



## 50 years of international control in psychotropic substances

Half a century ago, on 21 February 1971, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances was adopted and opened for signature. Signed by 34 States at the time of its adoption, the Convention enjoys nearly universal adherence today, with 184 State Parties. Recognizing that the use of psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes was indispensable, the 1971 Convention extended – for the first time in history - international regulation of manufacture and trade to psychotropic substances.



## INCB together with Member States commemorated the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1988 Convention

In November 2020, INCB held a hybrid consultation with over 50 Member States during its 129th Board session to commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary since the entry into force of the 1988 Convention Against the Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychoactive Substances. The Board and delegates reflected on developments and contemporary challenges in international precursor control and specifically on the implementation of article 12 of the 1988 Convention. Board members and officials also discussed INCB tools available to Member States to counter these challenges.

INCB President Cornelis P. de Joncheere highlighted that States have succeeded in significantly reducing diversion of precursor chemicals listed in Table I and Table II of the convention from international trade into illicit drug manufacture. However, he noted that among the current critical challenges are the growing level of sophistication and scale of illicit drug manufacture operations and of the use of a range of chemicals not under international control.

Several delegations echoed the concerns concerning the spread of non-scheduled chemicals and designer precursors and expressed support in implementing a robust, global drug precursor policy.



Picture: INCB President Cornelis P. de Joncheere chairing a hybrid consultation with Member States during the 129th Board session

### Past events

128th session of INCB, Vienna, Austria  
31 August - 4 September 2020

Online event on access to and availability of controlled substances in times of crisis  
Vienna, Austria  
20 October 2020

129th session of INCB, Vienna, Austria  
28 October-15 November 2019

130th session of INCB, Vienna, Austria  
1 –5 February 2021

### Upcoming events

Online expert group meeting on updated Guidelines for the International Provision of Controlled Substances for Emergency Situations  
Vienna, Austria  
18 & 19 March 2021

Launch of the INCB Annual Report 2020 and the Precursors Annual Report  
Vienna, Austria  
25 March 2021

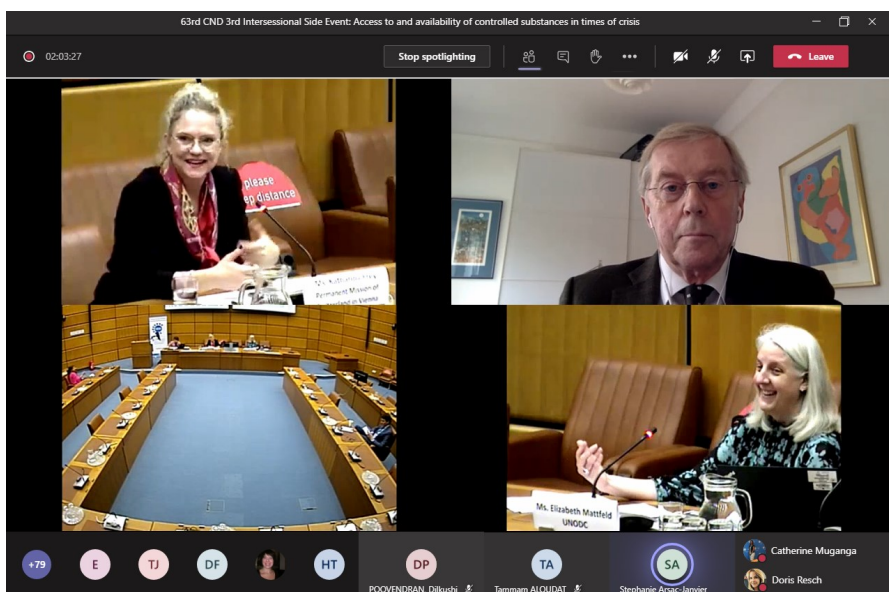
64th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs,  
Vienna, Austria  
12-16 April 2021

[Side event](#) on the Non-scheduled and designer precursors – global challenges and global solutions during the CND 2021, date to be confirmed

## Online event on access to and availability of controlled substances in times of crisis

At the margins of the third intersessional meeting of the sixty-third session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (20 March 2020), INCB together with the Government of Switzerland organized a virtual side-event on Access to and Availability of Controlled Substances in Times of Crisis.

