



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Agenda: Addressing the global rise of fentanyl trafficking and abuse

Letter from the Director:

Dear Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, at BDMUN 2024. My name is Aanya Bhimrajka, and I'm a 10th grader at BD Somani International school, and also, your director. This year, UNODC will be a committee like no other, where I hope to foster more than just intellectual, stimulating, engaging (and argumentative of course) debate, but also, to create a platform for an enjoyable and enriching experience.

I started my MUN journey as a timid 7th grader, with my first committee being UNSC and we were debating the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. I vividly remember my first GSL, cut out from my position paper and just simply read out. However, despite the way I delivered it, I received an encouraging smile from my chair, and an eclair thrown at me, creating a spark, which soon ignited as a love for debate. After that conference, it didn't matter if I was Iran in a UNHRC committee, or Armenia at another UNSC; I learned that if I put my mind to it, I would make a lasting impact in committee, something which has stayed with me till now. My confidence incremented every time I attended a new conference, where I gained the skills of not just research and public speaking, but also paperwork, diplomacy and collaboration.

Apart from MUN, I adore watching F1, and my favourite teams are Ferrari and McLaren. You would often find me rewatching my favourite shows and movies, or in the midst of the night, reading a novel; mostly a romance, dystopian or murder mystery, with the most perceptive one I've come across so far being, 'The Giver' by Lois Lowry. It is my daily ritual to complete three

New York Times Games: Wordle, Connections and Strands. I am a Black (I) Belt in Taekwondo, and music is something I take great comfort in, with my tastes ranging over multiple genres.

Whether it's the complexity of the question, or the logic required, I thoroughly enjoy solving all problems, but specifically mathematical ones. So, there you have it. That's me in a nutshell. Feel free to come up to me outside of committee, and I'd love to have a discussion on practically anything (unless you're a Red Bull fan- I'm kidding).

Coming back to MUN, this year, UNODC is tackling one of the most potent topics that plagues the world today; the Fentanyl crisis. The illicit distribution is driving the surge of overdose deaths by the second. Criminal organisations are using newer technologies to stay under the law enforcement, while illegally supplying to others. This has stopped affecting just individuals, but now, also poses a problem for communities, and nations as a whole. As a delegate, you would be researching all things criminal, contentious, and notorious.

I would hope to see delegates delivering bold, impactful and even controversial speeches, with crisp points. I would also look favourably upon delegates showcasing collaboration, and diplomacy within committee. However, I do also understand that for some, debating and speaking up is a nerve-wracking experience. Believe me, I've been there. My advice to all of you would be to thoroughly research, so that if asked, you could give a speech right there on the spot. Take inspiration from other delegates, and pay attention to all the crises and debates going on, as they would be useful to include in your resolution too. However, most importantly, don't forget to have fun too.

Just one last tip- make sure to clear your search history, before your parents consider serious rehab treatments. I look forward to meeting you all!

Warm Regards,

Aanya Bhimrajka (aanya.1213055@bdsint-students.org)

Director of UNODC

BDMUN 2024

Letter from the Assistant Director:

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime at BDMUN 2024! I'm thrilled to be your Assistant Director for what I know will be a challenging and inspiring committee. This year, we're tackling one of the most complex issues out there—the fentanyl crisis—and I expect to see a room full of innovative ideas and strategic thinking. My aim is to make this committee a space where everyone feels comfortable voicing their ideas, whether you're new to MUN or a veteran, because sometimes the boldest solutions come from those first, slightly nervous steps.

My own MUN journey began with a mix of nerves and excitement. I remember reading 'Sapiens' by Yuval Noah Harari and realising how deeply history, science, and policy shape our world.

That curiosity led me to MUN, where I hoped to explore these topics, though I wasn't exactly sure how to get started.

Fast forward to my first MUN conference: I joined as a delegate who could barely bring myself to speak. Public speaking? I was terrified. I remember sitting in that conference room, my first committee session, feeling like a fish out of water while others around me debated with ease. But the encouragement from my fellow delegates and the support of my chair helped me find my voice. By the end of the conference, I was not only comfortable but became one of the more, let's say, "problematic" delegates (in the best way possible). What I learned from that experience has stuck with me: MUN is about pushing yourself, taking risks, and understanding that the most rewarding debates often come from stepping out of your comfort zone.

