Buhari's crackdown on corruption. So there's suggestions that there is a linkage here and that political actors are using the militant groups to cover their involvement in oil theft.

So in terms of the impact on conflict, although the two regions are very different there are some trends that emerge that are actually quite similar. So in both regions conflict is being used as a

cover for criminal activity and it creates a shared strategic space for all of these groups to maximize their own gains. And because of that there's an interest in maintaining conflict from all sides because of the financial gains that sustain the conflict.

So in the Northeast, while Boko Haram is engaging in a lot of criminal activities and supporting this protection economy, there are also a lot of groups that are mimicking their activities and actually blaming it on Boko Haram. So there's been a number of groups that have been arrested in the last couple of years also engaging in extortion. So calling families in their own towns and asking for money to deter attacks and saying that they were from Boko Haram. But when they were arrested they were found to have nothing to do with the group. And this is not limited to just regular citizens, it's also the military and the police. And really this is because there's no other opportunities. Particularly when Boko Haram is controlling a lot of industries crime is really the only thing that's left. But in a way this makes Boko Haram appear more powerful and dangerous than it actually is and it's actually been a deterrent for both international organizations and others from having a presence in the region. In the Delta militancy has become a cover for political involvement in oil theft, and this is linked to Buhari's crackdown, as I've already said. But it's a really interesting relationship because political actors can keep the militancy at a distance through the mediation process.

What is interesting about Nigeria is that there doesn't seem to be a competition for governance. Both regions have very low socioeconomic development and both Boko Haram and the Delta militants have been calling for alternatives and so Boko Haram has been calling for an Islamic utopia and the Delta for more benefits from the oil industry. But in neither region has there been any support provided to communities.

Then from the state level, because there's also involvement in both criminal activity and violence, the state actors and political actors are also alienating civilians. And then the third group, criminal groups, which you could see playing a role here and taking up or filling some of these governance gaps, they instead are acting more clandestinely. And so working below the surface rather than pursuing any strategic objectives. So these allegiances are constantly evolving. Rather than any of these groups taking on the governance responsibilities they're all maximizing their own private gains. So no one is providing governance.

And so in a way this provides an opportunity for intervention or challenging both the conflict and criminality. Because really the responses are quite similar. So at a larger, more strategic level rebuilding governance is going to be essential to move forward, both in tackling criminality and conflict, as is addressing grievances. So particularly in the Delta Region, the amnesty process was effective in 2009 in bringing violence to an end. But it wasn't sustainable because the underlying factors that were actually informing the grievances were not addressed at all. But that's obviously a very long-term strategy and it's going to take time. But there are a couple of things that could be done in the short-term to address the specifics of this conflict and crime nexus. So one is connected to naming and shaming. So because of the violence and the sporadic nature of conflict in both regions there's not a strong presence of international organizations or independent observers, whether that's civil society organizations or journalists. But particularly when there is a range of different actors that are engaging in criminality or violence they can play a key role in pointing out exactly who is doing what. And then more specific ways of addressing this, particularly in the Delta, is protecting the pipelines because it's very difficult to understand who is actually benefitting from this. Security guards who are paid to look after pipelines are not necessarily going to be trusted. They could be paid off by anyone else. And so there's potentially a role here for the private sector and there's a number of organizations that have been working with the oil companies to protect pipelines. So that could be an avenue to at least create a space and to be engaging in more of the long-term responses. And then at the larger level challenging corruption is going to be crucial, particularly in tackling the state based involvement in this. And this also will contribute to rebuilding governance.

But all of these I think are quite big endeavors, so it's not going to be an easy process.

Thanks.

MR. PICCONE: All right. Thank you very much. More to chew on. And we'll now turn to another part of the world, Myanmar. Vanda?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Thank you, Ted. Thank you, John, for shepherding the process through and bringing together an excellent team in my view, a fantastic study such as Sasha's work.

You know, listening to Sasha it reminded me of what Ted mentioned in the beginning, the Brookings local order project in which we think about how international and local actors deliver order.

And one of the things we are examining in that, and will be featured in a book that comes out in the fall or winter, is why and how criminal groups and militant groups decide to provide governance or not. So why do some groups like Boko rule through plunder, why does the Islamic State in Afghanistan behave very differently than the Taliban.

Now, for this UN project I wrote three papers. One on Afghanistan, one on Myanmar, and then an overarching white paper policy recommendation study. The Afghanistan and Myanmar cases, as John explained at the beginning, were to be cases about post conflict. Now what is interesting about it, and we pulled a little bit of a switcharoo on the answers -- of course both of the countries today are at the level of far greater violence and far greater conflict than in the case of Afghanistan in the decade and arguably even proceeding that, really since I would say '97. And in the case of Myanmar even earlier, since 1994.

