

INCB President calls on the United States Government to address initiatives aimed at permitting recreational drug use

VIENNA, 13 March 2013 (UN Information Service) – Allowing for the recreational use of cannabis “would be a violation of international law, namely the United Nations Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, to which the United States is party.”

This was stressed by the President of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), Raymond Yans, here, today in a statement to the fifty-sixth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs as he made reference to the outcome of the November 2012 voting in the US states of Colorado and Washington in favour of initiatives which – if implemented – would allow for the recreational use of cannabis in these states.

Mr. Yans took note of a statement made by the Office of the Attorney General of the United States in December 2012 that, regardless of any changes in state law, growing, selling or possessing any amount of marijuana remained illegal under federal law. This was “good, but insufficient”, according to the President of INCB, whose mandate is to monitor the implementation of the three international drug control conventions. He went on to state that the United States has a treaty obligation to ensure the implementation of the treaties on the entirety of its territory.

Mr. Yans expressed the hope that this issue would soon be dealt with by the US Government in line with the international drug control treaties.

Noting the universal adherence to the three international drug control conventions, Mr. Yans also called on all Governments to implement all provisions of the conventions to which they are party.

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For further information please contact:

INCB Secretariat
Telephone: (+43-1) 26060 5638
Email: secretariat@incb.org
Website: www.incb.org
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