

Reports published by the International Narcotics Control Board in 2000

The *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2000* (E/INCB/2000/1) is supplemented by the following technical reports:

Narcotic Drugs: Estimated World Requirements for 2001; Statistics for 1999 (E/INCB/2000/2)

Psychotropic Substances: Statistics for 1999; Assessments of Medical and Scientific Requirements for Substances in Schedules II, III and IV (E/INCB/2000/3)

Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances: Report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2000 on the Implementation of Article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 (E/INCB/2000/4)

The updated lists of substances under international control, comprising narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, are contained in the latest editions of the annexes to the statistical forms ("Yellow List", "Green List" and "Red List"), which are also issued by the Board.

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INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD

Precursors

and chemicals frequently used in the
illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and
psychotropic substances

Report of the
International Narcotics Control Board for 2000
on the Implementation of Article 12
of the United Nations Convention
against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and
Psychotropic Substances of 1988



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Preface

The United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988,¹ article 12, paragraph 13, provides that the International Narcotics Control Board “shall report annually to the Commission on the implementation of this article and the Commission shall periodically review the adequacy and propriety of Tables I and II”.

In addition to its annual report and other technical publications (Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances), the Board has decided to publish its report on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention, in accordance with the following provisions contained in article 23 of that Convention.

“1. The Board shall prepare an annual report on its work containing an analysis of the information at its disposal and, in appropriate cases, an account of the explanations, if any, given by or required of Parties, together with any observations and recommendations which the Board desires to make. The Board may make such additional reports as it considers necessary. The reports shall be submitted to the Council through the Commission which may make such comments as it sees fit.

“2. The reports of the Board shall be communicated to the Parties and subsequently published by the Secretary-General. The Parties shall permit their unrestricted distribution.”

¹ *Official Records of the United Nations Conference for the Adoption of a Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, Vienna, 25 November-20 December 1988*, vol. I (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.XI.5).

Explanatory notes

The following abbreviations have been used in this report:

Interpol	International Criminal Police Organization
LSD	lysergic acid diethylamide
MDA	methylenedioxyamphetamine
MDMA	methylenedioxymethamphetamine
3,4-MDP-2-P	3, 4-methylenedioxyphenyl-2-propanone
MEK	methyl ethyl ketone
P-2-P	1-phenyl-2-propanone

The designations employed and the presentation of the material in this publication do not imply the expression of any opinion whatsoever on the part of the Secretariat of the United Nations concerning the legal status of any country, territory, city or area or of its authorities, or concerning the delimitation of its frontiers or boundaries.

Countries and areas are referred to by the names that were in official use at the time the relevant data were collected.

The maps in the present publication are intended to indicate the movement and seizures of the substances listed in the Tables of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988. Owing to lack of space, names of countries, territories, cities or areas may not appear at their exact geographic location.

The boundaries shown on maps in this publication do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

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I. Introduction

1. In 1990, the International Narcotics Control Board issued its first report on the implementation of article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.¹ When the Convention entered into force on 11 November 1990, many Governments had just begun to initiate legislative and administrative measures with a view to applying its provisions. Entering the second decade since the 1988 Convention came into force, the Board wishes to recall that major progress has been achieved in the field of precursor² chemical control.

2. It was in 1990 that the Board organized its first seminar³ on the application of article 12 of the 1988 Convention in an attempt to assist competent national authorities in taking practical steps to implement the relevant treaty provisions. It offered an opportunity for an exchange of views and information among regulatory and law enforcement officials, as well as competent international bodies, on the actual situation regarding diversion from licit channels into illicit traffic and use of precursor chemicals in the clandestine manufacture of drugs. The report of that seminar, among other things, emphasized that more adequate safeguards should be developed against trans-shipment of substances for the purpose of smuggling them out of the recipient country for use in the illicit manufacture of drugs. At the time, among the cases of diversion attempts brought to the attention of the Board, involvement of intermediaries and fictitious companies had often been noted. In such cases, the substances manufactured in one country had first been exported legally to another country and took circuitous routes before they were shipped to companies, often fictitious, in the final destination countries. Those transactions were frequently arranged by intermediaries located elsewhere and involved false documentation.

3. A similar situation exists today. What is different, however, is the fact that the circuitous routes and methods used are known and shipments of an increasing number of substances can be tracked down. In a number of its previous reports, the Board included detailed accounts of the successful detection of major diversion attempts, involving, for instance, ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which are precursors for the

stimulant methamphetamine, a substance heavily abused in various regions of the world. The successes achieved in the prevention of diversions included cases involving common chemicals used widely in industry. One notable example is potassium permanganate, an important chemical in the illicit manufacture of cocaine. In its report for 1999 on the implementation of article 12,⁴ the Board highlighted the success of activities carried out under "Operation Purple", an intensive international tracking programme, initiated in 1999, to monitor shipments and prevent the diversion of potassium permanganate. A new phase of the programme continued in 2000.

