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## Schedules and Tables of the International Drug Control Treaties

The 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs and the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances aim to limit the cultivation, production, distribution and use of drugs to medical and scientific purposes only.

To achieve this, governments must implement, *inter alia*, various control measures laid down in the conventions. For example, exports and imports of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances must be expressly authorized by government authorities from both sides of the transaction.

Currently, more than 200 substances, found in thousands of different medical products, are subject to international control under either the 1961 or the 1971 Conventions. But because of the wide variety of substances controlled under the conventions, differences in their addictive properties or public health risks on the one hand and variations in their therapeutic values and extent of medical use on the other, the necessary control measures differ and are categorized into various schedules. Both the 1961 and 1971 Conventions have four schedules each, with some containing "more dangerous" substances and others containing the comparatively "less dan

gerous" ones.

The required control measures vary. For example, drugs listed in Schedule I of the 1971 Convention such as MDMA (ecstasy) or LSD, are **completely prohibited** except for scientific and very limited medical purposes by duly authorized persons in medical or scientific establishments, directly under the control of their governments. Drugs, which may also be subject to abuse but are in the other schedules of that Convention, can be prescribed by physicians, in line with sound medical practices and national regulations.

The 1988 UN Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances brought under international control 22 chemicals, which can be used in illicit drug manufacture. As with the 1961 and the 1971 Conventions, the control measures vary in strictness from one group of chemicals to another. Therefore, substances are listed in either Table I or Table II of the Convention, according to the impact the control measures would have on licit commercial trade and according to the practicality of the different control measures of the tables.

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