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COUNCIL DECISION (CFSP) 2026/2176

of 28 September 2026

in support of strengthening the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological weapons (UNSGM)

THE COUNCIL OF THE EUROPEAN UNION,

Having regard to the Treaty on European Union, and in particular Article 28(1) and Article 31(1) thereof;

Having regard to the proposal from the High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy;

Whereas:

(1) On 12 December 2003, the European Council adopted the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (the 'EU Strategy'), Chapter III of which contains a list of measures to combat such proliferation.

(2) The Union is actively implementing the EU Strategy and is giving effect to the measures listed in Chapter III thereof, in particular those measures related to the reinforcement, implementation and universalisation of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC).

(3) The 2022 Strategic Compass for Security and Defence refers to the persistent threat of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and expresses the Union's objective of reinforcing concrete actions in support of the goals of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control.

(4) Within the framework of the EU Strategy, the Council adopted, in support of the BTWC, Joint Actions 2006/184/CFSP ([1]) and 2008/858/CFSP ([2]), and Decisions 2012/421/CFSP ([3]), (CFSP) 2016/51 ([4]), (CFSP) 2019/97 ([5]), (CFSP) 2024/349 ([6]) and (CFSP) 2025/494 ([7]). Through those joint actions and decisions, the Union contributed to the building up of a multilateral capacity to investigate alleged use of biological weapons. That Union support should be continued.

([1]) Council Joint Action 2006/184/CFSP of 27 February 2006 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, in the framework of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 65, 7.3.2006, p. 51, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/joint_action/2006/184/oj).

([2]) Council Joint Action 2008/858/CFSP of 10 November 2008 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), in the framework of the implementation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 302, 13.11.2008, p. 29, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/joint_action/2008/858/oj).

([3]) Council Decision 2012/421/CFSP of 23 July 2012 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 196, 24.7.2012, p. 61, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2012/421/oj).

([4]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2016/51 of 18 January 2016 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 12, 19.1.2016, p. 50, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2016/51/oj).

([5]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2019/97 of 21 January 2019 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention in the framework of the EU Strategy against Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (OJ L 19, 22.1.2019, p. 11, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2019/97/oj).

([6]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2024/349 of 16 January 2024 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (OJ L, 2024/349, 17.1.2024, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2024/349/oj).

([7]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2025/494 of 11 March 2025 in support of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, its inter-sessional programme and the preparations for its Tenth Review Conference (OJ L, 2025/494, 12.3.2025, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2025/494/oj).

(5) The United Nations (UN) Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons (the 'UNSGM') refers to the authority given to the UN Secretary-General by UN General Assembly Resolution A/RES/42/37C. That authority to conduct an investigation in response to reports that may be brought to the attention of the UN Secretary-General by any UN Member State, in order to establish the facts related to an allegation of use of such weapons, was reaffirmed by UN Security Council Resolution 620 (1988).

(6) In his Agenda for Disarmament 'Securing our Common Future', presented on 24 May 2018, the UN Secretary-General noted that the BTWC does not have single standing body with responsibility for carrying out investigations with the aim of determining whether or not biological weapons have been used in violation of the BTWC. Therefore, the Agenda for Disarmament establishes actions that aim to contribute to developing a framework that ensures a coordinated international response to the use of biological weapons and to establish a core standing coordinating capacity to conduct independent investigations of the alleged use of biological weapons.

(7) Against this backdrop and within the framework of the EU Strategy, the Council has also adopted Decision (CFSP) 2020/732 ([8]) in support of the UNSGM with a view to reinforcing multilateral capacity to investigate alleged use of biological weapons,

HAS ADOPTED THIS DECISION:

Article 1

1. In the context of the implementation of the EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, the Global Strategy for the European Union's Foreign and Security Policy and the Strategic Compass for Security and Defence, the Union shall further support the activities of the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) through an operational action in support to the strengthening of the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons (UNSGM).

2. This Decision is guided by the following principles:

(a) drawing upon and integrating the lessons learned and experience gained through Decisions 2012/421/CFSP, (CFSP) 2016/51 and (CFSP) 2020/732;

(b) maximising complementarity and synergies among UNODA programmes and projects supported by the Union, including those related to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004);

(c) prioritising the implementation of key elements of the Standing Preparatory Measures that are essential to maintaining and enhancing the UNSGM's operational readiness and effective functioning;

(d) ensuring meaningful and sustained participation of Qualified Experts, Expert Consultants, and Analytical Laboratories from the Global South across all relevant initiatives and activities;

(e) strengthening strategic partnerships with relevant national institutions and international organisations to reinforce coherence, coordination, and collective capabilities.

