



## The Board holds its INCB 120th Session

The INCB held its 120th Session in Vienna from 31 October to 17 November 2017. Opening the session, INCB President Dr. Viroj Sumyai reiterated the Board's "ultimate aim of increasing availability of and access to internationally controlled medicines for those in need while preventing substance abuse".



In the course of its deliberations, the Board also reviewed a wide range of issues, such as human rights, the connections between the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and international drug control, goal three on good health and well-being and the opioid overdose crisis in North America. On the crisis, Dr. Sumyai emphasised the importance of international cooperation to prevent the smuggling of fentanyl and fentanyl analogues. In its review of overall treaty compliance by States, the Board paid particular attention to the cultivation and/or distribution of non-medical cannabis and the legalisation

thereof which is inconsistent with the 1961 Convention.

The Board further discusses to great extent the availability of and access to medicines made of internationally controlled substances for those in need. The President highlighted that the INCB addresses the 'global pain divide' by reviewing its communication platforms, training national competent authorities and engaging with key partners.

During the Session, the Board held consultations with the Executive Director of UNODC, the Chair of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), the Assistant Director of INTERPOL and a representative of the World Customs Organisation (WCO). On the margins of the Session, Dr. Sumyai also met with the Ambassador of Nepal to discuss capacity-building in drug control.

Furthermore, the draft of the 2017 Annual Report was finalised, which includes a thematic chapter named "Treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration for drug use disorders: essential components of drug demand reduction". The Report will be launched worldwide in March 2018.

The President concluded the Session with a call for a global human rights-based approach to the treatment and rehabilitation of those suffering from drug use disorders.

### **INCB President appeals to the international community to support relief efforts in Myanmar-Bangladesh border region**

At its 120th Session, the INCB discussed the deteriorating humanitarian crisis in the Myanmar-Bangladesh border region and echoed the UN Secretary General's appeal in September 2017 for assistance to persons displaced or affected by the conflict. According to UN estimates, 1.2 million people require humanitarian assistance and contributions worth USD 434 million are needed.

The Board noted that the humanitarian crisis will require urgent shipments of medications, including medicines containing internationally controlled narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

INCB President Viroj Sumyai speaking on behalf of the Board said: "I urge the international community to heed the Secretary General's call for humanitarian assistance, including in the provision of needed medical supplies and care. INCB is ready to assist in whatever manner it can according to its mandate."



### Past events:

INCB Learning project, Guatemala, 11-13 December 2017

60th CND Session reconvened, 7-8 December 2017

INCB Learning project, Australia, 28-30 November 2017

120th Session of INCB, Vienna, 31 October–17 November 2017

60th CND Session, Vienna, 13-17 March 2017

### Upcoming events:

121st Session of INCB, Vienna, 5-9 February 2018

INCB briefing to Member States on the Mandate and Activities of the INCB and on the 2017 Report, Vienna, 7 February 2018

61st CND Session, Vienna, 12-16 March 2018

122nd Session of INCB, Vienna, 7-18 May 2018

## ***INCB Learning trains 159 officials from 68 countries***

The INCB secretariat recently held two training seminars on the implementation of the international drug control conventions. The seminar that took place from 28 to 30 November in Sydney brought together staff from the competent national authorities of the following countries and one territory in Oceania: Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Micronesia, New Caledonia, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. 24 officials from Guatemala and Honduras joined a similar training in Guatemala City from 11 to 13 December. During the training seminars, participants built their knowledge of the international drug control framework and the technical reporting obligations of the conventions related to narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals.

With initiatives such as INCB Learning, the Board supports Member States in fulfilling the commitment they made at the special session of the General Assembly on the world drug problem last year: to improve adequate access to controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes. Strengthening Governments' capacity to adequately assess their requirements of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes is key to ensure that medicines containing such substances are sufficiently available to patients in need, including in remote areas.



The INCB Learning project was launched in 2016 as a global initiative to assist governments in the regulatory control and monitoring of the licit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. Training seminars were held last year for countries in East Africa, South and East Asia and the Pacific regions, and for European countries earlier this year. Other INCB Learning activities include the production of e-learning modules on the requirements of the drug conventions for use by governments.

To date, a total of 159 officials from 68 countries has been trained in INCB Learning seminars. INCB Learning has benefitted from the support of the Governments of Australia, France and the United States. To continue and expand these activities, INCB Learning depends on further contributions by Member States.

