

**65<sup>th</sup> UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)**  
**USA National Statement**  
**(Assistant Secretary Todd Robinson)**  
**Plenary Agenda Item 3: General Debate**

Good afternoon. I am pleased to be here in Vienna for the CND. The threats we face are growing ever more pressing, and we need to address them through international cooperation within the framework of international law and the UN Charter.

For decades, the UN Charter has stood as a bulwark to the worst impulses of empires and autocrats. Russia's unprovoked and unjustified attack on Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is an attack on Ukraine as a UN Member State, on our Charter, and on the UN itself, including the Commission on Narcotic Drugs. Russia's choice for premeditated war is bringing catastrophic loss of life and human suffering. These actions contravene our commitments to protect the health and welfare of mankind, our single greatest purpose in the CND.

Here, we speak together against those who believe they can violate the law for their own benefit – criminals, corrupt actors, and drug traffickers. How can we continue to speak against these bad actors when one among us is operating with similar lawlessness? We have lost trust in Russia as a UN Member State and CND member, and we will approach its participation in this and other UN bodies with serious skepticism. We must hold Russia accountable. In so doing though we cannot allow our critical work in the CND to be deterred.

The United States is fully committed to safeguarding our future and advancing international cooperation to confront the unprecedented global synthetic drug crisis.

As President Biden said in his State of the Union, addressing this epidemic – and saving lives – is a top priority. The Biden-Harris Administration's approach outlined in its Drug Policy Priorities includes a focus on primary prevention, harm reduction, evidence-based treatment, and recovery support, and calls for public-private collaboration to remove barriers to high quality care, reduce stigma, and invest in evidence-based public health and public safety approaches.

The United States is also advancing equity for communities of color and other marginalized and vulnerable populations in their access to health care, substance use prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and recovery support services as well as in the justice system. Social factors can manifest in disparate access to care, differential treatment, and poorer health outcomes. Thank you for joining us this afternoon for our side event on this issue.

As laid out in the United States' approach, public health-focused efforts must also be complemented by effective international cooperation and law enforcement measures to reduce illicit manufacture and trafficking of drugs.

Following the CND's 2017 scheduling decisions, the fentanyl precursors ANPP and NPP disappeared from illicit traffic after they were internationally controlled. Traffickers were forced to seek out alternatives.

The United States requested the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB) review three additional fentanyl precursor chemicals for international control under the UN Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances. We applaud the INCB for its review of these substances and its recommendation they be controlled within the international framework.

We also need to take proactive measures to prevent the diversion of uncontrolled chemicals into illicit traffic. The U.S. resolution highlights such measures, which can help us outpace criminals contributing to the world drug problem. We look forward to discussing this text with you this week.

Our success in addressing and countering the world drug problem depends on effective international cooperation coordinated and advanced through the CND. We look forward to working with you all this week to make progress on these critical issues. Thank you.