

## INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM OF FORESIC DRUG TESTING LAB DIRECTORS

The International Symposium of Forensic Drug Testing Lab Directors, organized by the Colombo Plan Secretariat on behalf of the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, included lab directors and toxicologists from over twenty-five countries.

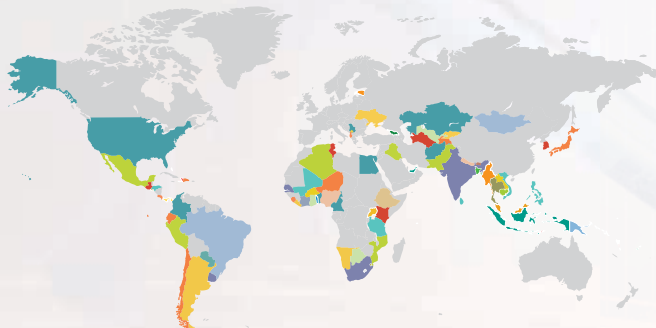
Lab directors and experts share their respective experiences and findings to gain a better understanding of the global threat of toxic adulterants increasingly being used to cut drugs of abuse, in addition to new synthetic compounds appearing in the illicit drug supply. Discussions often include details on participating countries' sample preparation, analytical platforms and equipment capabilities, drug testing and reporting formats, and those specific toxic adulterants/new synthetic compounds being identified.

The Symposium has also taken the initiative to develop a shared database, the International Toxic Adulterant Database (ITAD), to routinely collect information on adulterants and new synthetic compounds from a range of countries. The Colombo Plan and the Center for Forensic Science Research and Education (CFSRE) continue to work in close collaboration with symposium participants to determine what information should be collected and methods for maximizing the best use of the data. This global database will eventually serve as a global early warning system for the emergence of new toxic adulterants and novel synthetic compounds and their potentially injurious or fatal combinations.



Participants and resource persons from the 3rd International Symposium of Forensic Drug Testing Lab Directors held on May 14-16, 2022 in Abu Dhabi

## DAP'S PRESENCE AROUND THE GLOBE



DAP'S GLOBAL  
OUTREACH IN

6

CONTINENTS

80

COUNTRIES



THE COLOMBO PLAN

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**DAP**  
Drug Advisory Programme

## THE COLOMBO PLAN GLOBAL TOXIC ADULTERANTS AND SENTINEL PROJECTS



Providing a novel early warning system on new synthetic drugs of abuse and toxic drug/adulterant combinations entering a nation's local drug supply to facilitate the cause of saving lives and protecting the public health of communities worldwide.



[www.colombo-plan.org](http://www.colombo-plan.org)

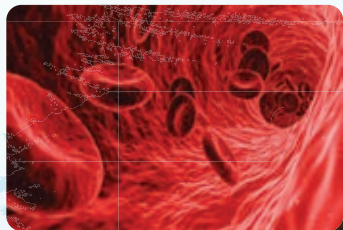


The Colombo Plan for Cooperative Economic and Social Development in Asia and the Pacific ([www.colombo-plan.org](http://www.colombo-plan.org)), instituted in 1951 as a regional intergovernmental organisation consisting of 28 member countries, operates on the partnership concept of self-help and mutual help to enhance human resource development and south-south cooperation.

Set up in 1973, the Drug Advisory Programme (DAP) is Colombo Plan's flagship programme, as well as one of the longest running initiatives in the global drug demand and supply reduction landscape.

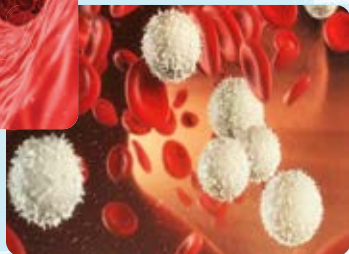
## THE COLOMBO PLAN GLOBAL TOXIC ADULTERANTS AND SENTINEL PROJECTS

The Colombo Plan's Global Toxic Adulterant and Sentinel Projects promote the use of state-of-the-art technologies for testing retail/street-level and wholesale drugs internationally and domestically for toxic adulterants in response to the alarming upsurge in the use of pharmacologically active chemicals added as adulterants to drugs of abuse, in addition to the emergence of new deadly synthetic drugs in order to prevent overdose. Many of these new adulterant chemicals and synthetic drug combinations pose serious public health hazards beyond the effects of the drug itself; adulterants and impurities, alone or in combination, can cause poisonous medical effects, including overdose, death, and near- and long-term public health problems.



◀ Phenacetin Depletes Red Blood Cells & Damages Kidneys

▶ Levamisole, Metamizole & Aminopyrine Deplete White Blood Cells



**STARTING IN 2010**, the Colombo Plan's supply reduction experts, working with law enforcement and public health in Latin America and other countries, began to detect an unprecedented trend of drugs being cut along the entire global supply chain (source, transit, and consumer countries) with toxic adulterants that severely increased morbidity.



**BY 2016**, the Colombo Pan's Global Toxic Adulterant Project was fully engaged in the global testing and analyses of seized drug samples as well as conducting research on the serious immediate and long-term public health implications of these adulterants, including respiratory depression, cardiovascular problems, immune system suppression, and red/white blood cell depletion.

In addition, the presence of fentanyl, its analogs, and novel synthetic opioids as adulterants were suspected of influencing levels of overdose.



**THE WORLD'S FIRST INSTANT ADULTERANT TEST KIT** for the detection of the adulterants, phenacetin and aminopyrine, were developed by INL's global toxic adulterant project. In addition, the world's first portable GC/MS drug testing machine that can simultaneously detect and display over 20 compounds in an individual drug sample was developed by Colombo Plan scientists.



● Portable GC/MS Drug Testing Machine

Instant Adulterant Test Kit ●



**BEGINNING IN 2016-2017**, the Colombo Plan adulterant project began testing of street drugs in the United States to help determine the underlying factors driving the unprecedented overdose epidemic which results in record overdose death rates on a yearly basis.



## MOST RECENTLY

▶ The Colombo Pan's Global Toxic Adulterant Project has been engaged in tracking the alarming super-stimulant effects reported by users of Middle Eastern manufactured "counterfeit" Captagon pills.

These pills are often cut with 4 common stimulants that in combination can pose dangerous cardiovascular health effects. Many pills are also cut with the bronchodilator, theophylline, which potentiates the effects of amphetamine-type stimulants. Other cutting agents that can cause severe health effects such as damage to red/white blood cells, pulmonary damage, and organ (liver, kidney) damage have also been detected.

▶ The Colombo Plan's Sentinel Project has identified additional ingredients/cutting agents in fentanyl pills that redefine the definition of a lethal dose.

▶ The Colombo Plan's Toxic Adulterant Project identified new patterns regarding the vet product, Xylazine, in the U.S. drug supply, which primarily in combination with fentanyl exponentially increases the chances of overdose. Project issued the first xylazine health alert in October 2020.

▶ The Sentinel Project recently issued the first global alert on the emerging threat of injectable liquid fentanyl (both pharmaceutical grade and illicitly manufactured) in January 2024.



**IN 2023 AND BEYOND**, the Colombo Plan's Toxic Adulterant project will continue to monitor drug supplies for the presence of adulterants and their synergistic effects, while the Sentinel project will document the emergence of new, deadly synthetic such compounds. Such information is of critical value to both the law enforcement and public health communities around the world and warrants a coordinated response going forward.