
Project:	Training of qualified experts on the roster for the Secretary-General's Mechanism (SGM) for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical, Biological or Toxin Weapons
Focus:	Biological Weapons
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Proposed Project Timeframe:	2011-2012
Geographical Focus	Worldwide
Donor source	Multi-donor project

INTRODUCTION

The project's objective is to provide specialized training for experts on the roster for the Secretary-General's mechanism (SGM) for investigation of alleged use. The training will prepare them to conduct fact-finding missions in case the Secretary-General decides to launch an investigation in response to a report by a Member State concerning alleged use of biological weapons.

BACKGROUND

1. Any use of biological weapons is a violation of international legal norms established under the 1925 Geneva Protocol and 1975 Convention on Biological and Toxin Weapons (BWC). Resort to biological weapons, including by terrorists, is a threat to international peace and security requiring global and national preventive and response actions. International response to the use of biological weapons will much depend on establishing the relevant facts in an objective and scientific manner.
2. Currently, only the UN Secretary-General has an authority to launch an international on-site investigation in case of allegations of use of biological weapons. The guidelines and procedures for the timely and efficient investigation of alleged use were endorsed by the General Assembly in 1990. The Sixth BWC Review Conference of 2006 noted that the Secretary-General's investigation mechanism represents an international institutional mechanism for investigating cases of alleged use of biological or toxin weapons.
3. As a part of the Plan of Action of the United Nations Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy (A/RES/60/288 adopted 8 September 2006) and among several other measures in the biological area, the Secretary-General was encouraged to update the roster of experts and laboratories as well as the technical guidelines and procedures available to him for the timely and efficient investigation of alleged use.

4. The Office for Disarmament Affairs (ODA) is engaged in activities to make the Secretary-General's investigation mechanism operational and to prepare for investigations of alleged use, in particular in the biological area. In this regard, ODA is developing and maintaining cooperative relations with the World Health Organization (WHO), Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), World Organization for Animal Health (OIE), Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and INTERPOL.

5. In 2007, ODA organized meetings of specialized experts to update the technical appendices contained in the 1990 guidelines and procedures. In 2008 and 2009, ODA updated the roster of experts and laboratories. At present, the roster includes of over 300 experts and 40 analytical laboratories. The Office for Disarmament Affairs is developing a set of operational procedures to be used by teams of experts during fact-finding missions in case the Secretary-General decides to launch an investigation in response to a report on alleged use of biological weapons.

6. The timely and efficient investigation of alleged use of biological weapons will rely on the technical knowledge and skills of experts on the roster who would be called upon by the Secretary-General to carry out fact-finding missions. In order to enable them to achieve objectives of their missions, it is essential that they receive specialized training. The training is aimed at familiarizing experts with the Secretary-General's mechanism for investigations of alleged use; developing their practical skills to work as a team in a fact-finding mission; building up an understanding of the challenges associated with field investigations. The training would enhance UN capabilities to maintain a core group of trained experts that could be called upon by the Secretary-General to conduct an investigation of alleged use of biological weapons.

7. The Office for Disarmament Affairs has initiated specialized training courses for experts from the roster. The first ever course was held in May-June 2009 with funding from the Government of Sweden. During its two-week proceedings, it provided comprehensive training for the practical preparation and conduct of on-site fact-finding activities by United Nations teams composed of experts from the roster. The first course trained 14 experts from the roster which contains over 120 biological experts nominated by Member States.

8. Continuous training is important to enlarge the core group of trained experts, thus enhancing operational capabilities of the Secretary-General's investigation mechanism. The training should be offered to more experts on the roster with a broad range of professional and scientific background in order to ensure that a fact-finding team would have required expertise to investigate specific allegation of alleged use of biological weapons. The team-building training is crucial to create a common understanding among experts of procedures and methods to be used by them as a team during fact-finding activities. Geographical distribution and gender balance within fact-finding teams would need to be ensured through the availability of a larger group of trained experts.

9. The Office for Disarmament Affairs has already been able to obtain some voluntary grants for additional training for experts on the roster, but they are not sufficient to conduct additional courses with adequate participation of experts on the

roster. ODA would need to acquire additional contributions from Member States to support additional training courses planned to be held in 2011 and 2012.

OBJECTIVES

- Enhance the UN Secretary-General’s capability to launch and conduct timely and efficient investigations of alleged use, in particular in the biological area;
- Contribute to the development of fact-finding skills of experts on the roster, in particular in the biological area;
- Improve team building among experts from the roster to work effectively in various political, cultural and operational environments;
- Contribute to strengthening of international responses to violations of the global and total prohibition on the use of chemical, biological and toxin weapons.

IMPACT

- Increased preparedness for the timely launch of a fact-finding mission and the efficient investigation of alleged use of biological weapons;
- Contribute to the development, through dedicated training, of practical skills of experts on the roster of the Secretary-General’s investigation mechanism.

BENEFICIARIES

United Nations and UN Member-States

Experts that would participate in investigations under the Secretary-General’s investigation mechanism

National authorities working on issues related to preparedness and management of actual biological incidents.

PARTNERS

Member States that nominated experts and laboratories for the Secretary-General’s investigation mechanism

Member States offering training

WHO, OPCW, OIE, FAO, INTERPOL and other relevant international organizations

FUNDING FOR FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Specialized training courses for experts on the roster of the Secretary-General’s mechanism in order to prepare them to conduct fact-finding missions in case the Secretary-General decides to launch an investigation in response to a report on alleged use of biological weapons

BUDGET ITEMS	AMOUNT IN US\$
○ Organization of one training courses in 2011 and support for participation of experts from the roster in training	225,000.00
○ Organization of two training courses in 2012 and support for participation of experts from the roster in training	425,000.00
TOTAL BUDGET REQUIRED	650,000.00

TOTAL SECURED FUNDING	300,000.00
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FUNDING GAP	350,000.00
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