



Dear {{FirstName or 'WOLA Supporter'}},

At the first-ever Cities Summit of the Americas that was held in Denver, Colorado last week, WOLA helped organize a [panel on drug policy and human rights](#) featuring civil society leaders and former mayors from Brazil, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and the United States, as well as officials from the Biden administration and the United Nations.

The aim was to foster discussion on how local communities and policymakers can place human rights at the center of the formation and implementation of drug policies. We hope you enjoy our [four takeaways from this discussion](#) and the [photo carousel](#) we published on [Instagram](#).

In other news this week, Adam Isacson, Maureen Meyer and Ana Lucia Verduzco were on a field visit to Honduras. Despite the heat and their busy schedule, they found the time to publish [a podcast](#) after returning from the Nicaraguan border, describing the dynamics for migrants arriving in Honduras and the hardships they face throughout the journey.

Also, as Title 42 comes to an end on May 11, Mexico Program Director, Stephanie Brewer published an [opinion piece](#) with [World Politics Review](#) titled: *Biden is Rebranding Trump's Border Policies*.

Last but not least, WOLA is excited to announce that lawyer Laura Dib recently joined us as our new [Program Director for Venezuela](#). She brings extensive experience in litigation before the Inter-American and International Human Rights Systems and is an expert on transitional justice, migration and human rights.

All this and more in this week's WOLA Weekly.

Best,



John Walsh

Director for Drug Policy and the Andes

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- 📍 Last week we hosted a panel on drug policy and human rights at the [Cities Summit of the Americas](#) in Denver, Colorado. Here are [four takeaways](#) from the discussion.
- 📄 The global drug prohibition regime and the 50-year-long U.S.-led “war on drugs” have not only had disastrous results across the world but are increasingly exacerbating other serious problems. Read our extensive report [Loosening Drug Prohibition's Lethal Grip on the Americas](#), which discusses how moving away from a prohibitionist drug policy framework can contribute to easing harms caused by drugs and the drug trade.
- ✉️ WOLA, LAWG & other NGOs [sent a letter](#) to President Biden & VP Harris urging them to double down on their root causes strategy to address the

humanitarian crisis in Central America. We urge the U.S. to intensify efforts through diplomacy, aid to protect civic space & financial sanctions.

- **mx** In the wake of the deadly fire at the migrant detention center in Ciudad Juárez and the end of Title 42, it remains to be seen whether Mexico City or Washington will take meaningful steps toward a human rights-respecting migratory policy, which prioritizes protection over detention. Read this analysis for [World Politics Review](#) from WOLA's Director for Mexico, [Stephanie Brewer](#).
- **PE** We urged the Peruvian government to implement recommendations made in this week's Inter-American Commission on Human Rights [report](#) including the creation of an independent expert group to support investigations of human rights violations committed during recent protests such as alleged extrajudicial killings by security forces. [Read](#) our Twitter thread.

WE DISCUSS MIGRATION DIRECT FROM THE HONDURAS-NICARAGUA BORDER



🎧 WOLA's Director for Defense Oversight Adam Isacson [recorded this podcast](#) during this week's delegation visit to the Honduras-Nicaragua border region. After the trip, we can't help but conclude: **Nobody should have to go through this.**

What we witnessed is the result of governance failures in the region, antiquated migration policies in the United States, and a failure to cooperate and communicate all along the migration route.



WOLA co-sponsored the [First International Convening of Formerly Incarcerated Women](#) in Bogotá, where 60 women from around the world gathered to discuss their experiences and strategies aimed at consolidating an international network of solidarity for women with similar stories.

WOLA's Weekly Border Update was quoted in John Oliver's episode about how the right to seek asylum at the US-Mexico border is still being curtailed after the end of Title 42. See [past weekly updates here](#).



🗣️ **A message from WOLA's president Carolina Jiménez Sandoval on World Press Freedom Day about the urgent need to protect journalists in Latin America**

“50% of journalists killed worldwide are in Latin America. Authoritarian governments and criminal groups continue to censor and harass journalists & dissenting voices while spreading misinformation through increasingly sophisticated methods. The need to protect journalists has never been so urgent.”

*Carolina Jiménez Sandoval,
President at WOLA*



WOLA IN THE NEWS



Maureen Meyer
Vice President for Programs



Security force abuses against migrants traveling to the United States are frequent. But “the overarching issue here is impunity ... They’re never fully investigated. The perpetrators are not being held responsible.”

– *CBC News*, [Scenes from an American migration crisis](#)



John Walsh
Director for Drug Policy and the Andes

Harm reduction strategies have been around for a long while. But the US political system has found it way more attractive to focus on wicked foreigners poisoning American youth. “The political payoff for the aggressive, drug warrior position is even more potent than fentanyl.”

“That is not going to go away.”

– *The Washington Post*, [Fentanyl Will Win the War on Drugs](#)

Support the Sally Yudelman Internship Program

At WOLA, internships are critical to arming future generations of advocates with the necessary skills to champion human rights and social justice work in their careers. Please consider contributing to WOLA’s internship program today!



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