



Marking the Board's 50th anniversary, INCB met States to discuss challenges and the way forward in international drug control



On 6 November 2018 the Board met representatives of Member States in Vienna, Austria, for an open dialogue marking its 50th anniversary on the topic: *"The international drug control system: challenges and the way forward."*

The Board Members took the opportunity to underline the challenges currently faced in drug control and initiatives to address them, focusing in particular on the access to and availability of internationally controlled medications, on the "recreational" use of cannabis, as well as the opioid and methamphetamine crises in North America, Asia and Oceania.

In his remarks, INCB President, Dr. Viroj Sumyai, stressed the importance of the cooperation of governments, together with the assistance of international organizations and civil society, to ensure the implementation of the three United Nations conventions on drug control, with a view to promoting public health and well-being. The President also emphasized the necessity for governments to "utilize the knowledge and expertise available and capitalize on the tools developed to support Member States in addressing drug control challenges".



The President of ECOSOC, the Director General of WHO and the Executive Director of the UNODC addressed the meeting via video messages. Opening statements were also made by the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, a representative of Austria as the host country of the Board, a representative of the Vienna NGO Committee on Drugs, and the Chairs of the Vienna-based regional groups of Member States. Member States delegations made statements from the floor and contributed to the

discussion on the way forward to address drug control challenges.

In closing the meeting, Dr. Sumyai reiterated the importance of safeguarding the well-being of citizens through the effective implementation of the treaties.

Statement by the INCB on the entry into force of Bill C-45 legalising cannabis for non-medical purposes in Canada

On 17 October 2018, the International Narcotics Control Board issued a press release reiterating its regret at the legalization of cannabis for non-medical purposes by the Government of Canada.

The full press release can be found [here](#).

Past events:

INCB Learning Training for Central American Countries, Vienna, Austria
15-18 January 2019

INCB Practitioners Workshop, Bangkok, Thailand
14-16 January 2019

123rd session of INCB, Vienna, Austria
30 October – 16 November 2018

INCB President participates at the GA NCD Meeting, New York, USA
27 September 2018

INCB Learning Regional Training for Francophone Africa, Dakar, Senegal
10-14 September 2018

Upcoming events:

124th session of INCB, Vienna, Austria
4 - 8 February 2019

CND 62nd session, Vienna, Austria,
14-22 March 2019

Mission to Chile,
March 2019

Mission to Sri Lanka,
March 2019

Mission to Madagascar,
April 2019

Mission to Montenegro,
April 2019

President of INCB addresses fifth intersessional meeting of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs

The Commission on Narcotic Drugs held its fifth intersessional meeting today on 7 November 2018 in Vienna, Austria. The meeting included a normative segment dedicated to the implementation of the three international drug control treaties, in view of recent policy developments. Dr. Viroj Sumyai addressed the meeting, in consideration of the role of INCB in monitoring and promoting the implementation of the conventions on drug control.

In his remarks, President Sumyai emphasized the fundamental role of the conventions in safeguarding "the health and welfare of humankind by ensuring the availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific use, preventing drug abuse and providing treatment for those affected by drug use, as well as tackling the diversion of controlled substances and precursors chemical to illicit activities". Dr. Sumyai also drew attention to the issue of respect for human rights, affirming that "any State action which violates human rights in the name of drug control policy, whatever its objective may be, is fundamentally inconsistent with the international drug control conventions" and confirming the complementarity of the conventions with the UN human rights treaties."

The words of President Sumyai at the fifth intersessional meeting of the Commission assumed greater significance, taking place immediately after the INCB meeting with Member States on the occasion of its 50th anniversary and in parallel with its ongoing 123rd session, during which INCB has been working to advance the implementation of the conventions among Member States.

Dr. Sumyai's statement at the event is available [here](#).



INCB President participates at General Assembly high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases



On 26 September 2018 INCB President, Dr. Viroj Sumyai, [addressed](#) the third General Assembly high-level meeting on non-communicable diseases at the UN Headquarters in New York.

