



## OVERCOMING STIGMA AND VIOLENCE AGAINST INCARCERATED AND DRUG USING WOMEN

65th session of the Commission on the Status of Women

**Wednesday, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2021, 14:00 - 15:30 (New York)**

**Online event | In English and Spanish**

**[Prior registration on the CSW platform](#) is required to [attend this event online](#)**

Organised by Dianova International, the International Drug Policy Consortium (IDPC), the Washington Office on Latin America (WOLA) and the Women and Harm Reduction International Network (WHRIN)

Women who use drugs, and women incarcerated and formerly incarcerated for drug offences, face high levels of stigma, discrimination and violence, as they are seen as defying their assigned roles in society as mothers and caregivers. Women who use drugs face daunting barriers in accessing harm reduction and treatment services, and gender-sensitive programmes remain an exception rather than the norm. As a result, they are at higher risk of contracting HIV and hepatitis C, especially while incarcerated. Formerly incarcerated women face significant obstacles in rebuilding their lives. From the time of their arrest until their release, women's – especially trans women's – journey through the criminal legal system is marked by experiences of systemic violence, discrimination and trauma. This side event will discuss the most pressing issues faced by women who use drugs and incarcerated and formerly incarcerated women, with accounts of lived experiences from the USA and Mexico.

### Speakers:

- **Mary Chinery-Hesse**, West Africa Commission on Drugs, IDPC representative in Ghana & Former Deputy-General of the International Labour Organisation - *Opening remarks*
- **Ruth Birgin**, Women and Harm Reduction International Network
- **Gisela Hansen Rodríguez**, Dianova International
- **Andrea James**, National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls
- **Kenya Cuevas**, Casa de las Muñecas Tiresias A.C. & Casa Hogar "Paola Buenrostro"

### Moderator:

- **Marie Nougier**, International Drug Policy Consortium

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