Outside of MUN, I have a few other interests that keep me busy. Robotics and coding are big ones—I love getting into the nitty-gritty of problem-solving—and the almost weekly F1 race is a Sunday ritual. If you're a McLaren fan, we'll definitely get along (though I can appreciate a good rivalry with Red Bull fans). Ballet is another side of my life that balances everything out, and if I'm not busy with any of those, you'll probably find me lost in a book or playing the latest Spotle.

As we head into the committee, remember that diplomacy is key, but so is creativity. We're here to explore, debate, and even challenge each other's views. The fentanyl crisis is a nuanced and urgent issue that needs both a hard look at the facts and a willingness to think outside the box. And if you're feeling stuck or nervous, know that MUN is a place to take those first steps,

stumble, and get right back up again.

Looking forward to meeting you all this November. Here's to a committee that's engaging, productive, and perhaps even a bit more dramatic than the Hamilton-Verstappen rivalry of 2021.

Warm Regards,

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Assistant-Director of UNODC

BDMUN 2024

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About UNODC:

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), established in 1997, is a key UN agency dedicated to tackling global issues like drug trafficking, organised crime, corruption, and terrorism. Operating in over 150 countries, UNODC provides technical assistance, policy advice, and legal support to help countries combat these challenges.

Guided by international conventions, UNODC promotes cooperation among nations to strengthen law enforcement, improve border controls, and enhance criminal justice systems. The agency also monitors global trends through reports like the World Drug Report, offering valuable insights for policymakers.

Beyond drug issues, UNODC addresses organised crime, human trafficking, and wildlife crime, promoting transparency and accountability through initiatives like the UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC). By working alongside governments, civil society, and international organisations to foster dialogue and collaborative action, playing a vital role in global security, public health, and human rights, while supporting the rule of law and sustainable development.

Introduction to the Topic:

Originally used for medical purposes, Fentanyl is a highly powerful synthetic opioid that is 50-100 times stronger than morphine and heroin. In recent years, fentanyl trafficking and usage have increased, resulting in a global opioid crisis. The drug is frequently created illegally and combined with other narcotics, resulting in a significant increase in overdose deaths, mainly in

the United States and Canada. Examples of such include mixing fentanyl with methamphetamine, cocaine and heroin. Furthermore, fentanyl is often pressed into counterfeit pills resembling prescription medications like Xanax and OxyContin. This adulteration raises the risks of overdose, and also poses an extremely difficult challenge to the health agencies who aim to protect and inform the public, as it affects those who aren't seeking opioids, and instead, believe they are consuming commonly prescribed medicines.

This has proven to be lethal to one's body because of the speed that they act on the central nervous system- by suppressing breathing, even if it is a minor dose. The substance binds to certain receptors, often found in areas of the brain which controls emotions and pain. After consuming it multiple times, the body adapts to the drug, making it nearly impossible to feel any sort of pleasure from anything beside the drug. The crisis exacerbated by the readily available, and surge in the spread of counterfeit pills, across suburban, urban and rural areas. States across Appalachia (Southern New York to Northern Mississippi), South and Midwest, have seen significant spikes in fentanyl-related deaths.

The substance, in certain circumstances, is used to treat a patient's severe pain, with the majority being after surgery. However, the illicitly distributed ones are in the form of powder, droppers and sprays, or even pills like other opioids.

Fentanyl trafficking has become a big concern due to its ease of manufacture, high profitability and distribution via internet and dark web channels. Criminal networks, particularly in Mexico and China, play an important role in drug trafficking, while law enforcement struggles to keep up

with the last expansion and innovation of fentanyl analogs. The main logic behind this is because it makes transportation easier as it isn't as bulky as other plant-based drugs. This is because consuming even just a tiny amount of the substance produces effects, creating a profitable scheme for cartels, fueling their drive for further trafficking.