The the INCB President urged Member States to prevent and address drug abuse and drug use disorders within the NCD framework. Dr. Sumyai emphasized that drug use disorders are a mental health concern that is preventable, treatable and curable, and that prevention of drug abuse must be included in efforts to change lifestyle and habits, in the same way as with other diseases.

Dr. Sumyai called on Member States to improve the availability and accessibility of internationally controlled substances for medical purposes, noting their importance in the treatment of disease and management of symptoms, such as pain. Reference was made to an upcoming report to be launched by the Board that will provide an update on the global imbalance in the consumption of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances and propose remedial measures.

In the context of the right to health and promoting health and well-being, the President urged Governments to step up their efforts in three areas:

- i) Ensuring availability and accessibility of controlled medicines, including by ensuring that levels of estimated requirements are sufficient to meet the real needs;
- ii) Ensuring that National NCD prevention and treatment plans include drug use disorders;
- iii) Ensuring availability of resources and training to enable health professionals to prevent, diagnose and treat drug use disorders.

On 27 September, Dr. Sumyai was also a keynote speaker at the side event entitled "Improving availability of internationally controlled drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes, with a specific focus on pain relief."

Dr. Sumyai encouraged Member States to review legislation and regulatory systems, to improve the health systems, the infrastructure to deliver health care, the training for health care professionals and the estimates and assessment of needs, to ensure that medicines are affordable and the pharmaceutical industry produces affordable medicines, to allow nurses to prescribe controlled substances, where needed; and to support other countries including by supporting the INCB Learning global initiative, by expediting the import and export processes for controlled substances, including by using the INCB platform I2ES, and above all, by including palliative care and mental health in national health care strategies.



Strengthening international cooperation and global intelligence sharing through INCB tools



On 16 January 2019, in a collaborative approach to address trafficking in dangerous substances, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) and the Office of Narcotics Control Board (ONCB) of Thailand held two training events on intelligence sharing tools to counter trafficking in new psychoactive substances, non-medical synthetic opioids, and fentanyl-related substances at ONCB headquarters in Bangkok, Thailand. The training was implemented jointly under INCB's Project Ion and the global OPIOIDS Project, in an effort to increase awareness and the capacity of officers to collect, integrate, and communicate NPS trafficking intelligence.

Twenty-four law, regulatory enforcement and related officers from Thai Customs, ONCB and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) participated in the rapid response trainings. The officers learned

about the changing NPS trafficking situation and regional differences in the opioids crisis and were trained in intelligence sharing and effective use of the IONICS communication platform to support domestic and international trafficking investigations. Results of specialist officers' pre-test and post-test skills assessments demonstrated an average increase in knowledge and skills of 38 percentage points following training officers.

The training programme was held at the same time as the [INCB Workshop on Public-Private Partnership for Prevention of Traffic in NPS, Synthetic Opioids and Precursors via E-Commerce Platforms](#), the third in a series of specialized workshops enlisting the voluntary cooperation of global industry partners. "These events highlight complementary, innovative, and practical solutions to making the sale and distribution of fentanyl-related and other dangerous substances more difficult", said Dr. Viroj Sumyai, President of INCB.

These two training events were made possible through the generous support of the Government of Japan.



Board's plan of action yielding early results in addressing the global synthetic opioids crisis

National experts and international partners gathered at the 5th WHO-UNODC Expert Consultation on New Psychoactive Substances held in Geneva on 26 September 2018 to discuss the threat posed by illicit synthetic opioids. The event focused on practical solutions to the challenges posed by trafficking and misuse of synthetic drugs, most notably dangerous fentanyl-related substances.



INCB highlighted practical actions taken under its global projects and outcomes realized from its synthetic opioids plan of action. Mr. Rossen Popov, Deputy Secretary of the Board stated, "the Board recognized early the threat illicit fentanyls posed and moved to rapidly review for scheduling key precursors", referring to the international scheduling of ANPP and 4-NPP in early 2017.

