

Human Rights Council – 36th Regular Session
Item 8 – General Debate

Joint Statement by
Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales – CELS
Penal Reform International

Delivered by Mr. Paulo de Tarso Lugon Arantes

Mr. President,

Centro de Estudios Legales y Sociales (CELS) and Penal Reform International would like to call your attention to the issue of the so-called “war on drugs” and drug-related policies which have led to a range of well-documented human rights violations worldwide. For example, increased police violence, especially in Latin America, and mass incarceration of users and people involved in non-violent low-level drug crimes leading to overcrowded prisons where rights are frequently violated.

We acknowledge the work of the Human Rights Council and Special Procedures in clearly establishing and documenting the impacts of harsh drug policies on human rights. We encourage the human rights system to further address this issue, specifically by contributing to the 2019 Review of the Plan of Action on International Cooperation to Counter the World Drug Problem. A human rights perspective is desperately needed in the design and implementation of drug policies around the world.

We encourage the HRC to contribute to this important process bringing to the table the technical expertise developed by this body, for instance on metrics and human rights indicators that will enrich the monitoring of drug policy impacts in our communities.

Thank you.