([8]) Council Decision (CFSP) 2020/732 of 2 June 2020 in support of the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism for investigation of alleged use of chemical and biological or toxin weapons (OJ L 172 I, 3.6.2020, p. 5, ELI: http://data.europa.eu/eli/dec/2020/732/oj).

3. The overall objective of the action referred to in paragraph 1 is to strengthen global capacity to investigate the alleged use of biological and toxin weapons by enhancing the operational readiness of the UNSGM, thereby contributing to a more effective international architecture capable of deterring the use of biological weapons and responding to potential violations of the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

4. The specific objectives of the action referred to in paragraph 1 shall be to:

(a) strengthen expert competencies and interoperability for effective investigations;

(b) harmonise validation and collaboration arrangements with the UNSGM for analytical laboratories;

(c) strengthen logistics and equipment support for investigations and training;

(d) enhance collaborative action through strategic outreach and coordination.

5. A detailed description of the action referred to in paragraph 1 is set out in the Annex.

Article 2

1. The High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy (the High Representative) shall be responsible for the implementation of this Decision.

2. The technical implementation of the action referred to in Article 1(1) shall be entrusted to the UNODA. It shall perform this task under the responsibility of the High Representative. For that purpose, the High Representative shall enter into the necessary arrangements with the UNODA.

Article 3

1. The financial reference amount for the implementation of the action referred to in Article 1(1) shall be EUR 800 000.

2. The expenditure financed by the reference amount set out in paragraph 1 shall be managed in accordance with the procedures and rules applicable to the general budget of the Union.

3. The Commission shall supervise the proper management of the expenditure referred to in paragraph 2. For that purpose, it shall conclude a financing agreement with the UNODA. The financing agreement shall stipulate that the UNODA is to ensure visibility of the Union's contribution appropriate to its size.

4. The Commission shall endeavour to conclude the financing agreement referred to in paragraph 3 as soon as possible after the entry into force of this Decision. It shall inform the Council of any difficulties in that process and of the date of conclusion of the financing agreement.

Article 4

The High Representative shall report to the Council on the implementation of this Decision on the basis of regular reports prepared by the UNODA. Those reports shall form the basis for the evaluation carried out by the Council. The Commission shall provide information on the financial aspects of the action referred to in Article 1(1). The UNODA shall report to the Council every six months.

Article 5

1. This Decision shall enter into force on the date of its adoption.

2. This Decision shall expire 36 months after the date of conclusion of the financing agreement referred to in Article 3(3) or six months after the date of its adoption if no financing agreement has been concluded within that period.

Done at Brussels, 28 September 2026.

For the Council

The President

K. KALLAS

ANNEX

PROJECT DOCUMENT

European Union contribution in support of strengthening the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons (UNSGM)

I. BACKGROUND

Established pursuant to General Assembly resolution A/42/37 C (1987), the United Nations Secretary-General's Mechanism for Investigation of Alleged Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons (UNSGM) is mandated to promptly investigate allegations of the possible use of chemical, bacteriological (biological), and toxin weapons in response to reports submitted by any Member State, where such allegations may constitute a violation of the 1925 Geneva Protocol or other relevant rules of customary international law. This mandate was further reaffirmed by Security Council resolution 620 (1988). The UNSGM remains the sole independent, science-based international mechanism for investigating alleged use of biological and toxin weapons.

The UNSGM is composed of Qualified Experts, Expert Consultants, and Analytical Laboratories nominated by Member States, who may be called upon at short notice to support a UN investigation of alleged use of biological weapons. These components are mutually reinforcing and are supported by Member States and relevant international organisations. This integrated, multi-component structure provides the Secretary-General with the resources to rapidly deploy a mission capable of conducting thorough, objective investigations in accordance with the UNSGM Guidelines and Procedures, as endorsed by General Assembly resolution A/RES/45/57 C (1990).

