

THE BECKLEY FOUNDATION

WWW.BECKLEYFOUNDATION.ORG



GLOBAL INITIATIVE FOR DRUG POLICY REFORM

OBJECTIVES

- To promote evidence-based, health-oriented, harm-reducing, cost-effective drug policies that respect human rights.
- To promote the redirection of resources away from prohibition, criminalisation and incarceration towards health care, education and rehabilitation.
- To reduce the human costs of both the illicit drug trade and the War on Drugs, which disproportionately affect producer and transit countries.
- To commission, write and disseminate new reports that facilitate debate on all possible policy options including legal regulation.
- To bring together international politicians, scientists and policy experts to develop new policy options.
- To educate and inform politicians, media and the public.

TIME FOR CHANGE

Half a century of prohibitionism has failed.

Despite governments spending globally in excess of \$100 billion a year on fighting the War on Drugs, there has been a clear long-term pattern of increasing availability and use. The unintended consequences of the current policies include ever-growing health problems, lack of access to essential medicines, soaring levels of crime, violence and corruption, discrimination and widespread abuses of human rights. The illicit drug trade is estimated to be the third most valuable industry in the world, all in the hands of criminals.

Improving our drug policy is one of the key policy challenges of our time. Let us break the taboo on debate and reform.

THE LAUNCH OF THE INITIATIVE

The Beckley Foundation's *Global Initiative for Drug Policy Reform* was launched in November 2011 at the House of Lords in London, at a Meeting co-hosted with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Drug Policy Reform. The *Global Initiative* promotes an evidence-based approach to drug policy, where all options are open for discussion, including legal regulation and the reform of the UN Drug Conventions.

For the launch of the *Initiative*, the Beckley commissioned two seminal Reports.

1. ROADMAPS TO REFORMING THE UN DRUG CONVENTIONS

www.beckleyfoundation.org/Roadmaps_to_Reform.pdf

This ground-breaking report, led by Professor Robin Room, is the first to carefully document different ways in which the UN Conventions can be amended in order to allow countries greater freedom to experiment with domestic policies better suited to their special needs. The report provides a blueprint towards allowing countries to implement two main policy options:

- **clear decriminalisation** of minor offences such as small-scale possession and cultivation
- the formation of a **legal, regulated and taxed** domestic market in one or more controlled substances.

2. A COST BENEFIT ANALYSIS OF A REGULATED AND TAXED CANNABIS MARKET IN THE UK

This Report, led by Professor Stephen Pudney, provides new and valuable data analysing the economic consequences of a regulated and taxed market.

Out of the *Global Initiative* arose the invitation by President Pérez Molina for Amanda Feilding and the Beckley Foundation to advise him and his Government on new approaches to drug policy reform.

CREATING AN EVIDENCE BASE

The Beckley Foundation has commissioned, written and produced over 40 influential books and reports on key drug policy issues. We are currently working on two new Reports, which will explore the options for creating legal, regulated markets in order to reduce drug-related harms:

1. REDUCING DRUG-RELATED HARMS THROUGH DECRIMINALISATION, REGULATION AND EDUCATION
2. COCA, COCAINE AND DERIVATIVES: REDUCING HARMS THROUGH DECRIMINALISATION AND REGULATION

ABOUT THE BECKLEY FOUNDATION

THE BECKLEY FOUNDATION IS A REGISTERED CHARITY IN THE UK, NO. SC033546



BACKGROUND

The Beckley Foundation was founded by its director Amanda Feilding in 1998, with the goal of reforming drug policy by promoting evidence-based, health-oriented, harm-reducing, cost-effective policies which respect human rights. It is now a leading international drug policy think-tank, with its work and publications disseminated worldwide. The Beckley Foundation is in the unique position of having substantial credibility in both the scientific and political arenas for its pioneering research and reports in both fields.

SELECTED BECKLEY MILESTONES

- The initiation in 2003 of the *Rational Scale of Harm for All Drugs*, later developed by Professor David Nutt *et al.*, and published in the *Lancet* in 2007 and 2010.
- Pioneering scientific research into the effects of drugs on the brain, in collaboration with leading academic institutions from around the world.
- The establishment in 2004 of the *International Society for the Study of Drug Policy* (ISSDP) and the *International Drug Policy Consortium* (IDPC).
- The commissioning of over 40 much-cited drug policy books, reports and briefing papers.
- The convening, in 2006, of the *Global Cannabis Commission*, whose 2008 Report, *Cannabis Policy: Moving Beyond Stalemate*, has been extremely influential in the development of global policy reform.

SEMINARS

Since 2000, the Beckley Foundation has organised a series of international seminars entitled *Society and Drugs: A Rational Perspective*, mainly held at the House of Lords. These events have been very influential in educating thought leaders, politicians and academics by presenting cutting-edge, rational overviews of the issues surrounding the use and misuse of drugs, both legal and illegal, and in promoting evidence-based approaches to global policy.

The Beckley seminars have brought together international politicians, scientists and other experts to debate:

- the comparative effectiveness of current prohibitionist policies with alternative policy options
- the importance of developing policies that reflect the different needs of different countries, and that differentiate between substances and patterns of use
- the scientific evaluation of the effects of different drugs, and patterns of use, on the brain, behaviour and health
- how policies that emphasise treatment and harm-reduction yield better results than those that focus on criminalisation and incarceration
- how the UN Drug Conventions could be amended to give individual countries more freedom to explore alternative policies, such as decriminalisation and regulation
- the likely consequences of changes in legislation, and their implications for public health, law and order, and the economy.

PRESIDENTIAL SIGNATURES FOR THE BECKLEY FOUNDATION PUBLIC LETTER & THE LAUNCH OF THE BECKLEY LATIN AMERICAN CHAPTER

The *Beckley Public Letter*, originally published in *The Times* and the *Guardian* in November 2011, calls for an end to the War on Drugs and for a re-examination of global drug policy. It has been signed by over 60 distinguished international figures, including nine Presidents (among them Jimmy Carter, Juan Manuel Santos and Otto Pérez Molina) and twelve Nobel laureates.

www.beckleyfoundation.org/public-letter

In April 2012, President Pérez Molina invited Amanda Feilding to launch the Beckley's Latin American Chapter in Guatemala in order to advise him and his Government on drug policy reform. In January 2013, Amanda presented the President and his key advisors with the Foundation's initial proposals, *Paths for Reform*. The President and his Government received the advice enthusiastically, and has incorporated it into both public announcements and the draft Declaration for the Organization of American States General Assembly in June 2013.

The Foundation is also working with the Government on convening the Tikal Summit: a confidential meeting of Latin American Presidents and key global business leaders to discuss drug policy reform.