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International Narcotics Control Board Elects Hamid Ghodse as President

VIENNA, 20 May (UN Information Service) -- Professor Hamid Ghodse, a renowned Iranian Physician and Professor at the University of London who is resident in the United Kingdom, has been elected President of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). The Board is currently meeting in its 92nd session, which runs through 30 May.

Professor Ghodse has been a member of the INCB since 1992 and has served eight times as the Board's President: in 1993, 1994, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001, 2004 and 2005. A distinguished academic, Professor Ghodse is the author of over 300 scientific papers on drug-related issues and an expert and advisor for a number of international fora.

Also elected were Professor Sevil Atasoy, First Vice-President; Dr. Camilo Uribe, Second Vice-President and Chairman of the Standing Committee on Estimates (SCE); and Professor Maria-Elena Medina-Mora, Rapporteur. The officers are elected by the Board to serve a one-year term, with the current appointments ending on the first day of the Board's May 2009 session.

At the current session, the Board will review the worldwide supply and demand of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances for medical purposes, discuss the growing problems of chemicals used in the illicit manufacture of drugs, as well as treaty compliance of more than 200 countries and territories.

The Board will also examine drug control situations in Ethiopia, Ukraine and United Arab Emirates following its missions to these countries. In addition, the Board will review the extent to which countries and territories have implemented recommendations made to them, pursuant to previous missions undertaken by the Board.

The outgoing President, Dr. Philip Emafo, will inform the Board of some of the events that took place since the last session in February 2008, such as the outcome of his annual meeting with the Secretary-General of the United Nations and a briefing for Permanent Missions in New York, chaired by the President of the Economic and Social Council.

The Chairman of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs and the Executive Director of the United Nations *Office on Drugs and Crime* will also address the session.

The Vienna-based Board is an independent body, established by the 1961 Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs to monitor and support Government compliance with the international drug control treaties. The membership of the Board is as follows: Joseph Bediako Asare (Ghana) Sevil Atasoy (Turkey), Tatyana Borisovna Dmitrieva (Russian Federation), Philip O. Emafo (Nigeria), Hamid Ghodse (Iran), Carola Lander (Germany), Melvyn Levitsky (United States), Maria-Elena Medina Mora (Mexico), Sri Suryawati (Indonesia), Camilo Uribe Granja (Colombia), Brian Watters (Australia), Raymond Yans (Belgium) and Xin Yu (China). Members are elected by the Economic and Social Council to serve in their individual capacities for a term of five years.

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