The United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) serves as the custodian of the UNSGM and plays a central role in maintaining the Standing Preparatory Measures outlined in the Guidelines and Procedures. This includes managing the roster of Qualified Experts, Expert Consultants, and Analytical Laboratories; facilitating preparedness training and exercises, coordinating with Member States and international organisations; and strengthening the administrative, logistical, and operational arrangements required for rapid deployment, thereby ensuring coherence across the UNSGM's components.

With the entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) in 1997, the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) assumed responsibility the investigation of chemical weapons use, except in cases involving non-State Parties to the CWC. Consequently, the priority for the UNSGM Standing Preparatory Measures has been preparedness for investigations involving biological and toxin weapons.

The UNSGM plays a critical role in upholding and reinforcing global norms against the use of biological weapons and maintaining its operational readiness is essential, not only to enable swift and credible investigations should allegations arise, but also to serve as a deterrent against the use of biological weapons.

II. GENERAL FRAMEWORK

The 2003 Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) of the EU is fully aligned with the objectives of the UNSGM, as it underscores the importance of strengthening existing verification mechanisms necessary to ensure effective detectability of violations, and to deter non-compliance. Accordingly, the EU has provided substantial support to the UNSGM, including through projects funded under Decisions 2012/421/CFSP, (CFSP) 2016/51 and (CFSP) 2020/732. Building on this foundation, the project aims to further consolidate and advance the outcomes achieved through earlier EU assistance.

The implementation of the project will be guided by the following principles:

(a) Drawing upon and integrating the lessons learned and experience gained through Decisions 2012/421/CFSP, (CFSP) 2016/51, and (CFSP) 2020/732.

(b) Maximising complementarity and synergies among UNODA programmes and projects supported by the Union, including those related to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) and United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004).

(c) Prioritising the implementation of key elements of the Standing Preparatory Measures that are essential to maintaining and enhancing the UNSGM's operational readiness and effective functioning.

(d) Ensuring meaningful and sustained participation of Qualified Experts, Expert Consultants, and Analytical Laboratories from the Global South across all relevant initiatives and activities.

(e) Strengthening strategic partnerships with relevant national institutions and international organisations to reinforce coherence, coordination, and collective capabilities.

III. OBJECTIVE AND OUTCOMES

Overall Objective / Impact

The overall objective of the project is to strengthen global capacity to investigate the alleged use of biological and toxin weapons by enhancing the operational readiness of the UNSGM, thereby contributing to a more effective international architecture capable of deterring the use of biological weapons and responding to potential violations of the 1925 Geneva Protocol.

Expected Outcomes

As a mechanism composed of multiple interdependent components, the effectiveness of the UNSGM depends on the continued strengthening of these elements and their ability to operate cohesively as a unified investigative structure. By reinforcing these core components and the linkages between them, the project aims to ensure a coherent, well-integrated, and operationally robust UNSGM capable of conducting rigorous, science-based investigations when required.

The expected outcomes of the project are as follows:

1. Competencies and interoperability of Qualified Experts are strengthened and exercised to support the conduct of thorough and effective investigations.

2. Harmonised validation modalities for assessing laboratory competencies, and collaboration modalities between laboratories and the UNSGM, are developed and consistently applied by Analytical Laboratories.

3. Access to, management, and deployment of equipment and supplies for training and investigations is enhanced.

4. Collaboration with stakeholders is strengthened through strategic outreach, partnerships, and coordination.

IV. PROJECTS, OUTPUTS AND ACTIVITIES

1. **Strengthening Expert Competencies and Interoperability for Effective Investigations**

1.1. Purpose

Qualified Experts carry out investigations into the alleged use of biological or toxin weapons in accordance with the Guidelines and Procedures. When deployed, they are expected to work collaboratively and apply UNSGM-specific methods and processes to ensure the impartiality and credibility of the investigation, including the collection of samples, information and other material evidence, interviewing witnesses, and engaging with relevant authorities and stakeholders.

Qualified Experts are nominated to the UNSGM roster in accordance with the specialisations outlined in the Guidelines and Procedures, covering disciplines such as medicine, veterinary medicine, plant health, microbiology, chemistry, toxicology, and epidemiology. These fields reflect the technical breadth required to investigate alleged use of biological or toxin weapons. Because experts come from diverse national systems, their levels of readiness and interoperability can vary due to differences in national standards, procedures, and experience with international investigations and UNSGM-specific methods.

