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## Factsheet 2

### In focus: Afghanistan's drug problems – more than just opiates

#### **INCB urges concrete action to address the deteriorating situation of illicit opium poppy cultivation**

The Government of Afghanistan is urged to translate into concrete action and results its national drug control strategy, which aims at eliminating illicit cultivation, production, manufacture and trafficking of drugs, says INCB in its Annual Report for 2013. The drug control situation in Afghanistan will not improve unless substantial, sustainable and measurable progress is made by the Government in anti-drug trafficking, alternative development and drug demand reduction.

INCB is seriously concerned that illicit cultivation of opium poppy increased for three consecutive years since 2010 and that the total area under opium poppy cultivation reached a record level of 209,000 hectares in 2013, an increase of 36 per cent compared with 2012 (153,000 hectares) despite eradication campaigns and recent adoption by the Government of drug policies to address the problem. This situation seriously endangers the aims of the international drug control treaties.

INCB has been closely monitoring the drug control situation in Afghanistan and has maintained an ongoing dialogue with the Government on issues of concern. In May 2000, the Board, in view of the widespread illicit cultivation of opium poppy, invoked article 14 of the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs vis-à-vis Afghanistan, in order to ensure the execution of the international drug control treaties. In doing so, INCB has drawn the attention of the international community to the issue and called for – at the highest levels – international cooperative action to resolve the situation.

Recognizing the efforts of the Government, and in view of the forthcoming conclusion of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan in 2014, the Board reiterates its call for full and continued support and cooperation from the international community, also from countries in the region. The Board also stresses that eradication of illicit opium poppy can only be achieved if relevant laws are fully respected and implemented while sustainable alternative livelihoods are provided in affected areas.

Illicit cannabis cultivation makes Afghanistan also a major source country for cannabis resin (hashish). The eradication of such illicit cultivation and the suppression of trafficking in cannabis resin have to go hand in hand with the combating of illicit opium poppy cultivation and trafficking.