



Elections to the International Narcotics Control Board (2012-2017)

On Wednesday 27 April 2011, the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) held elections in New York for the International Narcotics Control Board for a five-year term beginning on 7 May 2012 (beginning of the May session of INCB).

From among 5 candidates nominated by the World Health Organization (WHO), the Council elected:

Hamid Ghodse (*Islamic Rep. of Iran*)
Wayne Hall (*Australia*)

by Governments, the Council elected the following candidates:

David T. Johnson (*United States*)
Jorge Montaña (*Mexico*)
Ahmed Kamal Eldin Samak (*Egypt*)
Werner Sipp (*Germany*)
Raymond Yans (*Belgium*)

From among 15 candidates nominated

International Narcotics Control Board launches annual report in more than 25 locations around the world

The annual report of the International Narcotics Control Board for 2010 was launched on 2 March 2011 in more than 25 locations around the world. The President of the Board, Prof. Hamid Ghodse, presented the report to the press in Vienna and in London.

In other locations, the report was launched by members of the Board, as well as by field offices of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the network of United Nations information centres.



Prof. Hamid Ghodse, President of the Board (centre) with Ms. Sonja Wintersberger, Deputy to the Director of the UNIS (left) and Mr. Jonathan Lucas, Secretary of the Board at the Vienna launch of the Annual Report



Board member, Mr. Xin Yu (centre) with Mr. Jibao Niu of the NNCC (left) and Mr. Giovanni Nicotera, UNODC at the launch in Beijing

For the first time, the annual report was launched in China, at a press conference co-organized by the National Narcotics Control Commission of China (NNCC), the Board, the United Nations Information Service and the UNODC Programme Office in China.

At a briefing for the permanent missions to the United Nations (Vienna), held on 2 February, the President of the Board gave a presentation highlighting the major findings of the report, as well as the Board's recommendations.

This year, the Board decided to issue a special supplement to the annual report, on the availability of internationally controlled drugs. The supplement presents a thorough analysis of the availability of such substances for medical and scientific purposes and draws attention to variations in the consumption of internationally controlled substances among and within regions. For instance, data for 2009 indicate that more than 90 per cent of global consumption of opioid analgesics for medical

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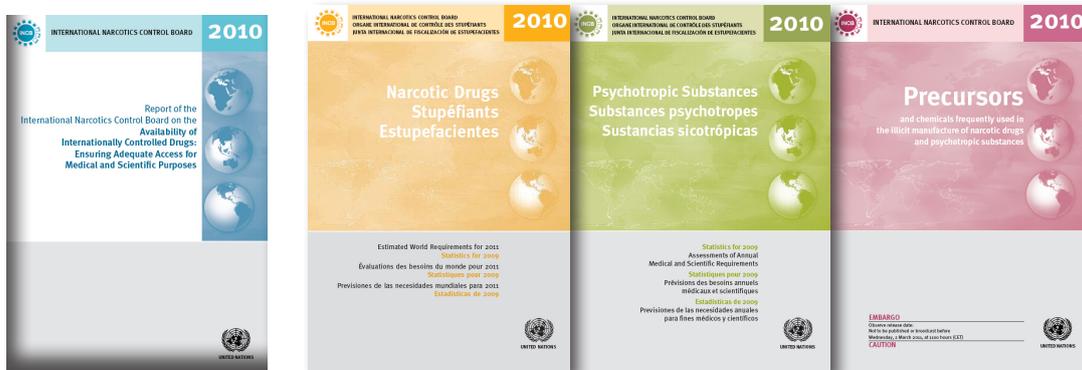
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purposes occurred in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, the United States of America and some European countries. Despite the fact that the global supply of opiate raw materials is sufficient for the production of opioid analgesics such as morphine and codeine, 80 per cent of the world population has no or insufficient access to pain treatment. A similar situation exists with regard to the consumption levels of psychotropic substances but is more difficult to quantify, given that the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 does not require Governments to provide the Board with data on consumption.

Each year, the Board devotes chapter I of its annual report to a topic of specific concern. In chapter I of its annual report for 2010, the Board addresses the issue of drug-related corruption, which it views as undermining international efforts to fight illicit drug manufacture and trafficking. The annual report includes a review of the implementation of the international drug control treaties, covers special topics such as “designer drugs” and synthetic cannabinoids, and presents regional developments. The report concludes with a series of recommendations for Governments and international and regional organizations aimed at improving the global drug control situation.

