**Introduction**

Many people in society employ a variety of methods in the name of generating an income, to sustain a living in the harsh conditions of today’s world. It is evident that not all strategies that have been undertaken are necessarily ethical or even legal paths to follow. The trafficking of falsified medical products is a very prominent example that fits right into that category as it involves the selling and buying of fake, counterfeit or substandard medicines.

According to various World Health Organisation (WHO) report, the trafficking of falsified medical products has been existing in society for a long time, to the extent of being traced back to the 16th century with the occurrence of an event where Queen Hatshepsut of Egypt employed a team to go out searching for genuine medicinal plants simply because the market was flooded with so many fakes. The trafficking of falsified medical goods massively affects the health of the population as the consumption of counterfeit medicines either does not cure the medical condition or worsens the patient’s state consisting of substances that could be toxic or poisonous to the body. Similarly, the national government's economy is also affected in many ways such, for example, the active criminals receiving the market share that should be directed to a legitimate business involved in the production of medicinal products, which overall diverts money away from the economy and these legalised businesses into the pockets of the criminals. The combination of the two sectors that are affected is why the trafficking in falsified medical products is viewed as a global socio-economic issue.

According to research by the WHO, in late November of 2018, it summed up its results showing that 1 in 10 medical products distributed in both low and middle-income countries was falsified. This piece of information drew the attention of member states to the realisation that not only are people purchasing false medical products - which are a waste of financial resources for those individuals and health systems - but more alarmingly, are consuming these falsified products which can greatly reduce the quality of life for the people in terms of them extracting fatal illnesses which can eventually lead to death. Factors like these and the fact that supply chains are becoming more penetrable for criminals is why there is an increase in the number of people participating in this crime and more urgently a reason as to why the issue is escalating at such a rapid rate.
An underrated cause for the trafficking in falsified medicines is the fact that supply chains for example regarding the distribution of medicines are not monitored by high security and given enough attention, therefore criminals take the opportunity of using this flaw to their advantage by utilising it to fulfil their methods of distribution. In order to stop this from occurring, governments and authorities need to ensure that their security, especially regarding the supply chains, is tight and that regulations and law are clean and precise to stop the trafficking with no loopholes to be detected that can be used by criminals to further encourage the practice of their crime. Tackling trafficking in falsified medical products is certainly not an easy task, but a vital task nonetheless. With such actions eradicated, that threat of civilians suffering health-wise due to their consumption of such illicit drugs is once and for all eliminated.

Definition of Key Terms

**Counterfeit**

The process of making a false replica of something with the intentions of using it to deceive and defraud. Falsified medical products are counterfeits made to rob the public of their finances in exchange for an invaluable medicine that puts their lives at risk.

**Electronic Commerce (E-commerce)**

The process of purchasing and selling products over an electronic medium, more frequently over the internet. It is an easier method to buy and sell goods as one need not go to the store to purchase a good but can do that from the comfort of their home.

**Falsified**

To change, adjust, or make something untrue in order to deceive and mislead people. Medicines are altered from their original composition and may not necessarily perform the same function they were originally produced, but sold to the public anyway to earn an income, hence why these medical products are labelled as falsified.

**Globalisation**

It is the process whereby people and businesses interact and integrate with each other on an international level, meaning people, ideas, cultures, goods, businesses and organizations can collaborate beyond national borders to not only improve things such as the economy but to better human interaction as well. The ease at which people and businesses can interact and work together makes it much easier to leak falsified medical products to the public as the counterfeit of its original form.

**Global Surveillance and Monitoring System (GSMS)**
An interconnected network system specifically designed for the identification of substandard and falsified medical products by the process of cross-referencing reports from other regions on suspected products, via the WHO database.

**Socio-economic issue**

An issue or problem that involves both social impacts relating to the wellbeing of people as well as economic impacts related to the government’s economic state. The trafficking of falsified medical products can eventually result in the deterioration of an individual’s health which is considered as the social aspect since a person’s well being and lifestyle is affected by the issue. The flow of money to criminals is evident to be the economic relevance in this case. Legitimate businesses do not receive the income affecting cash flow in the economy.

**Substandard**

This is when something is below or does not measure up to its standards, it is inadequate. Once medical products are falsified, they can become substandard as well, meaning the medicinal products become of an inferior product and do not measure up to the expectations set upon it.

