

## **INCB: US Supreme Court Decision on Cannabis Upholds International Law**

VIENNA, 8 June (UN Information Service) -- The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) welcomes the decision of the United States Supreme Court, made on 6 June, reaffirming that the cultivation and use of cannabis, even if it is for “medical” use, should be prohibited.

“INCB has for many years pointed out that the evidence that cannabis might be useful as a medicine is insufficient”, said Professor Hamid Ghodse, President, INCB. “Countries should not authorise the use of cannabis as a medicine until conclusive results based on research are available. Sound scientific evidence for its safety, efficacy and usefulness is required to justify its use in medical practice. Any research into cannabis as a medicine should involve the World Health Organization, as the responsible international health agency.”

INCB has expressed concern that organizations advocating the legalization of cannabis, and of narcotic drugs in general, are using the issue of medical cannabis as a “back door” to legalisation. “Cannabis is the most widely abused drug in the United States and in the world,” Professor Ghodse said. “Cannabis is classified under international conventions as a drug with a number of personal and public health problems. It is not a ‘soft’ drug as some people would have you believe. There is new evidence confirming well-known mental health problems, and some countries with a more liberal policy towards cannabis are reviewing their position. Countries need to take a strong stance towards cannabis abuse.”

In its decision, the United States Supreme Court noted that medical cannabis statutes in California were open to abuse, and even cannabis cultivated for personal use as medicine could end up being supplied to the illicit market.

The Vienna-based INCB is an independent body, established by the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs to monitor governments’ compliance with the international drug control treaties. The three treaties are the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, the 1971 Convention on Psychotropic Substances and the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. Its 13 members are elected by the Economic and Social Council to serve in their individual capacities for a term of five years.

For further information, contact:

**Saul Takahashi**

Drug Control Officer, INCB

Phone: +43 1 26060 5267

Email: [saul.takahashi@incb.org](mailto:saul.takahashi@incb.org)