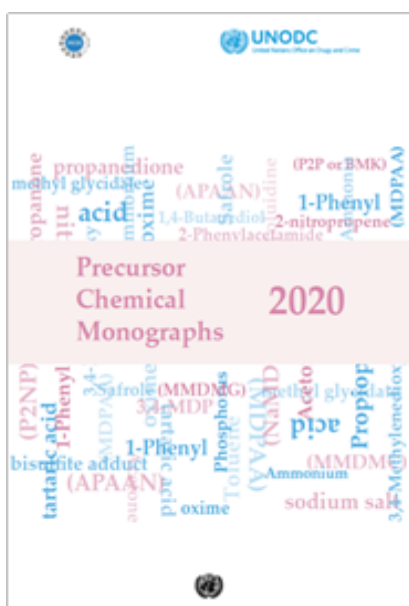
Attended by around 90 participants from all over the world and moderated by Ms. Katharina Frey, Deputy Head of the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the United Nations in Vienna, the event highlighted some of the major challenges experienced by Governments and humanitarian assistance organizations in ensuring access to and availability of controlled substances in emergency and crisis situations (including the COVID-19 pandemic) and the importance of updating the Model Guidelines for the International Provision of Controlled Medicines for Emergency Medical Care (1996).



The President of the Board, Mr. Cornelis P. de Joncheere, and representatives of the World Health Organization (Dr. Dilkushi Poovendran), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (Ms. Elisabeth Mattfeld), the International Committee of the Red Cross (Ms. Stephanie Arsac-Janvier) and Médecins Sans Frontières (Mr. Tammam Aloudat) shared their concerns and difficulties faced in delivering controlled substances during emergency and crisis situations, including that of the COVID-19 pandemic.

INCB calls for further cooperation among the international community on providing assistance to countries experiencing difficulties in access to and availability of controlled substances in times of crisis, and will continue working with governments, WHO, UNODC, humanitarian partners and other stakeholders in improving the Guidelines in this regard.

## INCB published the Precursor Chemical Monographs 2020 in cooperation with UNODC ROSEAP



INCB published the *Precursor Chemical Monographs 2020* in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime Regional Office for Southeast Asia and the Pacific (UNODC ROSEAP). This useful resource provides a comprehensive technical overview of over 95 precursor chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture, including dual-use chemicals with legitimate applications and designer precursors with no known legitimate use.

The compilation of chemical monographs supports the efforts of Governments to identify an ever-growing diversity of chemicals and combinations of chemicals and the risks of their diversion as well as their relevance for illicit drug manufacture. It aims to strengthen the work of regulatory and law enforcement authorities, promote national and international understanding of the subject and facilitate voluntary cooperation with private sector industries.

The document is accessible from the INCB secure portal or upon request for official use from: [incb.precursors@un.org](mailto:incb.precursors@un.org) (currently in English only).

## ***INCB compiled methodologies for collecting data on consumption of psychotropic substances, including medicines essential for the treatment of mental health and neurological conditions***

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) convened an online expert group meeting on methodologies for collection of data on consumption of psychotropic substances, from 14 to 17 September 2020. National officers from 21 countries participated in six online events, in addition to experts from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the World Health Organization (WHO), the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA).

INCB convened the expert group meeting in order to improve understanding of methodologies used for collecting data on consumption of psychotropic substances. The lack of reliable data on the actual consumption of psychotropic substances in many parts of the world remains a barrier to assessing and analysing trends in the availability of these substances and to providing targeted assistance to those countries with low levels of availability.

Some of the psychotropic substances under international control remain essential in the treatment of mental health and neurological conditions and robust data collection systems play a crucial role in evaluating levels of consumption of psychotropic substances within a country or territory, including whether patients have access to or if a particular population might be overusing or misusing such substances.