**Trafficking**

The process of trading or participating in the selling and buying of illegal goods. Except, trafficking does not only pertain to goods but may involve the illegal trading of persons in the form of forced labour whereby work is done involuntarily for the benefit of someone else. Trafficking falsified goods to be specific involves the handling of illicit products which have no substantial benefit to the buyer, and only favours the seller in terms of financial gain.

**Transnational Criminal Groups**

A group of criminals consisting of individuals from different countries who plan and coordinate illegal businesses across different national borders. They usually go against the law, using mediums such as the darknet in order to fulfil their business transactions. The trafficking of falsified medical products can be identified as one of the many goods involved in the crimes of transnational criminal groups across many countries in all continents.

**Background Information**

The question of trafficking in falsified goods is being projected more and more as one of the biggest issues occurring in the health and medicinal industry today, and unfortunately, it is on the rise. In the year 2009, 20 million pills, bottles and sachets of counterfeit and illegal medicines were captured throughout a period of 5 months by the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol) across China.
and 7 other south-east Asian countries, with a total of 100 retail outlets locked down and 33 people arrested. Measures are continually being taken to track down and report cases identified as being the illegal buying and trading of forged medical products. Before 2013, countries had no statistics or data regarding the acts of trafficking of falsified medical products, until the Global Surveillance and Monitoring System (GSMS) for substandard and falsified products was set up by the WHO. This enabled member states to be able to actively participate in the reporting and elimination of medicines and vaccines that were suspected of being fake. WHO has also taken action to train 550 regulators from 141 countries to detect and respond to this issue, and as a result, more cases are being submitted to WHO which is a great milestone from the case where nothing was done at all to stop such actions from occurring.

According to the WHO, globalization and e-commerce are massively contributing to the output and ease of distributing these false medications. To elaborate, due to the fact that globalisation and e-commerce are continually growing and connecting people and businesses to one another on an international scale, it limits the boundaries that criminal suppliers have to enter the supply chain for medicines, hence making it much easier for them to unethically and illegally produce and distribute these false medical products. If action is not conducted immediately to diminish these unlawful acts, people in society are at a greater risk of compromising their health which could lead to poor quality of life in the long run.

**The ease of manufacturing and distributing falsified medical products**

According to the WHO, there are currently no regions in the world that are exempted from the production of falsified medical products. Even though not all countries can attest to producing these false goods, most are found wanting when it comes to the situation of falsified medical products being produced within the borders of the land. It’s either the country hasn’t had any criminals involved in the trafficking of falsified medical products yet, or the country has organised crime heavily based on the production and illegal distribution of the fake medicines. The difficulty of knowing if a country has criminals involved in the crime of trafficking in falsified medical products is aroused by the fact that methods to detect the illicit activities are simply poor. There has barely been any efficient method or devices manufactured to increase the possibility of exposing such crimes, but as of late, the WHO has invested much into the training of personnel and people involved in the medical industry on how to detect these false medicinal crimes and what to do once criminals have been caught, and this overall has lessened the difficulty of which such crimes are eradicated and exposed in most countries. **Below is an example of a falsified medicine compared to the original.**
Regardless, with innovative technology and much easier ways to trade and reach a global market as a result of globalisation and e-commerce, criminals have more access to the technology required to produce these false medical products, which increases the production and the rate of this crime to a much higher extent. Their access to machines such as tabletting machines, specialist equipment, packaging materials, and manufacturing facilities, make it that much more simple and quick to assemble and forge more medical products. According to the WHO, 50% of websites that sell medicines but conceal their physical address have been convicted of selling falsified products. The case of manufacturing and distribution of falsified medical products was assumed by the WHO to have been limited and confined to Low Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs), but that assumption in recent times has been completely wiped out, as of now not even More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) are not clean of falsified medical products, meaning it is either distributed or produced in the country.

**The severity of the problem**

The trafficking of falsified medical products is a form of a pharmaceutical crime that has not been paid much attention in the past few decades, hence why the illegal practice of the trafficking of these goods have increased drastically worldwide. As affirmed by the WHO, falsified medical products now rank up as 10% of the world's medicinal products and are responsible for several hundreds of thousands of deaths per year.

