

COUNTERING CHEMICAL, BIOLOGICAL, RADIOLOGICAL & NUCLEAR (CBRN) DISINFORMATION:

UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY (UNGA) FIRST COMMITTEE



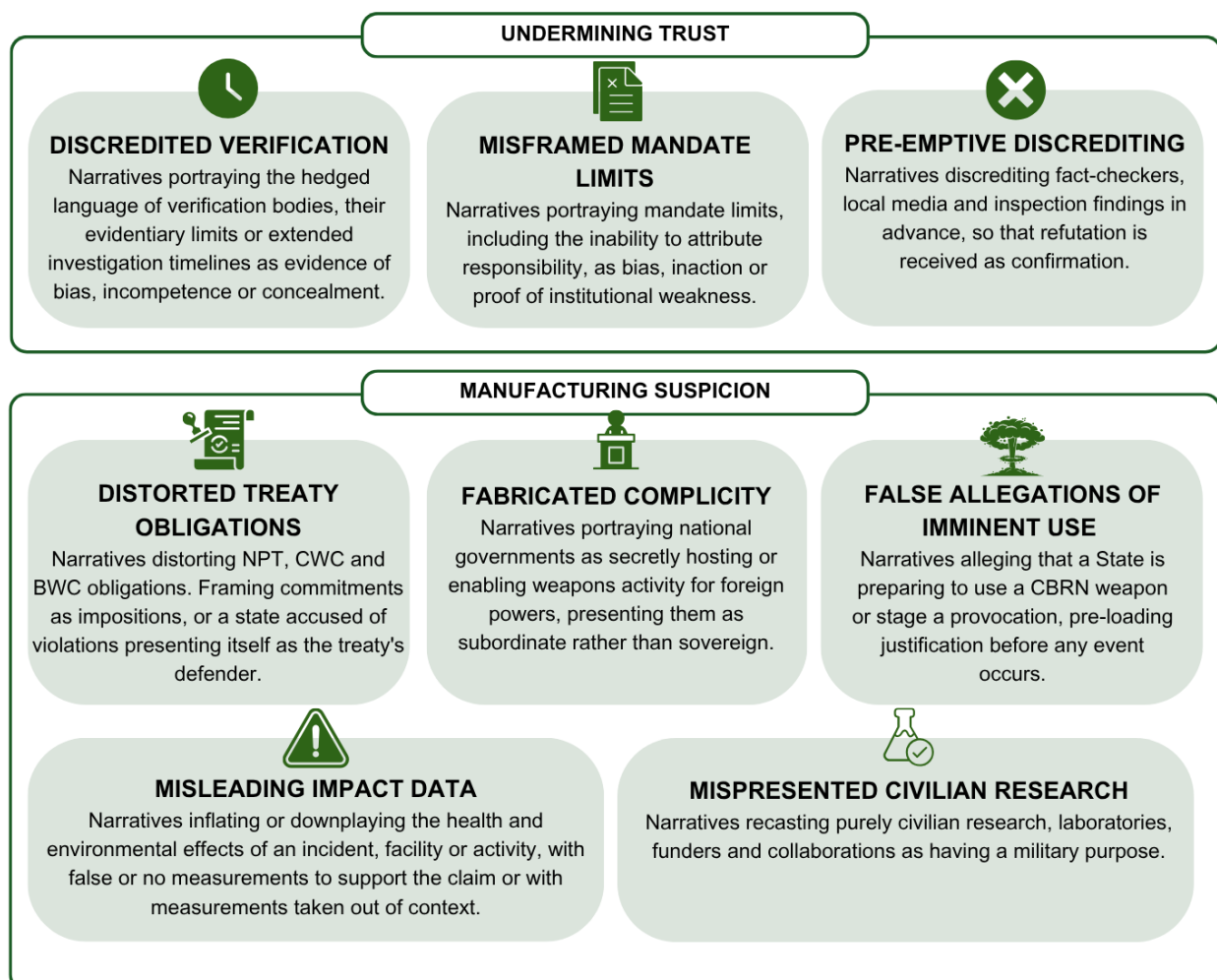
BRIEFING NOTE | OCTOBER 2026

Disinformation by State-sponsored and State-adjacent actors has been observed across multilateral fora and **will likely feature at the 81st session of the UNGA First Committee**. Further information can be found at www.GPWMDCounterDisinfo.com.*

WHY IS DISINFORMATION A RISK AT THE UNGA FIRST COMMITTEE?

CBRN disinformation refers to **deliberately false or manipulated information** concerning CBRN equipment, technologies or materials. In the First Committee, statements, rights of reply and official documents can be used to place unfounded allegations into the UN record, consuming negotiating time and recasting political disagreement as contested questions of fact that the Committee has no mandate to verify. Member States are also targeted directly, through misrepresented verification findings or fabricated allegations about their civilian and scientific activities. Such claims erode confidence in the UN system and in international verification bodies, fuel friction among Member States and disrupt negotiations. Understanding recurring narratives and tactics equips delegations to **pre-emptively debunk falsehoods, alert others to emerging patterns and build State and institutional resilience**.

WHAT DISINFORMATION NARRATIVES COULD BE ENCOUNTERED AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE?



* *Definitively identifying disinformation can be challenging, as deceptive intent and attribution are often unclear. This work therefore considers a broader range of narratives containing false, misleading or manipulated information that can distort perceptions and influence behaviour.*

WHERE MIGHT CBRN DISINFORMATION FEATURE AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE?

Each setting below carries a different risk for disinformation spread: the formal record lends more authority to claims, but when encountered in semi-formal and informal settings, disinformation is less likely to be scrutinised or verified in real time and can spread more rapidly.



Statements & Rights of Reply

Disinformation enters the official record and can afterwards be cited as having been raised at the UN.



Official Documents

Notes verbales and working papers enter circulation as official UN documents, becoming permanently citable regardless of evidence.



Side Events & Expert Panels

Expert framing may lend credibility to selective or poorly sourced technical claims.



Corridors & Informal Contact

Claims and materials passed on in consultations and corridor conversation propagate without an identifiable source.



Reports from the Press

A claim may be reported within minutes of being made, and downstream outlets often drop the attribution.



Digital Media

Clips and quotes are stripped of context and circulate with the visual authority of the UN chamber.

HOW SHOULD YOU RESPOND TO DISINFORMATION AT THE FIRST COMMITTEE?

1. Prepare



Know the recurring narratives before the session opens, so recognition does not depend on verification you may not have time to complete.

2. Spot & Check



Watch for potentially false narratives and verify with trusted experts and sources. Escalate through internal channels to capital and delegation leadership.

3. Select Response



Assess whether the narrative is strategically significant and spreading widely enough to warrant a response, and in which setting. Engagement could amplify the falsehood.

4. Coordinate



If deemed significant, coordinate with capital, with relevant stakeholders, and with trusted third parties including experts and organisations, to keep messaging consistent.

5. Debunk



Correct the false claim with factual language, clarify the relevant mandate and evidentiary limits, and support individuals or institutions that are personally targeted.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Scan the QR codes below to explore more information on countering CBRN disinformation:

CBRN DISINFORMATION IN
DIPLOMATIC
COMMUNICATIONS



DISINFO TACTIC
BINGO



BEST PRACTICES FOR
COUNTERING RN DISINFO

