BRITISH GROUP INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION

DRUG POLICY REFORM PARLIAMENTARY SEMINAR

PLENARY SESSION IV: SUPPLY REGULATION POLICIES

MARIA LUCIA KARAM, LORD RAMSBOTHAM, GEORGE SOROS and HARALD TERPE

Supply Regulation Policies

[BARONESS STERN *in the Chair*]

The Chair identified herself as a Member of the House of Lords, one of Baroness Meacher's helpers and great admirers, and a vice-chairman of the all-party group on drug policy. She congratulated the British Group IPU for taking the initiative to convene the important meeting, which would contribute to a safer and more just world.

She thought of the topic for discussion—supply regulation policies and their economic and social impact—as "collateral damage". She spoke of her experience of prisons and penitentiaries, having visited them in countries represented at the session including Argentina, Brazil, Chile and Guatemala, and described prisons as an example of that collateral damage. She said that more than 10 million people were in the world's overcrowded prisons, many of whom were there owing to the world's drug control regime. She said that, in prison, many people caught deadly diseases, but did not get any treatment

She introduced the "absolutely sparkling" panel, and said that George Soros had done much to get drug policy reform on the agenda. He was an influential international figure to whom all Presidents of the world have listened. His foundations had supported projects in the drug reform field, from harm reduction to the Global Commission.

She welcomed Maria Lucia Karam from Brazil, who was a judge for eight years before she retired to write and lecture on the failures of drug prohibition, and Lord Ramsbotham, an independent colleague, like herself, from the House of Lords. She said that independent members could think and say what they liked, and that he was famous for that. After a distinguished Army career, he became chief inspector of prisons, and then joined the House of Lords. Finally, she welcomed Harald Terpe, a Green Member of the German Parliament and a spokesman on drugs and addiction.

Supply and Demand Economics of the Global Drug Market

Speaker: **George Soros**, Chair, Open Society Foundations.

George Soros said how pleased he was to participate in this significant meeting. He said that now was the time for profound reform of global drug policy and that the gathering was an important step in that direction. He said that most people agreed that the war on drugs had failed, and that that could be explained by economic theory. He said that "economics 101" teaches us about supply and demand, and how restraining supply, such as through prohibition, pushes prices up. However, rising drugs prices do not diminish demand because that demand is inelastic—nothing is more inelastic than addiction.

He said that the conclusion was obvious: reduce demand directly by treating drug addiction as a public health problem. Treating it as a criminal problem had not reduced demand, but pushed supply into the hands of criminals. He said that the more severe the enforcement, the more the drug trade had fallen into the hands of hardened criminals who kill and create mayhem without hesitation.

He said that the war on drugs had proven to be counter-productive. It had no appreciable effect on drug use, but had led to the rise of drug lords, who reaped huge profits at a great cost to society, with the result of horrifying violence and political instability in many countries.

He said that, however, the opportunity for radical reform was better than it had been at any point in the 25 years he had engaged in drug policy reform. The movement was most

advanced in Latin America and started with a high-level commission headed by Henrique Cardoso of Brazil and other vice-presidents. It increased its political influence when taken up by sitting presidents, spearheaded by President Santos of Colombia and Otto Pérez Molina of Guatemala. The movement had spread to Africa under the active leadership of Kofi Annan.

He said that, in the United States, the fiscal crisis created a powerful incentive for drug reform. Law enforcement agencies spent billions of taxpayers' dollars every year trying to enforce an unenforceable law. There were about 750,000 arrests each year for possessing small amounts of marijuana, which represented more than 40% of all drug arrests. The need for spending cuts in national and local government came on top of a profound generational change of attitude towards marijuana, as today's parents had used it as teenagers and survived.

He said that Europe and Australia had always been more progressive about drugs than the rest of the world, and that now that the euro crisis had imposed acute financial constraints on European Governments, there was renewed impetus for more radical reform. He said that the money spent globally on arresting and jailing drug users could be put to better use by transferring it to education and treatment. Marijuana should be taken out of the criminal justice system and people should no longer be locked up for simple drug possession. It was time to end the war on drugs, which had turned users into criminals, and to treat drug addiction as a public health problem.