Now I will focus just on Myanmar. We did an event on Afghanistan on Monday. I spoke about some of the work for the study as well as broader issues. The papers are on the UN website right now and will be on the Brookings one shortly if they are not already. So I'll just focus on Myanmar.

The cases of Myanmar and Afghanistan are in some ways interrelated. What happened in one country influenced what happened in another country. At least in the very basic way that Myanmar until the 1994 cease-fire was the country where most drugs were produced, most opium, so opiate based drugs, opium poppy was cultivated. So we focus today on Afghanistan as the ultra producers of opiates and that is the case, but they sort of inherited the opportunity from Myanmar in the 1990s given what happened there.

I argued in a lot of my other work that the sort of standard conventional wisdom that drove much of U.S. policy, namely that in order to end conflict one needs to eliminate the illicit economies, was wrong. And that, in fact, if the illicit economy was labor intensive, such as poppy cultivation, the effect will be precisely the opposite. It would in fact prolong conflict because it would generate political capital for the insurgent groups by being able to offer itself as the protector of an illicit, but often the only available livelihoods. And there was in fact an illusion that during conflict it was possible to suppress the illicit economy effectively, that conflict must end before the government has the capacity to really actively and effectively mount the illicit economy.

So Myanmar was a fascinating case because the junta did listen to me. Of course, I'm being facetious -- what happened in '94 preceded my work, but not only did they not listen to me they actually really put a twist on how they ended conflict. So not only did they say we are suspending eradication despite what the United States and China have been telling us, but in fact they struck an economic bargain with many of the ethno insurgencies essentially saying look, you can trade with anything -- wink wink -- if it's drugs, if it's gems, if it's timber, as long as you put down your weapons and strike cease-fires. And if the economy were legal we would be of course applauding that by saying they're sharing part of the pie. But if the government, the junta, was willing to share very much part of the national pie, too bad it was of course illegal. And the cease-fire based on the illicit economic (inaudible) is very effective. Arguably, the 1990s until about mid-2000s were the most peaceful period in Burma after decades of very complicated conflict. Nonetheless the peace was in many ways profoundly unsatisfactory peace and peace that has since the mid-2000s significantly broken down. And I'll come back to why and how.

And after the cease-fire was struck the junta over time came to pressure control -- the nationalist insurgencies to significantly reduce their armament. They succeeded with some, not with others. For example, the United States Army is one of the best equipped military groups around with still tremendous amount of weapons today, not others. But also over time the Chinese government put tremendous pressure on many of the ethno insurgent groups that they supported, tolerated, had relations with, to eliminate opium poppy cultivation. And we saw massive brutal suppression in Burma, very effective for a while, and that was really in the late 1990s, early 2000s, would have allowed Afghanistan to become the number one producer. That's when the switch from Myanmar to Afghanistan happened.

One of the things that was very significant about the way that the cease-fire and the suppression of the illicit economy proceeded was that the ethno insurgent groups, such as the Wa, for example, turned out enormously willing at that point to be very brutal toward the population. So, for example, the eradication with China in the background carried out by the Wa, the eradication of poppy involved brutal relocation of people with many of the highland population facing catastrophic conditions in the lowlands where they were relocated. But because there was at this point peace or cease-fire the population had no longer any recourse as to whether to bargain with the government or with the Wa.

They were simply subordinate at this point to the Wa.

So the cease-fires and the suppression of the illicit economy was also incomplete. The one illicit economy that was suppressed was poppy production, but illegal mining, illegal logging, wildlife trafficking thrived and expanded, and I say illegal -- you know, I need to somewhat correct that. I should just say unrestrained. Much of the peace became associated really with unrestrained plunder. Sometimes there were rules that existed, in other cases there were not even rules that existed. And it was plunder that was wildly supported by outside actors, it's plunder that still today continues and it's supported by outside actors with, for example, Chinese businesses, Yunnan businesses providing a key role but also significant involvement of Indian not just organized crime groups but Indian businesses that in many ways are acting with much less visibility and even less of restraint than, for example, than Chinese businesses.

Since the mid-2000s the cease-fires have started breaking down and as I said today we are seeing the most intense ethnic conflict that we have seen since '94, very significant ethnic conflict. When I was there for the field work in December I was really struck by how much larger territory has become inaccessible even to when I was there prior, about two years before that. The level of (inaudible) movement is impossible and that are under serious conflict -- in the West focused on the Rohingya issues and really have not been paying attention to the inflagration of conflicts throughout the Northern parts bordering China, the (inaudible) into a level of violence that's underrated.

