



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

Nikita Smidovich

UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA)

Legal Framework & SGM Mandate

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

Recognition

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

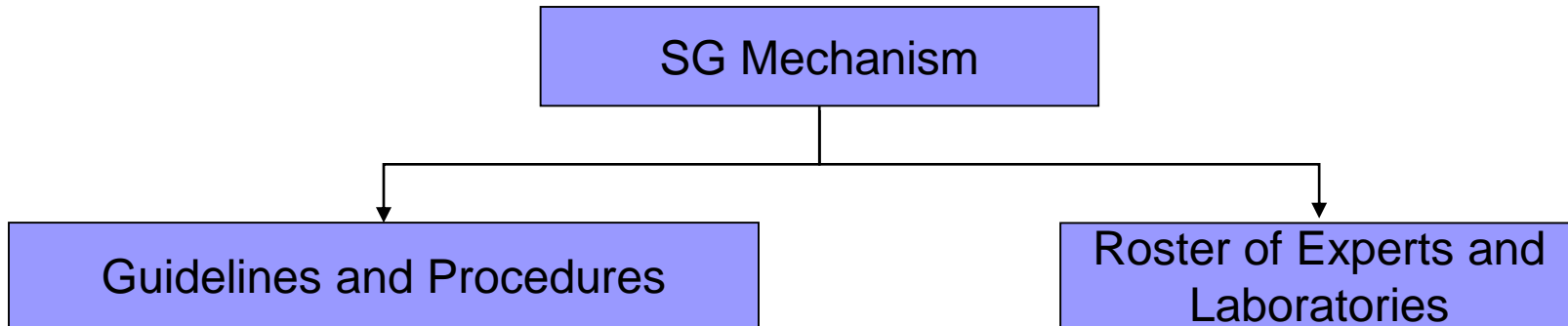
“The United Nations Secretary-General’s investigation mechanism represents an international institutional mechanism for investigating cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons.”

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.

Secretary-General's Mechanism (SGM)

Two Pillars



- o SG's mandate does not imply the creation of a permanent body;
- o Mechanism is designed in such a way that the required expertise and capabilities are regularly updated and readily available in the roster
- o 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