



**UNITED NATIONS  
UNIVERSITY**

Office at the United Nations, New York  
2 UN Plaza, DC2-2060  
New York, New York 10017  
Tel: 212-963-6387, Fax: 212-371-2144  
<http://www.ony.unu.edu>

**Subject: UNU Midday Forum:  
After the War on Drugs**

20 February 2009

Dear colleague,

The United Nations University Office at the UN in New York (UNU-ONY) is organizing a UNU Midday Forum titled “**After the War on Drugs.**” The event will take place on **Monday, February 23, 2009 from 1:15pm to 2:45pm** in Conference Room 8, UN Headquarters, New York.

This event will address the great need to reform current global drug policy. The last century has witnessed the construction of a global drug prohibition regime that relies overwhelmingly on criminal justice and other coercive institutions and mechanisms to try to reduce the use of forbidden substances. In the last few years however, the opposition to this rigidly prohibitionist approach promoted by the United States has grown. Europeans have led the way in reforming drug policy in ways that are more consistent with health, human rights and science, and Latin America and Asia are close behind. In the last few years, the U.S. has been forced to accept a more health-focused approach by allowing for the language of ‘harm reduction’ in a number of key U.N. documents (see UNU-ONY’s website for more information). The next decade of UN and international drug control policy will surely focus much more attention on reducing the harmful effects of both drug misuse and failed prohibitionist policies.

This UNU-ONY Midday Forum will host **Ethan Nadelmann**, the founder and executive director of the **Drug Policy Alliance**, the leading organization in the United States promoting alternatives to the war on drugs. Mr. Nadelmann will discuss the realistic options for global drug policy reform in both the short and long term. In addition, the discussion will address whether the Obama administration is likely to change the United States’ focus and allow global drug policy to evolve in a new direction that gives much greater weight to health, human rights, science and vigorous and open global debate. **Jean-Marc Coicaud**, Director of UNU New York Office, will moderate the discussion.

This discussion is part of the successful ongoing series of midday seminars—the *UNU-UN Midday Forum Series*. The UNU Office in New York aims to provide an intimate setting for the exchange of ideas and experiences, related to topics currently researched within the UNU and the UN, giving academics and policy makers an opportunity to participate in the intellectual work of the organization in a constructive and informal setting.

If you or your representative is interested in attending these events, please register online at [www.ony.unu.edu](http://www.ony.unu.edu), by Friday, February 20, 2009. If you have any questions, please contact my colleague, Ms. Sydney Kinnear on tel.: 212-963-6387 or email: [sydney@ony.unu.edu](mailto:sydney@ony.unu.edu). Confirmation of your participation would be most appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Jean-Marc Coicaud  
Director, UNU Office at the UN, New York