One of the reasons that this situation came to the level of conflict intensification is that the Junta in the mid-1990s decided to restructure the economic bargains. They essentially realized that they had enough military power to be able to try to retake greater share of the illegal economy, particularly in mining. And I say illegal because gems are illegal, the jade is exploited there. That is a legal commodity but really unrestrained exploitation of that. And, of course, the groups resist it, that retaking of resources on which they existed. So that was one element. But the other element was that the military became even more insistent on the disarmament which the ethnic groups didn't want to do. There was cease-fire but not truly peace, not integration, and the groups still have ambitions to get not just temporary autonomy that actually sometimes have, some of the groups. But in fact federalism, the evolution of power, significant changes, constitutional guarantee of local ethnic autonomy.

Now this process of conflict intensification however also coincides with the process of political liberalization in Myanmar. I won't go into too that too much here. I detail it quite in the paper. But I do want to highlight one element, namely that perhaps the biggest progress against some of the illicit economies, particularly crony capitalism, but also some of the bans on unrestrained logging, moves toward making Myanmar part of the extractive industries transparency initiative, came under the transition regime of Thein Sein.

And really have been stalled since the Suu Kyi government came to power. Now, Suu Kyi today is under tremendous pressure to start acting against some of the illicit economies. Poppy has rebounded significantly. It is not a surprise because the suppression was drive through brutality without any alternative livelihoods in place in situations that were even much more severe than, for example, in Colombia. So it was only a matter of time before poppy would come back. It has come back. We're talking 60,000+ hectares. And we will be much bigger where the world is not so oversupplied by Afghanistan. But I think that the Thein Sein government really needs to be given credit to making some quite significant moves toward the elicit economies that said both the political transition and the moves against the illicit economies have been more or less the direction and discretion of the junta. And in fact the mechanisms of why the junta allowed itself to reduce its power. Yes, they miscalculated, they did not expect Suu Kyi's party to be elected. That was a shock to them. They have since learned to live with her. Many are disappointed with the way she has accepted the conditions that her rule exists and still the preponderance of power lying with the military. I think we need to be careful and I think that if she is pushed to take on the military more frontally we can see significant backsliding. Nonetheless, so the military acted against illicit economies that it found convenient to act on. Again I think that Thein Sein was committed to reforms and deserves a lot of credit, both for the political reforms and reforms against and moves against illicit economies. But let's remember that this is still highly selective and none of it is done in a way that significantly threatens the political, financial, and other power of the military. And if the Suu Kyi government is pushed to undertake reforms that either eliminate her political capital, such as by mounting an aggressive eradication drive against poppy, or starts acting in ways that directly cross the golden parachute that the junta awarded itself in terms of illicit economies, such as saying no more involvement on military entities in mining or logging, she will really provoke very significant backlash.

Moreover, even those who are her supporters in terms of a sort of street power, are quite needy and uncomfortable about some of the reforms. For example, there is a lot of move to undertake financial transparency, anti money laundering measures that would remove the so called black money, the money generate in illegal economies or off the books from the economy. Well, realistically this is what has fueled a lot of growth in the country. And if she does that she risks reusing economic growth to the point where she will lose her base and that we will see a lot of other political entrepreneurs maneuvering for the base. So she has not wanted to undertake that and she has to very carefully calibrate where she can move. And I want to highlight that because those are the democratic elements that don't want her to undertake the moves, not just the other political power brokers that she faces.

She has been committed to reduce corruption at the top levels of the government. At the same time it's really micromanaging and paralyzing the government and paralyzing governance in ways that are bad for the country, and she's facing backlash for that. So again, anticorruption comes with costs for her, including in management style.

And, you know, all of this is to say that what John prefaced at the beginning, that rule of law and how to deal with illicit economies and organized crime is not simply a technical enterprise, it's not simply about putting in more honest and training attorneys, prosecutors, judges, about making police less subservient to the political enterprise. A lot of it is about fundamental redistribution of political power. And if we ignore that, if we simply insist on this is illegal, hence it has to be suppressed and this needs to be done quickly and in this manner, we will undermine the very political processes that give any hope for moving against illicit economies.