He said that Uruguay would be the first country to legalise marijuana. In the US, the states of Colorado and Washington had voted to legalise it, and the US Government recently announced that it would not interfere. The Attorney General, Eric Holder, recently expanded efforts to curtail severe penalties for low-level federal drug offences. The American public was squarely in favour of this. Last week, a Gallup poll found that 58% of them supported legalising marijuana, which was a 10-point jump since last year.

He said that the momentum for reform ought to be strong enough to have an impact on the outcome of the 2016 UN special session, although he did not think that victory was assured. Two permanent members of the Security Council, Russia and China, were committed to outdated drug policies, and even in the US there were powerful forces wedded to the status quo. He said that drug enforcement policies were intricately interwoven with racial prejudices. Depending on the city, African-Americans and Hispanics were up to 10 times more likely to be arrested for possessing marijuana than whites.

He said that that those wedded to the status quo would fight back with new strategies to resist reforms, which was why other's efforts must become more sophisticated. He wanted to focus on three major reforms: removing marijuana from the criminal justice system; no longer jailing people for simple drug possession, as in Portugal, where it had been remarkably successful; and finding the best ways to help those struggling with addiction.

He cited the examples of Switzerland, Germany, the Netherlands, Denmark, Britain and other countries that had heroin maintenance programmes to help street heroin addicts. He said that the result was that their health and welfare improved, crime dropped, black markets dried up—all citizens benefited.

He said that the world had reached a point at which it was not enough to say that the war on drugs did more harm than good—the mantra of the reform movement. Now that marijuana was being legalised in Uruguay, Colorado and Washington, people had to make sure that legalisation worked by looking at whether violence was reducing, whether other social benefits resulted from new taxes and regulation, and whether criminalisation could be replaced by honest drug education and guidance. Once marijuana policy was sorted out, the ultimate question would be about dealing with other drugs—those currently in use and those invented in the future.

The Chair noted that the applause that Mr Soros had earned was in part in recognition of his huge personal contribution towards drug reform.

Decriminalisation *v.* Legalisation

Speaker: **Judge Maria Lucia Karam**, retired judge, Law Enforcement Against Prohibition UK.

Maria Lucia Karam said that she was speaking on behalf of Law Enforcement Against Prohibition, a non-profit organisation comprising past and present members of law enforcement and criminal justice agencies who have enforced drug laws and understood the failures and harm provoked by existing policies. She said that drugs became illegal worldwide at the beginning of the 20th century. In the early 1970s, the former US President Richard Nixon declared "war on drugs", and that attitude soon spread throughout the world. Nevertheless, illegal drugs kept getting cheaper, more potent, more diversified and far easier to access than before their prohibition, and before producers, sellers and consumers were branded "enemies" in this war.

She said that prohibition was not just a failed and ineffective policy; it was much worse than that. It increased the risks and harm that drugs caused, most tragically in drug-related violence, which was the logical outcome of a policy based on war. Many more people died because of drug prohibition than from drugs themselves, because of the gangs, cartels and mafias. Production and supply of illegal drugs had become the main opportunity for profit from illicit activities, and therefore the greatest incitement to the corruption of state officials. It also provided money for other illicit activities, including terrorism.

She said that prohibition implied a lack of any control over the illicit drugs market, and handing it over to underground gangs and cartels without any kind of regulation. It was they who decided what to produce and sell, the toxic potential of the drugs, what cutting agents to use, the price, and whom to sell them to and where.

She said that prohibition hindered assistance and the provision of health services, whether through compulsory treatment, which was inefficient and violated human rights, or by inhibiting the search for voluntary treatment. It caused environmental harm by requiring manual drug crop eradication, or, worse, aerial spraying of chemical herbicides, which happened in Latin America in the Andean region. Drug prohibition was driven by the three UN conventions, which set guidelines for the domestic laws of almost all countries. They differentiated arbitrarily between the conduct of producers, sellers and users of drugs, according to whether the drugs were deemed illegal or, despite being similar, remained legal, as alcohol did. The conduct of some producers, sellers and users was criminal, while that of others was legal. Such unequal treatment of absolutely similar activities was a clear violation of the principle of equality, according to which all persons should be treated equally under the law.

