
Vienna International Centre, P.O. Box 500, A-1400 Vienna, Austria
Telephone: +43-1-26060, Telefax: +43-1-26060-5867 / 5868
E-Mail: secretariat@incb.org Internet Address: <http://www.incb.org/>

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**Statement by Jagjit Pavadia
Second Vice-President
International Narcotics Control Board (INCB)**

Special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem

**21 April 2016, 10.00 – 13.00 hrs.
CR 4**

Round table 4: Cross-cutting issues: new challenges, threats and realities in preventing and addressing the world drug problem in compliance with relevant international law, including the three drug control conventions; strengthening the principle of common and shared responsibility and international cooperation.

Honourable Chair, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the time they were negotiated and adopted by States, the three international drug control conventions have been at the heart of the international community's concerted efforts to address the world drug problem. In the many years which have followed, the world drug problem has evolved considerably: borders have been erased, distances have shrunk; the world has become interconnected and interdependent to an almost unimaginable extent through the evolution of technology and the diversification of trade.

International criminal syndicates have flourished and expanded. Yet despite these challenges and new realities, the international drug conventions have continued to provide an adaptable and flexible framework for coordinated State action to address contemporary threats.

For many years now, the international community has recognised the fundamental importance of the principle of common and [shared responsibility](#)¹ and working together to find innovative responses to the new challenges they face.

Traffickers and international criminal syndicates have used national borders as an unjust advantage and a means of frustrating national efforts to stem their activities.

The international community must address the world drug problem in a concerted manner. Dichotomies and classifications of producer and consumer States not only belonged to another era, but they never adequately reflected the realities on the ground. In order to tackle the world drug problem in a meaningful and effective way, the members of the international community must acknowledge the disparity in resource levels that continues to characterise our modern world and must commit to assist each other in any manner they can and, in particular by bolstering their common capacity through the provisions of financial and material support to technical assistance activities, including those delivered by the United Nations and its entities.

In order to achieve this, the Board believes States must do the following.

¹ [E/INCB/2012/1](#).

First, they must continue to develop mechanisms for increased communication and greater cooperation including through the sharing of intelligence, the real-time exchange of information and the dissemination of best practices. In the case of NPS, one of the most significant emerging threats today, the Board has supported States' efforts through the establishment of Project ION and its platform for the exchange of information, IONICS.

States must also commit to a more fluid and systematic exchange of information, be it in the field of supply reduction through the sharing of intelligence, information as to new trends and patterns of trafficking and abuse but also of best practices in the fields of demand reduction, including evidence based approaches to prevention, treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration.

States must also innovate and develop new tools to meet new challenges. This means investing in research, development and new technology to assist them in meeting the ever changing realities of the world drug problem. They need also make these new technologies available to States with limited material resources. Examples of this may include new approaches to assess drug use and abuse trends , sharing technological developments and equipment to screen cargo, analytical tools to assess data and information to name a few.

They must predicate the elaboration and implementation of drug policy on science and evidence-based approaches to drug control, undertake consultation of relevant stakeholders, including civil society groups. Drug policy must also take into account and incorporate considerations related to public health, social welfare and the respect for human rights. The use of sanctions and criminal justice mechanisms must be selective, balanced and proportionate.

In order to meet new and emerging challenges, States must ensure that they put into place strong, competent and impartial regulatory authorities, that they receive adequate and ongoing training, and that their mandates are clear and well defined. This is essential as regulatory authorities are often at the vanguard of their countries' drug control efforts. Thus, they need to be well resourced to perform their duties effectively. INCB has developed a training programme for national competent authorities designed to strengthen this fundamental pillar of drug control as we move forward together to address new and significant challenges.

States must also recognise the importance of [alternative development](#)² and poverty reduction initiatives as essential parts of a balanced approach to dealing with the international drug crime and trafficking, but also as contribution towards the achievement of the sustainable development goals. For this, they must demonstrate their commitment through the provision of expertise, training and funding support.

While all of these elements are espoused in the outcome document adopted at this special session on Tuesday, the challenge in the lead up to 2019 and beyond will be to give the words of the outcome document real meaning and translate the commitments expressed therein into concrete and result-oriented action.

Thank you for your attention.

² [E/INCB/2005/1](#).