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**Statement by Dr. Viroj Sumyai, President,
International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)**

**Signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Universal Postal Union and the
International Narcotics Control Board Opening**

19 April 2018, Bern Switzerland

Director General Ambassador Hussein, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is an honour to stand with the members of the Postal Operational Council on this historic signing of the Cooperation Agreement between the Universal Postal Union and the International Narcotics Control Board.

As the President of the International Narcotics Control Board, it is my responsibility to ensure the Board's mandate and work safeguards the availability of drugs and their precursors for legitimate medical, scientific and industrial purposes. The Universal Postal Union strives to promote social and economic development of all nations. Together, the health and safety of mankind, the communities and the men and women who serve them, are central to our collective work.

2018 marks the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. In the three decades since enacting this treaty, the global landscape for dangerous substances has changed significantly. Today, synthetically engineered highly toxic opioids, ordered online using anonymous cryptocurrencies and hidden among the millions of letters and parcels shipped around the world, result in a staggering number of overdose deaths.

Today, I am here to stress the urgency of addressing the current overdose epidemic that began in North America, but which has global consequences well beyond the region. The crisis is fuelled by powerful fentanyl-related substances, toxic to humans at the milligram level. The misuse of just 2mg of fentanyl can prove fatal, while analogues such as carfentanyl are even more potent.

Practical actions must be taken through new innovative partnerships that ensure officers in the international postal services, regulatory, law-enforcement, health and other first-responders can safely carry out their functions and sustainably serve the social and economic need of their communities.

The UN General Assembly called for practical and cooperative initiatives to address the complexities of the world drug problem and Sustainable Development Goal 17 stresses enhanced global partnership that bring together Governments, the United Nations system, the private sector, civil society and other actors and mobilizes all available resources. The Agreement between the Universal Postal Union and the International Narcotics Control Board represents a practical innovative partnership that protects our frontline personnel and the communities they serve from exposure to harmful substances.

Our partnership will support international initiatives that enhance information-sharing and early warning mechanisms for substances of concern, facilitate universal co-operation for

detection of trafficking in such substances, and promote technical assistance and training programmes that ensure effective safety and security for the conveyance of postal items throughout the global distribution chain.

To this effort, the new INCB Operational Partnerships to Interdict Opioids' Illicit Distribution and Sales—OPIOIDS Project—supports national authorities and the United Nations system in preventing dangerous non-medical synthetic opioids from reaching our communities. The project joins other successful, practical global initiatives led by the Board.

Today's global drug landscape is far more complex and challenging than 30 years ago, when the last international drug control treaty was signed. Now there is a specific urgency to stem the increasing illicit flow of deadly fentanyl-related substances wherever they are encountered. Our partnership will take a practical multidimensional approach that is sustainable over time and respectful of human rights, privacy and data-protections, and international law. The Board looks forward to implementing activities under this Cooperative Agreement to effectively address complex facets of today's world drug problem.

Thank you.