

# The Role of the ISU in Supporting Capacity-building

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UNITED NATIONS  
OFFICE FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS

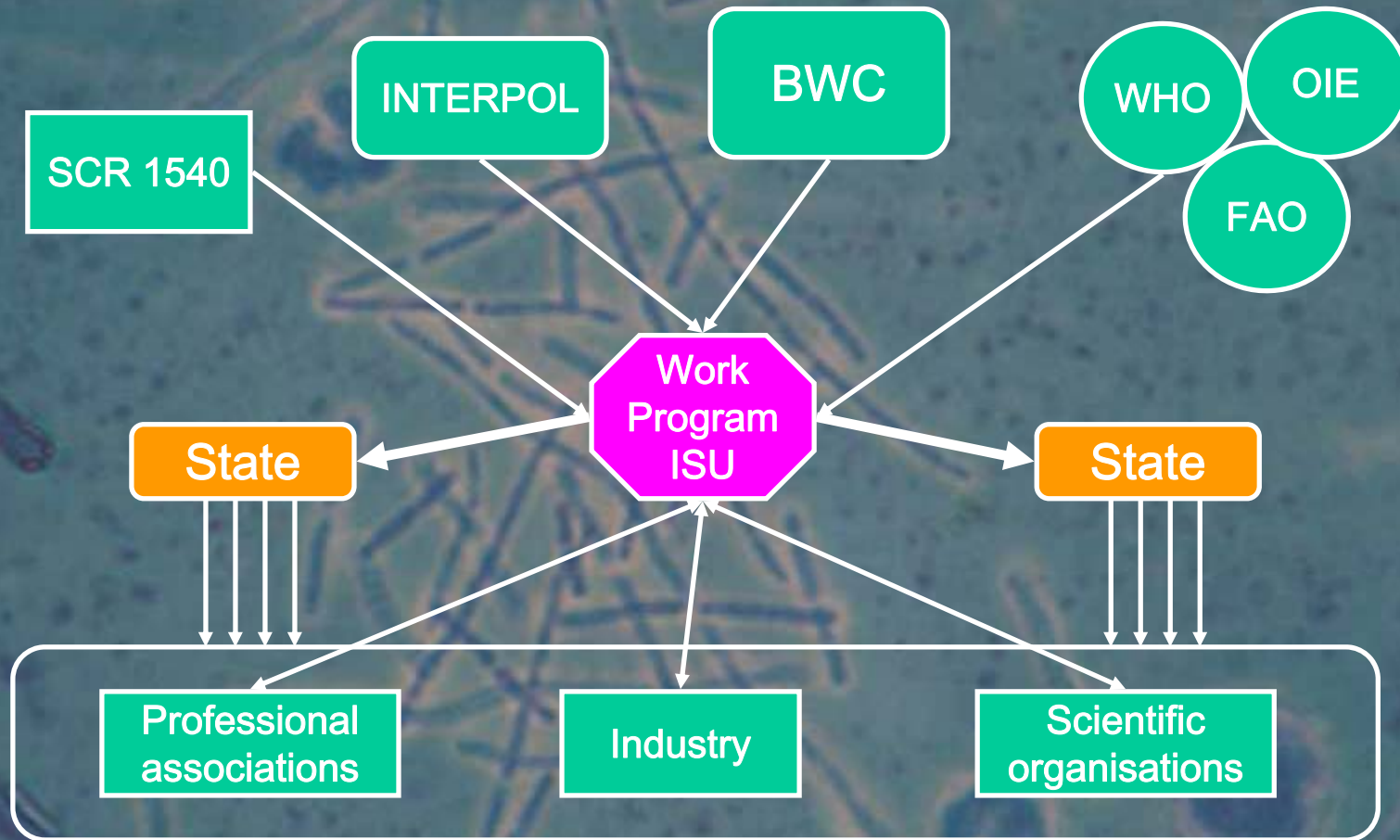


Workshop on the Biological Weapons  
Convention Supporting Global Health

Oslo, 18-19 June 2009

Convention on the Prohibition of  
the Development, Production and  
Stockpiling of Bacteriological  
(Biological) and Toxin Weapons  
and on their Destruction

# BWC implementation network





# The Implementation Support Unit (ISU)



- Established by the Sixth Review Conference to “help States Parties help themselves”
- Officially operational in August 2007
- Housed in Geneva Branch of UN Office for Disarmament Affairs
- Funded by BWC States Parties
- Three full-time staff
- To be reviewed by the Seventh Review Conference in 2011

# Mandate of the ISU

- Provide administrative support for BWC meetings
- Facilitate communication among States Parties and with relevant organizations
- Support national implementation efforts
- Act as clearing-house for offers of and requests for assistance
- Administer confidence-building measures (CBMs)
- Support universalization activities
- Support implementation of decisions and recommendations of Sixth Review Conference



# ISU resources

- Website: <http://www.unog.ch/bwc>
  - includes restricted area for States Parties
  - official and informal documents
  - links to relevant organizations, programmes and information
- National Implementation Database
  - over 2000 measures from 116 States Parties
- Confidence-building measures (CBMs)
  - online forms in six languages
  - tips and advice on participation, sample submissions
  - submitted CBMs available in restricted area

# ISU as focal point

- “Serving as a focal point for submission of information by and to States Parties”
- “Serving as an information exchange point for assistance related to preparation of CBMs”
- ISU does not provide substantive assistance itself:
  - Role is to put States Parties in need of assistance in contact with those who can provide it



# National contact points

- Sixth Review Conference requested States Parties to nominate national points of contact to facilitate:
  - National implementation
  - CBMs
  - Universalization activities
- ISU communicates with national points of contact as well as with permanent missions in Geneva or New York

# Assistance from States Parties

- “The Conference urges States Parties with relevant experience in legal and administrative measures for the implementation of the provisions of the Convention, to provide assistance on request to other States Parties.”
- ISU maintains a list of generic offers of assistance made by States Parties to date



# What kind of assistance?

- National implementation
  - Drafting legislation and regulations
  - Designing administrative systems
  - Training and capacity-building
- Confidence-building measures (CBMs)
  - Advice and “coaching”
  - On-site assistance to prepare first submission
- Participation in intersessional process
  - Travel to Geneva for expert meetings
- Anything else related to improving implementation of the Convention...

# Requesting assistance

- Can be done formally or informally
  - Informal enquiry followed by formal request
  - Degree of involvement of ISU is flexible
- ISU can make confidential enquiries without identifying the requesting State Party
- ISU can “broadcast” a request, or approach particular States Parties
  - Process will be agreed with requesting State Party
  - Requesting State Party can switch to bilateral approach at any time



# Requesting assistance: be specific!

- The more specific information the ISU has, the more likely it will be able to find a suitable assistance provider
- The ISU can discuss requests and help refine and develop them
- The ISU may be able to pool similar requests from different States Parties
  - Regional solutions may be possible
  - “Re-use, recycle”

# EU Joint Action in support of the BWC



- Two-year project: May 2009 – April 2011
- On-site assistance for BWC national implementation
- National awareness-raising seminars
- Workshops on BWC work program topics, including disease surveillance
- UNODA/ISU is implementing agency – contact us for details



## Further information:

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