Many are using Naloxone, an opioid antagonist, aimed at reversing the effects of fentanyl. This often works rapidly, but because fentanyl is stronger than the majority of other synthetic opioids, multiple doses are required. This is used in an emergency medical case scenario, and can alter life-threatening symptoms. Additionally, public health initiatives and local governments are adopting a multi-pronged approach to combat fentanyl overdoses. Many cities are now distributing fentanyl test strips, which allow users to detect fentanyl contamination in other substances before use. These strips have become a critical harm reduction tool, especially in regions where fentanyl contamination is widespread in drugs like heroin and cocaine. Educational campaigns are also expanding, aiming to increase public awareness of fentanyl's dangers, especially regarding its potency compared to other opioids.

Furthermore, some countries and states are exploring safe injection sites, where medical personnel can oversee and intervene in case of overdoses, reducing fatalities and providing access to treatment options. These facilities offer not only emergency response but also connect individuals with rehabilitation services, aiming to break the cycle of dependency. Additionally, law enforcement agencies are focusing on intercepting fentanyl and precursor chemicals at the borders, collaborating internationally to reduce the supply. By combining medical interventions, harm reduction tools, and policy measures, these efforts collectively aim to reduce the

devastating impact of fentanyl on communities worldwide.

However, there are multiple socio-economic consequences that are the result of fentanyl trafficking, abuse and misuse, with the first being the intensive costs to healthcare, due to the alarming number of overdose deaths, which include emergency services, addiction treatment, and mental health care. In the workplace, studies have shown a decrease in productivity and an increase in unemployment, creating an extremely vicious cycle of poverty and a huge economic burden. On a personal level, addiction in families has proven to cause instability, along with neglect, crime and domestic violence, raising even more concerns for safety than before. Fentanyl usage has been linked to an increase in infectious diseases such as Hepatitis or HIV, because of a surge in needle sharing practices. Involvement of youths with such drugs even affects school performances and reduces the working potential for the future. On a more international and larger scale, border security and diplomatic relations are at stake. In the long-term, this will be fatal, creating an intergenerational cycle of addiction and could even possibly reduce life expectancy rates.

The Current Situation:

United States of America

The opioid epidemic in the United States, reached an unprecedented height in 2022, with a surge in the number of overdose deaths reaching to more than 100,000, two-thirds of which were because of fentanyl. Fentanyl's presence in drug-related deaths has experienced an exponential growth since 2013, when it was linked to about 3,000 deaths, to over 66,000 fatalities in 2022. Fentanyl in the US is often mixed with drugs such as heroin, and cocaine, either by traffickers,

intentionally, to increase the effects of these substances or accidentally, due to its high potency and difficulty in handling. A single kilogram of fentanyl can produce over a million doses, contributing to its profitability, and reason for its widespread nature. Places in the Appalachian region have been affected, such as Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, but overdose rates are high too in Western states such as Arizona and California and even metropolitan areas such as Los Angeles and New York, with surges in their fentanyl-related cases in hospitals and morgues. The majority of illicit fentanyl along with its precursors received by the United States, originate from China, with the chemicals being shipped to Mexico, where cartels traffic and manufacture the drug across the United States border. The US-Mexico border has become a vital transit point for the entrance of fentanyl into the US market, with these traffickers using methods such as smuggling it within legal goods to avoid detection.

Europe

Europe, compared to the United States has a lower scale of fentanyl abuse and misuse, yet the prevalence of the drug is rising, recently causing 20% of overdose deaths, majority of which were in 2021. The severity of fentanyl varies in many regions.

A lot of the countries in Europe generally face fewer deaths caused by fentanyl, partially because of the stringent regulations placed on opioid prescriptions, and because there is a less rapid spread of the abuse of the synthetic drugs. While heroin still remains the most dominant drug in most European regions, fentanyl's share has been rapidly rising, particularly in the Northern and Eastern parts of Europe. In some countries, fentanyl and its precursors are the reason for more than 50% of overdose deaths.

