

I. OVERVIEW: EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE INTERNATIONAL DRUG CONTROL TREATIES

1. The mandate of the International Narcotics Control Board under the international drug control treaties, and the very essence of its work, is to evaluate treaty implementation, based on the examination and analysis of information provided by Governments and on its own continuous evaluation of efforts by Governments. The General Assembly, in its resolution 48/12, requested the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, with the support of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP) and in cooperation with the Board, to monitor and evaluate action at the national and international levels in implementing the international drug control instruments, with a view to identifying areas of satisfactory progress and weakness. The Board has accordingly been working closely with the Commission, Governments and the Executive Director of UNDCP in evaluating the impact of the treaties and in determining weaknesses, as well as strengths, in their provisions.

2. The present chapter contains some major findings of the Board with respect to the working of the treaties. In addition, the Board has prepared a reportⁱ presenting in more detail the main features of its assessment of the treaties and its proposals.

3. The assessment by the Board is based on several decades of continuous follow-up and evaluation. In its assessment, the Board has placed special emphasis on the treaty provisions which it bears a particular responsibility to administer or for which its mandate places it in a unique position to determine their strengths or weaknesses. The Board also has taken into consideration the views expressed, at its invitation, by the World Health Organization (WHO). The assessment made by the Board should be considered together with those made by the Commission.

4. The Board has decided not to articulate all the achievements of the international drug control treaties in the present chapter or in its more detailed report. Where necessary, a few major successes have been highlighted. Without going into all the technical details, the Board has drawn the attention of Governments to areas where the treaty provisions have not been effective enough or have not been wholly adequate, considering the present drug abuse and trafficking situation, or have been misunderstood.

A. Changes in drug abuse and illicit trafficking problems and in international responses to them

5. The genesis and development of the international drug control treaties are closely connected with national and international responses to the changing drug abuse and illicit trafficking situation. The recommendations of the first international conference on narcotic drugs, which was held at Shanghai in 1909 (and which later became known as the Opium Commission), and the provisions of the International Opium Convention, signed at The Hague in 1912, are to be seen as the result of the international consensus reached on how to react to the then unlimited availability in several countries of narcotic drugs for non-medical use, in particular opium, which had led to the widespread abuse of those drugs, with all its health and social implications.

6. There have been numerous changes in the nature and extent of drug abuse since then. First, the development of sciences, such as synthetic organic chemistry and pharmacology, and industrial manufacturing technologies has led to the discovery and

marketing of hundreds of new psychoactive drugs, which in turn have contributed to the fast development of medical therapy, making it possible to treat and cure millions of people. The inappropriate medical use and, to an even greater extent, the non-medical use of the same drugs, however, have opened the door for new types of drug abuse. Secondly, drug abuse has ceased to be a problem of a limited number of countries and has become a global problem, and drugs that used to be specific to certain cultures have spread to other cultures.

7. The responses to that dynamic process are reflected in the international drug control conventions, including those currently in force. The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961ⁱⁱ incorporates and builds upon earlier national and international measures to control the cultivation, production, manufacture and distribution of natural drugs (and, in the case of opiates, their synthetic analogues) and obliges Governments to take measures against the illicit traffic in and abuse of such drugs. The Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971ⁱⁱⁱ is a response to the diversification and expansion of the spectrum of drugs of abuse, introducing controls over a number of synthetic drugs (hallucinogens, stimulants, hypnotics, sedatives and anxiolytics). The immediate purpose of those two treaties is to codify universally applicable control measures in order to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, and to prevent their diversion from licit sources into illicit channels. They also include provisions of a general nature on the illicit traffic in and abuse of drugs.

8. The system of international control of the licit movement of narcotic drugs, as embodied in the 1961 Convention and that Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol,^{iv} has functioned in a generally satisfactory manner, as the Board has already stated several times. The system has succeeded in limiting the licit cultivation, production, manufacture and distribution of and trade in narcotic drugs to the quantities required for medical and scientific purposes. Those treaty provisions have kept to a minimum the diversion of narcotic drugs from licit sources into illicit channels.

9. As for the 1971 Convention, the diversion of psychotropic substances in Schedule II from licit sources into illicit channels has been successfully curtailed. But that achievement is attributable mainly to the control measures recommended by the Board and endorsed by the Economic and Social Council to reinforce the original measures of that Convention.

