



**International Colloquium  
Addressing the Development Implications of Illicit  
Economies: a Cross-Disciplinary and Cross Sectoral  
Exchange**

*SOAS, London; 19-21 April 2018*

## **PRE-CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS AND REGISTRATION**

### **SUMMARY**

Christian Aid, in partnership with the University of Glasgow, the Global Partnership on Drug Policies and Development (GPDPD) at *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH*, Open Society Foundations (OSF) and the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), is delighted to confirm the International Colloquium, 'Addressing the Development Implications of Illicit Economies: a Cross-Disciplinary and Cross Sectoral Exchange'.

The Colloquium will be held at SOAS, the University of London (Thornhaugh St, Russell Square, London, WC1H 0XG, UK) from 19-21 April 2018.

The Organising Committee at this time wishes to announce a **pre-call** for submissions and registration to the Colloquium. The formal-call for submissions and registration will open in late-January. In the meantime, please email [illiciteconomies.colloquium@gmail.com](mailto:illiciteconomies.colloquium@gmail.com) with your name and contact details to register your interest.

### **BACKGROUND**

Conventional policy discourses have typically framed illicit economic activity as a law enforcement problem and a serious threat to human development. Illicit economies, for example, frequently pose clear dangers to the health and well-being of individuals and communities. They can drive corruption and failures in governance; undermine institution-building; and create hidden structures of power that further entrench crime, conflict and instability. However, for many communities living in poverty and conflict-affected areas across the globe, involvement in illicit economic activity can also be a 'solution' to the real problems of survival they face.

From Afghanistan and Myanmar in Asia, to Latin America and the Caribbean, and across to the Sahel and Central Africa, marginalised communities have shown remarkable resilience to crisis after crisis. Many survive not because of state protection, which may be absent or ineffective; nor because of development aid, which may at-times fail to reach certain areas. Arguably, these communities survive because of their involvement in illicit economic activities. This often forces them into contact with criminal actors, who may exercise power and access to resources. In many cases, this is driven by structural discrimination and social exclusion. These dynamics raises difficult questions around the relationship between illicit economies, policy responses and development. How can the international community more effectively tackle the clear and obvious threats posed by illicit economies, while avoiding further harms to already marginalised communities?

The main aim of the Colloquium is thus to improve understanding of the development implications of illicit economies through a cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral exchange. This includes discussion of the effects of policy responses and a specific focus on illicit drug economies, as one of the most

important illicit value chains, as well as cross-cutting issues of gender and human rights. Key objectives are as follows:

- To bring together government representatives, development agencies, international organizations, NGO and academics to share different views and experiences of this topic, discuss emerging research, evidence needs, policy responses and specific challenges; and raise concerns and potential solutions;
- To highlight new and innovative research in this area, and encourage policymakers and practitioners to consider possible implications for implementation;
- To facilitate cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral interaction to establish common guidelines that address the development challenges of illicit economies; and
- To adapt and further improve development-oriented approaches to policy; building the evidence base to contribute to policy-innovations, sensitive to local development needs and realities.

### KEY THEMES FOR SUBMISSIONS

The Organising Committee will consider any submission that addresses the topic, broadly defined: ‘the development implications of illicit economies’. Submissions are encouraged from across disciplines and sectors, including academia, government, NGOs, practitioners and policymakers. This may incorporate, for example, academic papers, project/programmatic reports, position papers, policy reviews, posters and/or exploratory papers. Please note, though, the main themes of the Colloquium below:

- Working towards Sustainable Development Goal 16: the challenge of illicit economies to human rights, peace, security and justice
- Illicit economies from a historical perspective: learning contemporary lessons
- Understanding the gendered dimensions of illicit economies
- Illicit interactions with the state: corruption, protection rackets and the dynamics of violence
- (Post)conflict contexts and illicit economies
- Surviving at the margins: guerrilla livelihoods, counterfeit medicines and the black market
- The ‘Migrant Crisis’ and illicit economies: human smuggling and methods of survival
- Policy responses to drug production and trafficking in the Global South
- Alternative development in rural and urban settings: challenges in exiting the illicit economy
- Studying illicit economies: data, methodologies and indicators
- Money laundering and illicit money flows

The Organising Committee will review all submissions, and place accepted papers (academic and non-academic) on a relevant panel. Authors will be expected to make their paper available for circulation, and give a short 10-15min presentation of the main findings (preferably with PowerPoint slides) during the Colloquium. Across panels, the Organising Committee will assign a discussant for each paper, ideally from a different sector to that of the presenter. The discussant will provide comments following presentation of the paper, with the aim of stimulating cross-sectoral discussions and learning.

Panel discussions and plenaries will be video-recorded and shared more widely with the approval of participants. The Organising Committee also aims to make all papers and reports presented open access. In exceptional circumstances, off-the-record panel discussions may be considered.

Facilities for poster exhibits or publication tables during the Colloquium will be provided at the venue. There will also be space in the programme for report or book launches.

**ORGANISING COMMITTEE**

- **Julia Buxton** - Professor of Comparative Politics at the School of Public Policy, Central European University
- **Tom Blickman** – Senior Project Officer at Transnational Institute, Amsterdam
- **Daniel Brombacher** – Head of Project, Global Partnership on Drug Policies and Development (GPDPD), at GIZ
- **Allan Gillies** – ESRC Global Challenges Research Fund Fellow, School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Glasgow
- **Jonathan Goodhand** – Professor in Conflict and Development Studies, SOAS
- **Paul Gootenberg** – Distinguished Professor, and Chair of the Department of History, Stony Brook University, New York
- **Eric Gutierrez** – Senior Adviser on Tackling Violence, Building Peace, Christian Aid
- **Natasha Horsfield** – Coordinator of the BOND Drug Policy Group
- **Axel Klein** – Associate Fellow at the Royal United Services Institute
- **Alfred McCoy** – Harrington Professor of History, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- **Patrick Meehan** – ESRC Global Challenges Research Fund Fellow, Department of Development Studies, SOAS
- **Luciana Pol** – Senior Fellow in Security Policy and Human Rights at the Center for Legal and Social Studies, Argentina
- **Lisa Sanchez** – Latin America Programme Manager for Transform Drug Policy Foundations and *Mexico Unido Contra la Delincuencia*