To assist in this endeavour, INCB recently established and released to governments, task forces and international partners and relevant industries a list of fentanyl-related substances with no currently known legitimate medical or industrial uses, inviting governments to refrain on a voluntary basis from the manufacture, import, export or distribution of these substances. "The focus here is from a proactive rapid consumer protection approach as a tool to accompany the on-going international scheduling efforts", said Mr. Popov.

INCB global OPIOIDS Project supports expansion and training of multi-agency national focal points in police, customs, postal and regulatory agencies in high-risk countries to share real-time operational intelligence through INCB secure global communication systems, Precursors Incident Communications System (PICS) and the Project ION Incident Communication System (IONICS).

The Board's global [OPIOIDS Project](#), [Project Ion](#) and [Project Prism](#), [Project Cohesion](#), are helping Governments to respond to changing trafficking patterns involving fentanyl-related substance by quickly sharing specific intelligence on their sources and modus operandi, convening task forces and specialized intelligence operations, as well as providing information and alerts to Governments and partners in its efforts to interdict sales and distribution of these substances.

INCB Learning training event for El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) held a training seminar for drug control officials from El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras on 15 January 2019 in Vienna, Austria.

The activity was part of the global INCB Learning project, and it follows up on a training seminar held in Guatemala City in December 2017 with the participation of Guatemala and Honduras and supported by a contribution from the United States. The goal of the training seminar was to improve the monitoring and reporting capacities of participating national authorities, and to ensure that controlled substances are adequately available for medical purposes while at the same time preventing diversion into illicit channels, abuse or trafficking.

Central America continues to be used by transnational organized criminal organizations for the trans-shipment of drugs trafficked from South America to drug markets in the United States, Canada and Europe. At the same time, reported levels of consumption of opioids for pain relief and of psychotropic substances for the treatment of mental health and neurological conditions continue to be low among most countries in Central America.

Over four days, INCB Learning provided specialized training on treaty requirements regarding the regulatory control and monitoring of licit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. Participants were introduced to the INCB online tools: the [International Import Export Authorisation System \(I2ES\)](#), the [Pre-export Notification \(PEN\) Online System](#), the [Precursor Incident Communication System \(PICS\)](#) and the [Project Ion Incident Communication System \(IONICS\)](#). Technical expertise was also provided in dedicated segments by representatives of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and the World Health Organization.

Launched in 2016, INCB Learning is an initiative of the Board to assist Member States in implementing the provisions of the three international drug control conventions, as well as the recommendations of the [2016 General Assembly Special Session on the world drug problem](#) and the [Supplement to the INCB Annual Report 2015 on availability](#). The initiative addresses barriers to adequate availability of controlled substances, especially lack of training and awareness. Past activities include regional training seminars for authorities from countries in [East Africa](#), [South and East Asia and the Pacific](#), [Europe](#), [Oceania](#), [Central America](#) as well as [West and Central Africa](#).



INCB Learning training for Francophone Africa in Dakar, Senegal



On 10 September 2018 the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) held a regional training seminar in Dakar, Senegal. Organized through the Board's INCB Learning project, the seminar brought together 30 drug control officials from eleven Francophone African countries, and aimed to strengthen their compliance with the international drug control treaties. Officials from the national drug control authorities of Cameroon, the Central African Republic, Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal and Togo, participated in the training seminar.

Over the course of three days, INCB Learning provided specialized training on treaty requirements regarding the regulatory control and monitoring of licit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. Participants were also introduced to the INCB online tools: the [International Import Export Authorisation System \(I2ES\)](#), the [Pre-export Notification \(PEN\) Online System](#), the [Precursor Incident Communication System \(PICS\)](#) and the [Project Ion Incident Communication System \(IONICS\)](#). The training was co-organized with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Regional Office for West and Central Africa.

