INCB Annual Report launched on 27 February 2020

The Annual Report, prepared in accordance with the international drug control treaties, examines the global drug control situation, and makes recommendations to Governments and regional and international organizations.

The thematic chapter of the INCB annual report for 2019 focuses on improving prevention and treatment services for young people. The year 2019 marked the thirtieth anniversary of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In article 33 of that Convention, States parties committed to taking measures to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of drugs.

In its Annual Report, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB):

- Highlights the connection between the use of alcohol & tobacco and the use of psychoactive substances like cannabis, opiates and cocaine by children and adolescents;
- Focuses on the physical, emotional and social impact that psychoactive drugs have on young people between the ages of 15-24;
- Urges governments to improve services using evidence-based prevention and treatment interventions for young people;
- Expresses concern about the fast-changing global landscape of illegally manufactured designer-precursors tailored to a diverse and online market;
- Addresses injustices related to the availability of controlled medicines from over-prescription in some countries to limited access in other countries;
- Reminds governments to respect human rights in the implementation of drug policies and in compliance with the three international drug control conventions.

See the Annual Report by chapters here.

The Report is accompanied by the 2019 Precursors report published by INCB on an annual basis on the implementation of article 12 of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, on precursors and chemical frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

See the Precursors Report by chapters here.


The technical reports on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances provide analysis and comprehensive data on the licit global trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for 2018 and include national estimates and assessments of licit needs for medical and scientific purposes for 2020.

The reports were made available to Governments during the 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna, and are available below:

Narcotic Drugs 2019: Estimated World Requirements for 2020 - Statistics for 2018
Psychotropic Substances 2019: Statistics for 2018 - Assessments of Annual Medical and Scientific Requirements

One pager on key analysis in the licit market for psychotropic substances

Past events

Side event on the launch of Guidelines to prevent the diversion of equipment used in illicit drug manufacture Vienna, Austria 6 March 2020

Fifth I2ES User Group Meeting Vienna, Austria 6 March 2020

CND side event on INCB Learning and launch of the INCB e-learning modules in Spanish Vienna, Austria 3 March 2020

63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs Vienna, Austria 2-6 March 2020

127th session of INCB, Vienna, Austria 3-7 February 2020

INCB Learning regional training and workshop for Russian-speaking countries Moscow, Russian Federation 2-5 December 2019

126th session of INCB, Vienna, Austria 28 October-15 November 2019

2nd International Expert Group Meeting on trafficking in non-medical synthetic opioids through postal and express courier services Vienna, Austria 11-13 September 2019

INCB Learning regional training for Latin America and the Caribbean and national workshop Quito, Ecuador 3-7 June 2019

Upcoming events

Missions 2020*
- Canada
- Cyprus
- Greece
- Kyrgyzstan
- Tajikistan
- Thailand
- The Bahamas
- The Gambia
- The Kingdom of Eswatini

* held in abeyance due to the COVID-19 pandemic
COVID 19 - INCB continues to ensure functioning of international system for trade in controlled substances to ensure their availability for medical, scientific, and legitimate industrial purposes

In view of the COVID19 pandemic declared by the World Health Organization, the President of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Mr. Cornelis P. de Joncheere, has confirmed that INCB is continuing to ensure the functioning of the international system for trade in controlled substances.

Measures are in place to ensure that the Board and its Vienna-based secretariat can - regardless of any local restrictions in place to contain the pandemic - continue to assist competent national authorities in the functioning of the system of international trade in controlled substances.

INCB systems to facilitate licit international trade in controlled substances while preventing their diversion to illicit channels will continue to operate. Competent national authorities will remain able to exchange import and export authorizations for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances through INCB's International Import and Export Authorization System (I2ES) and issue pre-export notifications for precursor chemicals through INCB's Pre-Export Notification system (PEN-Online).

The President of the Board also takes this opportunity to remind all Governments that in acute emergencies, it is possible to utilize simplified control procedures for the export, transportation and provision of medicinal products containing controlled substances. Competent national authorities may permit the export of medicines containing narcotic drugs and/or psychotropic substances to affected areas even in the absence of the corresponding import authorizations and/or estimates. Urgent deliveries do not need to be included in the estimates of the receiving countries affected by emergencies.

In case of queries or need for assistance, competent national authorities should contact the INCB secretariat at incb.secretariat@un.org.