She said that many other principles guaranteed in declarations of human rights were systematically violated by the UN conventions and domestic drug laws, and that prohibition and its "war on drugs" were inconsistent with human rights, as they were contradictory concepts. Wars and human rights were not compatible in any circumstances. The "war on drugs" was not truly a war against drugs, or against things, but, like any other war, a war against people: the producers, sellers, and consumers of the arbitrarily selected substances deemed to be illegal. More properly, it was a war against the most vulnerable among those

producers, sellers and consumers. The enemies in that war were poor, powerless, marginalized people. The massive incarceration of African Americans in the United States revealed the primary target of the American drug war: to perpetuate discrimination based on the colour of someone's skin—discrimination that was previously enforced by slavery, and the segregation system known as Jim Crow.

She said that drug prohibition was overcrowding Brazilian prisons. Brazil had the fourth largest prison population in the world, 27% of which was inmates sentenced for drug offences. In the past seven years the number of inmates sentenced for drug offences in Brazil had more than quadrupled. Drug prohibition led to mass incarceration but also created crimes without victims, and the war on drugs, like any other war, created victims and was lethal. In Mexico, the military offensive against the cartels unleashed a wave of violence that had killed more than 70,000 people since it was launched in December 2006. Brazilian laws did not provide for the death penalty. However, Amnesty International reported that, between January and September 2012, 804 people were killed by the police in the states of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo alone, whereas there were 682 confirmed executions in the 20 countries that carried out the death penalty in that year, apart from China. In the last 10 years, in the city of Rio de Janeiro, one in five murders has resulted from summary executions during police operations in the poor communities known as favelas.

She said that the war on drugs had brought back to the scene the enforced disappearances that were a characteristic of the 20th century's Latin American dictatorships. In Mexico and Brazil, many people had disappeared in recent years, probably killed by the police or drug dealers, and it was time to put an end to failed, harmful and bloody drug prohibition. It was not enough to decriminalize drug possession for personal use, or to legalize only some substances seen as soft drugs, such as marijuana or the coca leaf. It was, rather, necessary to legalise and regulate the production, supply and consumption of all drugs. Mere decriminalisation maintained the illegality of the drug market, thus leaving untouched the most harmful consequences of drug prohibition and its war, including violence, corruption, greater risks and harm to health and the environment, deaths, mass incarceration, racism and other discrimination, the humiliation, control and submission of poor, powerless and marginalized people, and the violation of principles guaranteed in declarations of human rights and democratic constitutions. Only legalisation would put an end to those harmful consequences.

She said that to legalise drugs meant to regulate and control them. All drugs, legal or illegal, could be dangerous. The more dangerous the effects of a drug, the more reason to legalise its production, supply and consumption, because one could not control or regulate what was illegal. Legalising all drugs would give back to the state the power to regulate, control, limit and tax the production, supply and consumption of those substances. Besides putting an end to the risks, harm and pain caused by prohibition, legalisation was the only way to reduce the dangers caused by drug use. If there was no prohibition, drugs would cause less harm. The end of the war on drugs, and the replacement of prohibition with a system of legalised regulation of all drugs, were the most urgent measures needed to reduce violence, social harm, pain, and injustice.

Drugs, Prisons and Penal Reform

Speaker: **General Lord Ramsbotham GCB CBE**, former HM Chief Inspector of Prisons.

Lord Ramsbotham said that he was a member of Baroness Meacher's all-party group on drug policy reform, and he also chaired the cross-party group on criminal justice, drugs

and alcohol, which represented practitioners and tried to form a link between workers on the ground and Members of Parliament, so that those workers could put across their feelings to MPs.