And one of the things that I also highlight in the study is the role of geopolitics. I mean we often think in the West about crime -- organized crime is an outside infection that penetrates a system and needs to be cut out like cancer. And sometimes even international law enforcement and it has used specifically this language. I would argue that in many cases, including Nigeria, illicit economy, organized crime, are organic part of governance. They constitute governments and have for a long time. They are not something that came from the outside, but they predate the colonial era. So it's a very mutually constitutive process between crime and politics and crime and governance. That should give us some understanding about the scope and real extent of the project that we're undertaking. But also crime is

very much a tool of geopolitics. And that the role of China, Yunnan, the relationship between Yunnan and Beijing and their involvement in illegal economies in Myanmar is apparent, very fascinating, and once again a constraint on how can one move against illicit economies, how the Suu Kyi government and even the junta can move against illicit economies.

I'll leave it at that. I'm sure those were provocative enough statements to generate a lot of questions.

MR. PICCONE: Great. Thank you, Vanda. As you can see, I promised a rich conversation and this is a lot of material to chew on. So I think that we want to kind of see if we can pull out some of the common threads across these particular cases. And in preparing for this the one thing that keeps jumping out at me is, you know, the hybrid nature of crime and politics that when do groups move beyond just their political economic grievances into just running a criminal enterprise. And we certainly saw that allegation in the Colombia case with the FARC, and it sounds like in all of these three cases at the heart of this is a group that's just doing this to make money. It's all about the money and less about the political power at play.

I was wondering if you could comment on that and whether the material, the commodities that are being illicitly traded make a difference. Obviously, oil is a legal commodity, so it's a different kind of thing than coca or other illegal drug products or, you know, how is it different when it's wildlife or timber. So some thoughts about that money aspect.

And then I'd like to do a second part on the recommendations.

MR. DE BOAR: I'll start just saying that I don't -- you know, many economists would say it's all about the money, but I don't think in this case it's all about the money. In fact, power, whether it be a political power, social power, are intimately intertwined when it comes to illicit economies with the financial gain that they derive. I mean in the case of FARC obviously that case is quite obvious. A lot of their involvement in illicit activities was not just about funding the revolution, but it was also about gaining the sport, providing livelihoods to communities that they governed that were outside of the lawful order, and in so doing regulating those societies themselves. I mean often times, you know, when it came to their operations they would resolve conflicts, establish their own orders, et cetera. So it's not just about funding the revolution. In the case of Clan del Golfo, what you see with them, when they start becoming

a really perhaps preoccupying source or threat for the government and other entities is when they gain that social and political power. You know, there was a strike that they organized last year that collapsed vast amounts of infrastructure, transportation services in the Province of Apartado and beyond, and Antioquia Province, and they were able to basically control that entire infrastructure, both socially, politically. They derived a tremendous amount of political and social capital by regulating these economies. And often times they're intertwined. Sometimes, actually, the motives are unclear. And we're in, I believe -- and one of the key kind of lessons from this study is in a new kind of period where it's very difficult to disentangle the motives. We still operate within boxes. You look at UN Security Council resolutions, et cetera, still about greed versus grievance kind of a model. But that no longer works. It doesn't help us combat these organizations.

The other element I will ask is I mentioned the word about, you know, Colombia's at least history of conflict as one about recycling criminal groups, recycling armed groups. A lot of the members of the Clan del Golfo come from paramilitary groups, ELN. You'll see a lot of movement between FARC, ELN, EPL, different groups actually move into different spheres. Some of them carry with them their political motives, other carry with them the criminal motives. Very much intertwined. So taking an approach that is just largely about economies, let's stop their economies, will not be effective in this context.

MR. PICCONE: Sasha, do you want to jump in on this?

MS. JESPERSON: Yes, I do. Because I think what John said about the motives being unclear sums it up perfectly, which I know kind of says nothing and everything at the same time. But I guess I would say that money is not just about economic gain, that there is something political about that and that it's about power. And actually Vanda's comment about criminality being an organic part of governance. And I think there's an interesting divide between governance and power. And for me in the Nigeria case this is really interesting in that a lot of -- and this is a really cynical view -- but a lot of politics is just about power and not so much about governing. And so to take a really micro example, a lot of oil companies have been paying out to communities. So they will give the money to community leaders with the idea that they would then distribute that to their community. And so I guess that could be referred to as governing and that they would then be providing services to their community and distributing that

support. And instead they don't do that, they keep the money themselves, or with their family to maintain their power, so to maintain their status within their community. So they're not governing, but they're still using it for political purposes.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: You know, Ted, you left in the government the arguments about FARC being just a cartel so, you know, you are as well positioned as any of us to comment on that. And we hear today the same arguments about the Taliban. In fact, in some of its reports the UN said the Taliban has become a cartel. I believe that they were always oversimplifications and quite misdirection about the FARC and they are certainly about the Taliban. Now, we have to recognize that in all of these groups you have an assortment of motivations. I often talk about macro drivers and micro motivations. People join insurgencies because someone has beat up their aunt. Local criminal groups often find it very convenient to become part of a political movement. So it's a much better label to be the Taliban if you are the local unit than the three thieves from the road to (inaudible). So not every single individual is driven by the promise of heaven after jihad or motivation to change a local order to address grievances. And you can have entire units that are in for the money or are in because they need to escape prosecution.

