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International Narcotics Control Board Regrets Bolivia's Denunciation of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs

VIENNA, 5 July (UN Information Service) – The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) regrets the decision by the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to denounce the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol. On 29 June 2011, in an unprecedented step, the Government of Bolivia denounced the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the 1972 Protocol, to which the State of Bolivia had previously acceded. The Government also announced its intention to re-accede to this Convention but with a reservation regarding specific treaty provisions.

The Board is of the opinion that while this step by Bolivia may be in line with the letter of the Convention, such action is contrary to the Convention's spirit. The international community should not accept any approach whereby Governments use the mechanism of denunciation and re-accession with reservation, in order to free themselves from the obligation to implement certain treaty provisions. Such approach would undermine the integrity of the global drug control system, undoing the good work of Governments over many years to achieve the aims and objectives of the drug control conventions, including the prevention of drug abuse which is devastating the lives of millions of people.

The international drug control conventions are the corner stone of international efforts to prevent the illicit production, manufacture, traffic in and abuse of drugs while at the same time ensuring that licit drugs are available for medical and scientific purposes. The almost universal adherence to these conventions is testimony to Governments' trust in the international drug control system and a pre-requisite for the treaties' effectiveness to prevent drug trafficking and abuse.

The Board requests the Bolivian Government to consider very seriously all the implications of its actions in this regard, and invites it to do so in the context of the shared responsibility of all countries in dealing with the universal drug problem.

The Vienna-based Board is an independent body established under the international drug control treaties to monitor and support Governments' compliance with those treaties. The Board has the responsibility to bring any threat to the international drug control system to the attention of States parties.

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