He said that he wanted to talk about where prisons sat within the system. He had been a soldier, leaving the Army in 1993, and came to the criminal justice system late in life. He was surprised to find that it was not really a system, because all the parts were not pulling together. Instead of being seen as equivalent to hospitals in the health service—that is, the acute part to which people went for treatment—prisons were regarded as the default position, and everything related to them. As they were not part of a whole and not seen as places for acute treatment, there was no clarity on many issues, not least drugs.

He asked why, if prisons claimed to be drug-free, so many people were clearly taking drugs there. He said that prison officers confirmed that there were many drug dealers on every wing, and that prisoners could obtain virtually any drug they wanted. It seemed that the prison system did not help. Prisoners often told him that they took drugs out of boredom or frustration. Locking up prisoners all day, so that they did precisely nothing, created a climate in which drugs presented a possible way out.

He said that prisons saw themselves in isolation, not as part of a national drug structure. What they had to do with and for people sent to prison should have accorded with a national policy, but the national policy was not really national. He agreed with every word Judge Karam had said about prohibition and its evils, which were apparent to anyone who studied the American scene of the 1920s. He agreed with every single word George Soros said about the issue not being an internal one for prisons, but a public health issue. He asked what the aim of prison was, other than to help those in prison to lead a useful and law-abiding life when they came out. Their health, whether mental or physical, was a public health issue, because they would return to the public.

He said that if prisons were to tackle drugs, they would have to be linked to what was done nationally, with anything they did for someone in prison being carried on when that person left, so that such nationally provided opportunities were not wasted, and so that those people could continue their passage towards being drug-free.

He said that the phrase “war on drugs” had been ridiculed by his two companions. As a soldier, he always hated such uses of the word “war”, because he understood that it meant a clash between two sides that was governed by the law of armed conflict. The trouble with such a total misuse of a word was that it gave people a wrong direction about their role.

He said that Judge Karam had spoken about victims, but there had been no mention of home troops. He hoped that as progress was made towards the situation that George Soros outlined, the word “war” would be dropped, and it would be picked up that drugs would not go away; they were a public health issue, and all agencies in the system, including prisons, had to play their part in the overall effort.

He said he was impressed that it was clear that an overall effort was being made in many countries, some of which had worse problems. He offered a word of hope to countries taking a bold stance and seeking to get their influence accepted, particularly in the UN conference in 2016: the effort to abolish cluster munitions also started with a small group of countries, not including Security Council members, who took against the idea. That resulted in a cluster munitions treaty being signed by more than 150 countries. Luckily, cluster munitions seemed to be on the way out.

He said that his message was that parliamentarians should go down the Soros route as quickly as possibly, and down the Karam route with regard to prohibition, but prisons should not think that they were in isolation. They had a role to play on behalf of the public in achieving that aim.

Case Study (Germany)

Speaker: **Dr Harald Terpe**, Member and spokesman for Committee on Health, German Bundestag.

Harald Terpe said that political parties in Germany differed on central questions of drug policy. He was a spokesman for the Greens on drug policy, but would try to outline the German situation objectively. German drug policy was based on four principles: prevention, therapy, harm reduction and repression. The importance of the first two was uncontested by all political camps, and more than 70,000 heroin addicts were in substitution therapy, using replacements such as methadone, but there was a failure in prisons.

He said that agreement had not yet been reached on the necessity of harm reduction, and on strengthening instruments to achieve it, but progress had been made on that issue in Germany; for example, after long discussions, all the major parties realised that heroin-assisted treatment of opiate addicts was a promising way to improve patients' health and reduce social damage. In the case of other instruments, such as the necessity of pill testing, a lot of convincing was still needed.

He said there was total disagreement about the usefulness of repression in drug policy in Germany. Not only the Green party but the Socialists, some Liberals and a few Social Democrats were convinced that the war on drugs had been lost, and that the negative effects of repression prevailed. He demanded fundamental reform of international drug policies and an end to repression and prohibition. The current federal Government, however, saw things differently, and he supposed that the future Government would do so. They regarded repression as an efficient instrument of drug policy and did not see any need for fundamental reform. They rejected any attempt at wider reform, such as that in Latin America, and supported prohibitive approaches in those countries.