That, however, should not misdirect us to make assumptions that ne entire political project goes bankrupt. And in fact there is tremendous retention power for group of simply becoming locked into conflict and fighting. I am thinking about (inaudible), but I think the claims that they have lost some of their political goals and become very much in for the illegal money is more applicable than, for example, about the Taliban, the Abu Aayyaf group in the Philippines. But even for them a core element of purpose is just simply to maintain being on the out and to maintain conflict. So it's not even money. The money is a mechanism to simply -- remaining in existence on the outside that doesn't involve either defeat or for that matter some sort of reconciliation.

I also want to sort of say that even when organized crime groups like the Zetas in Mexico choose not to govern through the delivery of public goods in contrast to the Sinaloa cartel, for example. The fact that they control the bullets and the money of the streets have profoundly political affects. So here is a group, criminal group, that explicitly chose to rule through brutality (inaudible) and not a distribution of the same socioeconomic handouts and governance services like the Sinaloa. But

nonetheless they had profound political effects simply by controlling bullets and money, which after all is the barbarian definition of the state.

And to answer your question about is there a commodity that determines the behavior, I really don't think that's applicable. Or I don't think that's what drives the causality. What I do think makes the crucial difference is whether the state governs or not. So if you look at criminal groups in the United States, many of whom are the same Mexican criminal groups that rule through bullets and money in Mexico, in the territories that are not fully controlled by the state. They behave strikingly differently. Why? Because they do not have the space to compete for governance and the political effects are mitigated and almost obviated by the political effects of the official political sphere.

There is plenty of drug trafficking in Bethesda. Where do you live, Ted? (Laughter) But neither you or I will ever encounter the drug dealer and we will certainly not go to him to resolve dispute with the neighbors over the length of the fence. And they are very non violent, very non violent drug dealing in most of the United States, unless you live in Chicago or Baltimore. And they have no political affect. And so the purpose of law enforcement needs to be to make good criminals like the drug dealers in Bethesda, which involves the state delivering governance or they don't have the opportunity to really be viable competitors.

MR. PICCONE: So that was very helpful and we've gone through a lot of material that diagnoses the problems, which just seems to me like impossible to unravel and figure out how to address. So that's going to be the next set of questions, is your set of recommendations. And particularly your focus on international roles. It seems to me that whenever you talk about an international community's role in these kinds of very complex local conflicts, already you're starting at a losing proposition. It's extremely difficult I think for international actors to really have influence. But nonetheless we are spending billions and billions and billions of dollars every year, whether it's Colombia or Afghanistan or elsewhere to try to influence these outcomes.

So if you could say a little bit more about given everything that you've said, what are the best -- okay, it's a political problem so it requires a political solution. So should we be doing more on the diplomacy UN role, regional organization, to try to get the power brokers around the table to come to a solution, or is there more that we can be doing on the cross border law enforcement that you think can be

done together with the political solution to put more pressure on the parties to get to that kind of cease-fire and then good governance outcomes?

MR. DE BOER: Well, I'll start with Colombia. And I do want to say I forgot to mention that Juan Carlos Garzón-Vergara was part of this project in terms of drafting the Colombia study, undertaking field research in addition to (speaking in foreign language). So I want to acknowledge that.

But in terms of Colombia, just a couple of perhaps recommendations that came out. I mean at the essence of this it's not a battle of crime versus conflict or just about the FARC. It's really about the essence of the Colombian state, the state building project. And many of this, those who have been to Colombia or know about Colombia, this is not a surprise. You know, many talk about a divided Colombia, two Colombias or three Colombias. But really that is at the essence. So I think for international actors it is absolutely critical that you support the state being visible, active, in these zones beyond just demobilization programs. This is absolutely critical. Development needs to arrive at the same time as law enforcement or even in advance in many of these cases.

