1. After examining the extent of illicit cultivation of opium poppy and illicit trafficking in 
opium, morphine base and heroin from Afghanistan, the Board at its sixty-eighth session in 
May 2000, concluded that the critical drug control situation in the country, if left unaddressed, 
seriously endangered the aims of the 1961 Convention, and decided to invoke article 14 of 
the 1961 Convention with respect to Afghanistan. The Board’s objective in doing so has been 
to encourage compliance by Afghanistan with the international drug conventions as well as to 
bring this matter to the special attention of the ECOSOC and call upon the international 
community, in particular Afghanistan development partners, to support the Government of 
Afghanistan in its drug control and development efforts.

2. Since then, the Board has closely followed the drug control situation in Afghanistan 
and maintained an ongoing dialogue with the Government through bilateral meetings, 
correspondence and continuous updates received from the Government on the drug control 
situation and efforts of the country. One of the recent highlights of the dialogue with the 
Government was the a high-level INCB mission to Afghanistan from 8 to 10 May 2016, which 
was led by the President of the Board to continue consultations with the Government of 
Afghanistan under article 14 of the 1961 Convention.

3. Despite the challenges related to security, peace process and political transformation, the 
Government Afghanistan has been taking steps to strengthen its drug control system, 
including through updating its national drug action plan, legislation, strengthening cross- 
border cooperation and drug abuse prevention measures as well as improving treaty- 
mandated drug reporting to the Board. The Government of Afghanistan acceded to the 1972 
Protocol amending the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs in 2015, which contains 
important provisions such as the need for treatment and rehabilitation of drug addicts, 
measures to seize and destroy illicitly cultivated plants as well as allowing for treatment, 
rehabilitation, education and social reintegration as an alternative, or in addition to conviction 
or punishment for drug users.

4. At the same time, the Board regrets to observe that while over 90% of world’s opiates 
comes from Afghanistan only 2% is seized in country and that illicit opium poppy cultivation 
and production in Afghanistan have not been contained. Opium production in Afghanistan rose 
by 43 per cent to 4,800 metric tons in 2016 compared with 2015 levels, according to the latest 
Afghanistan Opium Survey figures released by the Afghan Ministry of Counter Narcotics and 
the UNODC. The area under opium poppy cultivation also increased to 201,000 hectares (ha) 
in 2016, a rise of 10 per cent compared with 183,000 ha in 2015.

5. The level of drug use and abuse in the country had reached epidemic proportions, with 
the number of drug users ranging up to 3.4 million people (ca. 10-15 per cent of the population 
– there are no recent censuses or accurate population estimates) and between 1.4 and 2.1 
million drug addicted persons. The Board believes the drug abuse situation is critical and 
national resources totally inadequate to tackle a potential drug abuse population of the 
aforementioned size.

6. INCB has been using every opportunity to call the attention of the international community to 
the drug challenges the country faced, including in the statement in advance of Brussels Conference
in October 2016 on Afghanistan, and other fora, stressing the fact that sustainable development is not possible without effective drug control in the country. International community should ensure that the cross-cutting issue of drug control is comprehensively addressed. Unless the drug control and drug abuse situation in Afghanistan is urgently tackled head on by the Government of Afghanistan with the support of its international cooperation partners, the security situation, terrorism threat, corruption and development issues affecting the country will remain unresolved.

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INCB is the independent, quasi-judicial body charged with promoting and monitoring Government compliance with the three international drug control conventions: the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances, and the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances.

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