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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The availability of internationally controlled substances for medical and scientific purposes remains inequitable and, in many locations, inadequate. To support Member States in improving the situation, the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) has published a special supplement to the INCB 2022 Annual Report, entitled *No Patient Left Behind: Progress in Ensuring Adequate Access to Internationally Controlled Substances for Medical and Scientific Purposes*. The supplement reviews the situation based on information reported to INCB by Member States and civil society, identifies obstacles and makes recommendations, including on ensuring availability during emergency situations.



The thematic chapter of the 2022 Annual Report presents the Board's analysis of the trend towards legalization of the non-medical use of cannabis. It analyses the various policy approaches from the perspective of the drug control conventions. INCB notes that the legalization of the non-medical and non-scientific supply and use of cannabis breaches the provisions of the conventions. The convention-based system offers significant flexibility for States to protect young people, improve public health, avoid unnecessary incarceration and address illicit markets and related organized crime. Central to the conventions is the principle of proportionality and establishing better prevention and treatment programmes as well as addressing organized crime through social prevention and law enforcement. Evidence suggests that cannabis legalization has not been successful in dissuading young people from using cannabis, and illicit markets persist. INCB is particularly concerned about the expanding cannabis industry, which markets cannabis-based products in ways that appeal to young people, and about the playing down of harms associated with using high-potency cannabis products.

The report also analyses the global surge in illicit cocaine production and trafficking and the growing threat posed to public health by increased availability and higher levels of purity.

INCB remains concerned about the large-scale opium poppy cultivation and opium production in Afghanistan, where there is an urgent need to improve prevention and treatment for all people who use drugs, in particular women. INCB draws attention to the importance of ensuring the provision of mental health treatment and support, including during emergencies.

The INCB 2022 Precursors Report contains recommendations aimed at improving the control of chemicals used in illicit drug manufacture and addressing the proliferation of non-scheduled designer precursor chemicals.

Following up on the recommendations contained in the Board's 2022 publications will contribute not only to improved implementation of the drug control conventions but also towards the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals. To this end, INCB supports Governments through INCB Learning, the Global Rapid Interdiction of Dangerous Substances (GRIDS) Programme, and other INCB systems,



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such as the Pre-Export Notification Online (PEN Online) tool, for the exchange of information among countries. As the international community seeks to put the 2030 Agenda back on track following the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and amid humanitarian emergencies, the implementation of the drug control conventions is central to safeguarding health and well-being.

**Jagjit Pavadia**

President

International Narcotics Control Board