The other thing is that I think there needs to be placed an emphasis on the social reintegration of in particular FARC combatants. Not just economic reintegration, but the social reintegration. A lot of studies across the board in Nigeria, et cetera, but particularly in Colombia, have actually looked at reintegration modalities. Colombia has a rich history in reintegrating former combatants, whether it be from the paramilitary groups, et cetera. And they point to the fact that in fact a lot of the successful reintegration programs are not based on economic motivations given them or even providing them with skills. It's really about social reintegration. How do you replace the social capital, the political capital, particularly amongst mid and lower level members who have been involved in say controlling local communities, et cetera, through reintegration programs. That needs to be an emphasis. Now we can learn here from a number of gang desistance or models, especially in the United States, that try to build non violent networks, social networks for ex combatants, for ex gang members, for example. This needs to be a priority.

Now, there's one key challenge when it comes to the Colombian whole vision for reintegration or reinsertion. They have set up these zones of concentration, which are largely in rural areas, self contained where the FARC traditionally governed. You're not building non violent social

networks there, you're not building new networks that enable people who have been in the war for decades often times, know nothing else, to learn other modalities of social reintegration. That needs to be a priority. Here external actors can certainly play a part.

And the final thing I'll mention in terms of recommendations, we do need to think about law enforcement. It has a role. And particularly in I think Colombia the attorney general's office is an important, very important actor. It's an independent actor. And here its capacity is extremely weak, particularly in the regions. And I think Vanda's paper also talks about this when it comes to Afghanistan and Myanmar, but there needs to be a focus on the most pernicious criminal actors, target them first.

MR. PICCONE: The predatory actors.

MR. DE BOAR: That's right, the predatory actors. That needs to be an emphasis moving forward. So those are three. There are many more, but.

MR. PICCONE: Sasha, do you want to?

MS. JESPERSON: I think there's actually a lot of similarities with the Nigeria case to what John has just said about Colombia because in both regions that I looked at the conditions that encourage both conflict and the criminality intersecting with it is this lack of governance and the political and economic grievances. But it's not just about the presence of the state because the state is there, but it's more -- well, in many cases it's involved. So it's about the state building trust, that they are acting in people's interests and not in their own, which I think is going to take quite a big shift in governance structures and how governance happens in Nigeria. But also more long-term thinking because the response to a lot of mostly security threats in Nigeria has been very short sighted. So in Boko Haram it's okay, let's send out the military and have an operation and we'll stop them and then there will be a lot of press releases saying yes, we've achieved success, and then two weeks later there's another attack. But the same happened in the Niger Delta in that there was an amnesty process and it did actually result in an end to the conflict in 2009, but it didn't actually address any of the grievances that MEND was advocating for. So now we're seeing a resurgence of groups that are making the same argument. Whether or not they're actually active on the basis of those grievances is redundant, but they can use that as an argument and that is legitimate. And if anything, I guess the amnesty sent a message that the state would buy off militants, so it almost creates an impetus to engage in violence. So I guess it's a more

long-term approach to addressing the governance values across the country, and in particular regions.

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Let me sort of put forth some more general propositions, although as in all cases the benevolent angels are in the details and the solution is to be tailored. I would put forth the number one proposition that conflict can and must end before illicit economies can be ended. That might mean negotiations and you want to think in the negotiations about how you are going to structure bargains around the illicit economies, whether it's Myanmar or whether it's Colombia, or it might mean brute force. Insurgencies can be one militarily. They have been one militarily. First military reversal and state may since 2007 in Colombia that brought about the negotiations in other cases. And they can and have been one, like in Peru back in the '80s, early 1990s, without touching illicit economies. The same in Burma, the same in China, the same in Thailand.

What you want to do then next is I think the crucial element of how you go about the state building. So you can have the peace plunder and satisfactory Burma situation with its both undesirable risks of the devastation that the illicit economies bring. But also the chance that it will somehow slide back into conflict. Or you can then start chipping away at the crime in ways that strengthen the desirable political elements, the forces of plurality if not outright democratization. That, however, means that one has to be conscious about what illicit economies bring human security and which undermine human security. International actors are predominantly focused on large scale illicit economies that have visibility and repercussions in their home states, home countries obviously. So drugs are always the number one focus. What method is much more to local people and what discredits the post 9/11 order of Afghanistan is predatory criminality, seizure of land, extortion, theft, monopolistic control over local markets. I would suggest that the international community starts prioritizing predatory criminality over illicit economies broadly.

Second, I would suggest prioritizing non labor illicit economies. That might mean the smuggling element of drug trafficking not because it's going to stop trafficking, it never does. It might merely redirect the routes or the actors, but it's a very important tool of what kind of criminals are left in the system.

