

#### 4. INCB Learning

354. Launched in 2016, INCB Learning is one of the Board's initiatives for promoting the implementation of the international drug control conventions and assisting Member States in following up on the commitment expressed during the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016 to improving access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. INCB Learning addresses barriers to the adequate availability of indispensable substances, in particular by raising awareness and building capacity.

355. INCB Learning provides training to enable Governments to accurately estimate their requirements for controlled substances and to monitor and control their licit trade in those substances. Timely reporting of estimated requirements and statistical data to the Board is essential to ensure that controlled substances are available for medical and scientific purposes. The estimates of annual legitimate requirements for precursors, provided on a voluntary basis, are essential for assessing the

legitimacy of a proposed import and thus preventing the diversion of those substances.

356. As part of INCB Learning, regional training seminars are organized for officials of competent national authorities. Since April 2016, six regional seminars have been held, attended by over 180 officials from 79 countries and territories that are home to almost half of the world's population. Regional training seminars were held in Nairobi from 25 to 29 April 2016, for officials from countries in East Africa; in Bangkok from 12 to 15 July 2016, for officials from countries in South and East Asia and the Pacific; in Vienna from 4 to 6 July 2017, for officials from countries in Europe; in Sydney, Australia, from 28 to 30 November 2017, for officials from countries in Oceania; in Guatemala City from 11 to 13 December 2017, for officials from countries in Central America; and in Dakar from 10 to 12 September 2018, for officials from French-speaking countries in Africa.

357. National awareness-raising workshops were also conducted in Kenya and Thailand as part of INCB Learning. The workshops were aimed at promoting dialogue between Governments, international organizations and civil society to find common ground and allow for the proposal of suggestions for improving access to opioids for pain relief and psychotropic substances for the treatment of mental health and neurological conditions.

358. To complement the delivery of training seminars and awareness-raising workshops, three e-learning modules were launched as part of INCB Learning for use by competent national authorities. Developed in cooperation with UNODC, the modules provide interactive training on the estimates system for narcotic drugs, the assessment system for psychotropic substances and estimates of annual legitimate requirements for imports of precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. Available on demand to staff of competent national authorities, the new e-learning tools assist authorities in building capacity and maintaining an institutional knowledge base, even at times of staff turnover or when faced with resource constraints.

359. The most recent training seminar implemented under INCB Learning was held in Dakar in September 2018. It brought together 29 drug control officials from Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, the Niger, Senegal and Togo. Specialized training was provided on treaty requirements relating to the regulatory control and monitoring of licit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursors.

Participants were also introduced to the INCB online tools I2ES, PEN Online, PICS and IONICS. The seminar was organized together with the UNODC Regional Office for West and Central Africa. Experts from WHO and the African Palliative Care Association provided input to the segment of the seminar on the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

360. Preparations are under way for a follow-up seminar for Central America to be held in Vienna in January 2019. The first seminar for the region took place in Guatemala City in December 2017 and was attended by officials from Guatemala and Honduras. The follow-up seminar was to include a study visit to the INCB secretariat and UNODC headquarters in Vienna to further deepen the knowledge of participants. The seminar is part of an extended initiative in support of Central America, a region that, together with the Caribbean, continues to be used by transnational criminal organizations for the shipment of drugs from South America to drug markets in the United States and in Europe. The levels of consumption of opioid analgesics and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes reported

by some countries in Central America are also among the lowest in the world.

361. In the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016, entitled “Our joint commitment to effectively addressing and countering the world drug problem”, the international community recognized the importance of training and awareness-raising to improve the availability of controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. Training provided through INCB Learning has effectively raised awareness of the importance of adequately estimating legitimate requirements and has strengthened participants’ technical knowledge of monitoring and reporting, leading to improved submissions of data to the Board. Capacity-building, however, can only have a lasting impact when ongoing follow-up is provided and adequate resources are available. **The Board is grateful for the contributions to INCB Learning made by the Governments of Australia, Belgium, France and the United States. The Board calls upon Governments to provide further support to sustain and expand activities under INCB Learning.**