Despite its obvious inefficiency, repression was still highly overrated in German drug policy. According to a study commissioned by the German Government, two thirds of all funds invested in drug policy were spent on repression, yet 10% of all state spending on law and order related to the fight against illegal drugs. That was utterly inappropriate. In recent years, the Greens in Germany had consistently criticised the policy, and had tried over and again to revive the drug policy debate in the country, and to draw attention to new approaches in other parts of the world. In the spring, they invited Ethan Nadelmann of the Drug Policy Alliance to speak as an expert to the German Parliament's Committee on Health. However, the Greens had to admit that there was still a long way to go, and that advances came in small steps.

On the medical use of cannabis, he said that in Germany an authorised cannabis-based drug was available to limited numbers of patients. The vast majority of patients still had no access to that treatment option. Some had even had to go to court to fight for their legitimate claims. The German debate on drug policy suffered from a pointless dispute over the morality of the use of drugs. There was also a tendency to attribute a specific risk to any drug that was illegal. There had been discussions on how dangerous cannabis was, how much THC it contained and whether it functioned as a gateway drug. From the Green party's point of view, those questions missed the point, which was how to regulate the drug market in a way that kept the adverse effects on people's health, on states, and on whole regions of the world as small as possible.

The debate in Germany did not take adequately into account the fact that a lot of health risks were not caused by the drug, but were due to black market conditions. For example, HIV

or hepatitis infections could be caused by sharing needles. The concentration of active substances in a single dose might have noxious effects; that was a problem created by the black market.

The regulation of drug production, supply and use was necessary. That did not mean that any drug would be available at any place at any time. A regulated legal market would be an efficient instrument for exerting a direct influence on the supply of any substance according to the potential health risk associated with it. In the report "After the War on Drugs: Blueprint for Regulation", the Transform Drug Policy Foundation made good proposals on what such a regulatory system could look like.

The challenge for future drugs policy was new psychoactive substances. That phenomenon showed two things. First, it had been wrong to criminalise drugs such as cannabis. The desire for psychoactive substances would always make people look for alternatives. It was known from surveys in Germany that a lot of people had switched to so-called legal highs because drugs such as cannabis were prohibited. The fact that cannabis was illegal made it easier for other substances to capture markets.

Secondly, he said we would never be able to win the war on drugs, especially not by prohibitive measures. The expectation that it would be possible to deal effectively with these issues through the use of criminal laws was unrealistic. It would be wrong constantly to impose new bans; parliamentarians should find out whether there were other ways to regulate new substances. New Zealand was just about to start doing that. The regulatory model in that country started with a risk assessment for any new substance; the substance was then classified in a regulatory regime. That was a wise, pragmatic approach, and its effect should be closely observed in Europe.

He said that the German Green party placed high hopes on reform efforts under way in Uruguay, for instance, but even more important were changes put into effect in some states in the USA. If the United States were to succeed in taking major steps towards ending prohibition, that could help the rest of the world to break the deadlock. He also put his hopes on the debate in Germany. Faced with the negative effects of the drugs scene and its black market in Berlin, for example, local authorities had started to discuss opening a coffee shop. There were similar problems in other German cities.

He said that perhaps, just as in the '90s, the major impulse for substantial drug policy reform in our country would come from cities and local communities, because it was there that the negative consequences of current policies were most visible. It would still take time before a broad consensus on ending a repressive drug policy would be reached. An unwillingness to admit that prohibition had failed to solve the problem was still widespread, but improvements in other countries gave him reason to hope.

Questions from Delegates

Fatma Nur Serter *(Turkey)* said that the important and valuable information shared by speakers would have been much more impressive had it included some opposing views. Since yesterday, everyone on the panels had been on the same side—defending legalisation, decriminalisation and so forth. She said that hearing from someone with opposing views would have made the debate more persuasive.

She said that her second complaint was about whether the speakers could make any reference to specific, scientific or experimental research. She asked whether they had any references to show that, if such and such happened or legalisation took place, people would use less drugs, or fewer would be put in jail for using drugs. She said that research was

necessary before taking such important decisions on policy, and that if the speakers could cite any studies by research institutes or universities, she would be glad if they could share them.