The annual report for 2010 is complemented by a special report and three technical reports as follows:

- *Report of the International Narcotics Control Board on the Availability of Internationally Controlled Drugs: Ensuring Adequate Access for Medical and Scientific Purposes*
- *Narcotic Drugs: Estimated World Requirements for 2011 - Statistics for 2009*
- *Psychotropic Substances: Statistics for 2009 - Assessments of Annual Medical and Scientific Requirements*
- *Precursors and Chemicals Frequently Used in the Illicit Manufacture of Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances*



The reports are available on the Board's website: www.incb.org.

Drug-related corruption: a key topic of the International Narcotics Control Board annual report

In its annual report for 2010, the International Narcotics Board emphasizes the risk posed by drug-related corruption to international drug control. The Board pays tribute to the brave efforts of law enforcement officers, who put their lives at risk to prevent drug trafficking. Unfortunately, these efforts are often jeopardized by corruption and intimidation, which are used by international drug traffickers to ensure an unimpeded flow of drugs.

Where drug traffickers fail to influence public officials through corruption, they may use intimidation and threaten officials with violence, even death. As noted by the Board in its report, areas with intense drug trafficking also experience high levels of violence and corruption.

States in post-conflict situations and States affected by drug-trafficking were identified as being particularly vulnerable to drug-

Recent and upcoming events

April - July 2011

- **19 April:** Annual briefing of the International Narcotics Control Board at the Economic and Social Council
- **2 - 13 May:** 101st session of the Board
- **4 - 29 July:** Substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, Geneva

Forthcoming INCB missions

- **April - June 2011**
Iraq, Mexico, United States, Venezuela and Zimbabwe

related corruption. Indeed, in some locations, the financial value of the illicit drug market can even exceed that of the local economy. The report indicates that, in extreme cases, criminal organizations with drug trafficking empires have become political forces with far-reaching power and authority.

In its report, the Board recognizes the efforts already being made by Governments and lays out strategies for addressing drug-related corruption. The strategies are intended for the general public, the judiciary and the law enforcement and criminal justice systems, but they also cover international and regional cooperation.

International Narcotics Control Board voices concern over the increasing variety and availability of “designer drugs”

The International Narcotics Control Board is gravely concerned about the increasing variety and availability of “designer drugs”, as reported in its annual report for 2010. A “designer drug” is a substance of abuse that has been designed to avoid control measures by means of a minor modification of the molecular structure of a controlled substance. The modification results in a new substance that has similar effects but which circumvents the control measures.



In its report, the Board cites the example of 4-methyl-methcathinone, commonly known as “mephedrone” or “4-MMC”, which has been reported as a drug of abuse in an increasing number of countries and regions. The abuse of new “designer drugs” can spread swiftly within and among regions.

To appropriately address the problem, the Board recommends that Governments closely monitor trends within their territories. To avoid delays that arise in placing individual drugs under national control as they are identified, the Board invites Governments to consider generic scheduling, where their national legislation allows it.

International Narcotics Control Board holds its 100th session

The 100th session of the International Narcotics Control Board was held from 31 January to 4 February 2011. Established by the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961, the Board became operational in 1968.

On the occasion of the opening of the 100th session, the President of the Board, Prof. Hamid Ghodse, stated: “Since its inception, the Board has worked determinedly towards promoting Government compliance with the international drug control conventions. We also promote accession to the three conventions, and we are proud that almost universal accession has been reached. However, despite the achievements of the Board, there is still much work to be done. For example, five States have not yet acceded to all three drug control conventions, so we clearly need to continue our efforts in promoting ratification of the conventions.”

With regard to the implementation of the conventions, the President noted that, while the diversion of controlled substances from licit sources into illicit channels had almost been fully eliminated at the international level, diversion of licit drugs continued to be a problem at the national level.

During its 100th session, the Board reviewed progress made in ensuring the implementation of the conventions and identified areas where more action was needed. The 101st session of the Board will be held from 2 to 13 May 2011.

