

V. Conclusions and recommendations

211. The present chapter summarizes the key conclusions of this report and provides recommendations to Governments, with a view to preventing trafficking in precursors and strengthening the functioning of the precursor control system at the national, regional and international levels. Specific recommendations and conclusions are also incorporated in the other chapters of the report, presented in bold text.

212. In the reporting period, many of the Board's earlier observations were confirmed, such as the continued emergence of non-scheduled alternative chemicals for use in the illicit manufacture of an ever-wider range of drugs. There was also a re-emergence of trends that had disappeared for some time, such as the diversion of pharmaceutical preparations containing ephedrine, in particular pseudoephedrine.

213. The resurgence of diversions of pharmaceutical preparations containing controlled precursors may explain some of the illicit drug manufacturing trends. However,

gaps in data continue to exist, in both quantitative and qualitative terms, as the amounts of precursors seized continue to be significantly lower than the amounts of the end-product equivalents seized, especially in relation to methamphetamine and its precursors. The data for 2021 may indicate the existence of manufacturing sites in as yet unaffected countries and regions. Notable data gaps are also found in relation to the flows of precursors of amphetamine and the illicit manufacture of the substance, as the key ingredient of fake "captagon" pills that are seized in massive amounts, especially in countries in West Asia.

214. In that connection, INCB continues to be concerned about flows of precursors in countries affected by conflict, unresolved territorial disputes, weak rule of law or other circumstances that hinder the exercise of effective control. The countries concerned, as well as international trading partners, need to more carefully scrutinize the potential modus operandi of criminal networks to determine how traffickers are obtaining chemicals and moving them to the sites of illicit manufacture. Given the lack of capacity as one possible reason for the limited knowledge in this area, **the Board encourages Governments, international donors and organizations and other relevant partners that engage in technical cooperation programmes to work together to build capacities and operational knowledge to prevent chemicals from being diverted into illicit drug manufacture.**

215. A significant share of the chemicals seized globally continues to comprise chemicals diverted from domestic distribution channels, including common markets. As regulating the domestic market and monitoring domestic sales and distribution pursuant to article 12, paragraph 8, of the 1988 Convention is the exclusive prerogative of Governments, knowledge of industry landscapes at the national level is a critical first step in protecting these licit markets and their operators from traffickers. To aid Governments in acquiring or enhancing such knowledge, INCB has prepared and disseminated an additional guidance document on categories of relevant industries, which is also available on the Board's secure website. **The Board encourages Governments to establish whether the different categories of industries that might be involved in the manufacture, trade or distribution of chemicals used for illicit drug manufacture are present in their country, as well as their sizes and geographical spread. Such an exercise would allow Governments to approach and eventually engage industries in self-protective, proactive strategies aimed at both reducing opportunities for infiltration by traffickers and facilitating the monitoring of the potential evolution of illicit drug markets.**