The goal of the training seminar was to improve the monitoring and reporting capacities of participating national authorities, and to ensure that controlled substances are adequately available for medical purposes while at the same time preventing diversion into illicit channels, abuse or trafficking.

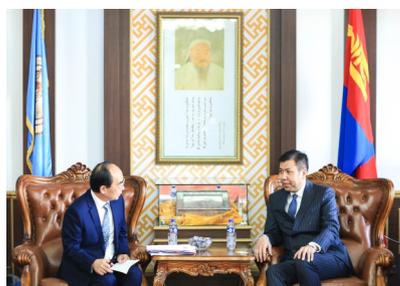
While some progress has been made, Africa continues to be among the regions of the world with low levels of access to opioids for pain relief and of psychotropic substances for the treatment of mental health and neurological conditions. The importance of adequate access to and availability of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes will be discussed in a dedicated segment of the training, with inputs provided by representatives of UNODC, the World Health Organization, the African Palliative Care Association and the Government of Senegal.

Another component of the INCB Learning project is the development of e-learning tools for use by Member States. INCB Learning has benefited from contributions by the Governments of Australia, Belgium, France and the United States, and further support from Member States is required to sustain and expand project activities.

INCB Missions

Eleven INCB missions took place in the second half of 2018. The objective of these missions was to examine the authorities' implementation of the international drug control treaties and to review the developments related to drug control on a confidential basis. The Board's recommendations will be transmitted to the governments in question.

Mission to Mongolia



INCB undertook a mission to Mongolia from 4 to 6 July 2018. The mission was led by [Prof. Wei Hao](#), Second Vice-President of the Board, who was accompanied by Ms Tatiana Jehl of the INCB Secretariat. The last mission of the Board took place in 1999 and was organized by the Ministry of Justice and Home Affairs, together with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The delegation met with the Deputy Minister of Justice and Home Affairs of Mongolia, as well as with high-level officials from the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the National Police Agency, Professional Inspection Agency, and Customs General Administration of Mongolia. The INCB delegation also visited the National Mental Health Center and the National Institute of Forensic Science and held a technical consultation meeting. A meeting was also held with the UNDP Resident Coordinator in Mongolia.

Mission to Mauritius

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) recently undertook a country mission to Mauritius from 23 to 26 July 2018. The mission was led by [Mr. Bernard Leroy](#), Member of the Board and Rapporteur, who was accompanied by Mr. Martin Dessart of the INCB Secretariat. The last mission of the Board in 2008 and was organized by the Ministry of Defence and Rodrigues of Mauritius.

During the country visit, the delegation met with Prime Minister of Mauritius, Minister of Defence and Rodrigues, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Health and Quality of Life, Attorney General, Minister of Education, Deputy Commissioner of the Mauritius National Police and the Commissioner of Prisons. Additionally, the delegation held meetings with officials from the Mauritius Revenue Authority, Customs Authority, Financial Intelligence Unit as well as the Forensic and Scientific Laboratory. The mission delegation also conducted a site visit of Melrose Maximum Security Prison. Additional meetings were held with various NGOs dealing with drug treatment, prevention and rehabilitation based in Mauritius.

Mission to Germany

An INCB mission to the Federal Republic of Germany took place from 3 to 5 September 2018. The mission was conducted by [Prof. Jallal Toufig](#), First Vice-President of INCB, accompanied by Mr. Adrian Moicean, Drug Control Officer of the INCB Secretariat. The last mission to the Federal Republic of Germany took place in July 2003. The mission was organized by the Ministry of Health.

The delegation met with the Federal Drugs Commissioner as well as with high level officials of the Federal Ministry of Health, the Federal Ministry of Interior, the Federal Foreign Office, the Federal Ministry of Finance, the Central Customs Authority and the President accompanied by high level officials of the Federal Institute for Drugs and Medical Devices (BfArM). The INCB delegation also met with the Drugs Commissioner of the Federal Land Berlin and conducted a visit to the Customs Administration at the airport Berlin-Tegel. The delegation visited NGO's active in drug abuse prevention in Berlin such as *Patrida* (substitutiontherapy), *Birkenstube* (a "supervised drug consumption facility") and *Tannenhof* (inpatient rehabilitation centre) and also had meetings with NGO representatives from *Deutsche AIDS-Hilfe*, *Deutsche Hauptstelle für Suchtgefahren* and *Fixpunkt*.