The current members of INCB:

- **Hamid Ghodse** (Islamic Republic of Iran)
- **Galina Aleksandrovna Korchagina** (Russian Federation)
- **Carola Lander** (Germany)
- **Melvyn Levitsky** (United States)
- **Marc Moinard** (France)
- **Jorge Montaño** (Mexico)
- **Lochan Naidoo** (South Africa)
- **Rajat Ray** (India)
- **Viroj Sumyai** (Thailand)
- **Sri Suryawati** (Indonesia)
- **Camilo Uribe Granja** (Colombia)
- **Raymond Yans** (Belgium)
- **Xin Yu** (China)

International Narcotics Control Board addresses the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs of the Council of the European Union

The President of the Board, Prof. Hamid Ghodse, and the Secretary of the Board, Jonathan Lucas, participated in the meeting of the Horizontal Working Party on Drugs of the Council of the European Union in Brussels on 15 February 2011. The Horizontal Working Party is the coordinating body within the Council for drug-related matters. The President gave a presentation on the availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes, providing an overview of global and regional variations in licit consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Also highlighted during the presentation was the fact that the rate of consumption of psychotropic substances and narcotic drugs varied significantly within Europe.

Fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

During the fifty-fourth session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, held from 21 to 25 March 2011, the President of the Board, Prof. Hamid Ghodse, presented the annual report of the Board for 2010. Many of the representatives of Member States expressed their appreciation for the thorough and balanced report of the Board, which served as an up-to-date source of information for Governments, and acknowledged the role of the Board in monitoring the implementation of the international drug control treaties.

Many Government representatives noted the relevance of the thematic chapter on corruption, highlighting the extent and severity of the problem and the risk posed by corruption to international drug control. In general, it was agreed that concrete action was required by the international community and civil society to address the problem of drug-related corruption.

The President also made a statement to the Commission under agenda sub-item 4 (c), entitled "international cooperation to ensure the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes while preventing their diversion". He highlighted the findings contained in the supplement to the report of the Board for 2010 entitled *Availability of Internationally Controlled Drugs: Ensuring Adequate Access for Medical and Scientific Purposes*. Many representatives of Member States recognized the value of the supplement and stressed that ensuring the availability of drugs for medical and scientific purposes while preventing their diversion were not mutually exclusive objectives and that it was possible to achieve both of those objectives of the international drug control conventions through well-functioning drug control systems.

Many delegates noted with grave concern the findings reported in the supplement that 80 per cent of the world's population had limited or no access to opioid analgesics for the treatment of pain and that about 90 per cent of global consumption of such drugs took place in a small group of developed countries. Attention was drawn to the barriers to the improved availability of internationally controlled drugs. Representatives called for the implementation of the recommendations contained in the Board's report.

Several technical meetings of the Board and its Secretariat were held on the margins of the Commission's session, including:

- Third informal meeting on the development of an international electronic import and export authorization system
- Informal consultation on the supply of and demand for opiate raw materials
- Training for Member States on the Pre-Export Notification Online (PEN-Online) system
- Informal task force meeting on Project Cohesion and Project Prism



Prof. Hamid Ghodse, President of the Board (centre) with Mr. Michel Perron, Chair of the Vienna Non-Governmental Organizations Committee on Narcotic Drugs (left) and Mr. Jonathan Lucas, Secretary of the Board

Furthering dialogue with civil society

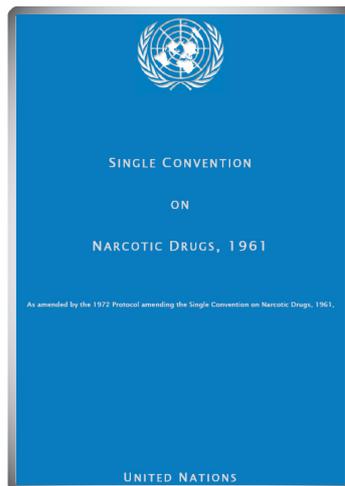
In order to further the Board's dialogue with civil society, the President of the Board, supported by the Vienna NGO Committee on Narcotic Drugs, led by Mr. Michel Perron held an informal dialogue with representatives of a wide range of non-governmental organizations. Various issues related to drug control were discussed. The President invited the representatives of civil society to participate in the ongoing dialogue with the Board, for example by providing suggestions for meetings with civil society organizations during the Board's country missions. Those suggestions will be channelled through the Committee.