INCB welcomes Palau’s accession to the UN Convention against illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychoactive Substances

Palau acceded to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances on 14 August 2019, becoming the 191st Party to the Convention which has been ratified by 189 States and the European Union.

The Board welcomes Palau's accession to the 1988 Convention and encourages the Government to take steps to implement its provisions through the adoption of legislation and regulations, as required, as well as through active participation in the Board's precursors monitoring activities. Palau is now a party to all three conventions, which means there are now only 16 countries which have not acceded to one or more conventions.

Universal ratification of the three international drug control conventions is essential in ensuring that States are not targeted by criminal networks seeking to exploit weaknesses in their legal, regulatory and international cooperation frameworks. The Board encourages States that have not yet become parties to one or more of the international drug control conventions to do so at the earliest opportunity, and to take all legislative and policy action necessary to ensure their comprehensive implementation at the national level.

Promoting paperless trade in controlled substances

The International Import and Export Authorization System (I2ES) equips competent national authorities with an electronic system that allows real-time issuance and exchange of import and export authorizations for the licit trade of controlled substances.

The Board, through its Secretariat, following the mandate given by the CND on multiple occasions to provide support to all Member States in the adoption and full implementation of I2ES, has conducted several capacity building and awareness raising activities.

From June 2019 to February 2020, the I2ES team has conducted 11 webinars for 96 national officers from 21 countries. These online seminars are usually divided in two parts whereby competent national authorities are first introduced to I2ES and the related provisions outlined in the international drug control treaties, and then be guided through hands-on exercises.

More details of the I2ES training activities are shown in the interactive map of the Training section of the I2ES webpage. Feel free to contact I2ES team at incb.i2es@un.org for more details regarding the system and requests for capacity building activities.
INCB participates in 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND) concluded its sixty-third session on 6 March 2020, having met in Vienna from 2 to 6 March 2020 to continue its work in addressing the complex drug control issues affecting the health and welfare of humanity.

Throughout the week, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) President, Mr. Cornelis de Joncheere, and Member of the Board, Mr. Bernard Leroy, were actively engaged in dialogue with the Commission, Member States, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the World Health Organization and civil society representatives.

The INCB President addressed the opening of the Commission and made a number of statements to the Commission under agenda item 5 on implementation of the international drug control treaties, on:

- the work of INCB, presenting the 2019 Annual Report and Precursors Report;
- the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes;

Challenges and future work of the CND, the WHO and the INCB in the review of substances for possible scheduling recommendations;

Upon recommendation of INCB, the Commission voted during the session to include to methyl alpha-phenylacetoacetate, otherwise known as MAPA, in Table 1 of the 1988 Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. MAPA has no known legitimate use and can be classified as a designer precursor. Placing MAPA in Table 1 will allow Governments to request pre-export notifications as a means of monitoring shipments entering their territory.

The INCB President was invited to an informal dialogue with the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs to respond to questions made by representatives of various NGO's. During the informal dialogue, Mr. de Joncheere discussed the Board's positions and recommendations on various matters including availability of internationally controlled medicines, cannabis for medical and scientific purposes, the reduction of adverse consequences of drug abuse, human rights, and the concept of proportionality and alternatives to conviction and punishment for drug-related offences of a minor nature. Mr. de Joncheere recognized the important role played by civil society in the provision of prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration services, and stressed the Board's commitment to continue its dialogue with civil society, including during its country missions.

In addition, Mr. de Joncheere and Mr. Leroy participated in a number of side events, including "Drug Reform: From a punitive to supportive approach - the Norwegian proposal", the launch of INCB's e-learning modules in Spanish, "Accelerating support for increasing access to controlled medicines while preventing diversion and non-medical use", "Tackling Dangerous Substances Trafficking Through the Internet - Updates and Developments" and "Equipment used in illicit drug manufacture: Approaches to preventing and investigating diversion as complementary tools in addressing illicit drug supply".

At the margins of the session, the President of the Board, together with Mr. Leroy of the Board, met with various Government officials and civil society representatives to discuss the implementation of the international drug control conventions and cooperation towards addressing the world drug problem. On 5 March, the INCB President met with Ms. Leigh Toomey, Vice-Chair of the UN Working Group on Arbitrary Detention, Human Rights Council.

During the week, the INCB technical publications on narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances were published and made available to Government delegations attending the Commission.

All speeches made by the President can be found here.

Fifth I2ES User Group Meeting held at margins of 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

On 6 March 2020, at the margins of the sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the INCB secretariat convened the fifth meeting of users of the International Import and Export Authorization System (I2ES).