Estonia has one of the highest rates of fentanyl-related deaths in Europe, which accounts for more than 90% of the overdose deaths by opioids. Since the 2000s, the most dominant drug in Estonia has transitioned from heroin to fentanyl, where the high mortality rates led Estonia to prioritise harm reduction. Furthermore, street fentanyl has been widely accessible due to its local production in clandestine and illicit labs.

Sweden had 50% of fentanyl-caused opioid overdose deaths by acetyl fentanyl and carfentanil, where a lot of these were purchased online (most through China), and often mixed in local labs. They have one of the largest markets for digitally sourced fentanyl analogs, in the whole of Europe (approximately 25% of Fentanyl is sourced online).

Lastly, the three Baltic countries- Poland, Lithuania and Latvia are key entry points for fentanyl trafficking into Europe, with the majority of the routes being from Belarus and Russia. All these countries have seen a significant increase in the number of fentanyl seizures, where the rate in Poland increased by 40% in just 2 years.

Asia

Asia has become a focal point in the global fentanyl crisis due to a combination of factors, including both its extensive production and consumption of synthetic opioids and its dense network of trade routes that facilitate trafficking. While China has historically played a significant role as a producer and exporter of fentanyl and its precursor chemicals, it took steps in 2019 to curb this by banning all fentanyl analogs. Nevertheless, production has since spread

across the region, particularly into Southeast Asia's Golden Triangle—encompassing Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand. This region, already a hub for methamphetamine production, has experienced a 25% increase in dismantled synthetic opioid labs between 2021 and 2023. This rise has been fueled not only by China but also by India, with both countries supplying precursor chemicals essential to the manufacturing process. Together, China and India account for over 70% of the global precursor supply.

The loosely regulated border areas in Southeast Asia, combined with the availability of precursor chemicals, have made these regions a key part of the global fentanyl supply chain. Multiple countries across Asia, beyond China alone, play crucial roles in this network, from precursor suppliers to production hubs, emphasising the complexity and collaborative challenges in addressing the crisis.

South Asia has also emerged as a key player, with countries like Afghanistan and Pakistan becoming increasingly central to the fentanyl trade. Afghanistan, traditionally a major producer of opium and heroin, is now shifting toward synthetic opioids following the Taliban's recent opium ban. Many Afghan producers have pivoted to synthetic drugs like methamphetamine and, reportedly, fentanyl, taking advantage of existing heroin trafficking routes to supply Western markets. Pakistan, meanwhile, has become a vital transit hub for synthetic opioids moving toward North America, Europe, and Africa. Porous borders and limited enforcement resources make it difficult to intercept shipments, as traffickers exploit Pakistan's ports and borders for distribution. Additionally, Pakistan and Afghanistan receive substantial volumes of precursor chemicals sourced from China and India, redirected through informal networks to support this

illicit trade. These developments underscore how instability and limited oversight in South Asia fuel the global fentanyl epidemic.

Meanwhile, domestic demand for synthetic opioids is rising sharply within Asia itself. Japan, South Korea, and China report surging fentanyl-related incidents, especially among urban youth populations accessing the drug through counterfeit pills or online channels. Overdose cases in China have reportedly doubled since 2020, and in Japan and South Korea, synthetic opioid use has grown by approximately 15% annually. This escalating use places a severe strain on public health systems, prompting governments to implement stringent narcotics control policies and awareness campaigns. In Southeast Asian countries like Thailand and the Philippines, enhanced anti-drug measures attempt to curb both trafficking and consumption; however, the availability of fentanyl-laced products often surpasses enforcement efforts, highlighting regulatory challenges across the region.

Environmental issues also emerge from synthetic drug production, especially in heavily affected regions like the Golden Triangle, where the disposal of toxic precursor chemicals severely impacts soil and water quality. Public health campaigns across Asia aim to mitigate demand for synthetic opioids through community outreach, but access to addiction treatment resources remains limited in many countries. As Asia grapples with these challenges, a coordinated effort across public health, regulatory, and enforcement sectors is essential to counter the continent's rising role in the synthetic opioid crisis.

