

## **GHS2026 Conference Workshops**

***Day One - Tuesday 9 2026, 4pm-6pm  
Room 402***

### **How to investigate a biological weapons attack under the UNSGM? - Understanding the mechanism and opportunities for engagement**

**Aim:**

This workshop aims to raise awareness for the importance of the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical or Biological Weapons (UNSGM), and to increase nominations for the roster of laboratories and experts with relevant expertise - particularly from regions that have so far been underrepresented, such as Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean. As the only mechanism available with a specific mandate for an international biological weapons investigation, the UNSGM is a crucial tool in times of increasing geopolitical conflicts and crises. While a roster of experts and laboratories that could be called upon for an investigation exists, we need to make sure to keep this roster updated, geographically balanced and broad in terms of required expertise, such as human health, animal health, plant health, forensics, etc. The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) coordinates those efforts, but there remains a gap in general awareness and understanding for the UNSGM amongst policymakers and technical experts alike. Conference delegates will therefore get the opportunity to increase their knowledge regarding this important aspect of international security, and use it as a starting point for getting involved.

The workshop will be organized by the Robert Koch Institute as a table top exercise with interactive elements, followed by an open discussion with the option to ask questions. The workshop will also illustrate which measures exist to support the mechanism and to facilitate participation as an expert or laboratory in this context.

**Objectives:**

- Create a general understanding of the mechanism, its application and procedures
- Give the audience the opportunity to learn about the needs and challenges when planning a UNSGM mission by using a fictitious scenario
- Demonstrate how health and security experts can be involved, both in peace time preparations and during a real mission

**Target audience:**

The workshop is open to all conference delegates including policy makers and scientists with an interest in international biological weapons investigations.