



The Lomé Initiative *Fake Drugs. Real Crime.*

The Presidents of the Republic of the Congo, Niger, Senegal, Togo, Uganda, Ghana and the Gambia will meet in Lomé, Togo, on 17 and 18 January 2020 to sign the **Lomé Initiative**, a binding agreement to criminalise the trafficking of falsified medicines.

The Lomé Initiative – A personal initiative by African heads of state

Developed over two years and coordinated by the [Brazzaville Foundation](#), the Lomé Initiative will be launched with the Presidents signing a Political Declaration and a legally binding Framework Agreement. This agreement will commit them to introduce legislation which criminalises the trafficking of fake medicines. This is the first phase of a wider programme to ensure access to safe and effective medicines for all their citizens. It will help to combat a deadly trade that claims hundreds of thousands of lives every year in Africa and funds transnational crime and terrorism.

Criminalising the traffic of falsified medicines at the heart of the Initiative

This lucrative traffic threatens regional security as it yields huge profits for organised criminal groups. In many African countries the necessary criminal legislation does not exist. The Lomé Initiative will result in new criminal legislation interdicting this traffic, imposing tough penalties and strengthening capacities for rigorous enforcement, in adherence with relevant international agreements. Other African countries will be encouraged to join this initiative. The Brazzaville Foundation will play a key role: having developed the Initiative, we will be responsible for coordinating and advising on its implementation. We are also conducting an audit of existing measures to identify gaps and threats.

Jean-Yves Ollivier, President of the Brazzaville Foundation, said:

"The proliferation of fake medicines is a public health crisis that we can no longer afford to ignore. People all over the world are dying every day because this scourge has not been given the priority it deserves."

"The abhorrent traffic in falsified medicines also generates huge profits for criminals and terrorists, destabilising some of the most fragile countries."

"That's why we are proud to have developed the Lomé Initiative. We must all take a stand against this scourge, and I hope that the political commitment of these seven African heads of state will encourage other African leaders to join the fight".

Key figures (source: World Health Organisation)

- Each year, the value of the illegal market for non-standard and falsified drugs is estimated to be worth **\$200 billion**, or about **10-15%** of the global pharmaceutical market.
- In 2015, the American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene estimated that **over 122,000 children under five** die each year due to poor-quality antimalarials in sub-Saharan Africa.
- It is estimated that **128 countries** worldwide are affected by falsified medicines.
- **42%** of all falsified medicines discovered since 2013 were in Africa.

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- It is estimated that falsified medicines account for **30-60%** of all medical products in certain African countries. In countries where regulations have been implemented and strictly enforced, this figure is **1%**.

For more information, please see the attached fact sheet.

Press contact

For further interview requests or information: medias@brazzavillefoundation.org

About the Brazzaville Foundation

The Brazzaville Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit organisation based in the UK and is registered with the Charity Commission. Under the patronage of H.R.H. Prince Michael of Kent, the Foundation is led by an experienced Board of Directors, chaired by its founder Jean-Yves Ollivier, and supported by a distinguished Advisory Board including former presidents and prime ministers as well as a former Nobel Peace Prize laureate. The Foundation develops initiatives to promote sustainable development, conflict prevention and facilitate peaceful cooperation on the African continent.