To address these disparities and ensure teams can operate cohesively in complex environments, UNODA implements a progressive preparedness training concept aimed at harmonising expertise, standardising core competencies, and establishing a common baseline among all experts who may be deployed. The training concept is implemented by UNODA in partnership with UN Member States, UN entities and international organisations, as well as specialised non-governmental institutions.

1.2. Description

The preparedness training concept consists of a multi-tiered pathway:

Tier 1 – Basic Training: A foundational course introducing the UNSGM mandate, operational modalities, and technical requirements. Participants learn the global framework prohibiting biological weapons, the structure and functions of the UNSGM, and the steps involved in launching an investigation. Practical modules cover mission planning and reporting, sample and evidence collection and handling, in situ detection and analysis, and risk assessment and personal safety.

Tier 2 – Skills Training: Specialised courses tailored to experts' roles and technical areas. Current modules include:

— Decontamination

— Biological Crime Scene Management

— Investigative Interviewing

— Sampling and Transport of Infectious and Toxic Substances

— Safe and Secure Approaches in Field Environments (SSAFE)

Advanced Tier 2 – Simulation Exercises: Scenario-based exercises that allow experts to apply technical and operational skills in realistic investigative contexts. These exercises prepare participants for full-scale Tier-3 exercises and help assess their ability to operate under varied and challenging conditions.

Tier 3 – Full-Scale Field Exercise (Capstone): A comprehensive simulation of the full life cycle of an investigation, designed to assess collective readiness and the operational coherence of the mechanism.

Under the project, two Tier-2 training courses and simulation exercises will be delivered for a total of 32 Qualified Experts.

1.3. Results

The project will contribute to the availability of Qualified Experts trained through the multi-tiered preparedness training concept. This will ensure that investigation teams are composed of specialists who share a consistent technical baseline, follow common operational standards, and possess a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities, enabling the Secretary-General to deploy multidisciplinary teams capable of conducting thorough investigations.

2. **Harmonisation of Validation and Collaboration Arrangements for Analytical Laboratories**

2.1. Purpose

Analytical Laboratories nominated to the UNSGM roster may be requested to conduct scientifically rigorous analysis of samples collected by Qualified Experts during an investigation, applying validated methods and strict chain-of-custody and quality-assurance requirements. They must therefore meet the validation and performance assessment requirements set out in the Guidelines and Procedures, including through interlaboratory calibration studies designed to demonstrate the validity and accuracy of their analytical methods. These studies serve to assess individual laboratory competence and to determine the collective level of readiness and capability to detect and identify the full spectrum of biological agents and toxins that may be encountered during an investigation. Additionally, Member States hosting Analytical Laboratories are required to ensure the smooth and unhindered transfer of samples and other evidence, including the clearance of materials through national authorities, customs, and quarantine services without delay or compromise.

Several Member States have supported interlaboratory studies and related activities. In response, UNODA has worked with these States to ensure balanced regional participation, including by sponsoring the participation of Analytical Laboratories in relevant annual exercises and platforms.

However, with a few exceptions, such inter-laboratory initiatives have largely been conducted on an ad hoc basis. In addition, there is a need for clear and harmonised operational modalities between UNODA and nominated Analytical Laboratories to govern interaction, collaboration, and the secure and unhindered transfer of samples and evidence for investigations and preparedness exercises.

The project therefore seeks to address these gaps by strengthening coordination with assistance providers, streamlining laboratory-related activities, and systematically integrating them into broader UNSGM preparedness efforts.

2.2. Description

UNODA will undertake preliminary consultations with Analytical Laboratories, Expert Consultants, Member States, and relevant partner institutions. These consultations will inform the development and refinement of draft modalities and procedures for laboratories' validation, as well as for interaction between the UNSGM and Analytical laboratories.

For the development of harmonised validation modalities, including inter-laboratory calibration studies, External Quality Assurance Exercises (EQAEs) and proficiency testing, the preliminary consultations will map existing validation practices, and explore feasible pathways toward consistent approaches for planning, conducting, and reviewing validation exercises.

Regarding the development of structured interaction procedures, consultations will examine existing collaboration and information-exchange practices, voluntary guides offered by Member States, and operational constraints affecting the secure movement of samples and evidence. These consultations will inform the drafting of structured arrangements and sample-transfer, handling and disposal procedures.

UNODA will also leverage the advisory role of Expert Consultants by identifying individuals on the UNSGM roster with the technical profiles required to support laboratory preparedness measures and provide specialised input throughout the process. All consultations will be conducted virtually, except for one meeting, which will be held in person.