Attended by twenty-four officials from the competent national authorities of eighteen countries, the user group meeting aimed at strengthening communication and exchanging knowledge among the I2ES community by bringing together regular users of I2ES and officials of authorities that are planning to or considering to use I2ES for the international trade in controlled substances.

The meeting included a presentation of activities carried out by the I2ES team in 2019 in the areas of outreach, training and publication of multilingual materials (for instance user manual in Spanish and introductory booklet in Russian), showing progress made since the fourth I2ES user group meeting, held in March 2019. The current level of registration and participation by countries in I2ES, particularly with regard to frequent trading partners, was also highlighted.

Participants shared information on paperless trade initiatives in operation around the world, such as the Electronic Single Window, which can serve as an example of what can be achieved within the framework of I2ES.

To learn more about I2ES and related activities, visit the I2ES webpage on the INCB website.
INCB launches Spanish versions of e-learning modules @63CND side event

On 3 March 2020, at a side event of the 63rd session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) launched the Spanish versions of e-learning modules developed through its INCB Learning initiative.

The event was organized by the Government of El Salvador in cooperation with INCB and the Governments of Australia, Belgium, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, the Netherlands, Paraguay, Peru, the Russian Federation and Singapore. H.E. Ms. Julia Emma Villatoro Tario, Ambassador and Permanent Representative of El Salvador to the United Nations in Vienna, moderated the event.

In his introductory remarks, the INCB President, Cornelis P. de Joncheere, emphasized the relevance of the INCB e-learning modules to support Governments in estimating their licit requirements of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical use and in establishing annual legitimate requirements for precursors chemicals.

Dr. Mónica Guadalupe Ayala Guerrero, Executive Director of the National Directorate of Medicines of El Salvador, highlighted the importance of strengthening institutional capacity and expressed appreciation for technical assistance provided by INCB Learning, including in an upcoming regional seminar to be hosted by El Salvador in April 2020.

Dr. Oxana Guseva, Assistant to the Minister of Health, Russian Federation, reiterated the commitment of the Government of the Russian Federation to continue contributing to initiatives of the Board and made reference to the support provided to INCB Learning for the implementation of a recent training seminar held in Moscow for Russian-speaking countries.

The importance of ensuring adequate access to controlled substances for medical use was stressed by Prof. Dr. Guy Hans, specialist in anaesthesiology and professor in pain medicine at the University of Antwerp, while the impact of training to prevent the diversion of controlled substances and their precursor chemicals was recognized by Mr. Carlos Charme Fuentes, National Director, National Service for the Prevention and Rehabilitation of Drug and Alcohol Consumption (SENDA) of Chile.

Dr. Francis Rafael Contreras, President Commissioner, Sanitary Regulation Agency (ARSA) of Honduras, who had participated in an INCB Learning seminar in Vienna in January 2019, echoed other speakers in noting the role of training of government experts to ensure adequate availability of controlled substances.

The statement read on behalf of H.E. Mr. Arnaldo Giuzzio Mendez, Minister of the National Anti-Drug Secretariat (SENAD) of Paraguay emphasized the "new wave of opportunities" that the INCB e-learning modules present for Spanish-speaking countries and the relevance of technical assistance for the implementation of the international drug control conventions.

Mr. Alexander Kasanof, Director of Global Policy and Programs, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the United States, stressed the impact on regional cooperation of training provided through INCB Learning seminars and e-learning modules. Founding support of INL enabled the launch of the INCB Learning project in 2016.

Finally, Mr. George Masri, Assistant Secretary, Office of Drug Control, Department of Health of Australia, reiterated the long-standing commitment of Australia to INCB Learning and encouraged Member States to make full use of its tools.

A Press Release is available here.

The INCB President's statement at the side event is available here.
**INCB Learning training for Russian-speaking countries in Moscow, Russian Federation**

From 2 to 4 December 2019, the Board’s INCB Learning project conducted a regional training seminar in Moscow, hosted by the government of the Russian Federation, for 38 drug control officials from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

The seminar was opened by Mr. Alexey Rogov, Deputy Director of the Department on New Challenges and Threats of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation and Ms. Saltanat Yegubayeva, Medical Officer on HIV/AIDS, TB and viral hepatitis of the WHO Office in the Russian Federation.

