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25th Anniversary of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances

VIENNA, 20 December 2013 (UN Information Service) – The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) marks today the 25th anniversary of the conclusion of the Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. In 1988 Member States decided to move forward and strengthen actions to counter drug trafficking and met in Vienna to elaborate on what became the third pillar of the universally endorsed international drug control system.

The 1988 Convention aims to promote cooperation among State parties to more effectively address the trafficking in drugs, deprive criminal organization of the profits from illicit drug production and trafficking by providing new tools to Governments. Together with the two other Conventions, the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, this Convention further strengthened principles of common action and shared responsibility among States. In order to reduce human suffering, the 1988 Convention also called on States to adopt effective measures in the fields of prevention, treatment and rehabilitation.

The Convention also details the mandate of INCB, especially its functions with regard to the control of precursors used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, providing the framework for the monitoring of the international legitimate trade in these substances. Over the past 25 years, States have succeeded, through the Convention and the oversight work undertaken by INCB, in virtually eliminating the diversion of those substances from international trade into illicit drug manufacture.

After a quarter century, the 1988 Convention enjoys near universal adherence by the States worldwide. Under its provisions and requirements, the Convention has served to establish, in partnership with industry, the infrastructure for control of precursor chemicals. To support the monitoring of the licit trade in precursor chemicals and to prevent their diversion into illicit channels, INCB has developed electronic tools, such as the Pre-Export Notification system (PEN Online) and the INCB Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS), available to all States upon request. These tools have served the international community well in preventing illicit drug manufacture and diversion of controlled chemicals.

As part of its mandate under the 1988 Convention, INCB publishes an annual report on the control of precursor chemicals frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. And under the mandates given by the three international drug control treaties, INCB publishes its Annual Report on the implementation of international drug control treaties and developments around the world. Both reports will be launched on 4 March 2014, marking the 45 years anniversary of the INCB annual reports.

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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