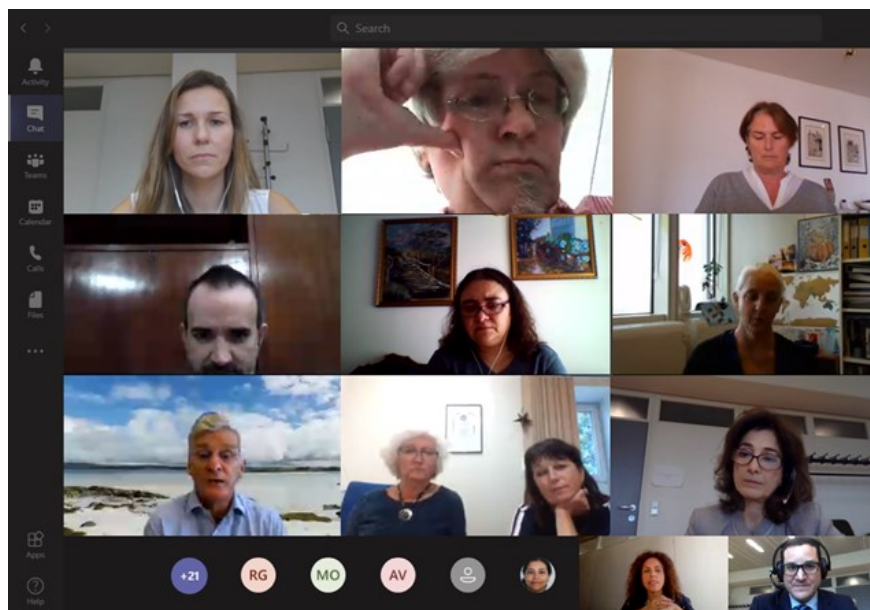
During the event, experts from the participating competent national authorities and international organizations shared their experiences in operating data collection systems for internationally controlled substances and recognized the technical challenges in implementing such systems, especially regarding consumption data for psychotropic substances. The participants also highlighted the relevance of improving the methodologies used in their countries as it would improve the quality of the data collected and ultimately support evidence-based decisions that will affect the availability and accessibility of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes.

Information collected during the consultation served as basis for the development of a “Compilation of methodologies for collecting data on consumption of psychotropic substances”, which will be shared with all Governments in the upcoming months and will serve as a reference for the Board to support Governments in improving the collection of consumption data of psychotropic substances. Existence of reliable national consumption data will in turn enable to Board to undertake a more accurate evaluation of global availability and accessibility of psychotropic substances for medical and scientific purposes.

### ***Effective scheduling of MAPA on 3 November 2020***

As [decided](#) by the Sixty Third Commission on Narcotic Drugs in March 2020, MAPA, was included as an internationally controlled precursors in Table I of the 1988 Convention, effective as of 3 November 2020. State Parties are therefore expected to replicate controls of this substance nationally.

MAPA is a designer precursor and pre-precursor used in the illicit manufacture of amphetamine and methamphetamine and has no known legitimate uses beyond limited research. Following this scheduling, there are now 30 internationally controlled precursors.



## ***Guidelines to prevent and investigate the diversion of materials and equipment essential for illicit drug manufacture now available in all official languages of the United Nations***

In early 2020, INCB published the Guidelines to prevent and investigate the diversion of materials and equipment essential for illicit drug manufacture in the context of article 13 of the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988.

The purpose of the guidelines is to assist Governments in increasing the operational use of [article 13 of the 1988 Convention](#) by taking appropriate measures to prevent trade in and the diversion of essential equipment for the illicit manufacture of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances. Measures range from raising awareness with the industry about the misuse of equipment for illicit drug manufacture and voluntary initiatives conducted in cooperation with industry to the establishment of more comprehensive regulatory systems.



The document is now accessible, in all six UN languages, from the INCB secure portal or upon request for official use from: [incb.precursors@un.org](mailto:incb.precursors@un.org).

## ***INCB, WHO and UNODC statement on access to internationally controlled medicines during COVID-19 pandemic***

The International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) call on governments to ensure that the procurement and supply of controlled medicines in countries meet the needs of patients, both those who have COVID-19 and those who require internationally controlled medicines for other medical conditions.

Read the full statement [here](#).

## ***International Narcotics Control Board reviews the drug control situation in the Philippines, including alleged extrajudicial responses to suspected drug-related activities, and reiterates request to conduct a mission to the Philippines***

During its 129th session, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) held consultations with senior representatives of the Government of the Philippines to discuss the country's implementation of its legal obligations under the three international drug control conventions in conjunction with continued reports of extrajudicial acts of violence, including killings of people in the Philippines suspected of engaging in drug-related conduct and drug use.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has highlighted that reports of these killings continue, including during the COVID-19 pandemic. INCB has remained in dialogue with the Government of the Philippines on these issues and has been working to secure a Board mission to the country to review implementation of the three drug control conventions on the ground.

Read the full Press Release [here](#).