In view of the need for highly specialised technical expertise to support the implementation of this task, **UNODA will engage the services of an external consultant for up to five (5) months**. The consultant will support the planning and implementation of the consultations; conduct a review and mapping of existing laboratory validation, proficiency testing and quality assurance practices; analyse information gathered through consultations and desk research; and provide technical advice for the development of draft modalities and procedures for laboratory validation and interaction between the UNSGM and analytical laboratories. The consultant will also assist in preparing background papers and meeting reports, and contribute to the drafting and refinement of recommendations, guidance documents, and procedural arrangements related to laboratory preparedness, sample transfer, handling and disposal procedures, and other related outputs under this task.

Additionally, UNODA will continue to promote and ensure broad, geographically balanced participation in interlaboratory exercises and platforms offered by Member States, including through **offering up to eight (8) sponsorship slots to facilitate** the participation of Analytical Laboratories in annual workshops and related activities.

2.3. Results

Through initiating the development of consistent modalities for planning, conducting, and reviewing Analytical Laboratory validation exercises, as well as structured arrangements for laboratory interaction and collaboration, the project will contribute to enhancing UNODA's ability to verify and establish the reliability, accuracy, and operational readiness of designated laboratories. These modalities will also support laboratories' in fulfilling the functions assigned to them under the UNSGM Guidelines and Procedures with greater clarity, consistency and predictability. The project will also support the continued participation of Analytical Laboratories from underrepresented regions in related initiatives led by Member States.

3. **Strengthening Logistics and Equipment Support for Investigations and Training**

3.1. Purpose

Equipment and supplies are essential enablers of UNSGM investigations and preparedness activities, allowing missions to operate safely, efficiently, and in accordance with applicable scientific and operational standards. Given that investigative requirements vary across missions, teams must have timely access to a flexible and comprehensive range of equipment, consumables, and personal protective items that can be rapidly deployed in diverse operational environments.

Under the UNSGM Guidelines and Procedures, the Secretary-General is responsible for ensuring that the collective pool of equipment offered in kind by Member States is sufficient to support any investigation, and for arranging alternative means where gaps exist. At present, however, the UNSGM lacks a consolidated operational framework defining how equipment, whether provided in kind by Member States or procured by UNODA, is acquired, verified, stored, maintained, and deployed, including the associated standardised procedures, workflows, and technical specifications. The absence of such a framework, together with the lack of essential stockpiles, has also affected preparedness training and exercises, which to date have relied on supplies made available by training partners on an ad hoc basis.

Under previous projects, UNODA initiated consultations and collaboration with training partners, international organisations, and internal UN entities, to review a consolidated list of equipment and supplies, as well as to undertake a tentative mapping of arrangements for their acquisition and management. Building on this initial work, the project will initiate the development of a comprehensive operational framework governing the acquisition and management of both in-kind contributions and UN-secured equipment and supplies.

3.2. Description

UNODA will continue consultations with Expert Consultants, the UN Internal Task Force on the UNSGM, relevant UN logistics and procurement entities, relevant international organisations, and training partners to design a preliminary framework to guide the acquisition, management, and deployment of equipment and supplies, including items offered in kind by Member States. Consultations will address practical procedures for registering and verifying in-kind contributions; managing storage and maintenance; establishing technical specifications; and defining modalities for equipment mobilisation, deployment and repatriation, as well as associated roles, responsibilities, and workflows. These consultations will be conducted virtually and on the margins of relevant international forums where necessary.

UNODA will also map capacities available through UN entities responsible for operational and logistic support, as well as through partner international organisations that have expressed readiness to provide advisory and operational support through their global logistics centres.

Considering the need for highly specialised technical expertise for the implementation of this task, **UNODA will engage the services of an external consultant for up to four (4) months**. The consultant will support the planning and conduct of consultations; undertake a review and mapping of operational and logistical capabilities; and support the development and refinement of a framework governing the registration, verification, storage, maintenance, mobilisation, deployment and repatriation of equipment and supplies, including in-kind contributions from Member States.

3.3. Results

The project will contribute to the development of the operational framework required to strengthen the UNSGM's ability to receive and procure, manage, and deploy equipment and supplies in support of investigations and preparedness activities.