10. The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988^v reflects the response of the international community to the ever-increasing illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking activities. The implementation of measures of control has resulted in a situation where most of the drugs in the illicit traffic or on illicit markets are no longer produced and manufactured in licit production areas: the international illicit traffic is supplied mainly by illicit producers and clandestine laboratories. The general provisions of the earlier conventions against illicit traffic were not comprehensive and specific enough.

11. To counteract the rapid increase in illicit activities involving narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, the 1988 Convention provides for comprehensive and innovative measures against drug trafficking, such as provisions against money-laundering and against illicit activities related to precursors and provisions for new methods of international cooperation against illicit traffic (transfer of proceedings, controlled delivery etc.). Although it is too early to expect a significant impact of the 1988 Convention, which came into force in 1990, there are already signs that it is leading to enhanced drug control and effective results. However, wider application of its provisions by Governments is necessary.

12. Hence, the three major international drug control treaties are mutually supportive, and complementary. Each of them builds upon and reinforces the provisions of the others and none of them alone would be comprehensive enough. The main focus of the strategy reflected in each of the three conventions has evolved, but the conventions have only one main goal, one philosophy to prevent the use of drugs for non-medical purposes. That common and unique objective should be constantly kept in mind by all involved in national and international drug control.

B. Areas of improvement

13. When evaluating the effectiveness of the treaties with regard to the "ideal" objective of a society free of non-medical use of drugs, it has to be taken into account that the abuse of and illicit trafficking in drugs (including illicit cultivation, production and manufacture) have many reasons - social, economic, cultural and political - upon which the drug control instruments do not have a direct influence.

14. The international community realized that even preventing the diversion of drugs from licit channels and strengthening and coordinating the fight against illicit drug cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking would not by themselves solve the problem of the persisting demand. Without reducing the demand for drugs of abuse, limiting the illicit supply would result in only temporary or partial success. The Board appreciates that demand reduction programmes therefore now constitute a key element in the fight against drug abuse, in the same way as supply reduction measures. The Board presented in detail its views on demand reduction in its report for 1993 and made several recommendations to Governments for action in that area.

15. In the 1961 and 1971 Conventions, demand reduction is specifically addressed, albeit not in detail. Though they obligate Governments to take appropriate measures, the conventions leave it to them to define those measures. That approach, in a field where uniform actions are hardly possible, may have led Governments to underestimate the importance of such measures for a long time. The 1988 Convention contains provisions on demand reduction that go into more detail, referring to recommendations of the competent United Nations bodies and to the Comprehensive Multidisciplinary Outline of Future Activities in Drug Abuse Control as a basis for demand reduction measures.

16. It has been questioned whether there should be a specific convention on demand reduction, or whether the provisions of the existing conventions should be amended to ensure greater commitment by Governments to demand reduction strategies. Present treaty obligations may indeed be supplemented by those of other instruments, emphasizing the importance of demand reduction in the context of comprehensive drug control strategies and stating general principles and guidelines. But the Board is not convinced that specific, universally binding treaty provisions on demand reduction could be agreed upon or that such a treaty would be an appropriate instrument to deal with such an issue. The Board considers that demand reduction is a national task, which in a number of countries may have to be carried out with international support, and that demand reduction programmes are to be designed at the national and local levels, based on knowledge of the real drug abuse situation and taking into consideration the cultural, political, economic and legal environment. Demand reduction programmes should also deal with the use of licit psychoactive substances, such as alcohol and nicotine.

17. The cooperation of the mass media and publishers is of crucial importance to demand reduction efforts. The Board urges Governments and the mass media to develop policies to prevent promotion of the non-medical use of drugs, with due respect for freedom of expression and freedom of the press. The general public, and vulnerable groups in particular, have a right to be protected.

