

I. Introduction

1. The present report begins with a review of the action taken by Governments and by the International Narcotics Control Board to implement the provisions of article 12 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.¹ Information is then presented on the status of adherence to the Convention and on the fulfilment of reporting obligations, followed by a review of recently adopted national legislative controls on precursor chemicals. The report then examines the situation of reporting by Governments on their estimated annual legitimate requirements for the four most common precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants and discusses the efficiency gains achieved by Governments from using the system of pre-export notifications, including Pre-Export Notification Online (PEN Online), to verify the legitimacy of transactions involving precursor chemicals. Closing that chapter is an overview of the results of action taken by Governments in cooperation with the Board under the international initiatives Project Cohesion and Project Prism, which focus on preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of heroin, cocaine and amphetamine-type stimulants.

2. The report continues with a regional overview of the licit trade, as well as the trafficking, in the substances most commonly used in the illicit manufacture of drugs. The analysis, presented by region, includes information on the most relevant cases of diversion or attempted diversion of those substances. Based on the feedback received from Governments, specific recommendations are proposed to facilitate the work of the competent authorities with the aim of preventing the diversion of and trafficking in precursor chemicals. Those recommendations are summarized in chapter IV.

3. In the annexes to the report, updated information is provided on: the accession status of the 1988 Convention; the submission of annual data on seizures of scheduled substances and other substances used in illicit drug manufacturing; the annual submission of information required under article 12 of the Convention (such as information on methods of diversion, illicit drug manufacturing and stopped

shipments); the licit trade in, uses of and legitimate needs for scheduled substances; the annual legitimate requirements for selected scheduled substances; requests for pre-export notification; substances scheduled under the Convention; use of scheduled substances for illicit drug manufacturing; licit uses of scheduled substances; and the relevant provisions of applicable United Nations instruments.

II. Action taken by Governments and by the Board

A. Scope of control

Initiation of procedures for the transfer of phenylacetic acid from Table II to Table I of the 1988 Convention

4. Phenylacetic acid is an immediate precursor of 1-phenyl-2-propanone (P-2-P), a substance in Table I of the 1988 Convention that is used in the manufacture of amphetamine and methamphetamine. Concerned by the increase in seizures of phenylacetic acid and illicitly manufactured P-2-P, the Board instructed its advisory expert group² to review the situation. The review, conducted in October 2006, found that the illicit manufacture of both amphetamine and methamphetamine appeared to be on the rise, posing a threat to public health and lying at the root of other social problems. The Board concluded that the controls required for the substances in Table II of the Convention were insufficient to prevent diversions of phenylacetic acid. On that basis and having assessed the relevant comments and supplementary information provided by Governments pursuant to article 12 of the Convention, the Board submitted a communication to the Secretary-General in January 2007 to formally initiate the procedures for the transfer of phenylacetic acid from Table II to Table I of the Convention.

Definition of “safrole-rich oils”

5. Safrole is a substance included in Table I of the 1988 Convention that is used in the manufacture of methylenedioxymethamphetamine (MDMA, also known as “ecstasy”). In its resolution 49/7, the

¹ United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1582, No. 27627.

² The advisory expert group consists of individual experts appointed by the Board to provide advice with regard to the 1988 Convention.