

PREFACE

Concern at the rising tide of drug abuse and trafficking in illicit drugs has been manifest in many Commonwealth gatherings in recent times. In developing their collective response to these challenges, Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Vancouver in October 1987 requested the Commonwealth Secretariat to provide assistance in several areas of need, among them the implementation of relevant international conventions.

This "Accession Kit" is the result. It has been designed to meet the needs of Commonwealth governments who have not to date become party to The Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs 1961 (as amended by the Protocol of 1972) and The Convention on Psychotropic Substances 1971.

It is modelled on a number of "Accession Kits", originally pioneered by Professors David McClean and Keith Patchett and which have provided an impetus to accession by Commonwealth countries to selected international conventions. This has been prepared by Dr S K Chatterjee, who has assisted both the World Health Organisation and the Commonwealth Secretariat, and who is an acknowledged authority on the international drugs regime. The Secretariat is deeply indebted to him for his personal and substantive contribution to our work.

This text is designed primarily for lawyers in government service, and discusses in some detail the legal matters associated with the Conventions, which form an essential background to any legislation in the field. The text may therefore be too detailed in this respect for the general administrator of a drug control agency, for whom a broad outline is provided in "Guidelines for the Control of Narcotic and Psychotropic Substances in the Context of the International Treaties" by B Rexed, K Edmonson, I Khan and R J Famsom (WHO, Geneva, 1984). This is highly recommended and should be read in parallel to this text. The health expert may also find considerable technical assistance in respect of specialist responsibilities in the WHO Technical Report Series, which inter alia outline the work of various expert committees working in the drug dependence field.

The Mental Health Division of the WHO in Geneva has indicated its readiness to assist in any way it can. For its part, the Commonwealth Secretariat is planning the preparation of a guide to the various international agencies - including both the U.N. and NGOs - active in the field, with an emphasis on the assistance they are able to provide.

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