## INCB Learning Webinar sessions in 2020



In order to continue providing capacity building for competent national authorities while complying with measures designed to prevent the spread of COVID-19, INCB Learning held three regional webinar sessions in 2020. The first session held for Central America and the Caribbean was a [two-part webinar series](#) in Spanish (8 to 15 June) for Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Panama and in English (16 to 23 June) for Belize and Guyana. As part of these series, 33 government officials received training. The second [virtual training](#) organized in Spanish for 41 officials of Colombia, Ecuador and Peru were divided into two parts: 28

September to 1 October 2020 and 25 to 26 November. The session on the international legal framework was delivered by the Vice-President of the Board, Luis Alberto Otarola Peñaranda, while INCB Board Members Mr. Martin Del Campo and Dr César Arce actively participated in the sessions with insightful interventions. The third [webinar sessions](#) in French from 7 to 14 December brought together 19 participants of Burkina Faso, Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Guinea, Morocco, Niger, Senegal and Togo. During the opening session, INCB Board Member Jallal Toufiq welcomed participants and highlighted the availability of controlled substances, and INCB Board Member and Rapporteur Bernard Leroy follow up with a session focused on the legal obligations under the conventions.

**A total of 93 government officials from 19 countries were trained in 2020.** The virtual training seminars provided training on the responsibilities of governments under the three drug control conventions and raised awareness on the importance of timely and adequate reporting to ensure the adequate availability of internationally controlled substances for medical, scientific and industrial purposes, yet prevent their abuse and diversion to illicit channels.

Did you know?



In 2020, 93 government officials of 19 countries were trained virtually. 67% of those officials were women.

## Feedback received from government officials about the INCB Learning virtual sessions



"It was an enriching experience for the improvement of the knowledge of the communication tools between the INCB -other international authorities."



"I am very grateful for the opportunity you have given us. There were 9 excellent sessions where the content was easy to understand, the presentations were very interactive, and the speakers are highly qualified. I also congratulate the organization that has been held, since all the session started on time."



"Very satisfied with the training provided and grateful for their effort. Despite being their first-time offering training under the virtual modality, the sessions were very well structured and addressed."



"The INCB eLearning sessions offered an interactive training and increased our relevant knowledge on the narcotics regulatory system, the psychotropic substance regulatory system, and the annual legitimate requirements to import amphetamine-type stimulant precursors."

## FAQ compendium

### Frequently asked questions



Find the answers to the most frequently asked questions by national authorities

A [Frequently Asked Questions](#) document compiling questions received from government officials during INCB Learning trainings was produced with the input of the substantive INCB sections and published on the INCB Learning website. This document compiles relevant information on the Board and the forms furnished to INCB by governments in compliance with the provisions of the three international drug control conventions in the regulatory control and

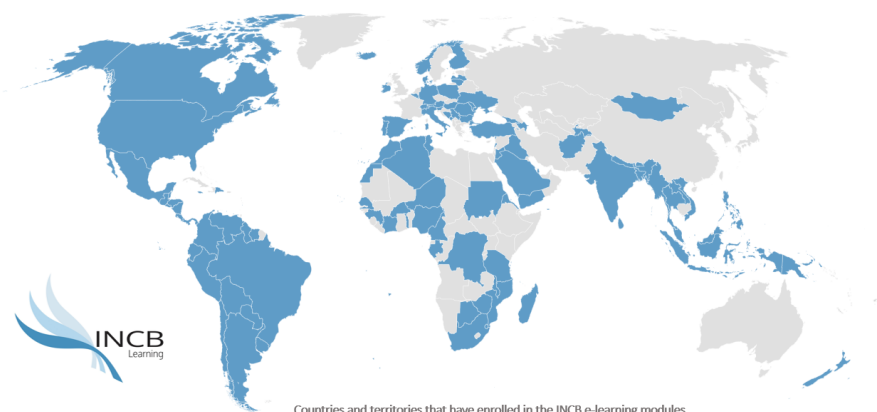
monitoring of the licit trade in narcotic drugs, psychotropic substances and precursor chemicals. This tool is currently available in English, with efforts in place to translate the document into all 6 official UN languages due to the relevance of this tool aimed at supporting to maintain continuity of relevant knowledge despite staff turnover.

## INCB Learning e-modules

### 106 countries and territories enrolled on the INCB Learning e-modules by the end of January 2021

In 2020, [INCB Learning](#) reached a significant milestone with the enrolment of officials of competent national authorities from 105 countries and territories worldwide in the [INCB Learning e-learning modules](#). Available since October 2019 in English, and since March 2020 in Spanish, the interactive modules have been taken up by around half the governments of the world within one year. The [INCB Learning e-modules](#) were developed to assist Governments in

adequately estimating and assessing their needs for internationally controlled substances. As of 31 January 2021, **857** government officials of **106** countries and territories were enrolled in the e-learning modules.



