

To support countries in addressing the ongoing synthetic opioids crisis affecting mainly North America, with fentanyl and its analogues, and parts of Africa, Asia, and the Middle East with tramadol, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) launched an integrated strategy in June 2018.

The UNODC Opioid Strategy is a five-pillar, integrated, inter-agency response to the global opioid crisis. Led by UNODC, the Strategy integrates the unique expertise housed within the Office with complimentary specialized knowledge across the UN system.



Pillar 5 - Strengthening National and International Counternarcotic Capacity

As part of the efforts under this pillar to enhance the forensic capacity of Member States, UNODC provides reference samples of drugs, classified into scheduling categories, and precursors, to national institutions to facilitate the identification and detection of harmful synthetic opioids using modern drug field testing technologies. It also shares regular updates of classification resources, such as multilingual dictionaries of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances, UNODC manuals and guidelines, and other publications to support field operational work.

The UNODC Opioid Strategy supports placing substances under international control by the

Commission on Narcotic Drugs, the central drug policy-making body within the UN system. It does so by engaging with source, transit and destination countries in close collaboration with International Narcotics Control Board, to ensure the timely implementation of international scheduling decisions, particularly the incorporation into national legislation, as required.

Regular meetings serve as a tool to strengthen intra- and inter-organizational collaboration to respond to the opioid crisis, while they also help mobilize relevant institutions to identify options and system-wide synergies as a response.



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