**Strategies of the culprits**

It becomes a strenuous task to estimate the intensity of the issue when there a variety of definitions for "counterfeit" are circulating in the system. As pointed out previously, before 2013
countries barely had any data on such acts which led to the ignorance on this topic for a long time, mainly because people were just not aware of the existence of such crimes. However, according to the executive summary, the WHO GSMS for substandard and falsified medical products, the same routes, methods and technologies used in the illicit trafficking of other goods are used as well for the trafficking of falsified medical products by organized criminal groups indulged in the illegal business. This may include but not limited to for example how false medicinal products would be distributed will have no differentiation to how false foods are distributed as well. This could save costs for criminals who may be participating in both fields of trafficking as they can distribute to the same customers and use the same devices to make both products. Back in the early 2000s in the duration of time where not much was being done to put an end to the criminal activity of trafficking in falsified goods, culprits were able to become more skilled and experts in the steps to continue their corrupt commerce. Some of their strategies included slightly reducing the price of medical goods in order to attract their market, but not to reduce it so much as to raise suspicion as well as using darknet sites as a medium to traffic their false products. This enabled the criminals to flourish in their act and continue to pursue it further as authorities did not suspect anything, which can be directed back to the reason being the faults in laws and regulations. Open gaps in the law and national criminal justice systems such as easy access to supply chains are utilized by criminal groups to pursue the trafficking of falsified medical products while escaping any detection by law-enforcing authorities. It, therefore, has not become the easiest task to diminish the difference between a counterfeit medical product and the legitimate ones. According to the Center for Medicine in the Public Interest in the United States of America (USA), sales of falsified medical products have risen up to about US$ 75 billion, which is a 90% increase in the past 5 years. Suppliers have become experts at their crime to the point where providers of these medicines who deal face to face with customers, are unaware that the drugs they are prescribing are false and counterfeits of the original ones.

The public’s contribution

An established lifestyle of self-diagnosis and furthermore prescribing medicines for oneself has resulted in the formation of countless unregulated websites offering unsupervised access to substandard and falsified medical products, as people go online themselves to purchase these false products unaware of the worse impact it could have on their health. This culture that has been developed by people is contributing massively to the heightening of the situation, by encouraging criminal suppliers to continue to produce their false goods to leech the money of these uneducated members of society. Patients living in both low income and medium-income countries and conflicted areas with civil unrest are more prone to purchasing these forged goods,
mainly because those substitutes are more affordable and accessible to the almost non-existent health systems in the country.

The Effects

The trafficking of falsified medical products can cause catastrophic damages to people in society and is guaranteed to be in more ways than one. Trafficking in falsified medical products is classed as a socio-economic problem due to its negative effects on two major fields in a country which include the public health and the economy.

Health

Health can in no way be taken for granted, meaning people need to be able to have access to medicines of high quality that are reliable and can fulfil the purpose it was made for. It is a right, in fact, a right that has been hindered by the availability of other false medical products in the market. This is because as soon as those false medicines are released into the market for customer consumption, there’s a high chance that the fake medicine could harm someone, and in that context takes away the person’s right to healthcare and good quality of life. According to the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) report on the Effects of Falsified and Substandard Drugs, in the months of November 2008 to February 2009, 84 children died due to the kidney failures due to the consumption of false medical products by a chemical dealer in Lagos. This is one example out of many of the fatal consequences of falsified medical products being trafficked without efforts to cease such actions. These illicit products contain unidentified toxins which poison the victims that consume them. The human body also becomes resistant to drugs, meaning the health of both present and future generations are largely at stake. Public health is predicted to be compromised on a large scale if such medicines are not removed from the system immediately.

Economy

The economy is also another victim of the trafficking of falsified medical products in the sense that, every single consequence of the trafficking of fake medical products, results in higher costs for better treatments because victims become even sicker and need to spend much more to reverse what the false medicines cause and then completely cure the illness, which would require a substantial sum of money. The cost of fixing the negative impact the falsified products had on people could take a toll on the economy of the government. This is because as the flow of money goes to the criminals instead of the government, there are fewer funds available to for example research and formulate drugs that could reverse the effect the false medicines on the populations which will greatly reduce the public quality of life as people may be sick occasionally. As stated before, one downside of falsified medical products is that they reduce the human body resistance
to drugs that are legitimately produced to cure an illness, therefore society needs to carry the cost and expenses of new medicines being developed to counteract the effect of the falsified ones by for example paying higher taxes. In reality, once people begin to realise the danger and threat falsified medical products present, they begin to lose their confidence and trust in medicine, health care providers, and national regulatory agencies who are sincere in the production of legitimate medical products. There are situations where providers do not know that the medicines they are prescribing are false and therefore once patients come back with their disease or illness uncured, they continue to prescribe the same medicines and same tests which worsens the case for the patients, both financially and physically.