The training seminar was the ninth INCB Learning regional training seminar, and was supported by a contribution from the Russian Federation. The goal of the INCB Learning project is to support participating countries in improving monitoring and reporting related to the control of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals, and in ensuring that controlled substances are available for medical purposes while at the same time preventing diversion into illicit channels, abuse or trafficking.

On 5 December, INCB Learning convened a regional workshop for the participants of the training seminar on the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes. The event was co-organized with and hosted by the Ministry of Foreign of the Russian Federation and brought together participants from the authorities represented at the training seminar, from international organizations and from civil society to discuss the importance of ensuring access to medicines containing internationally controlled substances.

**INCB Learning training for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean in Quito, Ecuador**

From 3 to 6 June 2019, INCB Learning implemented a training seminar in Quito, hosted by the Government of Ecuador, for 43 drug control officials from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador and Peru.

The seminar was opened by Dr. Verónica Espinosa Serrano, Minister of Public Health of Ecuador, Ambassador Mireya Muñoz, Under-Secretary of Multilateral Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, and Arnaud Peral, the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations System in Ecuador. Luis Alberto Otárola Peñaranda, member of the Board, addressed participants in a video message. Representatives from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) also joined the opening session.

The training seminar was the first activity of the global INCB Learning project implemented in South America, and was supported by a contribution from the United States. Over four days, INCB Learning provided specialized training on the requirements of the three international drug control conventions relating to the regulatory control and monitoring of licit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. Participants received hands-on training on the Board's global online tools: the International Import Export Authorisation System (I2ES), the Pre-export Notification (PEN) Online System, the Precursor Incident Communication System (PICS) and the Project Ion Incident Communication System (IONICS). These systems are made available free of charge to Member States.

On 7 June 2019, following the regional seminar, INCB Learning held a national workshop to raise awareness on the importance of ensuring access to medicines containing substances under international control. Co-organized with and hosted by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Human Mobility, the event was attended by about 60 participants from national authorities, international organizations, civil society and the private sector.
INCB Missions

Eight INCB missions took place in the period June 2019 to March 2020. The objective of these missions was to examine the authorities' implementation of the international drug control treaties and to review the developments related to drug control on a confidential basis. The Board’s recommendations will be transmitted to the governments in question.

Mission to Austria

From 17 to 19 June, 2019 the INCB conducted a mission to Austria to review the country's experiences and practices in fulfilling the aims of the international drug control conventions. The mission was led by Ambassador (ret.) David Johnson, member and vice-president of the Board, assisted by Ms. Karin Esposito of the INCB secretariat. The mission was organized by Austria's Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection.

The delegation met with Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs, Health and Consumer Protection, Brigitte Zorra, and senior officials from the Ministries of Interior; Constitutional Affairs, Reforms, Deregulation and Justice; and Finance. In addition, the INCB delegation visited an outpatient treatment center and met with the leader of Checklist, a mobile illicit drug evaluation service. A meeting with the Austrian Agency for Food and Health Safety (AGES) focused on the Austrian Government's cultivation of cannabis to be exported and processed for medical purposes. Consultations were also held with multiple civil society groups and the mission visited a correctional services center dedicated to the treatment of drug offenders.

Mission to Kosovo

From 23 to 27 June 2019, the INCB conducted a mission to Pristina, Kosovo to review the drug control situation there with a view of facilitating access to controlled substances while preventing their diversion. The mission was led by Ambassador (ret.) David Johnson, Member of the Board, supported by Mr. Nodirjon Ibragimov of the INCB secretariat. The mission was facilitated by the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

The delegation met with the representatives of Kosovo agencies involved in pharmaceutical regulation; the administration of justice, including prosecutorial services and the judiciary; law-enforcement, customs and forensics; and public health, addiction treatment and rehabilitation. The INCB delegation also met with leaders of the international community supporting local institutions, including the EU Office in Pristina, EULEX, the OSCE Mission, UNDP, UNODC and UNMIK. In addition, meetings were held with officials from the NGO "Labyrinth", which provides opioid substitution treatment and other elements of a comprehensive treatment and reintegration programme and with the leader of the NGO Community Development Fund, which supports "Labyrinth".

Mission to Madagascar

From 10 to 13 September 2019, the Board conducted a mission to the Republic of Madagascar with the objective of discussing the Malagasy Government's implementation of the three international drug control conventions. A previous INCB mission to the country took place in 2004.

