

Necessary truths



Donald Trump is imposing extraordinary tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada, and China.
Image: Infinox

by Guillermo Alvarado

One of the reasons given by the US President Donald Trump for imposing extraordinary tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada and China was that, in his opinion, these countries were not doing enough to curb the trafficking of fentanyl to the northern power.

This synthetic opioid is known to be 50 times more potent than heroin and 100 times more potent than morphine, but it was not created as a drug but as a medicine to be used in operating rooms to sedate patients before surgery.

Its illegal use has spread throughout much of the world and, to add insult to injury, one of its main consumer markets is precisely the United States, which now wants to turn this tragedy into a weapon of blackmail in politics and international trade.

In this regard, my attention has been drawn to an article written by the Chilean journalist Hugo Guzmán in the newspaper *El Siglo*. The journalist points to the response of Mexico and China to President Trump on this incident, which reminds him of some basic truths and is completely

appropriate at this time.

The Chinese authorities point out that it is true that there are factories in that country that produce fentanyl as a pharmaceutical product, as an analgesic and anesthetic, which is authorized as such in the vast majority of countries, including the United States.

But to accuse China, says Guzman's text, of being a key raw material for the illegal production and consumption of this substance would be like sanctioning iron and steel producers because the military industry uses them to manufacture weapons for war.

The Asian nation has cooperated with the United States in the fight against drugs, with notable results, said the Chinese Foreign Ministry, and controls on products related to the manufacture of opioids have also been strengthened, but the United States has not dealt with the problem objectively.

The northern power has a serious public health problem due to the use of this and other drugs, but does not seek solutions to rehabilitate addicts and educate young people, nor does it exercise effective control of its own borders.

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