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INCB CALLS FOR CONTINUED VIGILANCE AND INCREASED COOPERATION TO STEM THE DIVERSION OF PRECURSOR CHEMICALS FOR THE ILLICIT MANUFACTURING OF DRUGS

In its Annual Report released today, INCB reminds Governments of the need to remain vigilant in identifying and addressing new trends in the diversion of precursor chemicals intended to be used in the illicit manufacturing of drugs.

Criminal networks have shown themselves to be highly adaptable in modifying their diversion and production methods in order to circumvent stricter control measures adopted by national Governments.

This year's INCB Report reflects the Board's findings that criminal networks are increasingly turning to "non-scheduled substances", substances which are not subject to control measures, in order to bypass existing regulatory frameworks. In addition to using new substances, these criminal groups have also resorted to using derivatives of substances currently under international control.

In response to this threat, the Board encourages Governments to extend monitoring mechanisms for precursors to some of the derivatives and other forms of these substances, such as natural product sources and esters. The Board also recommends that Governments regularly consult the INCB "Limited International Special Surveillance List" and engage stakeholders such as private industry in establishing voluntary codes of practice aimed at preventing the diversion of precursors.

The success of global drug control measures is contingent upon the capacity of States to communicate effectively with the Board and with each other. The 2010 Annual Report once again underscores the importance for States of making active use of the Board's system of pre-export notifications (PEN online) to send and respond to enquiries aimed at verifying the legitimacy of precursor shipments. The Report notes that while use of the PEN online system has significantly increased, registration among African States remains low and urges those States to register and use the system without delay.

In the pursuit of its mandate, the Board relies extensively on the cooperation of Governments to provide estimates as to their legitimate requirements for precursor chemicals. In order to optimize its effort and to avoid unduly hindering the availability of chemicals for legitimate purposes, the report highlights the importance for Governments in ensuring the accuracy and the currency of the estimates communicated to the Board.