Ignazio Cassis *(Switzerland)* said that his question was mainly for Mr Soros, but also for the other speakers. He said that a world without drug consumption and problems would be a utopia, but utopias cannot be reached, so we have to choose between a black market and a regulated market. Mr Soros had said that in a regulated market, as we have known for 40 years, we had the situation under control, with rules, which are applied—as with medicines. Dr Cassis said that that was a pragmatic way to manage things so as to reduce collateral effects on society and to save lives by preventing people from catching AIDS or infectious diseases.

He said that his question was about why, when everything seemed so logical, we could not have succeeded in the past 40 years. We had lived with the utopian war on drugs—a war against evil, because there is a strong moral element in this—for 40 years. Twenty years ago, Switzerland had a wide debate on drugs and took decisions that were greatly criticised by the UN for being over-legalistic—not liberal. He asked how Mr Soros, with his wide vision of the world over a number of years, could explain a phenomenon that had occupied 40 years' history of our planet? It went wrong, with reason taking over from the emotional aspect and everything having that moral element.

Jaime Mario Trobo *(Uruguay)* said that there was no consensus in Uruguay. His country's delegation was made up of parliamentarians in favour of the Bill before the Uruguayan Parliament to legalise marijuana, as well as of others who were against it. He shared the views of Fatma Nur Serter, because although he was grateful to the British Group for putting the seminar together, there were only voices in favour of the decriminalisation and legalisation of drugs—there had been no significant arguments against. In a parliamentary context, it was good to have at least two points of view. He said that the event gave the impression of a generalised opinion in favour as a recommendation for other parliamentarians or for work on drugs, but that that was not necessarily everyone's view.

He said that we were contemplating whether it was good to regulate markets so that an illegal trade could become legal and we could control it, but that those who projected that solution were unable to assure us that an illegal trade in other products or substances would not continue. A black market would continue, because the problem lay more in demand than in supply.

He said that, on the demand side, the role of education was fundamental, but that no one had talked about education or investment in youth and children from an early age so that they understood the harm of addiction. He said that that would be of benefit to the welfare of society.

He said that Open Society Foundations had financed an intense campaign in Uruguay—on television, and with high-cost publicity and advertising—in support of a Government initiative to approve the legalisation of cannabis. That campaign argued that cannabis was not bad. He said that it was a mistake to say to young people that cannabis was not bad, because it is bad for you. He said that cannabis needed to be controlled. Whether we could control it was another issue, but the drug should not be presented as if it were good. He said that it would have been good to hear alternative opinions, as it was not a good idea to say to young people that drugs are good for you, in the way that the media campaign in Uruguay did, when they have a major bearing on such impressionable people as our youth.

The Chair said that she would not speak at length about the balance of the views expressed, except to say that since the seminar was about drugs policy reform, it had presumably attracted delegates from around the world who were interested in what reforms were possible and practical. All sorts of meetings took place in Parliament all the time, some of which, like the present meeting, were about how things could be changed to improve the world.

George Soros said that his answer to Dr Cassis was that drug addiction was an insoluble problem, because human beings had a tendency towards addiction, whether to drugs, alcohol or other addictive substances. As people wanted to find a solution to an insoluble problem, all kinds of ideas would be raised, but if there was no perfect solution, the remedies would often make the problem worse.

He said that the best example was that as death was an insoluble and unavoidable problem faced by everyone, people had found many myths that seemed to make it acceptable, but actually aggravated the problem. He said that his organisation had also established the "Project on Death in America". In America, there was a desire to ignore and deny the problem, which extended to the medical profession, but the project had managed to change some attitudes with very beneficial effects. He said that the same thing applied to drugs, as the war on drugs had been going on for 40 years and had made the problem much worse. He said that that had done a lot more damage than the drugs themselves, although that did not mean that drugs did no damage.