Disclaimer: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Welcome to the United Nations

INCB e-learning modules to support Governments to adequately estimate and assess their needs for internationally controlled substances. The modules are free of charge and available upon request to staff members of competent national authorities under the International Drug Control Conventions. Requests for access can be sent to [incb.learning@un.org](mailto:incb.learning@un.org).

- Estimates System for Narcotic Drugs
- Assessment System for Psychotropic Substances
- Estimates of Annual Legitimate Requirements (ALRs) for Imports of Precursors of Amphetamine-Type Stimulants

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

The three e-learning modules are free of charge to competent national authorities and aimed at supporting governments in estimating and assessing their needs for internationally controlled substances. The modules offer self-paced training on the estimates system for narcotic drugs, the assessment system for psychotropic substances, and estimates of annual legitimate requirements (ALRs) for imports of precursors of amphetamine-type stimulants. A fourth module on the International Drug Control Framework and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) is currently under production. The INCB Learning e-modules can also be accessed from the website of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).

## Upcoming INCB Learning Events

- INCB Learning is organizing webinar sessions for 19 South-East Asian countries scheduled for March 2021, the webinars will offer a follow up of the [Thailand regional training in 2016](#).
- During the 64th session of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND), INCB Learning will host a side event organized by the Government of Switzerland. The 50-minute virtual event entitled “*INCB Learning Capacity Building Solutions: Supporting Member States during emergencies and the way forward*” is dedicated to the work of [INCB Learning](#) Global Programme and will serve as a platform to launch a new e-learning module on the International Drug Control Framework and the translation of the three existing [INCB Learning e-modules](#) into French and Portuguese.

## Scheduling Decisions by the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)

At its sixty-third session, the Commission decided to include thirteen substances in the relevant schedules of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol, the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971 and the United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances of 1988, as follows: crotonylfentanyl and valerylfentanyl in Schedule I of the 1961 Convention as amended by the 1972 Protocol; DOC in Schedule I and AB-FUBINACA, 5F-AMB-PINACA (5F-AMB, 5F-MMB-PINACA), 5F-MDMB-PICA (5F-MDMB-2201), 4F-MDMB-BINACA, 4-CMC (4-chloromethcathinone, clephedrone), *N*-ethylhexedrone, *alpha*-PHP, flualprazolam and etizolam in Schedule II of the 1971; "methyl *alpha*-phenylacetoacetate (MAPA), (including its optical isomers) in Table I of the 1988 Convention. The decisions will become effective 180 days after they were communicated by the Secretary-General to all parties.

## INCB holds Expert Group Meeting on control and monitoring requirements of cannabis and cannabis-related substances

INCB held a virtual Expert Group Meeting bringing together 16 experts from across the globe to discuss control of and reporting on cannabis for medical and scientific purposes from 18 to 21 January 2021. The Board is developing an initiative on the control and monitoring requirements of cannabis and cannabis-related substances to support Member States in improving their control and reporting capacities.



The meeting reviewed the control and compliance issues as well as good practices related to cannabis cultivation and the manufacture of and international trade in cannabis and related products. Experts highlighted the importance of ensuring availability of cannabis-based substances for medical purposes and underlined that estimates should be improved to appropriately reflect the needs in the health care system. Disparities in control and monitoring capacities of countries in different regions of the world should also be taken into consideration.

The findings of the Expert Group Meeting will assist INCB in supporting Member States on the improvement of control and reporting capacities, ensure availability of cannabis and related products for medical and scientific purposes and prevent diversion to illicit channels and abuse.

Read the full Press Release [here](#).

## Other items of interest on the INCB website

- ◇ INCB Alerts
- ◇ INCB Publications
- ◇ INCB Speeches
- ◇ INCB Guidelines
- ◇ INCB Press releases

## Recent UNODC publications on drugs:

World Drug Report 2020

Afghanistan opium survey 2019, Socio-economic survey report: Drivers, causes and consequences of opium poppy cultivation

Plurinational State of Bolivia - Coca cultivation survey 2019 - Summary and fact sheet

Myanmar Opium Survey 2020 - Cultivation, Production, and Implications

## Useful links:

United Nations

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Commission on Narcotic Drugs

World Health Organization

World Customs Organization

INTERPOL