Asia's extensive trade and transport networks also facilitate fentanyl trafficking on a large scale. Around 35% of fentanyl entering Western countries transits through Asian ports, with India and Pakistan serving as major transit points. The UNODC has observed that fentanyl and its precursors from Asia to North America and Europe increased by 40% over the last three years. Complex trafficking methods, such as mislabeling chemicals and using fragmented courier services, challenge enforcement agencies across Asia. To address this, governments and international organisations like the UNODC are intensifying collaborations to strengthen border control and improve regulatory oversight. Operations such as Azure, led by the UNODC, focus on providing technical training, intelligence-sharing, and resource support to enhance Asian countries' capacities for intercepting shipments and dismantling networks.

In response, Asian governments are implementing multi-faceted strategies to address the synthetic opioid crisis. China has tightened production and export controls for chemical precursors, while Thailand and Myanmar have increased anti-drug operations, especially in the Golden Triangle. India, given its significant role in precursor production, has strengthened regulations to curb the diversion of chemicals into illicit fentanyl manufacturing. The UNODC plays a critical role in these efforts, offering technical support and facilitating intelligence sharing, which helps local authorities track and dismantle fentanyl supply chains.

Russia has recently been involved with fentanyl, as it is experiencing a shift from heroin to more synthetic opioids. Its recent collaboration with the UNODC was to train Kyrgyz law enforcement officers to handle discreet and online transactions of illicit drugs, through means such as cryptocurrency; this underscores the importance of addressing drug trafficking, and its utmost

importance. However, back in 2002, there was a usage of a fentanyl-based gas, in a hostage situation in Moscow. This killed around 115 hostages, highlighting the strength of this drug, as not just a medical agent, but even a powerful incapacitant. This raised a lot of concern as to whether it violated the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which blurred the line of using fentanyl for domestic enforcement and international laws. For a while now, due to its proximity to Afghanistan, Russia has struggled with high rates of opioids, transmitted through illicit markets and online payments. Its legal situation with such substances have its complexities, as fentanyl continues to rise through its markets.

Mexico and Canada

Mexico acts as both a production hub and a transit route for fentanyl. Cartels such as Sinaloa and Jalisco New Generation have been dominating the market for fentanyl trade, by responding to the high demands by US consumers, and importing precursors, and converting them to fentanyl powder or counterfeit pills in clandestine laboratories. Cartel controls are strong in places such as northern states (Sinaloa and Baja California), where most of the labs are made. The logic behind such an overwhelming number of cartels and fentanyl trade is because of the profitability that comes from it, because only a fractional amount is needed to produce any kind of effect, as opposed to more plant based drugs. The chemicals are imported mainly from China, and recently in increasing amounts, India. To avoid law detection, they are smuggled in, disguised as legitimate goods, such as cleaning and home products, and are then sent to the labs. These ports include Lázaro Cárdenas and Manzanillo. The converted drug is then sold across the US-Mexico border, transported through passenger vehicles, drones, tunnels, commercial trucks and other

devices. This is harder to control because of the increasing corruption that comes with the influence of cartels, through bribery and more.

Canada is currently facing a major public health crisis, due to the skyrocketing rates of overdose deaths. The three most affected places are British Columbia, Alberta, and Ontario, with 85% of death rates being the consequence of fentanyl, often mixed with cocaine, or heroin. There is a limited number of domestic production of drugs, and instead is procured through packages from overseas (mainly US and China). To aid the situation, the government has started including supervised injection sites to prevent overdoses, have 'safe supply' programs to prevent contamination through street drugs and even expand availability of naloxone.

Significant Events:

1. The Rise of Fentanyl in Illicit Markets

The rise of fentanyl in the illicit drug market began as a byproduct of increased restrictions on prescription opioids in the United States and elsewhere. Originally synthesised in the 1960s as a powerful painkiller for medical use, fentanyl's extreme potency and ease of production made it attractive to drug cartels and traffickers when prescription opioids became more difficult to obtain. By the early 2010s, Mexican cartels and other criminal organisations began manufacturing illicit fentanyl and incorporating it into the drug supply, often mixing it with heroin or pressing it into counterfeit pills sold as prescription medications. Its potency (up to 50 times stronger than heroin) allows

traffickers to smuggle smaller, more concentrated amounts across borders, making fentanyl a highly profitable commodity in the black market .