Major Countries and Organizations Involved

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)

The UNODC has conducted research and written reports to provide authorities and the public with as much information as possible to understand and be aware of the fact that such a crime exists. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime has the lead in the fight against illicit drugs and international crime globally, concluded that indeed the trafficking of falsified medical products is a wide-spreading phenomenon that would require the efforts and cooperation of entire supply chains in the realm of medicine to be combatted. The UNODC formulated the ‘Guide to Good Legislative Practices on Combating Falsified Medical Product-Related Crime’ which was released during the 28th Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice as a measure to aid countries in the strengthening of local legislations. UNODC Division for Treaty Affairs director, John Brandolino, stated that falsified medical product-related crimes occur along a supply chain that runs from the manufacturer to distributors and sellers or traffickers and then eventually, the end consumer. In addition to the release of the guide, the UNODC demonstrated its practicality by showcasing occasions whereby transnational criminal groups were convicted in countries across Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa for the trafficking of falsified medicines that were assumed to be life-saving for patients. The trafficking of falsified medical products has been labelled as a “high-profit low-risk sector” for criminals hence why the UNODC encourages countries to use the guide to strengthen legislation as well as enable countries to raise the number of investigations and prosecutions of falsified medical product-related crime.

France

France is an active member when it comes to the tackling of trafficked falsified medical products. France believes aside from the false medical products, the focus should be given to the other key
features involved in the making of the counterfeits which may include the medical devices and the ingredients incorporated into the medical products. This then leads to the conclusion that for that motive to be achieved, it would involve action from many sectors that have any involvement in the distribution and making of medical products which may include but not limited to healthcare professionals, private companies, customs, police and justice systems. France believes in the process of advocacy, prevention and enforcement to fully combat the issue, and has become increasingly active in the monitoring of production, distribution and traceability of its medicinal products. Indulging in quality laboratory checks, pharmaceutical inspections, and the strengthening of regulations governing distribution are to name but a few strategies taken up by France to dissipate the issue on a large scale. Apart from working on a national scale, France broadens its efforts to tackle the issue internationally by working with organisations such as the WHO, the UNODC and the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL). It aids Interpol specifically to help countries that have become victims and have been affected by the trafficking of falsified medicinal products, this may include either having the medicinal products produced in the country or distributed in the country which has decreases the rate of trafficking of falsified medicinal products in the country, which overall reduces the exposure the public have to fake medicines that could harm them. France namely is also one of the many countries that contributed to the financial support given the UNODC for the formulation of the ‘Guide to Good Legislative Practices on Combating Falsified Medical Product-Related Crime’.

**Russian Federation**

The Russian Federation is one of many countries where the trafficking of falsified medical products occurs, which not only contributes to the deterioration of the economy but weakens the public’s health as well. Russia then realising this adopted an objective to not only identify the gaps causing the fight of the trafficking of falsified medical products to be challenging but find solutions to seal those gaps and overcome the issue once and for all. The issue regarding the trafficking of falsified medical goods came into light in the Russian Federation in the late 1990s and early 2000s via the media and other outlets, and soon caught the attention of authorities who then allowed the issue to become a subject of extensive discussions at international conferences. Russia took the initiative to join Operation Pangaea which is an organised mission to expose and eradicate the trafficking of falsified medical products online by tracking down the website mediums that are used and using it as bait to find the culprits. It is done by Interpol and the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency of the World Health Organization (MHRA WHO). This annual international police operation was brought about to join international forces to combat the trafficking of falsified medical goods by removing transnational criminal groups working through the internet as their medium of a global network. 2010 was when the Russian Federation joined the movement, and in that same year about 1200 internet sites were exposed and about 10,000 boxes of medicines were seized, summing up to more than a million falsified tablets in the amount of 2.6 million USA dollars. Out of their involvement in Operation Pangaea, about 34 cases on the...
trafficking of falsified medical goods were uncovered in Russia. In late October of 2011, 26 to 28th to be specific, a high-level international conference was held in Moscow which accommodated more than 750 professionals in the field of law and pharmacy from different countries, including the USA, China, countries of the European Council and the Commonwealth of Independent States. During the conference, the Medicirime was signed which is “the first legal agreement in the field of criminal law aimed at criminalizing the trafficking of falsified and substandard medicinal products, as well as aimed at providing legal support for the investigation of these crimes at the international level.”

**Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN)**

The ASEAN has had a big reputation as a hub for fake medicines. The amount of falsified medical products produced in the ASEAN continue to rise annually and according to the UNODC, this is a bi-product of legitimate, and illegitimate, pharmaceutical producers based in India and China has moved some manufacturing processes to Malaysia, Vietnam, Myanmar and Cambodia to avoid harder regulations and enforcement – and to benefit from lower production costs. The problem has driven to intensity whereby almost 50% of medicines made for the cause of curing malaria that is tested in Southeast-Asia have proven to be fraudulent, and although it is a widely negative, the positive aspect of the situation is that it is getting more attention both regionally and nationally by authorities and organisations who have the power to take action and change the destructive course the issue is taking. During the ASEAN Health Ministers’ Meeting in Cambodia, General Tea Banh, the Cambodian Defence Minister indicated that falsified medical products were openly advertised and sold online, as a method to approach the issue, although nothing was said about how to combat it. However, some initiatives have been set about to reduce the severity of the issue in the Southeast Asian Nations. This would include the Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte, instructing police to start to suppress false medicine manufacturers and sellers to reduce the rate of crime in the country as well as reduce the number of false medicines in the country. It has been released by the Pharmaceutical Security Institute (PSI) that “of the 673 incidents of counterfeiting and illegal diversion in ASEAN from 2013 to 2017, 193 occurred in the Philippines, 110 in Thailand, 93 in Indonesia, and 49 in Vietnam”. A report titled ‘Transnational Organized Crime in Southeast Asia: Evolution, Growth and Impact' written by the UNODC estimated the amount spent by consumers in Southeast Asia for falsified medicines was around US$520 million and US$2.6 billion per year, which was used as an indicator to show the value and amount criminals were benefiting from their crimes.

**Timeline of Events**

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Page 10 of 17 | Research Report
July 2013
Launch of WHO Global Surveillance and Monitoring System for substandard and falsified medical products

July 2017
17 WHO training workshops conducted with 126 Member States and more than 400 regulatory personnel trained - training was with regards to handling the trafficking of falsified medical products

September 2017
Interpol's Operation Pangea with 25 million fake and illicit potentially harmful medicines seized, worth approximately US$51 million

November 2017
Release of WHO Global Surveillance and Monitoring System for substandard and falsified medical products report

January 2018
WHO declares every 1 to 10 medical products in low- and middle-income countries is substandard or falsified

20 - 24th May, 2019
28th session of the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ) - where the formations of resolution 20/6 to counter fraudulent medicines in particular their trafficking was drafted

Relevant UN Treaties and Events

- Countering fraudulent medicines in particular their trafficking, April 2011 (Resolution 20/6)

Previous Attempts to solve the Issue

The INTERPOL and its operations

INTERPOL’s pharmaceutical crime operations deal with the sale of counterfeit and illicit medicines as well as medical products. Operation Pangea which evolved from about barely 8 countries in 2008 to about 123 countries as of 2017. Although ideally, all the operations deal with the exposure of illicit trading of falsified medical products, Operation Pangea specifically dealt with sales online. It not only targeted the selling of counterfeit or false medical products but medical devices as well used in the making if the falsified medical products. According to a report by INTERPOL, their undertaken strategy is agencies participating would carry out coordinated operational activities against illegal website within 7 days to identify the criminal networks behind the trafficking. INTERPOL’s mission was to eliminate illicit pharmaceutical products from circulating to civilians and educating as well as raising awareness to
civilians to stray away and be able to identify unregulated websites that sell false medical products. With
that motivation, INTERPOL was able to seize about 10 million units of false medical products with a
value of about USD 14 million in the year 2018. About 859 people were arrested and 3,671 websites
were taken down that same year.