I would then suggest also using targeted focus deterrents, so to focus targeting to say well some criminal actors are less pernicious than others. And although in the ultimate goal is to have the

good criminals and as few of them as possible, in the first place you're making bargains over who more destabilizes the system, who more subverts the system. That means looking for (inaudible) that can be peeled off. Not all military economically powerful actors in Myanmar is equally dangerous to the Suu Kyi government and democratization and other.

So I have not every power broker/war lord in Afghanistan is an intense driver of the Taliban insurgency. So look for those that have incentives to behave better and see if you can enforce those incentives to bring them into the fold.

The big problem is, of course, that in many of these settings the state is deeply involved in the illicit economy. And so the crucial question is how does the state that for decades has existed on some form of illegality for both money and rule, develop incentives to break the system. And I suggest that we need to start looking for political agents of change that are not civil society solely, that are not the good trained judge that was in the United States. But there are politicians that benefit from behaving differently. The trick is how to convert anti crime, anti corruption that are tools of political advancement to become institutional habits that survive beyond the individual and ultimately start applying to the individual. And here is where broader institution building, civil society I think will come play a role.

But in the initial phases --and it doesn't have to be a country in conflict. I could pull up many African countries, and Nigeria is a good example, outside of conflict, how do you make the state, the politicians, all the power brokers who are legally part of the system break incentives from their deep fingers in illegality.

MR. PICCONE: Well, if we solve that problem them we can all go home and declare victory.

There's a microphone I hope somewhere and let's take a few questions. We only have about 10 minutes left. Anyone who would like to pose a comment or a question? I see some hands. Yes, right there in the -- yes.

QUESTIONER: Hi. This is Ali.

MR. PICCONE: If you could introduce yourself.

QUESTIONER: I'm a researcher. I'm Ali Muhammed. So given all the discussions you've had, so how would you fight the criminal economy? Do you think that legalization of illegal like

opiates would be a way to finish the crime? Thank you.

MR. PICCONE: Great. Good question. Let's take a couple of more. I saw a hand there. Yes, sir.

QUESTIONER: Thank you very much. My name is (inaudible); I'm a private person who is formerly of the Nigerian Mission in Washington. My question is for Sasha. You've spoken a lot about Nigeria very lightly. And a lot of things I would contest, but this is not the time. My question is if you had the opportunity to advise President Buhari, tell us in a few seconds the things you would advise him.

MR. PICCONE: Thank you. And I saw -- yes, that hand right behind you.

MR. PAYNE: Hi, my name is Greg Payne. I'm an independent consultant and actually spent some time in Colombia and now focused on working as part of the reintegration process hopefully. My question is with regards to employment, which obviously is a focus of reintegration and an important part of reintegration, employment of former combatants. What, if any, case studies exist around what methods to employment are the best ways to address, as you said, not only the financial and economic aspects, but the social and political capital. Is it entrepreneurship, is it ensuring former combatants have guarantee to land? And if it's none of those or those don't answer the full question, and some of these former combatants have to be reintegrated into "normal companies, other businesses" what are the methods to address the social and political capital as they become part of the broader workforce?

MR. PICCONE: Great questions. So legalization, advice to Buhari, and jobs. Vanda, do you want to?

MS. FELBAB-BROWN: Look, I think there are good reasons to explore legalization of commodities that are illegal, such as drugs. Obviously we do not want to say nuclear smuggling should become legal. There are also limits to legalization as applicable.

I don't, however, believe that legalization is alone a fact that eliminated criminality. So if poppy cultivation in Mexico becomes legal or in Afghanistan becomes legal, illegal actors will still be deeply involved in it and might not be any less violent. In many of these countries, whether it's Mexico, whether it's Afghanistan, the commodities that fuel illegality and criminality and conflict are legal. The timber, the gems. Yes there are drugs, but there are many other things than drugs. And in some cases the non drug ones are far more violent than even the drug ones. Indonesia being another good example

of a county outside of conflict, but timber is, for example, a far more violent, criminal pervaded activity than drug trafficking.

So I think it's about other forces and again I think I'm not going to repeat what I said about what I think are the steps, the three papers outline steps for each case, also the overarching lessons. But I do want to make one comment about employment. Look, whether it's development for stabilization in post conflict or development in general, creating jobs is the single most difficult issue. You can resolve micro credit, you can build up infrastructure. A lot of very auspicious circumstances need to click together to find employment. And essentially the economy needs to be reconstituted around macroeconomic growth that's labor intensive, not capital intensive. Colombia has had great macroeconomic growth, but it's about accumulation of money, it's created many fewer jobs than one would have hoped it would create. And that involves changing the taxation system, taking on vested interest in the legal economic sphere that are far greater. And so what DDR and (inaudible) is training people as plumbers and training people as car mechanics. And that might help tens of people, it might help hundreds of people, but it rarely resolves creating jobs for an insurgency that had the force of say 15,000 people.

