



**NO PEACE
WITHOUT
JUSTICE**

No Peace Without Justice Non C'è Pace Senza Giustizia
ETS

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Organisation in Special Consultative Status with the United Nations ECOSOC
since 2022

**Accountability for Human Rights Violations
committed in the name of the "War on Drugs"**

Tuesday, 30 September 2025 | 16:00–17:00

Concordia I Conference Room, Palais des Nations, Geneva

Live streaming on Facebook: <https://fb.me/e/5c2o9MRcl>

The global push to combat narcotics has become a pretext for systematic human rights violations and state violence, including extrajudicial executions, torture, arbitrary detention, and crimes against humanity. This side event examines accountability mechanisms by linking the ongoing ICC prosecution of former Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte with recent U.S. military strikes on ostensibly civilian vessels in the Caribbean, exploring how international law can protect both direct victims and populations "in whose name" such violence occurs.

The Philippines case provides critical precedent: Duterte's anti-drugs campaign resulted in thousands of deaths, widespread intimidation, and deliberate erosion of democratic institutions. On 12 March 2025, Duterte was surrendered to the ICC by virtue of an ICC arrest warrant for the crime against humanity of murder under Article 7(1)(a) of the Rome Statute—marking historic progress toward accountability for state-sponsored extrajudicial killings. Victims continue to seek justice at the ICC, highlighting challenges and possibilities of victim-centered accountability.

Contemporary Caribbean developments demonstrate pattern evolution: U.S. military forces struck four ostensibly civilian vessels in international waters in September 2025, killing at least 19 individuals. Regional leaders' endorsement—Trinidad and Tobago's PM praising the strikes, Dominican Republic describing "first-of-its-kind joint operation against narco-terrorism"—reveals how anti-drug rhetoric facilitates regional complicity in unlawful state violence. UN Special Rapporteurs and human rights organizations condemned these as extrajudicial killings violating international law.

A proposed U.S. Authorization for Use of Military Force aimed at "narco-terrorists" could grant authority for counter-narcotics military operations across 60+ countries, systematizing cross-border interventions and creating templates for authoritarian consolidation. Such operations serve dual purposes: generating popular support while intimidating opponents and normalizing state violence. Populations "in whose name" violence occurs—including the American public—constitute critical victim groups, highlighting transnational implications requiring robust international accountability.

Core Objectives:

- Examine accountability processes for human rights violations committed in anti-drug contexts, including ICC confirmation under Article 61 and complementarity principles
- Analyze contemporary operations within proposed legislative expansions that could systematize such operations globally
- Explore victim-centered approaches for both directly targeted populations and those indirectly affected "in whose name" violence is conducted
- Assess authoritarian consolidation patterns through anti-drug rhetoric and transnational "security cooperation"
- Identify concrete recommendations for States, international organizations, and civil society to strengthen accountability, prevent future violations, uphold rule of law



Program

Opening Remarks

- **Niccolò Figà Talamanca**, Secretary-General of No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ)
Framework linking Philippines to Caribbean developments

Panel Presentations: Key Findings and Perspectives

- **Gilbert Andres**, Lawyer for Victims of Duterte's "war on drugs"; Executive Director, Center for International Law (CenterLaw Philippines); ICC Listed Counsel
Philippines case study: ICC proceedings and victim perspectives
- **David Borden**, Executive Director, DRCNet Foundation (remote)
Patterns of authoritarian consolidation under anti-drug rhetoric
- **Rev. Father Albert C. Alejo, S.J.** – Board Member, NPWJ; Professor of Social Ethics, Pontifical Gregorian University
Ethical and social dimensions of state violence and anti-drug policies

Interactive Discussion

Closing Remarks

- **Niccolò Figà-Talamanca**, Secretary-General of No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ)

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