4. In 2000, the Board organized an international meeting focusing on a specific substance, acetic anhydride, a critical chemical used in the clandestine manufacture of heroin.⁵ That meeting resulted in the launching of another international operation, known as "Operation Topaz", focusing not only on international tracking of shipments of acetic anhydride, but also on the interception of smuggled substances and the investigation of seizures in order to identify the traffickers involved and the points where the diversion of the substance occurred. The Board, through its secretariat, provides full support to that international programme within the framework of its treaty mandates.

5. The practical actions proposed by the Board in its previous reports have stood the test of time and have proven to be workable and effective in preventing diversion of precursor chemicals from licit channels into the illicit manufacture of drugs. It is essential for each Government to take the practical measures required to deal with the specific issues at stake for its country and region. When a measure taken by one Government cannot be immediately pursued by another, the latter should devise other means of addressing the issue. The key to the control of precursors is the exchange of information and intelligence. The Board continues to stand ready to assist competent national and international bodies in that endeavour.

6. In 1999, the Board initiated its review of the adequacy and propriety of the current scheduling of acetic anhydride and potassium permanganate and formally commenced the process of assessing whether sufficient information was available to justify the

transfer of either or both of those substances from Table II to Table I of the 1988 Convention.⁶ The assessment of the Board is contained in the present report. On the basis of that assessment, the Board is recommending to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs that both substances be transferred from Table II to Table I of the 1988 Convention.

II. Framework for precursor control and action taken by Governments

A. Status of adherence to the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988 and reporting by Governments under article 12

1. Status of the 1988 Convention

7. As of 1 November 2000, the Convention had been ratified, acceded to or approved by a total of 157 States, and formally confirmed by the European Community (extent of competence: article 12). That represents 82 per cent of all countries in the world. Since the report of the Board for 1999 on the implementation of article 12⁷ was issued, four States (Comoros, Estonia, Maldives and San Marino) have become parties to the 1988 Convention. Figure I shows the current status of adherence.

8. Most of the major countries that manufacture, export and import precursor chemicals are parties to the 1988 Convention, and Switzerland, the only major trading country that has not yet acceded to the Convention, is already applying control measures in conformity with the provisions thereof. At the same time, the Board has noted with concern that the territorial application of the 1988 Convention has not yet been extended to some non-metropolitan territories. The Board invites all metropolitan Governments that have not yet done so to extend the territorial application of the 1988 Convention, where applicable, to their non-metropolitan territories. The Board also encourages Governments of the non-metropolitan territories to apply the necessary practical measures to implement the provisions of article 12 of the Convention.

9. In annex I, table 1, of the present report, the parties and non-parties to the 1988 Convention are listed by region. The rates of accession have been as follows: Africa (76 per cent); Americas (100 per cent); Asia (84 per cent); Europe (91 per cent); and Oceania (29 per cent). Figure II below gives the distribution of States parties and non-parties by region.

2. Reporting to the Board under article 12

10. The Board transmits to all Governments, parties and non-parties alike, an annual questionnaire on substances frequently used in the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, known as Form D.

11. As of 1 November 2000, a total of 121 States and territories had submitted Form D for 1999. That represents over half of the countries and territories requested to provide the information, which is similar to the rate of return in previous years. A total of 62 per cent of all parties and 29 per cent of non-parties submitted data for 1999. The situation concerning the submission of information to the Board as required under article 12, paragraph 12, of the 1988 Convention for the years 1995 to 1999 is shown in annex I, table 2.

12. It is of concern to the Board that a large number of parties, that is, 38 per cent, have failed to comply with their reporting obligations under article 12 of the 1988 Convention. Nine States parties, namely, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burundi, Comoros, Gambia, Mauritania, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Yemen and Yugoslavia, have never submitted Form D to the Board, while some parties, among them Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Haiti, Iceland, the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Qatar, Sudan and Uruguay, have not done so for the last three or more years. The Board has individually contacted those parties, requesting them to take, as a matter of priority, the necessary steps to implement the treaty provisions fully. It further urges the Governments of all countries and territories that have not furnished the required information to do so as soon as possible. The Board reiterates that that information is essential to enable the Board to monitor, and to assist Governments in, the implementation of the provisions of article 12 of the Convention, while lack of reporting may indicate that the framework and systems for adequate control are not yet in place.