



# **MONARCH MUN 2024**

**Committee:-** World Health Organization  
(WHO)

**Issue:-** Measures to end the illegal trade of  
falsified medicine

**Student Officer :-** Sriyanshi Dwibedi

# INTRODUCTION

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- The illegal trade of falsified medicines involves the production and distribution of counterfeit drugs that contain harmful or ineffective ingredients, posing serious health risks globally.
- The illegal trade of falsified medicines is a global issue that endangers public health by distributing unsafe and ineffective treatments. These counterfeit drugs often contain harmful or inactive ingredients, leading to severe health risks.
- Combating this trade requires stronger regulations, enhanced broader controls, better tracking systems in the pharmaceutical supply chain, and increased public awareness.
- A coordinated global effort is essential to ensure the safety and effectiveness of medicines.

# Background Information

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- The illegal trade of falsified medicines has existed for decades, with criminals exploiting gaps in healthcare and regulatory systems.
- Initially more prevalent in developing nations, the trade has expanded globally, affecting both low- and high-income countries.
- Falsified medicines often target high-demand drugs, such as antibiotics, vaccines, and life-saving treatments for chronic diseases.
- The expansion of online marketplaces has facilitated the sale of counterfeit drugs, making it easier for criminals to distribute dangerous products to unsuspecting consumers.

- The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that up to 10% of medicines in low- and middle-income countries are substandard or falsified, leading to thousands of preventable deaths annually.
- Inadequate regulatory frameworks and enforcement in many countries contribute to the rise of this trade, as counterfeiters exploit weak laws and oversight.
- The growing complexity of global pharmaceutical supply chains makes it increasingly difficult to trace the origins of medicines, enabling falsified products to enter legitimate markets.
- International cooperation, stronger regulations, and advanced tracking systems are essential to curbing the illegal trade and protecting public health.

# Relevant Treaties or Past Solutions

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- **World Health Organization (WHO) framework:** The WHO emphasizes the need for enhanced collaboration among countries, providing guidelines to strengthen regulatory systems and improve the detection of counterfeit medicines.
- **Global Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation, and Intellectual Property:** This initiative focuses on equitable access to quality medicines and aims to strengthen regulatory capacities in developing countries to mitigate the prevalence of counterfeit drugs.
- **Property Rights (Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual TRIPS):** Under the World Trade Organization (WTO), this agreement aims to ensure that patent rights are enforced, indirectly contributing to the fight against falsified medicines by protecting legitimate pharmaceutical innovations.
- **United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) Initiatives:** UNODC works on global drug control and has developed projects that address the trafficking of counterfeit medicines, emphasizing the need for integrated responses to health threats.

# Past Solutions and Initiatives

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- **Operation Pangea:** Led by INTERPOL, this global operation targets the online sale of counterfeit medicines, resulting in significant seizures and arrests, demonstrating the effectiveness of international law enforcement collaboration.
- **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Health organizations, including WHO and national health authorities, have launched initiatives to educate consumers on the dangers of purchasing medicines from unverified sources, helping to reduce demand for counterfeit products.
- **Strengthening Supply Chain Security:** Implementing advanced technologies, such as blockchain and serialization, in the pharmaceutical supply chain to verify the authenticity of medicines and ensure safe delivery to patients.
- **Capacity Building Programs:** providing training and resources to regulatory agencies in developing countries to improve their ability to detect and combat falsified medicines, fostering a more robust global experience to this public health threat.

# Possible Solution

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- **Strengthening Regulatory Frameworks:** Countries should establish and enforce strict regulations governing the manufacture, distribution, and sale of medicines. This includes regular inspections of pharmaceutical facilities and penalties for violations.
- **Enhancing International Collaboration:** Foster cooperation among countries, law enforcement agencies, and international organizations to share information, resources, and best practices in combating the illegal trade of falsified medicines.
- **Increasing Public Awareness and Education:** Launch educational campaigns aimed at informing the public about the dangers of purchasing medicines from unregulated sources and the importance of verifying the authenticity of medications.

- **Improving Online Regulation:** Strengthen regulations governing online pharmacies, ensuring they operate legally and verify the authenticity of medicines sold. Develop mechanisms to monitor and take down illegal online sales platforms
- **Engaging Healthcare Professionals:** Train healthcare providers to recognize the signs of counterfeit medicines and encourage them to inform patients about safe medication practices and the risks associated with falsified products.
- **Encouraging Pharmaceutical Companies to Collaborate:** Pharmaceutical companies should work together to share information about counterfeit threats and collaborate on solutions to enhance the security of their supply chains.



# APPENDICE

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- WHO, “Substandard and Falsified Medical Products,” <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/substandard-and-falsified-medical-products>
- Council of Europe, “Medicrime Convention,” <https://www.coe.int/en/web/medicrime>
- “Operation Pangea” <https://www.interpol.int/en/Crimes/Illicit-goods/Pharmaceutical-crime>.
- “Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS),” [https://www.wto.org/english/tratop\\_e/trips\\_e/trips\\_e.htm](https://www.wto.org/english/tratop_e/trips_e/trips_e.htm).
- “Global Strategy and Plan of Action on Public Health, Innovation and Intellectual Property,” <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789241502714>.
- “Counterfeit Medicine: Consumers Should Be Aware,” <https://www.fda.gov/drugs/buying-using-medicine-safely/counterfeit-medicine>