Mission to Luxembourg



From 25 to 28 September 2018, INCB undertook a mission to the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg. The mission was led by [Mr. Bernard Leroy](#), Member of the Board, accompanied by Mrs. Hanifa Rebbani of the INCB secretariat. The mission was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs. The delegation met with the Deputy Director of Political Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, and held meetings with senior officials from the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Justice, the Ministry of Interior security and the customs and excise administration. The INCB delegation also visited the Center for Addiction Prevention and the Penitentiary Center of Luxembourg (CPL).

Mission to Nepal

The International Narcotics Control Board undertook a country mission to Nepal from 5 to 7 September 2018. The mission was led by [Ms. Jagjit Pavadia](#), Member of the Board and Vice-Chair of the Standing Committee on Estimates, who was accompanied by Mr. Martin Dessart of the INCB secretariat. The last mission of the Board took place in 2007 and was organized by the Ministry of Home Affairs of Nepal.



During the country visit, the delegation met with H.E. Mr. Ram Bahadur Thapa, Minister for Home Affairs for Nepal. Additionally, the mission held meetings with officials from the Ministry of Home Affairs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Health and Population, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs. The delegation also met with the Resident Coordinator for UNDP in Nepal as well as the country representative for WHO in Nepal. A site visit of Asara Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre in Kathmandu was also conducted. Additional meetings were held with various NGOs dealing with drug treatment, prevention and rehabilitation based in Nepal.

Mission to the UAE

From 10 to 12 September 2018 INCB undertook a mission to the United Arab Emirates. The mission was led by [Prof. Wei Hao](#), Second Vice-President of the Board, accompanied by Mr Imrich Betko of the INCB secretariat, and was coordinated by the Federal General Department of Anti-Narcotics of the Ministry of Interior. The delegation met with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Interior, and held meetings with senior officials from the Ministry of Health and Prevention, the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



The INCB delegation also visited the General Department of Forensic Science & Criminology of Dubai Police and the National Rehabilitation Center in Abu Dhabi. A further site visit was undertaken to a customs facility in Jebel Ali port.

Mission to Qatar



From 1 to 3 October 2018 INCB conducted a mission to the State of Qatar. [Prof. Dr. Sevil Atasoy](#), Member of the Board, led the mission and was accompanied by Mr. Stefano Berterame of the INCB secretariat. The mission was coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the delegation met with senior officials from the Ministry of Interior (General Directorate of Drugs Enforcement and General Directorate of Criminal Investigation), the Ministry of Public Health (Pharmacy and Drug Control Department), the Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The delegation also visited the Naufar Treatment and Rehabilitation Centre, the Drug Stores of the Pharmacy and Drug Control Department, and the customs facilities at the Hamad International Airport.

Mission to Tunisia

From 16 to 18 October 2018, INCB undertook a mission to Tunisia. The mission was led by [Prof. Jallal Toufig](#), First Vice-President of the Board accompanied by Mrs. Hanifa Rebbani of the INCB secretariat. The mission was coordinated by the National Bureau of Narcotics of the Ministry of Health. The last mission of the Board took place in 2002.

The delegation met with H.E Mr. Imed Hammami, Minister of Health and held meetings with senior officials from the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Interior, Ministry of Education and the customs administration. The INCB delegation also conducted site visits of the treatment and rehabilitation centre "Amal" in J'bel el Oust and the Emergency Medical Assistance centre in Tunis. A meeting with an NGO dealing with drug prevention and rehabilitation was also held.