4. **Enhancing Collaborative Action through Strategic Outreach and Coordination**

4.1. Purpose

The UNSGM Guidelines and Procedures identify a range of stakeholders involved in the implementation of Standing Preparatory Measures and investigation missions. These include Member States that nominate experts and analytical laboratories and provide technical and operational support; Expert Consultants who provide technical and advisory support to the Secretary-General; and international organisations that contribute specialised expertise and operational assistance within their respective mandates.

In recent years, sustained outreach efforts by UNODA have strengthened representation from the Global South within the UNSGM, particularly from Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, and the Asia-Pacific region. As a result, representation from these regions on the UNSGM roster increased significantly, improving geographic balance and broadening the diversity of expertise.

UNODA has expanded its engagement with governmental and non-governmental entities to support the continuous strengthening of all aspects of the Standing Preparatory Measures by drawing on diverse knowledge and experience to identify emerging issues and best practices relevant to the UNSGM.

Strengthening collaboration with and among these stakeholders remains essential to fully leverage available expertise and resources, ensure coherent and complementary action, and draw on knowledge and capabilities from all regions.

4.2. Description

UNODA will leverage multilateral forums and relevant conferences to engage a broad range of stakeholders and organise side events where feasible. These forums will include Meetings of States Parties to the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC), meetings of the Working Group of the Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction (GP), and similar platforms.

Through these engagements, UNODA will seek to promote the UNSGM among regions underrepresented in the roster, as well as to mobilise support from Member States and partner entities, and to ensure that such support is coordinated, streamlined, and aligned with identified priorities, thereby optimising resource use, enhancing sustainability, and reinforcing partnerships within a coherent framework.

4.3. Results

The project is expected to strengthen technical and operational support to the UNSGM by expanding regional representation, broadening the diversity of expertise across the Mechanism, and actively enhancing coordination and collaboration with and among stakeholders.

V. STAFFING

The implementation of the project will require sustained and dedicated staffing within UNODA to ensure timely, efficient, and high-quality delivery across all activities. The UNSGM Support Team currently comprises three extra-budgetary fixed-term positions based in New York: one Senior Political Affairs Officer (P-5), one Political Affairs Officer (P-3), and one Programme Assistant (G-6). These positions are currently funded through a voluntary contribution from a Member State until the end of 2027. The Team is complemented by one Regular Budget position that is partially dedicated to UNSGM-related functions.

Given the broad scope of the proposed project and the wider UNSGM operational readiness requirements, UNODA acknowledges the need for increased capacity beyond current staffing levels. Nevertheless, the proposal provides for the retention of two of the three existing extra-budgetary positions throughout the project period, with the EU contributing to staff costs for 12 months, from January to December 2028. These positions are the Political Affairs Officer (P-3) and the Programme Assistant (G-6).

To ensure access to highly specialised technical expertise required for the effective implementation of project components, UNODA will engage external consultants for specific substantive assignment on a limited-term basis, as required.

VI. REPORTING

UNODA will submit yearly progress reports on the implementation of the project.

VII. DURATION

The total estimated duration of the project implementation will be 36 months.

VIII. VISIBILITY

UNODA will take all appropriate measures to publicise that the project is funded by the EU. All visibility actions will be implemented in accordance with the *Communication and Visibility Manual for EU External Actions*, ensuring accurate representation of the Union's support and full compliance with branding, emblem-use, and acknowledgment requirements.

The EU's contribution will be clearly highlighted in all relevant publications, presentations, and public information products produced under the project. UNODA will also integrate EU visibility across its broader communication channels. This includes proactive acknowledgment of EU support in official statements, working documents, and public remarks delivered during project-related activities. EU support will further be featured in the UNSGM biannual newsletter, on UNODA's website, and across UNODA's social-media platforms, ensuring that stakeholders and the wider public are consistently informed of the Union's role in strengthening UNSGM.

IX. BENEFICIARIES

The primary beneficiary of the project is the UNSGM, which will gain enhanced operational readiness and strengthened capacities across its core components, including Qualified Experts, Expert Consultants, and Analytical Laboratories. UN Member States also benefit substantially, as the project supports their ability to effectively contribute to the UNSGM through the nomination of experts, laboratories, and other in-kind contributions, and ensures that these contributions are integrated into a coherent global investigative architecture. In doing so, the project strengthens both the UNSGM as a whole and the Member States that rely on – and actively contribute to – its effective functioning.