



The way towards drug policy reform:

Regional perspectives from Southeast Asia and Latin America

10 December 2015, 9:00 to 10:00

Room C3, C Building, 7th floor, Vienna International Centre

Organised by the Thailand Institute of Justice, the International Drug Policy Consortium, Penal Reform International, the Permanent Mission of Thailand to the UN in Vienna and the Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the UN in Vienna

For 50 years, drug control has focused on imposing criminal sanctions against all people involved in the drug market, hoping that harsh criminal sanctions would deter people from entering the illicit drug trade. This has led to massive prison overcrowding (in 2014, UNODC estimated that one in five people in prison had been condemned for an offence linked to illicit drug possession or trafficking) and an exacerbation of social and health harms. Although women are incarcerated at a lower rate than that of men, they are the fastest growing prison population worldwide, and their incarceration is mainly driven by drug control efforts. Most are incarcerated for micro-trafficking or personal use offences, and lived in a situation of high vulnerability prior to their incarceration. Their incarceration has had devastating impacts on their lives and that of their children and other dependents.

This side event aims to promote options for drug policy reform that aim to promote alternatives to incarceration and more proportionate sentencing for drug offences, in an effort to reduce prison overcrowding and ensure an approach based on health, human rights and social inclusion.

Speakers:

- **Welcome remarks** – Ambassador Arthayudh Srisamoot, Permanent Mission of Thailand to the UN in Vienna
- **Global Prison Trends: developments and challenges in penal policy** – Oliver Robertson, Penal Reform International
- **Alternatives to Incarceration: lessons learned from Southeast Asia** – Dr. Phiset Sa-ardyen, Thailand Institute of Justice
- **Women, incarceration and drug policies in Latin America** – Marie Nougier, International Drug Policy Consortium
- **Promoting more proportionate penalties: The experience of Costa Rica** – Ambassador Pilar Saborio de Rocafort, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica to the UN in Vienna

Thai snacks will be available at the event.