Fentanyl's widespread availability in illicit markets marked the beginning of a dramatic increase in overdose deaths, particularly in North America. By 2016, fentanyl-related deaths had surged, with synthetic opioids accounting for the majority of opioid-related deaths in the United States. Law enforcement agencies, including the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), started reporting that fentanyl was often sold in combination with other substances, increasing the likelihood of unintentional overdoses. As demand grew, fentanyl trafficking networks expanded rapidly, making it a global crisis as synthetic opioids began appearing in markets across Europe, Asia, and Latin America.

2. China's Ban on Fentanyl and Its Precursors (2018-2019)

Recognizing the role China played in supplying precursor chemicals for fentanyl, the Chinese government took significant action in 2018 and 2019 to restrict fentanyl and its analogs. In May 2019, China classified all fentanyl-related substances as controlled, effectively banning their manufacture, sale, and export unless for medical use. This comprehensive ban closed significant loopholes in Chinese law, as prior to this, only specific fentanyl analogs were restricted, allowing producers to create chemically modified versions to circumvent regulations.

Despite these measures, traffickers adapted by finding new supply routes for precursor chemicals, often sourced from less-regulated regions or smuggled through countries with

weaker enforcement. Nonetheless, China's actions marked a turning point, as international scrutiny of fentanyl production increased. This ban prompted heightened diplomatic efforts, with the United States and China engaging in collaborative discussions on monitoring and enforcement. However, synthetic opioid production largely shifted to Mexico, where cartels used Chinese precursor chemicals to produce fentanyl in clandestine laboratories, keeping the supply chain active despite the regulatory crackdown.

3. The Impact of COVID-19 on Fentanyl Overdoses (2020-2022)

The COVID-19 pandemic had a profound impact on the fentanyl crisis, exacerbating opioid-related deaths worldwide. Social isolation, economic instability, and heightened mental health issues created conditions that intensified substance misuse. In the United States, for example, overdose deaths reached record levels during the pandemic, with fentanyl implicated in approximately 60% of these cases. Disruptions in the drug supply chain led some users to turn to more potent synthetic opioids like fentanyl when traditional drugs became harder to obtain. This shift contributed to the alarming rise in overdose rates, with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reporting over 100,000 overdose deaths in the U.S. in 2021, marking a 30% increase from the previous year.

The pandemic also strained healthcare resources, making it more challenging for individuals with substance use disorders to access treatment and support. Lockdowns limited access to harm-reduction services, such as needle exchanges and supervised

consumption facilities, while health systems were overwhelmed by COVID-19 cases. Moreover, fentanyl's increased prevalence in drug markets, often mixed with drugs like cocaine and methamphetamine, led to a higher incidence of accidental overdoses among individuals unaware of fentanyl's presence in their drugs. This period underscored the urgent need for public health responses to address the synthetic opioid crisis alongside traditional law enforcement measures.

4. Operation Azure

Operation Azure has set a precedent in global drug enforcement by focusing specifically on synthetic opioids and their unique production and trafficking dynamics. Since its inception in early 2024, this UNODC-led operation has targeted high-risk regions like Latin America, the Caribbean, and select African countries that serve as crucial transit points for fentanyl and its precursors. One of the main impacts of Operation Azure is in disrupting the fentanyl supply chain. This is achieved by intercepting shipments of precursor chemicals used in fentanyl production and raiding clandestine labs that manufacture synthetic opioids in large quantities. By removing these key nodes, Operation Azure aims to reduce the supply of fentanyl reaching North America and Europe, which are the primary markets for this substance.

Methods and Techniques

Operation Azure takes a multi-layered approach to tackle the fentanyl crisis, with a strong focus on collaboration and intelligence-sharing across borders. UNODC provides specialised training for local law enforcement agencies in Latin American and Caribbean

countries, allowing them to better recognize and intercept precursor chemicals and raw fentanyl before it reaches distribution points. In addition, Azure leverages advanced tracking technology, utilising digital surveillance and monitoring systems to follow suspicious cargo movements from production centres to key ports and transit hubs. This method has already led to the interception of significant fentanyl shipments, disrupting the distribution networks of major trafficking organisations.

