

October 20 National Statement of United States of America

Challenge 3: The adverse health consequences of and risks associated with new psychoactive substances have reached alarming levels

U.S. National Statement

- I would like to congratulate today's presenters who provided excellent contributions to the discussion.
- The rapid proliferation of new psychoactive substances, is one of the greatest challenges that we face.
- Drug manufacturers and traffickers are constantly innovating. These manufacturers and traffickers are creative and resilient, shifting sales online to the DarkNet and using non-controlled precursor substances known as designer precursors to circumvent international and domestic controls.
- NPS are not the only evolving threat; U.S. drug availability and use patterns are changing, too. Evidence indicates synthetic drugs including methamphetamine continue to increase in addition to the existing opioid crisis. In other words, we've been experiencing the impact of both synthetic opioids and rising methamphetamine substance use disorder.
- Despite our best efforts to keep up with these bad actors, we are not working fast enough and it is adversely affecting the public health and safety of citizens across the world. – Justice Tettey mentioned we are now tracking over 1000 synthetic substances. We must remain committed to working together to broaden international controls of these dangerous substances and stay apace with traffickers.
- We must continue to leverage international cooperation to share information and intelligence at the national, regional and international level. As NPS proliferate and new illicit flows and modalities emerge to reach nascent markets, facilitation of real-time information exchange is paramount.
- Sharing of information on changing substance use patterns and public health harms from emerging drug threats such as NPS is also critical to informing responses at the national, regional, and international levels, such as providing the WHO Expert Committee on Drug Dependence with member state-specific evidence enabling the assessment and subsequent recommendation for international control of several dangerous NPS.

- As Member States, providing up-to-date information is key to this fight, but even more so, robust and accurate information is vital to inform our neighbors and the international community of a new trend or modality of a criminal organization. The United States is dedicated to bolstering the capacity of Member States to detect and report new trends, substances and flows.
- The United States applauds the work of UNODC and INCB to turn information into actionable outcomes with programs such as GRIDS and Project ION. Recently INCB's Operation Trance led to the arrest of a Darknet trafficker who shipped hundreds of NPS around the world. These programs strengthen the capacity of Member States to generate, manage, analyze, report, and use information on illicit synthetic drugs such as the UNODC Global SMART program.
- Furthermore, we are proud to support a new UNODC effort to train national law enforcement entities to identify and interdict cyber assets used to facilitate online trafficking of drugs and their precursors.
- Further, the UN ToolKit on Synthetic Drugs offers a library of national-level interventions that can help to guide countries in identifying and addressing national synthetic drug threats, including legislative approaches, such as class-wide scheduling models, forensic capacity building, and enhancing controls on precursor chemicals.
- By utilizing these strategic tools we can improve our ability to rapidly recognize substances as they emerge, more quickly raise awareness about these emerging threats, better target prevention, treatment, and response strategies, and turn the tide on combating the world drug problem.
- Yet, we as governments are not alone in this fight. Our partners in the private sector are committed to sharing information on new trends, securing supply chains and keeping illicit substances out of the hands of traffickers.
- As follow up to our resolution this year on enhancing public private partnerships to combat the world drug problem, we look forward to our newly established programs with UNODC and the INCB to enhance public-private partnerships. Program activities include the development of a platform to share best practices, a new Toolkit component, and meetings of government and industry representatives to develop recommendations for collaboration to address synthetic drug trafficking.
- Mr. Chair, I will end by stating that as criminal modalities change, the need to sustain evidence-based prevention, treatment, and recovery for people with substance use disorders remains the same. We urge Member States increase the amount of voluntary resources to address this issue commensurate to the magnitude of the increasing challenges that we are facing.