## ***INCB Missions***

Four INCB missions took place in November and December 2017. The findings of these mission will be presented to the Board at its 121<sup>st</sup> session in February 2018, and the Board's recommendations will be transmitted to the governments in question. The objective of the missions was to examine the authorities' implementation of the international drug control treaties and to review the developments related to drug control since the Board's last visit.

### ***Mission to Switzerland***



An INCB mission to Switzerland took place 20-22 November 2017. The mission was led by Dr. Galina Korchagina, Member of the Board, accompanied by Ms. Cilla NG of the INCB Secretariat.

The mission, organized by the Federal Office of Public Health, held consultations with several high-level officials from the latter, Swissmedic, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Federal Police and Cantonal Police Bern. Meetings with members of the Federal Commission on Addiction and NGO representatives were also held. Further, the mission visited a company manufacturing internationally controlled substances as well as drug injection facilities in the capital.

Discussions centred on the most recent developments within Swiss drug control, the trafficking and abuse of narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and control precursor chemicals, the measures taken to address the latter, as well as challenges with regard to access and availability of substances for medical purposes under international control.

## Mission to the Russian Federation

A mission of the Board visited the Russian Federation 20-24 November 2017. The mission was conducted by Dr. Viroj Sumyai, President of the INCB, accompanied by Ms. Beate Hammond of the INCB Secretariat.

The mission, coordinated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, held consultations with a number of senior government officials, including the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Deputy Minister of Health, the Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade, the Chief of the Ministry of Internal Affairs' General Administration. The mission visited the Moscow Endocrine Plant, a state-owned manufacturer of pharmaceutical preparations, as well as facilities that provide emergency care, treatment counselling and rehabilitation for drug users. Further, the mission met with NGOs working in the area of drug prevention and rehabilitation.



## Mission to Australia



An INCB mission to Australia took place 27-29 November 2017. The mission was carried out by Ms. Jagjit Pavadia, Second Vice President of the INCB, accompanied by Mr Paul Rabbat, Chief of the Convention Evaluation Section of the INCB Secretariat. The mission, organised by the Department of Health, held high-level talks with officials from the Drug Strategy Branch, the Office of Drug Control, the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, the Attorney General's Department, the Australian Federal Police, the Department of Immigration and Border Protection as well as the Australian Advisory Council on the Medicinal Use of Cannabis.

The delegation further held meetings in Melbourne, with the Office of Medicinal Cannabis Regulation of the State of Victoria as well as the Agriculture Research Division of the Department of Economic Development, Jobs, Transport and Resources of the State of Victoria.

In Sydney, the delegation visited the National Measurement Institute and a container examination facility administered by the Department of Immigration and Border Protection.

## Mission to Guyana

An INCB mission visited Guyana 5-7 December 2017. The mission was led by Dr. Raul Martin del Campo Sánchez, Member of the Board, accompanied by Mr. Stefano Berterame of the INCB secretariat.

The mission, coordinated by the recently established National Anti-Narcotics Agency (NANA), held consultations with Vice President and Minister of Public Security, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Attorney General, the Minister of Legal Affairs, the Chief of Staff of the Guyana Defence Forces, as well as several officials from other ministries and the police force. Discussions focused, among other, on the vulnerability of Guyana to drug trafficking and the action taken by the Government to address this issue.



## Recent UNODC publications on drugs:

Myanmar - Opium Survey 2017

Peru - Coca cultivation survey 2016 - Fact sheet

Afghanistan Opium Survey 2017

Global Synthetic Drugs Assessment - 2017

Colombia - Survey of territories affected by illicit crops 2016

World Drug Report 2017

## Useful links:

[United Nations](#)

[United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime](#)

[Commission on Narcotic Drugs](#)

[United Nations Economic and Social Council](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[World Customs Organization](#)

[INTERPOL](#)

## Highlights from the INCB website

- ◇ [INCB presents to the 5th International Conference on Novel Psychoactive Substances](#)
- ◇ [INCB presents at WHO's Global Conference on NCDs](#)
- ◇ [Scheduling of fentanyl precursors comes into force](#)
- ◇ [INCB participates in the 2017 I2ES User Group Meeting in Bern](#)
- ◇ [INCB presents to the 4th intersessional meeting of the Commission on the implementation of the outcome of the 30th UNGASS](#)
- ◇ [INCB calls for assistance of Governments with regard to the emergency in Central America, the Caribbean and Mexico](#)
- ◇ [INCB President participates in UNODC 20th anniversary event and meets with Representatives of Member States](#)
- ◇ [INCB condemns acts of violence against persons suspected of drug-related crime and drug use in the Philippines](#)
- ◇ [UN News interview: INCB President calls for greater access to treatment for women](#)