18. Limiting the use of narcotic drugs to medical and scientific purposes is motivated by humanitarian considerations, such as protecting the individual from the slavery of drug dependence and protecting society from the irresponsible behaviour of intoxicated individuals. The provisions of the international drug control treaties aimed at limiting the use of drugs to medical and scientific purposes should be regarded as "limiting" free choice in human behaviour in the same way as traffic regulations, restrictions on the

availability of weapons or poisons or other dangerous substances, or regulations on prescribing, dispensing and using pharmaceutical products. (Thus, promoting the non-medical use of drugs can be compared to promoting the violation of traffic regulations, free access to weapons or poisons, or the use of pharmaceuticals (such as antibiotics) without medical diagnosis.) Protecting the well-being of the individual and society is the purpose of prohibiting the non-medical use of drugs, which is certainly not an attempt to limit human rights. The Board wishes to draw attention to the confusion created by some advocates of legalization of the non-medical use of drugs with their statements about human rights. The prevention of drug abuse problems, by means of national and international drug control, and demand reduction activities, can be regarded as a basic right of the individual and society.

19. Most countries, developed as well as developing countries, have not yet properly assessed the real extent of the abuse of narcotic drugs and, to an even greater degree, the abuse of psychotropic substances as a result of their being excessively prescribed or consumed. That aspect of demand reduction appears to have been neglected by most parties despite the requirement laid down in the conventions to ensure that prescriptions are issued in accordance with sound medical practice. The inadequacy of the licit distribution systems for pharmaceuticals contributes to the development of so-called parallel distribution systems. It would also be necessary to study the use of drugs procured outside of pharmacies and other authorized drug-dispensing places, in order to assess the impact of parallel distribution systems on the development of drug abuse.

20. The treaty objective of ensuring an adequate supply of narcotic drugs, especially opiates used for medical purposes, has not been universally achieved. The countries most affected by the situation are developing countries, where, for example, according to WHO, the majority of cancer cases occur. Of the 12 tonnes of morphine used worldwide in 1993 to treat severe pain, less than 20 per cent was used in developing countries. Similar statistics could be cited for codeine and other opiates. The Board, recalling that ensuring the availability of an adequate amount of drugs for medical and scientific use is an obligation under the international drug control treaties, encourages all Governments to take measures to that end. National measures to prevent diversion should never hinder the availability of drugs for legitimate medical purposes. National strategies to improve availability should also deal with the problems of irrational prescribing of drugs and self-medication, inadequate distribution systems for pharmaceuticals, and improperly functioning national drug control systems.

C. Possible future adjustments in the international drug control treaties

21. It does not appear necessary to substantially amend the international drug control treaties at this stage, but some technical adjustments are needed in order to update some of their provisions. Some provisions of the 1961 and 1971 Conventions should be harmonized, shortcomings should be eliminated and some administrative procedures, including reporting requirements, should be simplified. The Board has elaborated the following proposals (for details on the proposals and for a discussion of areas where clarifications from Governments are needed, see the report of the Board on the effectiveness of the international drug control treaties¹):

(a) In the light of the widespread abuse of preparations obtained from poppy straw in some producer countries, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs should consider measures to strengthen the control of poppy cultivation and poppy straw production;

(b) The Board wishes to draw the attention of Governments to a problem linked to the appearance of new, highly potent cannabis varieties of which also the leaves have a

very high tetrahydrocannabinol (THC) content. The classification and control of the cannabis plant and cannabis products listed in the 1961 Convention should ensure that there is a correlation with the potency of the plants and the products;

(c) The conflict between the provisions of the 1961 Convention and the views and legislation of countries where the use of the coca leaf is legal should be solved. There is a need to undertake a scientific review to assess the coca-chewing habit and the drinking of coca tea;

(d) The control regime of the 1971 Convention for substances in Schedule II with the simplified estimate system has been effective enough to prevent the diversion of such substances from licit international trade. A similar simplified estimate system could be used for synthetic narcotic drugs (synthetic opioids such as pethidine and methadone), thereby reducing the administrative obligations of Governments;

(e) Practical experience has shown that the provisions laid down in the 1971 Convention could not ensure the prevention of the diversion of substances in Schedules II, III and IV of that Convention. There is an urgent need for the mandatory introduction of the simplified estimate system and import and export authorizations for all substances in Schedules II, III and IV of the 1971 Convention. Such measures would also allow the better implementation of import prohibitions under article 13 of that Convention;

(f) The furnishing of information on the countries of origin of imports and the countries of destination of exports of substances in Schedules III and IV of the 1971 Convention (as requested by the Economic and Social Council in its resolutions) should become a treaty obligation. Without that information, the Board is not in a position to thoroughly analyse international trade in psychotropic substances and to assist Governments in preventing the diversion of such substances;

