

**C.V. Starr Lecture**  
**Moving Beyond “Drugs and Thugs”: A New Strategy for the Andean Region**  
**March 31, 2004**

“We need more butter than guns. Now it’s much more guns than butter,” said John G. Heimann in assessing the effectiveness of United States drug policy in South America during a C.V. Starr Lecture on March 31, 2004, sponsored by the Law School’s Center for International Law.

Mr. Heimann – who recently served as co-chair of the Center for Preventive Action Commission at the Council on Foreign Relations which evaluated United States drug policies – said that over the past two decades, the United States had spent billions of dollars in trying to staunch the flow of illegal drugs from the Andean countries of Colombia, Venezuela, Peru, and Bolivia. He noted that the combination of the illegal drug trade with several insurgency movements and pervasive corruption in these countries has made this region of South America one of the most politically volatile in the world today.

During his lecture, Mr. Heimann characterized current United States anti-narcotics policy as a “drugs and thugs” approach which concentrates on stemming the actual flow of narcotics, apprehending drug lords and producers, and assisting local security forces in these efforts. But a report (“Andes 2020: A New Strategy for the Challenges of Colombia and the Region.”) released by the Center for Preventive Action Commission in January 2004 concluded that the current focus on counternarcotics and security issues will not promote regional stability and security, and could, in fact, hurt long-term American interests.

Instead, Mr. Heimann – who was also a former Comptroller of the United States Treasury Department and later held senior positions in the financial services industry – called on the United States to refocus its policy by placing greater emphasis on the so-called “butter” issues such as economic growth, land reform, reducing poverty, eliminating corruption, strengthening good governance, and building greater international support toward these ends in the Andean countries. He also called for greater efforts in reducing demand for illegal narcotics in countries such as the United States.

Because funding for current anti-drug policies expires this year, Mr. Heimann said that he expected a vigorous debate on the future of American drug policy in the coming months, and was confident that the commission’s report would play an influential role in guiding current discussions. “Crisis resolution gets the headlines. On the other hand, crisis prevention doesn’t get any attention in the press. But we want to get the attention of the policymakers now,” said Mr. Heimann.