He said that he had not seen the advertisements that had been aired in Uruguay, so he could not comment on them, but that he would not support the statement that marijuana was good. It was a drug that had considerable beneficial effects, which had not been properly studied or used, and gave great relief to terminally ill patients, but it did so because it had psychedelic effects. Information provided by his foundation pointed out that studies had shown that the drug's most harmful effect was to interfere with short-term memory, which was particularly unhelpful for schoolchildren. Although the drug was not to be recommended, the case for that should not be overstated. He said that he would look into the matter, but he doubted very much that the foundation was sponsoring advertisements that claimed, "Marijuana is good for you." He said that there was, however, plenty of evidence to back up the claim that marijuana had a very beneficial effect for the terminally ill, such as people suffering from cancer.

He sympathised with the question asked by Fatma Nur Serter, because it was right to ask for information, and said that he would be happy to make available information that showed the beneficial effect of marijuana on terminally ill patients. He said that it had been difficult to get reliable scientific studies, because the drug warriors had prohibited them, but he and others had been pressing for them.

Lord Ramsbotham said that his approach stemmed from his appreciation that prohibition did not work and that there was a need to take a completely different approach. He had asked General Barry McCaffrey, a former colleague from the American army who had been the American drugs tsar, what he felt was the most important message was to put across. The answer was, "Prevent tomorrow's market." General McCaffrey's method was to use education—in schools, universities and other places—to tell young people about the damage done by drugs.

He said that he was glad that George Soros had mentioned substance abuse-induced memory loss. A speech and language therapist who had looked at young children in young

offenders institutions had found that 50% had substance abuse-induced memory loss, with related effects on learning.

He said that if drugs were legalised so that people could apply for them, they should automatically be given drugs education as part of their prescription for the drugs.

Maria Lucia Karam said that legalisation would not solve the drug problem, as there were two types of problem: those caused by drugs themselves; and those caused by prohibition. Legalisation would resolve the problems caused by prohibition, meaning that there would be more money to address the problems caused by drugs through education and help for users.

She said that there was no need for research or complicated scientific studies to see the harm caused by prohibition, as history and reality showed the problems. She said that delegates should think about the violence caused by drugs. There had been more than 70,000 deaths in Mexico, and that although there was no death penalty in Brazil, the police there killed more people than the countries that had the death penalty.

She said that there could be a residual underground market after legalisation, but that the whole market would not be underground. There were underground markets in tobacco and alcohol, but those did not create the problems caused when an entire market was underground and controlled by criminal agents.

She said that she was not arguing that drugs were good; all drugs could be bad. She said that delegates would probably agree that alcohol and tobacco were not good, but that no one was suggesting the prohibition of alcohol or tobacco. She said that violence was connected with the production and supply of cocaine, marijuana and heroin, but that there was no violence in the alcohol and tobacco markets. There were not people with guns in pubs or vineyards now, but gun violence was connected with alcohol production and supply in the United States from 1920 to 1933, during the prohibition period. She said that history and reality show that violence—the worst consequence of the war on drugs—existed only because of prohibition.

Harald Terpe said that the problem was not that there were no studies, as Fatma Nur Serter had said. He said that the experience in the Netherlands and Switzerland over a 20-year period had been that there were not more users of marijuana or cannabis, and that the problem was that the situation with marijuana was worse when there was a black market.

Maria Angelica Cristi *(Chile)* said that she wanted to return to the comments made by the Turkish and Uruguayan delegates. Her notes contained references to addiction, money laundering, drugs in prisons, the decriminalisation and legalisation of drugs and laws for preventing organised crime, conflict and violence, but at no point had the legalisation of drugs been set out as a topic that needed to be addressed. She agreed with the remarks made by the Turkish and Uruguayan delegates.

She said that given that drugs had not been legalised in the UK, it was interesting that most people on the panel agreed with legalisation, although Mr Soros and others left their position more open, and it was odd that more opposition had not be voiced. She said that Judge Karam had talked about violence and death and the difficult situation associated with drugs in Brazil, quoting many statistics. Yesterday, the number of people who died due to problematic drug use had been discussed. She said that everybody knew that drugs were associated with health problems, but asked whether it would not be better to work on prevention programmes before thinking about legalising marijuana or other drugs.

