

Medina, C. (2017). *Mafia, drug trafficking and criminal gangs in Colombia. Elements for a compared study to the case of Mexico.* Bogotá: National University of Colombia

It presents a detailed balance of the historical development of organized crime in the country and its impact on the social and institutional life of the nation.

It contains a preliminary study on the mafia and drug trafficking in Colombia, compared to the case of Mexico; a study of drug trafficking, criminal gangs, and post-conflict; and a reflection on peasants, coca and drug trafficking in the framework of the peace conversation.

Since the mid-20th century, the drug trafficking phenomenon has become a global problem, with great repercussions at the national and regional levels. It has a capacity for development within the framework of the global capitalist accumulation model, its foundation and criminal essence, with the power to destabilize States, infiltrate and corrupt democratic institutions, capture conventional economies, and generate models of economic, social, political development and mafia activities.

The structuring of the drug trafficking economy into a mafia phenomenon occurs through turning the market logic into power logic, where it is recognized that both phenomena are illegal. However, the pretense of insertion in conventional societies forces them to move towards the universe of the legal. The impossibility of doing so entirely or the interest in maintaining illegal activities and nurturing, through their processes of criminal capital accumulation, legal activities generate this business mafia model with profound influences on political power.

In the Colombian case, the development and evolution of the drug trafficking industry has generated a mafia model of power that, in different ways, is inserted into the social, economic and political life of the nation, with a very high capacity to influence aspects of strategic development.

The drug cartels in Colombia consolidated as a mafia organization and introduced capital to the national economy through real estate activities, livestock, commerce, tourism, hotels, transportation, health, housing, education, among other areas of conventional life. In addition, they participated in the counter-insurgency war and the expansion of paramilitary violence, through the administration of private violence; they controlled part of the Public Force and Justice and compromised the local and regional political class through bribery, corruption and clientele.

The capital from drug trafficking and public budgets do not stop producing accelerated processes of degradation of social networks and members of organizations that nurture their personal interest with the resources and spaces captured and co-opted by the state by mafia organizations in alliance with the political and economic class of the country.