

## Foreword

20 December 2013 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the conclusion of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Much progress and many successes have occurred since then, with milestones such as the General Assembly's twentieth special session in 1998 devoted to countering the world drug problem together, the 2009 Political Declaration and Plan of Action on International Cooperation towards an Integrated and Balanced Strategy to Counter the World Drug Problem, and the preparations for the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016.

It is my pleasure to present the International Narcotics Control Board's 2014 report on precursors, which contains the Board's review and assessment of international precursor control, the challenges ahead and possible solutions.

In terms of regular, established working procedures, international cooperation, facilitated by the Board's communication platforms—Pre-Export Notification Online (PEN Online) for licit trade, and the Precursors Incident Communication System (PICS) for seizures and other incidents involving precursor chemicals—has continued to yield results. When suspicion was established, planned exports were stopped through successful cooperation between the authorities of exporting and importing countries; when seizures were made, proactive officials of the seizing Government immediately alerted their counterparts elsewhere to the details of the seizure, the modus operandi and other relevant information to ensure that they too would be prepared should a similar incident occur in their countries.

However, new challenges have emerged, partly the result of inconsistent implementation of the provisions of the 1988 Convention at the national level and between and within regions, and partly the result of external factors such as the current economic and technological environment, which is very different from that of 25 years ago, when the 1988 Convention was negotiated.

Every year, in its report on precursors, the Board has advocated the need to address solutions to the diversion of precursor chemicals at the international level; the Board has also called for the comprehensive implementation of existing tools, many of which are available to Governments at no cost. The Board's recommendations over the years in both its annual reports and the annual reports on precursors show the numerous actions Governments can and should take to fulfil their shared responsibility.

However, to make precursor control fit for the future and beyond 2019, the target date set in the Political Declaration, efforts need to go further than the mechanistic introduction and implementation of regulatory measures. First and foremost, it has to be accepted that the diversion of precursor chemicals can and does happen at all stages of the distribution chain, regardless of whether or not a country has a manufacturing industry. That is, it has to be accepted that domestic distribution is as much at risk as is international trade. Secondly, each and every Government must take this challenge seriously and accept its responsibility and role in an interconnected world.

On behalf of the Board, I wish to express my sincere hope that the international community will seize the opportunity provided by the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem to be held in 2016 to build on

the successes of the last 25 years and further improve the international precursor control system without introducing unnecessary regulatory burdens. The goal is achievable, but because the bar is high, it requires an honest and open discussion and the closest possible cooperation of all Governments.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Naidoo', with a large, stylized loop at the bottom.

Lochan **Naidoo**

President of the International  
Narcotics Control Board