



THE ROLE OF THE INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL BOARD

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) is the independent and quasi-judicial monitoring body for the implementation of the United Nations international drug control conventions. It was established in 1968 in accordance with the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961. It had predecessors under the former drug control treaties as far back as the time of the League of Nations.

Composition

INCB is independent of Governments as well as of the United Nations. Its 13 members are elected by the Economic and Social Council and serve in their personal capacity, not as government representatives. Three members with medical, pharmacological or pharmaceutical experience are elected from a list of experts nominated by the World Health Organization (WHO) and 10 members are elected from a list of experts nominated by Governments.

INCB collaborates with the United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime* and also with other international bodies concerned with drug control including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, WHO, the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) and the World Customs Organization.

Functions

The functions of INCB are laid down in the following treaties: the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol; the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971; and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

Broadly speaking, INCB:

- monitors Government's compliance with the international drug control treaties and recommends, where appropriate, technical or financial assistance;
- works in cooperation with Governments to ensure that adequate supplies of drugs are available for medical and scientific uses and that drugs from licit sources are not diverted to illicit channels;
- identifies weaknesses in national and international control systems;
- assesses chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs to determine whether they should be placed under international control;
- administers a system of estimates of narcotic drugs and a voluntary assessment of psychotropic substances and monitors licit activities through an international reporting system established by the conventions;
- monitors and promotes measures taken by Governments to prevent the diversion of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs;
- In the event of apparent treaty violations, INCB demands explanations and proposes remedial measures to governments. It can also draw attention to treaty violations to the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Economic and Social Council.

Reports

The international drug control treaties require INCB to prepare an Annual Report on its work. The Annual Report contains an analysis of the drug control situation, draws attention to gaps and weaknesses in national control and in treaty compliance and recommends improvements at both national and international levels. The Reports are based on information provided by Governments and international bodies to INCB. The Annual Report is supplemented by detailed technical reports on narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and on precursor chemicals which can be used in the illicit manufacture of such drugs.