

U.S. National Statement to the 64th Session of the CND
Regina LaBelle, Acting Director of National Drug Control Policy

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Remarks as Prepared for Delivery

Hello,

I am Regina LaBelle, the Acting Director of the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy.

The United States is pleased to be participating in the Commission on Narcotic Drugs because this is the forum in which we can work together to make meaningful progress that will benefit all nations.

I want to express our sincere appreciation for the Secretariat's efforts to make this meeting—the first-ever hybrid CND—possible.

We welcome the opportunity to engage with all delegates, even if we are not all physically in Vienna.

The CND is the premier forum to focus on the problems caused by illicit drugs.

And these problems are significant, and made tragically worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We know the effects that substance use disorder can have on communities, on families, on health, and on our nations.

We know, too, how synthetic drugs, including illicitly-manufactured fentanyl and fentanyl analogues, and New Psychoactive Substances, are making existing problems worse.

In the United States, illicitly-manufactured synthetic drugs were responsible for more overdose deaths last year than any other substance, and they are becoming more prevalent in other countries as well.

Every member of the CND knows we must address the problems that affect us all so we all may benefit.

But we can't confront today's challenges with yesterday's methods; we have to modernize and make sure our approaches are responsive to current trends.

In the United States, we are facing unprecedented levels of overdoses. On April 1st, we released President Biden's plan to address the addiction and overdose epidemic, which calls for modern

solutions—such as expanding access to evidence-based treatment services and harm reduction services, and prioritizing racial equity.

We also seek to expand access to recovery support services, and reduce barriers to employment for people in recovery.

Reducing the demand for drugs is an important part of the equation.

And so is reducing the supply of illicit drugs, particularly synthetics, which includes addressing the supply of precursor chemicals used to make these substances. Many are now scheduled...but scheduling alone won't make them go away.

As illicitly-produced synthetic drugs proliferate, it is in all of our interests to focus on them.

CND member states must ensure they have strong regulatory systems in place—particularly for tracking production in their chemical industries—in order to prevent bad actors from taking advantage of weak regulations that allow illicit production of these substances.

While a strong regulatory framework is the most important piece, we must also engage the private sector in preventing the diversion of licit substances, as well as the production and shipping of illicit substances, including through mail carriers.

In this regard, we welcomed the CND's adoption of the U.S.-sponsored resolution 63/2 focused on public-private partnerships, and we implore all members to make its implementation a priority.

The treaties provide the framework and the CND provides the mechanism for member states to find a way to act on key issues.

The growing threat from synthetic drugs demonstrates that our work together to address global drug-related challenges has never been more important.

The United States looks forward to working together to address our common problems and save lives.

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