



**GLOBAL
INITIATIVE**
AGAINST TRANSNATIONAL
ORGANIZED CRIME

EXPLORING THE TRANSFORMATIONS AND TRAJECTORIES OF DRUG MARKETS IN A CHANGING WORLD

SIDE EVENT AT THE 69TH CND

**9 MARCH 2026
TIME: 13:00–14:00 (CET)**

**Venue: Hybrid
(Room MOE79), Vienna
International Centre**

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Organized by the Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime (GI-TOC) and supported by Australia, Canada, New Zealand, Germany, UK, the Netherlands and the African Union.

The ability of drug markets and drug trafficking organizations to adapt, evolve and expand is evident worldwide. Furthermore, the dynamics of drug markets are undergoing significant changes. The third edition of the GI-TOC Global Organized Crime Index, for instance, shows that synthetic drugs and cocaine now dominate the global illicit drug landscape. More generally, the world is experiencing a steadily expanding global drug trade, accompanied by record-high drug use and mounting health, social and security costs in nearly every region.

The profound transformations in drug markets are driven by major shifts in the global criminal economy. Disruptions to Afghan heroin production, surging cocaine supplies, the steady rise and diversification in the market for synthetic opioids, the upsurge of digital supply chains and online drug markets, and the partial legalization of cannabis in some countries are reshaping patterns of production, trafficking and consumption. These changes have severe consequences for public health, human rights, organized criminal activity and drug-related violence.

The GI-TOC will present its latest research findings from different regions, which underline these drastic developments. Through analyzing the most recent trends, this event will consider possible future scenarios for drug markets and how to anticipate and prepare for them, as well as how to reduce the most severe costs and harms through evidence-based policy development that focuses on people, communities, human rights and the rule of law.

In the context of growing political fragmentation in the field of international drug policy, an understanding of the dynamics of criminal economies will be crucial for the prospective success of the independent review panel established by the CND.



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Speakers

- Opening remarks and chair, H.E. Ian Biggs, Permanent Representative of Australia to the UN in Vienna
- GI-TOC presentations – Jason Eligh, Senior Expert on Drugs and Drug Markets, and insights from regional Observatory Directors: Daniel Brombacher (Europe) and Cecilia Farfán-Méndez (North America)
- Prof. Dr. Hendrik Streeck, Commissioner of the Federal Government for Drug and Addiction Policy, Germany
- Closing remarks, Jeeva Saraswati, Director of Anti-Crime Capacity Building Program, Canada
- Moderation: Kristina Amerhauser, Head of Mekong Observatory, GI-TOC