Mr. Michel Perron is Chair of the Vienna Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO) Committee on Narcotic Drugs, and Chair of the Steering Committee for "Beyond 2008", a global NGO forum that provides input on the 1998–2008 review of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on illicit drugs (UNGASS).

50 years of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs

The year 2011 marks the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961. Prior to the elaboration of the Convention, the international legal regime governing narcotic drugs was a system derived from six different international treaties adopted between 1912 and 1936 and three further instruments concluded in the period following World War II. With the adoption of each of those treaties, the complexity of legal norms governing drug control increased, as did the potential for inconsistency between the various instruments. The various conventions also left important issues unaddressed, one of the most problematic of which was the absence of provisions for controlling the cultivation of plants used for the production of narcotic raw materials. The administrative framework created to monitor the implementation of the conventions also became progressively more complex, as no single body was mandated to monitor that implementation.

On 3 August 1948, the Economic and Social Council adopted resolution 159 II D (VII), in which it requested that the Secretary-General oversee the preparation of a single convention on narcotic drugs aimed at addressing those concerns. The result of the process initiated by that resolution was the adoption on 30 March 1961 of the Single Convention by a plenipotentiary conference. The objective of the new Convention was to limit the possession, use, trade in, distribution, import, export, manufacture and production of drugs to medical and scientific purposes and to ensure their availability for such purposes.



Cover page of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961

The Single Convention succeeded in consolidating existing norms, thereby simplifying treaty law, addressing new scientific realities, such as the increase in production of synthetic drugs, and closing several existing gaps, such as those related to the production of narcotic raw materials. The Single Convention also streamlined the international drug control administrative framework by merging the Permanent Central Board and the Drug Supervisory Body, thereby creating a new entity, the International Narcotics Control Board.

Since its entry into force in 1964, the Single Convention has become the cornerstone of the international drug control legal framework. The 1972 Protocol amending the Single Convention introduced or reinforced provisions with respect to the prevention of drug abuse and the rehabilitation and treatment of drug addicts, bolstered various aspects of the international drug control system and set out in greater detail provisions relating to the functions and composition of the Board.

The Single Convention's importance and widespread acceptance is evidenced by the fact that there are currently 186 States parties to the Convention. Although much progress has been made on drug control issues since the Single Convention entered into force, important challenges remain. On the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of the Single Convention, the Board remains as committed as ever to continuing to work with States to ensure the effective implementation of this important international legal instrument.

Expert group meeting on psychoactive substances that are used to facilitate sexual assault

From 23 to 25 March 2011, the Laboratory and Scientific Section of UNODC convened an expert group meeting on psychoactive substances that are used to facilitate sexual assault. The meeting was organized pursuant to Commission on Narcotic Drugs resolution 53/7, in which the Commission urged the relevant international organizations, including the Board, UNODC and the World Health Organization (WHO), to gather information and further analyse the phenomenon of the use of drugs to facilitate sexual assault or other criminal acts, with a view to developing common definitions and standards, in particular international guidelines for forensic analyses to identify the presence of psychoactive substances used in connection with such acts, with due regard to the initiatives and legal provisions of States.

Thirteen participants from 11 countries, including forensic chemists, toxicologists and laboratory managers, attended the meeting. INCB was represented at the meeting as an observer. The meeting participants agreed on the structure and content of a manual on recommended methods for the identification and analysis of psychoactive substances used to facilitate sexual assault and other criminal acts.

Developing an international electronic import and export authorization system for controlled substances: recent developments

An effective import and export authorization system is essential in preventing diversion of controlled substances from legitimate international trade. In 2009, the Board convened an informal meeting to explore the possibility of developing an international electronic import and export authorization system for controlled substances in order to facilitate the real-time exchange of import and export authorizations between the competent authorities of importing and exporting countries. Over the past two years, progress has been made by the international community in the development of such a system.

In March 2010, the Board, in cooperation with the Information Technology Service (ITS) of UNODC, convened a second informal meeting with interested Governments to prepare a road map for developing the international system. The meeting decided that the Board should prepare the draft minimum requirements for such a system, which were circulated by the Board to interested Governments in July 2010. Responses received by the Board confirmed the agreement of those Governments with the majority of those requirements.