(g) There is evidence that the provisions of the 1971 Convention on the exemption of preparations from certain control measures are not respected in many countries. Consideration should be given to revising the complex procedure provided for in the 1971 Convention on the exemption of preparations containing psychotropic substances;

(h) Quarterly statistics on international trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances do not appear to facilitate significantly early detection of their diversion, contrary to what was originally expected. Eliminating that obligation would reduce the administrative burden of national authorities;

(i) In order to ensure the timely provision of drugs in emergency situations, the control obligations could, in such situations, be limited to the competent authorities of the exporting countries;

(j) The supply of very small quantities of drugs contained in diagnostic kits used by medical services can be ensured without the involvement of the present cumbersome exemption system of the conventions. The Board invites the Commission on Narcotic Drugs to consider endorsing the present practice of a number of exporting countries whereby no import and export authorizations are required for international trade in those kits;

(k) In order to enhance the effectiveness of the 1961 and 1971 Conventions, consideration should be given to harmonizing the scheduling criteria and process. Amending the 1971 Convention to conform with the respective provisions of the 1961 Convention would lead to the elimination of contradictions, to transparency and to easier scheduling decisions, while reducing the costs of the evaluation process.

D. Monitoring the implementation of the international drug control treaties

22. The role of the Board in monitoring and promoting the implementation of the international drug control treaties is clearly defined under the 1961 and 1971 Conventions. One issue to be raised under the present evaluation exercise is the measures by the Board to ensure the execution of the treaties, which are spelt out in article 14 of the 1961 Convention and article 19 of the 1971 Convention. Over the years, the Board, building on the practice of its predecessors (the Permanent Central Opium Board, the Permanent Central Narcotics Board and the Drug Supervisory Body) and in line with the provisions and spirit of the treaties, has established its own procedure for promoting treaty implementation, within the context of a constant diplomatic dialogue with Governments and good international cooperation. As part of that continuing dialogue, the Board has established procedures to deal with serious drug abuse and illicit trafficking situations and with problems in treaty implementation. Those include exchanging letters with the Governments concerned, raising the problems in its report, sending missions to the countries concerned and mentioning the conclusions of those missions in its report. Within that context, the Board has often requested certain Governments to provide explanations or to take remedial measures and has frequently drawn the attention of the parties to the conventions, of the Economic and Social Council and of the Commission to particularly worrying situations. The Board has, until now, never made use of the final steps foreseen in article 14 of the 1961 Convention and article 19 of the 1971 Convention. As for the specific procedure under those articles, the Board believes that an explicit provision for conducting "local inquiries", of a more technical nature than those of its regular missions would be useful in the context of the measures to ensure the execution of the treaties set forth in those articles. The possibility of conducting "local inquiries" was included in the Protocol for Limiting and Regulating the Cultivation of the Poppy Plant, the Production of, International and Wholesale Trade in, and Use of Opium, signed in 1953, but was not included in the provisions of the 1961 and 1971 Conventions.

23. Ensuring that national drug control legislation is reviewed and evaluated in a systematic and continuous manner is of particular importance to determining whether the provisions of the international drug control treaties are being implemented by Governments. The Board is not equipped at present to conduct such an analysis on a regular, country-by-country basis, though it does review the adequacy of national legislation during some of its missions and on the basis of the information it receives from Governments.

24. So far, there has not been a systematic evaluation of the extent to which Governments have, under domestic law, established as offences the acts stipulated to be defined as such by the international drug control conventions or of whether Governments have provided for the appropriate sanctions in the spirit of the conventions. The Board wishes to underline the fact that, while the conventions require the acquisition and possession of drugs for non-medical use to be established as punishable offences, the conventions also provide for alternatives to conviction or punishment. In many circumstances those alternatives provide a better instrument to deal with the problem of drug abuse, which imprisonment would not solve. Alternatives foreseen in the conventions include treatment, education, after-care, rehabilitation or social reintegration. Further to article 3 of the 1988 Convention, which is more specific on this aspect, such measures may be provided as alternatives to conviction or imprisonment, in minor cases and for offences of possession, purchase or cultivation for personal consumption, and in

addition to conviction or imprisonment for other offences defined in that Convention. The extent to which Governments have actually provided such alternatives is not known. In addition, the conventions do not define precisely the scope and main characteristics of such alternatives, and there might be room for interpretations that would not be in line with the spirit of the conventions.