The UNODC’s Guide to Good Legislative Practices on Combating Falsified Medical Product-
Related Crime

As mentioned, an initiative was brought about by the UNODC which consisted of formulating a
guide for governments and authorities to secure and tighten security in regards to supply chains for
medical products as well as ingredients and medical devices used in the formulation of these falsified
medical products, in order to prevent criminals from having easy access to those resources. The
UNODC realised that countries face countless troubles when it comes to combating the trafficking of
falsified medical products due to the unfortunate lack of a consistent legal structure and legislations to
cover the selling of medical products in general. As a result, potholes or gaps are always found in the
law allowing for the criminal groups to exploit these free passes and encouraging their trade of illicit
medical products. Hence why in the drafting of resolution 20/6 during the 28th session of the
Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (CCPCJ), member states were encouraged to
counter falsified medicines by reviewing and updating their legal and regulatory frameworks as
necessary, and to ensure that they do not overlook any stage in the supply chain. “The guide although
was not written independently by the UNODC, as it got some expertise such as but not limited to
INTERPOL, the WHO, the Council of Europe, the Economic Community of the West African States, the
European Union and the International Council of Nurses. The guide was written in the hope of member
states using it as a tool to strengthen, draft and review important national legislations related to the
especially the distribution of medical products. As the trafficking of falsified medical products is known as
the “high-profit low risk” sector for criminals, the UNODC ensured the guide included relevant information
to increase the national and international investigations and prosecutions of falsified medical product-
related crime.

Possible Solutions

CCPCJ Resolutions work differently in that, as opposed to voting on a resolution, the member
states must come to a consensus. One resolution is written for each issue, and the house goes through
the resolution line-by-line. All delegates must agree on a clause before they move on. If there are
delegates who disagree with the clause, it is debated upon, and changes on the clause are considered. At the end, a change is made to a clause so that all delegates agree, and then the next clause is debated upon. Even if only one delegate disagrees, debate will have to happen to form a new clause that all delegates, that delegate included, can agree with, or to simply remove that clause completely. We must keep this in mind as we move on to consider possible solutions, as different countries may have different views on which solution will work better.

**Education**

When it comes to education as a measure to tackle the trafficking of falsified medical products, it is not directed at one target audience. Education is vital in combating the trafficking of falsified medical products in many ways such as but not limited to the educating of civilians, especially people in LEDCs who are vulnerable to the cunning marketing techniques served to them by the criminals involved in the crime. Reasons why people in LEDCs or less developed areas are easy victims of the deceptions of transnational criminals, is because those people do not have access to medicines to treat their health and therefore receive with open arms whatever is offered to them. Secondly, they are not aware of the fact that some medicines indeed can be falsified to fulfil the financial gain of the criminals and this reason does not only apply to people living in LEDCs but even in developed areas of the world, most people are simply not aware. This is why it is important to educate people on such threats and how to avoid them to prevent a complete downfall in public health. In this context, healthcare professionals could be invited to school premises and workplaces to educate civilians on the issue, its risks, causes and effects. This way, people can have a one on one approach with these professionals to have discussions to clear any doubts they may have. In this way, people gain more knowledge and therefore become more vigilant when purchasing medicines and other goods in general.

Education also overlaps to educating governments and authorities on measures to strengthen national laws and legislations to prevent criminal intercepting and taking advantage of loose ends of the rules for their benefit. Governments and authorities additionally need to be educated on how to uncover already existing activities relating to either the making or distribution of fraudulent medical products and the measures to ensure that no more illegal businesses are being set up after the culprits have been caught and dealt with. This could be done by holding conferences, seminars and workshops for specifically, people in authority and the government.

**Security of supply chains**

The supply chains are a key feature of the distribution and handling of the medical products once they have gone through the production stage. If left unmonitored, supply chains could be hijacked and
taken over by criminals without the notice of authorities and governments, this is one of the countless reasons as to why once again the trafficking of falsified medical products is considered as a high-profit low-risk crime due to the absence of government interference in the criminal activities that go on behind the scenes. An insecure supply chain is a gateway to ensure the flourish of the trafficking of falsified medical products which ideally should not be the target for any member state. In order to protect the supply chain, tools need to be brought about to enable the medicinal products to be tracked, traced and localized anywhere it lands. These tools should become accessible and distributed to all the legitimate sectors of the supply chain which may include wholesale distributors and retail pharmacies, to identify and authentication a drug. The staff should also be trained on its usage to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of its use. Another underrated method to secure the supply chain would be to reduce the intermediaries involved in the supply chain but at the same time sustaining free competition between legitimate competitors in the market. Once all these measures have been taken, applying the skills and knowledge learnt should be done immediately.

