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Fake drugs aid terrorists

By SUN ONLINE REPORTER

TERRORISTS and organised crime networks are cashing in on the counterfeit medicine trade.

According to a report, traffickers are finding it easier to smuggle the fake pharmaceuticals past security because law agencies are oblivious to the problem.

And profits from the bogus drugs can gross more cash than narcotics such as heroin and cocaine.

The shocking findings were revealed in a report by the Stockholm Network thinktank.

Its author Graham Satchwell warned that phoney medicines may be harming or even killing patients in the UK - in China, around 100,000 people died last year as a result of taking counterfeits.

Mr Satchwell, a former detective superintendent and one-time spokesman on counterfeit goods for the Association of Chief Police Officers, called for legitimate manufacturers, governments and police forces to tackle the problem.

He said: "There is no doubt that organised crime globally is involved in the manufacture of pharmaceuticals.

"There is a tremendous amount of money to be made. The return on pharmaceuticals is greater than the return on illicit drugs.

"What is more, not only can you make as much money, but law enforcement is not looking in that direction, so consequently the risk of detection is much less."

He added that countries such as China and Africa, where fake drugs were more crude and easily linked to illness and death, were more clued-up on the issue.

Mr Satchwell continued: "In Western societies, where the drugs are often finished and packaged very well indeed, it is very hard to detect.

"Very often we wouldn't know if people had died (as a result of the fake drug) or not."