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International Narcotics Control Board Examines Impact Of Drugs, Crime And Violence At Community Level

VIENNA, 3 November 2003 (UN Information Service) -- The micro-level impact of drugs, crime and violence will be discussed by members of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) when it meets for its 78th session (3-14 November 2003) in Vienna today. The topic will form part of the Board's Annual Report for 2003. The report, which will be adopted during this session will be released in February 2004.

During this session, the Board will review the impact of the different forms of crime and violence associated with drug use, including violent crime perpetrated by or against individual drug users and the plight of innocent individuals caught in the cross-fire of violent drug cultures.

In the report, the Board will draw the attention of Governments to the impact of drug abuse and trafficking on the development of violence and crime at the community level. It will also focus on the relationship between illicit drug abuse, crime and violence with respect to individuals, families, neighbourhoods and communities, taking into account both criminality and victimization.

Drug trafficking and related violent crime link local communities with transnational criminal networks. While the INCB acknowledges the importance of these issues at the national and international levels, this report will focus more on the equally important localized and targeted interventions with respect to groups engaging in or at risk of violent drug-related crime and on the affected communities.

Since its last session in May 2003, the Board has sent missions to Canada, Ecuador, Germany, Iran, Peru and Turkey. The Board will review the reports of these missions and examine how governments and territories are implementing the provisions of international drug control treaties.

Through its Standing Committee on Estimates, the Board will also review the worldwide supply and demand of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical purposes and establish or confirm quotas for narcotic drugs for every country in the world. A

representative from the World Health Organization (WHO) will discuss with the Board health-related issues in the field of international controlled drugs during this session.

The Vienna-based Board is an independent body, established by the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs to monitor Governments' compliance with the international drug control treaties. Its 13 members are elected by the United Nations Economic and Social Council to serve in their individual capacities for a term of five years. Its meetings are held in private.

The current members of the Board are: Edouard Armenakovich Babayan (Russian Federation), Madan Mohan Bhatnagar (India), Elisaldo Luiz de Araújo Carlini (Brazil), Philip O. Emafo (Nigeria), Jacques Franquet (France), Hamid Ghodse (Iran), Nüzhet Kandemir (Turkey), Robert Lousberg (Netherlands), Maria Elena Medina-Mora (Mexico), Alfredo Pemjean (Chile), Rainer Wolfgang Schmid (Austria) and Jiwang Zheng (China). On 31 October 2003, Melvyn Levitsky (United States) was elected by the Economic and Social Council to replace Rosa Maria del Castillo (Peru) who resigned from her position earlier this year.

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