The mission was led by Prof. Sevil Atasoy, Member of the Board, who was accompanied by Mr. Paul Rabitat, Chief of the Convention Evaluation Section of the INCB secretariat. While in Antananarivo, the INCB delegation held talks with Government stakeholders involved in the country's drug control efforts including the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Public Security, the National Police, the Gendarmerie and Customs. The delegation also visited public and private health institutions and companies involved in the import of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals.

Mission to Ukraine

From 10 to 13 September 2019, the Board conducted a mission to Ukraine to discuss the country's efforts to implement the three international drug control conventions and to strengthen the Board's cooperation with the Ukrainian Government. Ambassador (ret.) David Johnson, member and vice-president of the Board, led the mission with the support of Ms. Karin Esposito of the Board's secretariat. The mission was organized by Ukraine's Ministry of Health.

The INCB delegation met with Ukraine's Minister of Health and held talks with senior officials from the National Police, the Security Service, State Border Guard Service, and Ministries of Justice; Foreign Affairs; Social Policy; Youth and Sports; and Education. As part of the discussions with the Ministry of Health, the INCB mission met with stakeholders in the State Service of Ukraine on Medicines and Drugs Control; the Pharmaceutical Directorate; the Center for Mental Health and Monitoring of Drugs and Alcohol; the Center for Public Health; and the Kyiv City Narcological Clinical Hospital. On 13 September, the INCB mission held consultations with representatives of multiple civil society groups to discuss national drug policy developments.

1 All references to Kosovo in this article should be understood to be in the context of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999).
Mission to Trinidad and Tobago

From 11 to 13 September 2019, INCB conducted a mission to Trinidad and Tobago to review the country’s experiences and practices in fulfilling the aims of the international drug control conventions. Board member Professor Francisco Thoumi led the mission supported by Ms. Kebebush Welkema, of the INCB secretariat. The mission was organized by Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of National Security.

The delegation met with Minister for Health, Terrence Deyalsingh, the Attorney General, Faris Al-Rawi, and senior officials from the Ministry of National Security, Ministry of Health, Police Service and Defence Force. In addition, the INCB delegation visited an outpatient treatment centre, Caura substance abuse prevention and treatment centre. Discussions were also held with representatives of the Implementing Agency for Crime and Security (IMPACS), part of CARICOM, and the Caribbean Financial Action Task Force.

Mission to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea

From 17 to 19 September 2019, the Board conducted a mission to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to discuss progress made in the implementation of the three international drug control conventions to which the country became party in 2007. A previous INCB mission visited the country in 2006. The mission was organized by the Ministry of Public Health and carried out by Dr. Wei Hao, First Vice President of the Board, who was accompanied by Ms. Beate Hammond of the INCB secretariat.

Meetings were held with the Vice Minister of Public Health and senior officials from the Ministry of Public Health, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of People’s Security and the Presidium of the Supreme People’s Assembly. The delegation visited the Kim Man Yu hospital in Pyongyang as well as a site where opium poppy is cultivated for medical purposes. The delegation also met with the Acting Representative of the World Health Organization Country Office.

Mission to New Zealand

INCB undertook a country mission to New Zealand from 23 to 26 September 2019. The mission was led by Prof. Richard Mattick, Member of the Board, who was accompanied by Mr. Martin Dessart of the INCB secretariat. The mission was organized by the Ministry of Health of New Zealand.

During the country visit, the delegation met with H.E. Hon. Andrew Little, Minister of Justice and H.E. Hon Dr David Clark, Minister of Health. Additionally, meetings were held with officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, New Zealand Police and New Zealand Customs. The delegation also conducted a site visit of Waitematā CADS and Higher Ground, drug and addiction treatment facilities in Auckland. Additional meetings were held with the secretariat of the Pacific Islands Chiefs of Police as well as the New Zealand Drug Foundation.

Mission to Jordan

From 7 to 9 October 2019, the International Narcotics Control Board conducted a country mission to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan. The mission was led by Prof. Jallal Toufiq, who was accompanied by Ms Tatiana Jehl of the INCB secretariat. The mission was organized by the Jordanian Food and Drugs Administration.

While in Amman, the INCB delegation held meetings with Government stakeholders involved in the country’s drug control efforts including the Ministry of Justice, the Jordanian Food and Drugs Administration, the Anti-Narcotics Department of the Public Security Directorate, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Customs. The delegation also visited public drug rehabilitation centers. In addition, meetings were held with non-governmental organizations and representatives of public and private health institutions working in the area of palliative care and pain management.