The Secretary-General’s Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical, Biological or Toxin Weapons

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Legal Framework & SGM Mandate

- The complete and total prohibitions of use of chemical, biological and toxin weapons
- UNGA mandate & UNSC support
Recognition

Outcome Documents of the 2006 and 2011 Review Conferences of BWC:

“The United Nations Secretary-General’s investigation mechanism represents an international institutional mechanism for investigating cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons.”
SGM Basic Modalities

- Any UN Member State can request an investigation by the UNSG;
- In response, the SG may:
  - review the evidence to decide if a team is dispatched,
  - dispatch a fact-finding team to a location of the alleged attack;
- Team collects evidence, conducts clinical examinations and interviews with victims, eye witnesses and officials and collects samples for analysis;
- Team submits its findings to the SG to be reported to all UN Member States.
SG’s mandate does not imply the creation of a permanent body;
Mechanism is designed in such a way that the required expertise and capabilities are regularly updated and readily available in the roster.
Skills, knowledge, equipment and other resources in the roster are made available to the SG by Member States and international organizations.
Secretary-General’s Roster

- Ongoing update of the roster of experts and laboratories

- Currently:
  - Experts $>240$
  - Laboratories $>42$
Partnerships with International Organizations

- Assistance of international organizations in preparation for and conduct of investigation

- Partners
  - OPCW (2001 UN-OPCW and 2012 UN-OPCW)
  - WHO (1948 UN-WHO, 2009 UNODA-WHO)
  - OIE (MOU 2012)
  - INTERPOL
  - FAO
Training for Experts

- Key requirement
- Training offered by Member States and conducted in cooperation with UNODA
- First-ever training course in 2009 in Sweden
- Second & third training courses in France in 2012 and 2015
- Additional training was held in Sweden, UK, Germany
Recent Training

- Since 2014 BWC experts meeting:
  - September 2014: Advance training course in UK for a command element;
  - November 2014: SGM exercise to validate a FSU model
  - FSU model
- June 2015: Third Basic Training course in France
Training: Achievements

- Results:
  - The cadre of trained expert: 43 experts from 25 countries and 3 IO;
  - Established training programme
  - Lessons learned
  - Possible enhancements
Future Training for Experts

- Training activities in 2015 and onwards:
  - Advance course offered by UK to be held as a joint OPCW/SGM course, September in the Hague.
  - Basic training course offered by Australia

- UNODA is ready to cooperate with any Member State in holding SGM training activities
SGM Laboratories

- The 2015 also saw a start of a practical work on another key element of the SGM: analytical laboratories.

- A special workshop on the development of a UNSGM biological analysis network in Stockholm, 16-17 June 2015 organized by the Swedish MFA and the FOI

- Follow-up activities are in planning
Mission in Syria: Lessons Learned
Report published in May 2015
Principal conclusions:
- The SGM is an effective investigative mechanism
  - Role of international organizations
- Areas for strengthening preparedness of the SGM including partnerships and cooperation; information-sharing and training
Summary

- Legitimate, effective and proven international tool for investigation of alleged use
- Build upon the high level of expertise (experts and laboratories) provided by Member States and international organizations
- Cooperation between international organizations
- Enhancement of the SGM requires additional efforts in particular training of experts and SGM operational capabilities
- Efforts are on-going