Mission to UK

An INCB mission visited the United Kingdom from 15 to 18 October 2018. The mission was conducted by [Prof. Francisco Thoumi](#), member of INCB and Ms. Beate Hammond of the INCB Secretariat. The last INCB delegation visited the United Kingdom in 2007. The mission was organized by the Home Office.

The delegation met with Ms. Victoria Atkins, Parliamentary Under Secretary of State at the Home Office as well as with other high-level officials of the Home Office, Department of Health and Social Care, Public Health England, Advisory Council on the Misuse of Drugs, National Crime Agency, Ministry of Justice/Her Majesty's Prison & Probation Service, Border Force, National Police and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. In addition, at the request of and accompanied by officials from the Home Office and Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the delegation visited a site where cannabis is cultivated to produce pharmaceutical cannabis-based preparations. The INCB delegation also went to the Club Drug Clinic in London and held consultations with several civil society groups as well as with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Drug Policy Reform.

Mission to Jamaica

A mission of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) to Jamaica took place from 26 to 30 November 2018. The mission was conducted by [Mr. Bernard Leroy](#), member of INCB and Mr. Stefano Berterame of the INCB Secretariat. The last INCB mission to Jamaica took place in 2001 and was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade.

The INCB delegation also reviewed the efforts of the Government of Jamaica in countering drug trafficking and drug-related criminal activities as well as the actions to prevent drug abuse and to ensure access to treatment and rehabilitation services for drug dependent persons.

The delegation met with the Minister of National Security, the Honourable Dr. Horace Chang and with Minister of Justice the Honourable Delroy Chuck. The INCB delegation also met with senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade, the Ministry of Justice, the Attorney General's office, the Ministry of National Security, the Ministry of Health; the Ministry of Culture, Gender, Entertainment and Sports; the Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Agriculture and Fisheries; Ministry of Education, Youth and Information.

In addition, the delegation met with officials from the Cannabis Licensing Authority the National Council on Drug Abuse, the Ministry of Science and Technology, the Science Research Council, the National Council on Science and Technology, the Jamaica Constabulary Force, the Jamaica Defence Force, the Jamaica Customs Agency, the Financial Investigations Division, the Port Authority of Jamaica, the Port Security Corps, and the Jamaica Civil Aviation Authority. The facility of the Drug Treatment Centre "Patricia House" was also visited .



Mission to Paraguay

An INCB mission to Paraguay took place from 3 to 7 December 2018. The mission was conducted by [Mr. Luis Alberto Otárola Peñaranda](#), member of the INCB and Ms. Beatriz Ospina Aragón of the INCB secretariat. The last INCB mission to Paraguay took place in 2005. The mission was organized by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

The objective of the mission was to review the drug control situation in Paraguay and the full implementation of the three United Nations drug control conventions to which Paraguay is a party, including reporting to and cooperation with INCB in accordance with the Conventions. The situation of, and the actions by the Government to counter drug trafficking, to prevent drug abuse and to provide treatment and rehabilitation for drug dependent persons were also discussed.

The delegation met with H.E. Juan Ernesto Villamayor, Minister of Interior, H.E. Julio Mazzoleni, Minister of Public Health and Social Welfare, H.E. Carla Bacigalupo, Minister of Labor, Employment and Social Security; H.E. Arnaldo Giuzzio, Minister of the National Anti-Drug Secretariat, the Ministers of the Supreme Justice Court, members of Senators and Deputies Chambers, as well as with Directors of the National Police and the General Customs.



Recent UNODC publications on drugs:

Drug Use Survey
Nigeria - 2018

Myanmar Opium Survey
2018 - Cultivation and
Production

Peru - Monitoreo de
Cultivos de Coca 2017

Mexico - Opium Survey
2015-2016/2016-2017

Afghanistan Opium
Survey 2018

Useful links:

United Nations

United Nations Office on
Drugs and Crime

Commission on Narcotic
Drugs

United Nations
Economic and Social
Council

World Health
Organization

World Customs
Organization

INTERPOL

Other items of interest on the INCB website

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