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### **INCB Examines Drug Abuse Prevention**

VIENNA, 2 November (UN Information Service) – A review of drug abuse prevention is one highlight of the 96th session of the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB). The session is currently being held in Vienna, and will conclude on 13 November 2009.

The first chapter of the forthcoming annual report of the Board will focus on preventing drug abuse, a crucial area of demand reduction. The INCB President, Professor Sevil Atasoy said: “Primary prevention includes measures taken to prevent and reduce drug use in populations that are either not using or not seriously involved with drugs.”

In its examination of the worldwide situation with respect to drug abuse and illicit trafficking, the Board will devote special attention to the growing dimension of abuse of painkillers and other prescription medicines. The analysis will be reflected in the Board’s Annual Report for 2009, which will be adopted at the current session.

In addition, INCB will review the supply and demand of narcotic and psychotropic substances used for medical purposes. Through its Standing Committee on Estimates, the Board will examine the requirements of licit drugs for each country and, where necessary, make amendments to ensure that all patients in the world have access to the cure and care they need.

Another area of focus will be the achievements of the international community in preventing the diversion of precursor chemicals for the manufacturing of drugs. INCB has supported operations that have led to the successful interception of illicit shipments of chemicals, thus preventing the manufacture of heroin and cocaine. The Board will discuss how to continue and strengthen this global effort in the midst of an increasing demand for monitoring international chemical trade, especially in Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries.

Since its last session in May, the Board has visited Hungary, Jordan, Malta, Spain and Sudan. The results of these missions and technical visits will be presented and the Board will discuss ways to cooperate with those countries in their efforts to tackle illicit drug abuse and trafficking.

The Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and representatives of the World Health Organization, the World Customs Organization and the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) will also share their latest information with the Board.

Professor Sevil Atasoy added that other major issues that the Board will discuss include the problems associated with counterfeit medicines and the sale of controlled substances through the Internet; problematic consumption levels of anorectics in some countries; abuse of synthetic cannabinoids; internationally controlled substances on the unregulated market and other trends in drug abuse and trafficking with a view to recommending actions to improve international control measures.

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.

The current president of the Board is Professor Sevil Atasoy (Turkey) and the current members are: Joseph Bediako Asare (Ghana), Tatyana Borisovna Dmitrieva (Russian Federation), Phillip O. Emafo (Nigeria), Hamid Ghodse (Iran), Carola Lander (Germany), Melvyn Levitsky (United States), Jorge Montaña (Mexico), Sri Suryawati (Indonesia), Camilo Uribe Granja (Colombia), Brian Watters (Australia), Raymond Yans (Belgium) and Xin Yu (China).

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