25. The Board, when it identifies shortcomings in treaty implementation that call for the provision of technical assistance to certain countries, has the right to recommend that various forms of technical assistance should be provided by the United Nations system to further the objectives of the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol. The Board notes that it is important to evaluate systematically the results and effectiveness of technical assistance provided to Governments to counteract illicit traffic and drug abuse.

26. Since provisions of the 1988 Convention relate to provisions of the 1961 and 1971 Conventions and make their implementation more effective, the Board is of the opinion that, within its mandate to monitor treaty implementation, it also has to take into account the implementation by Governments of the 1988 Convention.

27. As the 1988 Convention entered into force only on 11 November 1990, it would be premature to evaluate the functioning of that Convention as a whole. However, it may be appropriate to make some preliminary observations on how the provisions of article 12 of that Convention, on precursor control, function, since many national and international measures have been taken to implement that article.

28. The objective of article 12 of the 1988 Convention is to prevent the diversion of substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, which are included in Tables I and II of that Convention. To that end, the article provides for, *inter alia*, measures to control the manufacture and domestic distribution of, and international trade in, substances in Tables I and II. Unlike the provisions of the 1961 and 1971 Conventions, article 12 of the 1988 Convention only provides for general measures of control. There is consequently a need for Governments to translate those general provisions into specific control activities.

29. One of the most serious problems concerning the general monitoring of the licit movement of chemicals, particularly substances in Table II of the 1988 Convention, is that a large number of countries do not yet have in place mechanisms enabling them to obtain information on the licit requirements for, and general availability and use of, the substances listed in the tables of that Convention. Manufacturers, distributors, importers and exporters of such substances are unknown. It is difficult to see how, under such circumstances, adequate controls can be established. As for international trade in such substances, exchanging information between exporting, importing and transit countries, so that the countries that are the immediate recipients of shipments of precursors are alerted, has proved to be an effective means of identifying suspicious transactions. One example of this is the pre-export notification requirement for substances in Table I of the 1988 Convention, provided in article 12, paragraph 10, of that Convention. At present, only one State party to the 1988 Convention has availed itself of this requirement, which is applied only when special notification is made to the Secretary-General. The Board has noted, however, that a number of countries actually send pre-export notifications to importing countries. Recent experience gained in preventing diversion, however, seems to indicate that some type of import and export authorization system may be needed to prevent diversion more effectively. The European Union has adopted a regulation requiring export authorization under certain conditions, and a few individual countries have similar requirements.

30. Pursuant to article 12 of the 1988 Convention, parties to that Convention are under the general obligation to collect data, since it is a prerequisite for their monitoring of international trade in, and their manufacture and distribution of, substances in Tables I and II, and such information is necessary for the assessment by the Board of substances in Tables I and II for scheduling purposes. Though much has been achieved to prevent the diversion of precursors since the 1988 Convention came into force, the international community recognizes that much remains to be done to improve controls and to prevent chemicals from falling into the hands of illicit drug manufacturers. The need for such improvement stems not from a need to deal with major shortcomings of the 1988 Convention itself but from the fact that many countries have yet to develop the legal framework and appropriate mechanisms for the application of the measures provided for in that Convention.

31. In its report for 1993, the Board underscored the importance of measures against money-laundering, which are essential to the struggle against organized crime and illicit drug trafficking. Various measures have been adopted by Governments - individually or collectively - to combat the laundering of proceeds derived from illicit drug trafficking and from the whole range of organized criminal activities. However, the provisions of the 1988 Convention against money-laundering have yet to be fully implemented. The Board encourages Governments of States parties to the 1988 Convention to urgently adopt the necessary legislative provisions on the prevention of money-laundering, the tracing, seizure and confiscation of the instrumentalities and the proceeds of drug trafficking. The Board recommends that parties to the 1988 Convention should, pursuant to article 5 of that Convention, consider reversing the onus of proof regarding the lawful origin of alleged proceeds or other property liable to confiscation, subject to appropriate safeguards. The Board notes with interest the ongoing discussion on the possibility of incorporating all such international measures against the laundering of proceeds of illicit activities, including some of the measures introduced at the national level, into an international convention against the laundering of money derived from organized criminal activities.