Strengthening Local Law Enforcement and Cooperation

Operation Azure also focuses on building long-term capabilities within partner nations by equipping local agencies with the resources, technology, and training needed to combat synthetic opioid trafficking independently. This includes forensic training to identify fentanyl and its precursors accurately, digital literacy for monitoring dark web trafficking, and strategies for undercover operations. By creating an inter-agency framework, Operation Azure strengthens intelligence-sharing between countries, ensuring that information on new trafficking routes or methods is rapidly disseminated and acted upon.

Addressing Environmental and Public Health Implications

In addition to focusing on supply reduction, Operation Azure also targets the environmental degradation caused by synthetic drug production. The disposal of toxic precursor chemicals has polluted soil and waterways in production areas, harming local agriculture and endangering residents. Operation Azure's response includes partnering with environmental organisations to mitigate this impact, removing hazardous waste from dismantled labs, and encouraging safer waste management practices. Furthermore, the

UNODC provides public awareness campaigns and resources to improve community understanding of the dangers posed by fentanyl, aiming to reduce demand by educating potential users and supporting addiction treatment initiatives alongside enforcement efforts.

Questions a Resolution Must Answer (QARMA):

I. International Cooperation:

1. How can international cooperation be strengthened to disrupt fentanyl trafficking networks?
 - What mechanisms can be put in place to enhance cross-border law enforcement and intelligence sharing?
 - How can international trade regulations be updated to monitor and control shipments that may carry fentanyl or its precursors?
 - How can countries coordinate efforts to dismantle organised crime syndicates involved in fentanyl production and distribution?
2. What international support should be provided to countries struggling with the fentanyl crisis?
3. What role should global pharmaceutical companies play in making sure fentanyl is used appropriately, and how can these companies be held accountable?
4. How can countries collaborate to ensure that their legal production of fentanyl is not diverted to illicit channels and markets?
5. What measures should be taken to regulate the production and distribution of fentanyl and its precursors?

- How can governments effectively control the supply of precursor chemicals used in illegal fentanyl production?
- Should there be stricter international regulations or sanctions on countries that fail to control fentanyl production?

II. Internal Frameworks:

1. What strategies can be implemented to reduce demand for fentanyl and prevent abuse?
2. How can countries enhance their public health systems to manage the opioid crisis caused by fentanyl?
3. What policies should be adopted to prevent the emergence of new fentanyl analogs?
4. How can the supply chains of organised crime groups involved in fentanyl production be dismantled?

Note: *Do not limit your resolution to just these questions, but they are a useful guide on which aspects of the topic to research on. Much more can be addressed in a resolution as you see fit, and any other pertinent problems not mentioned here can also be solved. Also, don't forget to factor in crises that have occurred in committee.*

Closing Remarks:

In all, the fentanyl crisis is a global cause for concern, as it creates surges in overdose deaths, strains healthcare systems, and even destabilises communities as a whole, worldwide. Traffickers

often exploit digital platforms, complex smuggling networks and even weak regulations, to increase their profitability by selling the drug. Precursors are imported from countries like China and India, and distributed across regions such as Mexico or Canada. Countries nearing these face heightened impacts, having to deal with increased crime rates, addictions, and burdens on public health. However, even despite these challenges, some believe that having a controlled and regulated use of fentanyl is beneficial for medical purposes, while keeping the drug out of illicit markets. So now, it is up to you, delegates, to come together and solve this crisis plaguing the world today.

Recommended Reading:

1. [Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs \(1961\)](#)
2. [Facts about Fentanyl](#)
3. [Latin America - Drug Cartels](#)
4. [Organised Crime in Central America](#)
5. [Fentanyl and its Analogues](#)
6. [Steps - Helping the Overdose Situation](#)
7. [Report on Fentanyl](#)
8. [Fentanyl Crisis - America](#)
9. [Fentanyl Trafficking](#)
10. [Canada - Largest Illegal Drug Lab Bust](#)
11. [EMCDDA](#)
12. [Operation Azure](#)