She said that there was zero tolerance for cigarettes in Chile and restrictions on alcohol, but at the same time the legalisation of marijuana was being promoted, yet nobody asked whether that was strange. She asked whether the aim was to limit the harm caused by substances in general, or to focus only on one or two.

She said that perhaps not everybody had had the same experience as that in Latin America, where there were producing countries and countries for drug transit, and many people were suffering due to the impact of drugs. She said that 60% of crime took place under the influence of alcohol or drugs, and that the extent of violence and crime committed under the influence of drugs in Chile was significant.

She said that it would be interesting to hear opinions from Holland, which had already been through a process of legalisation.

Iris Vianey Mendoza *(Mexico)* said that the issue of drugs in Mexico had nothing to do with raising taxes. If Mexico legalised drugs, it would be able to collect more taxes, but there would be no impact on the use of marijuana.

She said that attending such events was useful, even though there was a trend towards legalisation, which Mexico was not in favour of. Peña Nieto, who represents the right-wing party, was not in favour of that, and the left-wing parties were not in agreement either. She said that she represented a left-wing party that does not agree with the decriminalisation of drugs to resolve the problem.

She said that she had seen the abuse and crime generated by drugs. Drugs were a clinical and public health issue. In Mexico, a war had been waged for more than six years, leaving many people dead and thousands displaced, and affecting thousands of families. She said that now was the time to talk about terrorism, which has not been dealt with in the seminar. She said that terrorism was caused by the production and trafficking of drugs.

She said that although there was a global trend towards the decriminalisation of drugs, people in Mexico did not agree because the problem was not limited to marijuana. She asked whether such a seminar should focus on decriminalisation, because there are many other topics that needed mentioning, such as policing and professional training. She said that she did not believe that decriminalisation would resolve the problems in Mexico or lead to peace. Mexico was a transit country for drugs, and she said that there must be another way to improve conditions.

Matías Conde Vázquez *(Spain)* said that he remembered that people used to say that things were good if they were whole and that, if they were faulty, they were considered to be bad. He said that he never agreed with that philosophy, as if a window pane did not have glass, it did not stop being a window. He said that the conference did not have to focus exclusively on either regulation or prohibition and asked whether the co-existence of regulation and prohibition should be considered.

Lord Ramsbotham said that he was extremely glad that Iris Vianey Mendoza had mentioned terrorism. He said that when he was on the streets of Northern Ireland facing what looked like sectarian conflict, he found that a lot of it was merely criminal activity involving drugs. He said that the link between terrorism and drugs needed to be carefully and deeply investigated.

Maria Lucia Karam said that so-called organised crime in Mexico had its present dimensions only because of prohibition and the war on drugs. She said that, before 2006, Mexico had a homicide rate of around 10 per 100,000 people. In 2012, that rate was around 20, although that was less than Brazil's, at 26. Many people had died for drugs and prohibition increased the risk. Many people died from overdoses because they did not know what they were taking. She said that, in an illegal market, there was neither control nor regulation.

She said that there was organised crime in Mexico due to prohibition, but there was no organised crime in the production or supply of alcohol. However, during prohibition in the United States, Al Capone and gangsters controlled the market, and that was happening today with the illegal market. She said that only legalisation would put an end to the violence provoked by the repression of organised crime.

Harald Terpe said that there was no one solution to the problem. Everyone said that education, harm reduction and solving problems in the health system were important, but that decriminalisation was also part of the solution.

George Soros said that the question of whether a combination of repression and regulation was possible required thorough study.

He said that addiction was a public health problem. The nature of addiction was that the person concerned lost control over their behaviour, so some form of repression might be appropriate to bring them under control and ensure that they undergo therapy. He said that treating an addict as a criminal makes it difficult to reach him as a patient, which was something that needed to be resolved, although he said that he did not know how.

He said that he got involved in the process because he felt that the war on drugs was doing more damage than drugs themselves, but he was not saying that drugs did not cause damage and there was no need to take any action.

The Chair thanked everyone for a lively and interesting session, and the speakers for their contribution.