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Your reference:

His Excellency
Mr António Guterres
Secretary-General of the United Nations
New York, NY 10017
USA

24 January 2019

Dear Mr Secretary-General,

The forty-first meeting of the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (ECDD) convened from 12 to 16 November 2018 at WHO headquarters in Geneva. Following recommendations made by the fortieth ECDD in June 2018 regarding the pre-review of cannabis and cannabis-related substances, the forty-first ECDD carried out critical reviews of these substances to determine the most relevant level of international control for cannabis and cannabis-related substances and whether the World Health Organization (WHO) should recommend changes in their level of control.

In addition, the forty-first WHO ECDD reviewed ten New Psychoactive Substances (NPS), five of which are synthetic opioids; and two pain-relieving medicines, pregabalin and tramadol. The recommendations regarding these substances are communicated to you through a separate letter under the same date as this letter.

The review of cannabis and cannabis-related substances was carried out in relation to Resolution 52/5 of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, in which the Commission stated that it looked forward to an updated report on cannabis by the Expert Committee.

With reference to Article 3, paragraphs 1, 3, 5, and 6 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961), as amended by the 1972 Protocol, and Article 2, paragraphs 1, 4, and 6 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971), I am pleased to submit recommendations of the forty-first meeting of the ECDD regarding the review of cannabis and cannabis-related substances as follows:

ENCL: (1)

Cannabis and cannabis-related substances

- **Cannabis and cannabis resin**
 - To be deleted from Schedule IV of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
- **Dronabinol (*delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol*)**
 - To be added to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
 - To be deleted from Schedule II of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971), subject to the CND's adoption of the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol*) to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
- **Tetrahydrocannabinol (Isomers of *delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol*)**
 - To be added to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) subject to the CND's adoption of the recommendation to add dronabinol and its stereoisomers (*delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol*) to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
 - To be deleted from Schedule I of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances (1971), subject to the CND's adoption of the recommendation to add tetrahydrocannabinol to Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
- **Extracts and tinctures**
 - To be deleted from Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)
- **Cannabidiol preparations**
 - To give effect to the recommendation of the fortieth meeting of the ECDD that preparations considered to be pure cannabidiol (CBD) should not be scheduled within the International Drug Control Conventions by adding a footnote to the entry for cannabis and cannabis resin in Schedule I of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961) to read "*Preparations containing predominantly cannabidiol and not more than 0,2 percent of delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol are not under international control*"
- **Preparations produced either by chemical synthesis or as preparation of cannabis, that are compounded as pharmaceutical preparations with one or more other ingredients and in such a way that delta-9-tetrahydrocannabinol (dronabinol) cannot be recovered by readily available means or in a yield which would constitute a risk to public health**
 - To be added to Schedule III of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs (1961)

The assessments and findings on which they are based are set out in detail in the forty-first report of the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence. An extract of the report is attached in Annex 1 of this letter.

I am very pleased with the ongoing collaboration between WHO, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), and in particular, how this collaboration has benefited the work of the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence (including through the participation of UNODC and INCB in the forty-first meeting of the ECDD), and more generally, the implementation of the operational recommendations of the United Nations General Assembly Special Session (UNGASS) 2016.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus
Director-General