

318. Governments in all regions have used the *Guidelines* in drafting and subsequently adopting legislation that empowers authorities to investigate and take legal action against illegal Internet pharmacies. This includes legislation allowing for the inspection of shipments by mail suspected of containing internationally controlled substances and legislation providing a framework for the operation of Internet pharmacies.

319. The continued growth of Internet access around the world, the widespread availability of online communication channels and the vastness of the deep web, the part of the Internet that is not accessible to search engines, all contribute to making drug trafficking over the Internet, whether through illegal Internet pharmacies or by other means, a significant crime threat. **In that connection the Board calls on Governments to continue to use the *Guidelines* pursuant to the recommendation expressed in the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016.**<sup>89</sup>

## 7. The International Import and Export Authorization System (I2ES): modernizing import and export authorization to ensure the availability of and access to controlled substances

320. Making indispensable narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances available for medical and scientific purposes while ensuring that there is no diversion or abuse: these two fundamental principles were set forth in the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol and the 1971 Convention. The commitment of the international community towards these goals was further reiterated in the outcome document of the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem held in 2016.

321. Pursuant to the 1961 and 1971 Conventions and to relevant resolutions of the Economic and Social Council, import and export authorizations are required for the international trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. An efficient and effective import and export authorization system that enables competent national authorities to expedite the process is crucial to ensuring the adequate availability of and access to controlled substances and to reducing the risk of diversion.

322. The volume of licit trade in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances under international control has increased continuously over the last decade. That rise is

expected to persist, as the availability of and access to internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes increases in more and more countries.

323. I2ES, a web-based electronic system developed by the Board together with UNODC and with the generous financial and technical support of Member States, was designed to modernize the import and export authorization system and assist competent national authorities in managing their increasing workload. By achieving these goals, I2ES contributes to the implementation of the import and export authorization system as stipulated in the Conventions, and operational recommendation 2 (c), contained in the outcome document of the thirtieth special session of the General Assembly, on ensuring the availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

324. I2ES is provided to all Governments free of charge and serves as a secure and safe platform for uploading and exchanging import and export authorizations between trading countries. Competent national authorities can save much time and resources on verifying the authenticity of import and export authorizations via the secure portal. Real-time communication and exchange of information between authorities of trading countries is also possible whenever transactions require clarification or further processing.

325. The new tool modernizes the import and export authorization system while taking into consideration the needs and national systems of various Governments. I2ES enables countries with no existing national electronic systems to generate and transmit import and export authorizations electronically and to download and print them as necessary. It also provides them with a repository and data-bank of all their international trade in controlled substances, making it easier for them to monitor the trends in the use of controlled substances. Governments with existing national electronic systems can link up their systems with I2ES so that relevant data can be utilized for the further processing and exchange of import and export authorizations.

326. Throughout the development of I2ES, the Board has ensured that all business rules underlying the system fully comply with the relevant provisions of the 1961 and 1971 Conventions regarding import and export authorizations, and that the format and content of the authorizations fulfil all the requirements provided for in the Conventions and relevant decisions of the Commission.

327. With a number of built-in functions and automatic alerts, I2ES enables Governments to monitor the licit trade of internationally controlled substances and prevent their diversion. When, for a particular substance, the

<sup>89</sup>General Assembly resolution S-30/1.

envisaged trading volume exceeds the latest estimate or assessment of the importing country, a warning message is displayed automatically and further processing is blocked until the relevant estimates and/or assessments are updated. Furthermore, by enabling authorities of an importing country to verify in real time the amounts actually received, authorities of the exporting country can be notified immediately should those quantities be smaller or larger than those authorized for export.

328. The Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in its resolution 58/10 of March 2015, welcomed the launch of I2ES and urged Member States to promote and facilitate the fullest possible use of the system. It also invited the secretariat of INCB to administer the system and encouraged Member States to provide the fullest possible financial support for its administration and maintenance and the provision of trainings.

329. User-group meetings were held on the margins of the fifty-ninth and sixtieth sessions of the Commission in March 2016 and March 2017. Authorities from around 40 countries, together with the INCB secretariat and UNODC, shared their views on and experience with using I2ES. In particular, participants assessed the progress made, gave feedback and suggestions regarding the further development of I2ES and identified specific actions to promote its use.

330. One user-group meeting focused on the latest version of the UNODC National Drug Control System and the technical aspects of its data exchange with I2ES. The meeting was organized jointly by the competent national authorities of Switzerland and UNODC, and was held at the beginning of October 2017. The secretariat of INCB participated and gave an overview of I2ES. Authorities from about 15 major countries trading in narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances shared their experiences with and vision for using these applications.

331. The Board wishes to express its appreciation to all Governments that have provided financial, political and technical support during the development and testing of I2ES. **While its development was completed entirely with extrabudgetary resources, further funding is required to enable the secretariat of INCB to administer I2ES in line with its mandate and in accordance with all relevant resolutions of the Commission.**

332. As at 1 November 2017, 40 countries (Afghanistan, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Italy, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lithuania,

Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Saint Lucia, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Spain, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey and Zambia) had registered with I2ES.

333. **The Board would like to encourage all competent national authorities to register with I2ES as soon as possible and start utilizing it.** As more and more Governments join hands in issuing and exchanging import and export authorizations via the system, its power and effectiveness in expediting the process increase rapidly. In particular, the active participation of major trading countries for narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances is of paramount importance. More widespread utilization of I2ES will not only improve the efficiency and workflow of competent national authorities, but also serve as a basis for further strengthening the international drug control system.

334. Applying the principle of common and shared responsibility, States parties have successfully reduced the diversion of controlled substances thanks to their concerted efforts to implement the import and export authorization system and regulate the licit trade of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances under international control. It is time to apply the same spirit to realizing the full potential of I2ES so as to modernize the import and export authorization system and ensure adequate availability of and access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

335. **The Board would like to invite Member States to consider what further measures would be needed to ensure the fullest utilization of I2ES, its maintenance and further development.**

## 8. Training for competent national authorities, and INCB Learning

336. The provision of estimates, assessments and statistics to the Board, together with the control over international trade lie at the core of the international drug control system. The Board has observed, however, that many countries have difficulties in meeting the requirements set out in the international drug control conventions and related resolutions of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission on Narcotic Drugs.

337. The insufficient capacity of some Governments to comply with the provisions of the international drug control conventions increases the risks of diversion, trafficking and abuse and can lead to inadequate availability of controlled substances for medical, scientific and, in the case of precursor chemicals, legitimate industrial