E. Concluding observations

32. Each of the different international drug control conventions adopted during the past few decades was developed based on the particular situation that prevailed when it was designed. Each of their provisions is the outcome of various national or international drug control experiences, of the exchange of views and expertise, and of compromises between various national situations and priorities. The history of international drug control reflects its various stages of development, and each international instrument was a necessary condition for moving to the next stage and identifying, designing and implementing the provisions of the next instrument. The three conventions are mutually supportive and none of them alone would be a perfect instrument. As mentioned in the preamble to the 1988 Convention, the parties to that Convention recognized the need to reinforce and to supplement the measures provided in the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol and in the 1971 Convention.

The term "precursor" is used to indicate any of the substances in Table I or II of the 1988 Convention, except where the context requires a different expression. Such substances are often described as precursors or essential chemicals, depending on their principal chemical properties. The plenipotentiary conference that adopted the 1988 Convention did not use any one term to describe such substances. Instead, the expression "substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs or psychotropic substances" was introduced in the Convention. It has become common practice, however, to refer to all such substances simply as "precursors"; although that term is not technically correct, the Board has decided to use it in the present report for the sake of brevity.

33. In the fight against drug abuse and illicit trafficking, the role of the international drug control conventions is of crucial importance. They constitute the legislative foundation of the United Nations drug control system and the basis for common efforts and mutual legal action involving all States. They create obligations for the overwhelming majority of States in the world and those States have accepted those obligations of their own will. There are four basic conditions that are necessary to ensure the efficacy of those conventions:

(a) The conventions require universal adherence. Loopholes in the global preventive network are constantly being exploited by criminal organizations. A serious problem in the implementation of the control system for psychotropic substances, in particular, stems from the fact that some major manufacturing and exporting countries have not yet acceded to the 1971 Convention. Indeed, a large part of the shortcomings of the international drug control system may be attributed to the fact that the conventions were meant to be universal but have not yet been universally adopted;

(b) Adherence is not enough; provisions of the international drug control treaties must be properly implemented at the national level. The treaty requirements must be considered as minimum common denominators that must be supplemented by specific national measures. In many areas, national controls are below those minimum requirements. In particular, some countries, including State parties to the 1971 Convention, do not yet control international trade in all psychotropic substances. In some countries, difficulties in treaty implementation are related to the absence of a special drug control administration to carry out the provisions of the treaties, which is essential to the effective coordination of drug control activities. In many other countries, drug control administrations lack sufficiently trained and qualified personnel and adequate financial resources, because of the overall economic situation or low government priority. In addition, a number of developing countries find it difficult to enforce several treaty requirements, such as the control of imported narcotic drugs or psychotropic substance at national borders or the control of the internal distribution channel for pharmaceuticals, particularly for psychotropic substances. It is the duty and in the interest of every State to assist, within its capacity, other States by providing them with the necessary resources for the fulfilment of their national responsibilities. Demand reduction, supply reduction and the fight against illicit traffic, as well as cooperation and solidarity with other countries, constitute integral elements of the implementation of treaty requirements at the national level;

(c) Thorough implementation of treaty requirements at the international level, including cooperation among Governments and with the Board, is another key factor in efficient drug control. More specifically, the Board has repeatedly drawn the attention of the international community to the non-compliance of a number of Governments with the reporting requirements set by the international drug control treaties and the Economic and Social Council in its resolutions. Such non-compliance is often indicative of deficiencies in national drug control systems and in national implementation of treaty provisions. With a view to facilitating overall reporting to the Board and the Secretary-General, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Board have encouraged the use of electronic data transmission and storage. The associated problems of confidentiality and authenticity of the information submitted are being considered by the Board with the support of UNDCP;

(d) Drug abuse and illicit trafficking are dynamic processes; consequently, any effective response to them must also be dynamic. The international drug control system depends not only on the adequate functioning of government authorities, but also on the proper functioning of the international bodies and organizations (the Board, the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, UNDCP, WHO etc.) responsible for the rapid adaptation of

that system to the fast-changing drug scene. The adoption of timely decisions on scheduling, the updating of treaty provisions, the incorporation of new drug control measures into the existing treaties, and the provision of appropriate and timely technical assistance to Governments to overcome difficulties constitute major areas to be focused on in order to ensure the efficacy of the global fight against illicit drug cultivation, production, manufacture, trade and use.