So the job creation is the Achilles Heel of DDR, is the Achilles Heel of lots of post conflict, is the Achilles Heel in Afghanistan, and it generates the question of why being a member of a criminal group or a militant group gets you training and gets you perhaps preferential a lot in job, and why I, who have been on the outside, the righteous listing out of conflict, don't get that.

MR. DE BOAR: Yes, I'll pick up on that issue in terms of Colombia in particular. I mean the starting premise of my response is that the responses and the social reintegration, economic reintegration programs for ex FARC members has to be tailored to each level. So the agreement does very well in terms of speaking to the political and social capital of FARC leaders. They're going to be transitioning into a political party essentially. For them, you know, that's an automatic. They're continuing the revolution through other means in essence. But for the mid level, low level kind of FARC members, that's not the case.

So here you touched on one key issue when it comes to Colombia that many people are conscious of, which is land. A lot of the reintegration programs are envisioned to take place in rural

Colombia. And so there land reform, you know, providing that is a key incentive. But there is one key problem to that. If they become farmers how do they get their products to market? There's absolutely no infrastructure to speak of. It will take, you know, 15, maybe 10, if you're lucky, 5 years, to build that infrastructure, to be able to make it a viable opportunity for many of these FARC members. So I think from my own perspective here there's a great divide and a great opportunity as well to think about how metropolitan areas, how cities like Medellin, for example, can play a part in helping to bridge that gap, helping to provide opportunities.

Now cities, mayors, even governors, have been largely left out of the negotiation process. Some of them are actively or at least, you know, in somewhat of an opposition kind of position towards not collaborating with the peace process. We need to build alliances with those entities, at the political level. Businesses as well. And I think there's going to have to be a plan in terms of how do we bring a lot of the use, because let's remember, many of the lower level, mid level FARC members are young combatants, ho you integrate them into the Colombian society as a whole, not relegate them to parts of the country. We have always been marginalized, will likely continue to be marginalized, at least in the short-term. So that speaks to not just economic issues, but also social grievances that can continue to manifest. It is a complex endeavor, but I think that negotiation, that discussion has to happen.

MR. PICCONE: Great. Sasha, you're the final word.

MS. JESPERSON: Okay. In terms of what I would say in terms of advice to Buhari, and I'm conscious that we've only got a couple of minutes, so I'm going to keep this very brief, but to start with what I think he's doing well is pursuing the anti corruption agenda and managing to bring at least a large proportion of a population with him, even though the country is facing a very serious recession. But the two I guess shortfalls of that is that there's a lot of putting out fires. And so going from place to place and trying to do I guess what can be done in the immediate term to stop things and trying to do everything himself. And I understand both of those because there are a lot of issues facing his leadership at the moment, and given the level of entrenched corruption, it is quite difficult to trust people within the government.

But so just three quick points. I think first would be to slow down -- and this is connected to my second point -- and identify the strategic entry points and where there can be a much more long-

term effort to address problems, but not just focusing on a particular region. So at the moment there tends to be a shift back and forth between the Northeast and the Niger Delta, depending on the state of attacks, but sort of having a concerted effort in both regions and elsewhere to make sure that there is a focus on all of the key issues, and to do that he needs a stronger team around him of trusted both advisors but also within government to actually carry out this so that he doesn't feel like he needs to be doing this all alone. And so I think establishing himself as running the oil ministry was the first mistake because it's consolidating all the power and I think that risks going in the same direction that Nigerian government has been for some time. So trying to spread out some of that power and so there can be more of an equal focus across the country. But that's very brief.

MR. PICCONE: Okay. Great. Well, thank you all for coming, thank our speakers, John, Vanda, and Sasha. And I just want to point out to please read all this great material that's coming out. The title of Vanda's paper is particularly apt given this conversation. It's called "The Hellish Road to Good Intentions." (Laughter)

Thank you. (Applause)

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I, Carleton J. Anderson, III do hereby certify that the forgoing electronic file when originally transmitted was reduced to text at my direction; that said transcript is a true record of the proceedings therein referenced; that I am neither counsel for, related to, nor employed by any of the parties to the action in which these proceedings were taken; and, furthermore, that I am neither a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel employed by the parties hereto, nor financially or otherwise interested in the outcome of this action.

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