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His Excellency Mr. António Guterres
Secretary General of the United Nations
New York

Excellency,

The Republic of Palau, being a Party to the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, has the honour to inform you that it has information relating to nicotine (C₁₀H₁₄N₂; CAS No. 54 11 5), a substance not currently under international control, which in the Government's opinion may require its addition to one of the Schedules of the Convention.

Nicotine is the principal addictive agent in tobacco and nicotine products and is responsible for sustaining a global epidemic of dependence that drives more than seven million deaths every year through tobacco and nicotine products, with more than one billion people dependent on nicotine, most of them hooked as children. Nicotine addiction, rather than tobacco alone, is the engine that locks children and adults into lifelong use of nicotine products and the diseases and premature deaths that follow.

The WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence evaluates substances against four principal criteria: dependence potential, abuse risk, public health harm and therapeutic usefulness. In Palau's view, the available scientific and epidemiological evidence shows that nicotine now clearly meets all four criteria for international control.

Nicotine is among the most addictive psychoactive substances in the world, with neurobiological processes similar to those behind addiction to heroin and cocaine; it is widely abused and poses a particularly serious threat to public health, especially to children and young people whose developing brains are uniquely vulnerable to nicotine's toxic effects. At the same time, its recognised therapeutic usefulness is limited to regulated nicotine replacement therapies for smoking cessation, and current evidence does not support the use of nicotine as a therapeutic agent outside these cessation contexts. These cessation uses can be safeguarded through existing mechanisms under the 1971 Convention, including exemptions for medicinal preparations, without leaving the nicotine molecule itself outside international control.

When WHO last considered nicotine in 1996, the Expert Committee's assessment was limited to low dose nicotine preparations then available for cessation and did not examine nicotine as a substance in its own right; those preparations were found not to raise blood nicotine levels to the



psychotropic thresholds addressed by the 1971 Convention, and the Committee indicated that new information on more abuse prone nicotine products would warrant a future review. Since that time, modern nicotine delivery systems, including today's e cigarettes and oral nicotine pouches, have emerged that can deliver nicotine as fast as a cigarette and in higher doses than a cigarette, and are now used by more than 15 million adolescents aged 13 to 15 worldwide, nine times the rate of adults in the same countries.

The Government of Palau therefore transmits this notification to the Secretary General of the United Nations, in accordance with paragraph 1 of Article 2 of the Convention on Psychotropic Substances of 1971, in order to initiate the procedure provided for under that Article with a view to a critical review of nicotine by the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence. Annexed to this notification is a supporting scientific dossier on nicotine (C₁₀H₁₄N₂; CAS No. 54 11 5) setting out the pharmacological, toxicological, epidemiological and regulatory evidence in support of this request.

On my instructions, the Permanent Mission of the Republic of Palau to the United Nations transmits this notification and its annexes to you officially and provides copies to the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and to the Director General of the World Health Organization.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Surangel S. Whipps Jr.", is written over a horizontal line.

Surangel S. Whipps Jr.
President of the Republic of Palau