There are possibilities whereby after all the support is given to authorities and governments nothing would be implicated to ensure the supply chains are guarded and secure for example. This could, therefore, make absolutely no difference and the criminals may continue to succeed in the crimes they commit. Hence why it is important that after training and education, governments and authorities be monitored by the United Nations (UN). The UN could request reports from individual countries to see the progress made and the number of criminals found and convicted, just to ensure that something is being done overall to solve the issue.

Provision of healthcare

Going back to one of the causations of people especially in LEDCs being vulnerable to the purchase and use of falsified medical products would be the lack of proficient healthcare being served to the people in terms of accurate healthcare access, medicines to treat illnesses, and accurate medical attention from qualified doctors. If an increasing amount of these people in lacking environments get greater exposure to medical access, they would be more sceptical about receiving any medicinal products offered to them. This would have a massive effect on the death rate in those underprivileged areas and therefore improving the overall quality of life for the people.

Healthcare can then be provided as aid from MEDCs whereby qualified doctors could be sent on volunteer service trips along with the resources needed to treat the people in underprivileged areas. To ensure that access to healthcare is sustained, members of those impoverished areas with potential could be trained on the simple techniques done to take care of the people such as but not limited to learning the boiling of water to remove bacteria and other harmful microorganisms from the water consumed or used for cooking. They could be taught on first aid techniques as well and another simple, basic but vital methods to take care of themselves and the community.
Guiding Questions

1. Is the rate at which criminals and the trafficking of falsified medical products being eradicated is good enough to completely tackle the issue within the next decade?
2. Is enough awareness being raised on the issue to ensure people are knowledgeable of the fact that some medicinal products out in the market are not legitimate and that they need to be careful and vigilant when it comes to purchasing medicines?
3. Is there anything the global community is failing to recognise when it comes to the causations of the issue and how to tackle it?
4. Have the previous solutions that were brought about to solve the issue effective in practise?
5. Are the solutions proposed for the issue attainable and sustainable to ensure that criminals have no methods to continue to trade their falsified medical products?

Bibliography


Appendix


This website contains a simplified breakdown of what the production and trafficking of falsified medicinal products is according to the WHO. Its contains the risks and consequences attached to the continual trafficking of falsified medical products as well as an overly detailed report on some measures that can be taken to tackle the issue such as making supply chains safer.


The website briefly list some operations to tackle the trafficking of falsified medical products that were undertaken by INTERPOL. It contains a short description of what each operation entailed, how many countries involved, and facts about the success of the operation such as but not limited to the number of online websites involved in the trafficking of falsified medical products that were taken down and the units of falsified medical products were discovered and ceased.


It's a short article about fake medicines written by INTERPOL. It gives a good summary of what a fake medicine is, the risks of consuming these false medical products and how to identify whether the
medicinal products that were purchasing is fake or not. This gives a simple idea on the foundation of the issue which would be falsified medical products and why it is important to solve the issue in the first place.


This website is very helpful when it comes to the drafting of a resolution as it gives examples of measures that should be taken to combat the issue in a detailed but summarised format of bullet points. The main idea is to get inspiration and ideas from the ones already listed on the website rather than just using exactly what the website has listed down.


This website, the article to be specific thoroughly states the WHO’s active involvement in the tackling of falsified medical products and it includes the severity of the issue at the moment and why it is so important to find measures to combat the issue now before it elevates to an overly difficult to stop rate. Understanding the WHO’s contribution can also provide inspiration and ideas on other different solutions that can be drafted to combat the issue at hand.

VI. Guide to Good Legislative Practices on Combating Falsified Medical Product-Related Crime

It is the pdf of the guide formulated by the UNODC to help governments and national authorities in the strengthening and implementation of the law, related to sectors such as the medicinal supply chain. It is useful in terms of showing how laws can be formulated on a national level and directly how the governments are making these legislations using the guide as a tool of reference to correct any mistakes and close any gaps in the legislation that could be taken advantage of by criminals.

VII. France and the fight against falsified medicinal products,

The website gives detailed information about France’s participation in the combating of trafficked falsified medical products, which again would be useful in the coming up of solutions to include into a resolution.