In February 2011, a meeting of an expert group was organized by the Board and UNODC, bringing together experts from Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, Italy and Switzerland. The experts reviewed in detail the requirements for the system and agreed that the revised draft requirements should be presented at an informal meeting of interested Governments in March 2011.

Representatives from 18 countries attended the informal meeting, which was convened by the Board and UNODC in Vienna on 22 March 2011. At that meeting, it was decided that concerted international efforts should be maintained and that a meeting of an expert group should be organized by the Board and UNODC in May 2011 to review and finalize the draft requirements, which would then be circulated to interested Governments for comment. It was also decided at the informal meeting that ITS should enlist the support of Governments with regard to funding and other resources. The Board welcomes the participation of any Governments interested in this international initiative. For more information on the initiative, please contact the Board's secretariat.

Proposed main features of the international import and export authorization system

- Web-based and easy to use
- Safe and secure
- Real-time exchange of import and export authorizations
- Online endorsement of export authorizations by importing countries
- Automatic checking against estimates and assessments
- Authorization can be issued on paper
- Generation of statistical and discrepancy reports

Informal consultations on reporting

Every year, the Board organizes informal consultations with selected countries on mandatory statistical reporting requirements under the international drug control conventions and related Economic and Social Council resolutions. Those consultations usually take place on the margins of the sessions of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in order to take advantage of the presence in Vienna of representatives of competent national authorities. In 2011, the consultations were held with delegates from Australia, India, Spain, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Recent developments in international precursor control Governments of Malaysia and Thailand request pre-export notifications for pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine

The significant role of pharmaceutical preparations as a source of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine is well recognized and confirmed by results from targeted initiatives under Project Prism. Recommendations of the Board to address that problem have included controlling pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine or pseudoephedrine in the same way as the substances themselves and utilizing the automated Pre-Export Notification

Online (PEN-Online) system to advise of exports of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in all forms, whether raw or formulated into preparations. In line with those recommendations, the Governments of Malaysia and Thailand have requested that they receive pre-export notifications for all proposed transactions involving pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine. The Board has communicated this request to all national competent authorities.

Awareness-raising workshop in Pakistan focuses on precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic stimulants

At the behest of the UNODC Country Office in Pakistan, the Board organized a workshop in Islamabad in February 2011 to raise awareness about precursor chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of synthetic stimulants. The workshop provided key information to staff in various Government ministries and in the Country Office as part of the new country programme plan for the period 2010-2014. While the focus continues to be on the diversion of acetic anhydride, there are increasing concerns related to rising imports of the precursor chemicals ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which can be diverted for use in the illicit manufacture of methamphetamine. The illicit manufacture of, trafficking in and use of methamphetamine has recently emerged in bordering countries, and there is concern that this could also emerge in Pakistan.

INCB missions

Libyan Arab Jamahiriya

Raymond Yans, a member of the International Narcotics Control Board, accompanied by a member of the Board's secretariat, visited the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from 23 to 26 January 2011. The previous mission of the Board to that country took place in 1999.

The objective of the mission was to review the implementation of the three international drug control conventions to which the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya is a party. The mission included a meeting with senior authorities within the General People's Committee for Justice and Security and also with the secretariats for foreign affairs, health and the interior. The mission included a meeting with officials at the Anti-Narcotics General Administration and the Customs Services.

The discussions focused on developments in drug trafficking and abuse in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya and the status of the national legislative and administrative measures taken by the authorities in that regard. Comprehensive data on drug trafficking and various reports were collected. The availability of opiates for medical needs was discussed with the health authorities.



Call for contributions

Readers are invited to submit comments and contributions:

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The Focus Team reserves the right to edit and select articles depending on their relevance and the availability of space.

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About Focus on international drug control

Focus on international drug control is a quarterly publication, initiated by the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), that provides

insight into the activities and positions of the Board and information on other issues relevant to the Board's mandate. Focus also functions as a

forum in which interested parties may share their opinions. Focus on international drug control is prepared by the Vienna-based INCB Secretariat.