Secretary-General’s Mechanism (SGM) for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical, Bacteriological (Biological) and Toxin Weapons

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Mandate
for the Secretary-General’s Mechanism

GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION (1987)

A/RES/42/37(C)

Requests the Secretary-General to carry out investigations in response to reports that may be brought to his attention by any Member State concerning the possible use of chemical, bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons that may constitute a violation of the Geneva Protocol or other relevant rules of customary international law, in order to ascertain the facts of the matter and to report promptly the results of any such investigation to all Member States.
Mandate
for the Secretary-General’s Mechanism

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION 620 (1988)

Encourages the Secretary-General to carry out promptly investigations brought to his attention by any Member State concerning the possible use of chemical, bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons that may constitute a violation of the Geneva Protocol or other relevant rules of customary international law, in order to ascertain the facts of the matter, and to report the results.
### History

**GA Document A/44/561 (1989)**

- **A/RES/45/57(C) (1990)**

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<th><strong>A/44/561</strong></th>
<th><strong>A/RES/45/57 (C)</strong></th>
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<td><strong>Guidelines and Procedures</strong> for: the preparation and conduct of SGM fact-finding missions; technical procedures; role of expert consultants, qualified experts and laboratories; report writing</td>
<td><strong>Endorsement</strong> of proposals of group of qualified experts established pursuant to resolution 42/37 (C) concerning technical guidelines and procedures to guide the Secretary-General in the conduct of timely and efficient investigations of reports of the use of chemical and bacteriological (biological) or toxin weapons.</td>
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History of the Secretary-General’s Mechanism


“…notes that the UN Secretary-General’s investigation mechanism…represents an international institutional mechanism for investigating cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons.”
Structure of the Secretary-General’s Mechanism

- Member States
- Organizational Partners
- ROSTERS
  - Qualified Experts
  - Expert Consultants
  - Laboratories

UNODA
### Roster of the Secretary-General’s Mechanism

#### Summary

**Qualified Experts**
Nominations received from over 50 Member States  
Over 450 individuals nominated

**Laboratories**
Nominations received from 30 Member States  
Over 70 laboratories nominated

**Expert Consultants**
Nominations received from 13 Member States  
Over 20 individuals nominated
Principal conclusions:

- The SGM is an effective and impartial mechanism to investigate alleged use of chemical, biological and/or toxin weapons.

- While the SGM is an effective investigative tool, there is room for strengthening its preparedness.

Categories of lessons learned and consolidated conclusions/recommendations:

 Activation of the Mechanism
 Unity and consistency of mission
 Strategic Partnerships
 Training and Information Sharing
2013 Lessons-Learned Exercise

Categories of lessons learned and consolidated conclusions/recommendations:

Best Practices:

Activation of the Mechanism
Unity and consistency of mission

Actionable items:

Strategic Partnerships
Training and Information Sharing
Strategic Partnerships

- Conduct an internal (United Nations) capacity assessment of SGM stakeholders to establish necessary partnerships ✓
- Review how reliance on partner organizations affects mission composition vs. role of roster experts. ✓
- Enhance the roster of Expert including through means such as calling for additional nominations and acquiring particular competencies absent from roster. ✓
- Pursue other forums (workshops, bilateral cooperation and individual organizational tasks, in order to track progress. ✓
- Member States may consider an assessment of the capabilities of the laboratories on the roster with a view to determining criteria according to which they could function. ✓
- Conduct a mapping of existing organizational competencies so that additional arrangements could be concluded to identify resources not yet secured, specifically in the context of an alleged use of biological weapons. ✓
Enhance and reinforce the operability of the roster of experts with a particular focus on identifying future Heads of Mission, including offering specific training in this regard and developing core competencies for an investigative team through regular training. ✓

Regular trainings organized with international organizations should be further explored with a view to utilizing existing resources and best practices. ✓

Identify clear training modules such that trainings offered by Member States are coordinated to the greatest extent possible. ✓
UNSGM Training Approach

DISTANCE/E-LEARNING

Early and sustained engagement with rostered experts

CORE SKILLS TRAINING
Scenario independent

CAPSTONE EXERCISE
Engaged experts applying core skills in a real-world scenario
CORE SKILLS TRAINING

- Leadership
- Operational Planning
- Command & Control
- Interviewing and Negotiations
- Mission Safety and Security
- Communications
- Evidence Collection
- SGM Report Writing

OUR PARTNERS

- INTERPOL
- OIE
- OPCW
- WHO

COURSE CONTENT

98% EXCELLENT OR VERY GOOD

PARTICIPANT SATISFACTION

97% VERY SATISFIED OR SATISFIED

-COURSE FEEDBACK
Challenges

OPERATIONAL AND TECHNICAL

Equipment

Ideal pool of expertise (incl. gender balance)

Financial/Staffing resources

Predictable training
Action 10

The Secretary-General and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs will work with Member States, including through the General Assembly, to establish a core coordinating capacity to conduct independent investigations of the alleged use of biological weapons, in accordance with his authority under resolution 42/37 C.
Supporting the SGM and Championing the Agenda

- ODA actively seeking support of Member States in implementing all aspects of the Agenda (including SGM)

“The [2013 SGM investigation in Syria] has highlighted the immense value of the mechanism established under the authority of General Assembly resolution 42/37 C and endorsed by Security Council resolution 620 of 1988.”

-- Former Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon
New York, 13 December 2013
https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/secretary-general-mechanism

Thank you!