



BI-WEEKLY TREATY REVIEW



25 October 2012 – 07 November 2012

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ARMS CONTROL (GENERAL)

Disarmament and Security Segment of Thematic Debate

U.S. Department of State, 02 November 2012, <http://www.state.gov>

Statement by the U.S. Delegation at the UN First Committee in New York

As an Atlantic and a Pacific state, the United States has an enduring interest in maintaining peace and prosperity across many regions. We have seen the value of strengthening partnerships and cooperation with regional and other inter-governmental organizations. We have seen the fruits of our labors in regions that have enjoyed almost unparalleled periods of peace, prosperity, and stability. These efforts are most effective only when regional parties meet their commitments fully. (1,143 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Chemical and Biological WMD Thematic Debate

U.S. Department of State, 22 October 2012, <http://www.state.gov>

Remarks by Ambassador Laura E. Kennedy, U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, U.S. Delegation to the UN First Committee in New York

Mr. Chairman, I would like to emphasize that the United States remains encouraged by the progress made by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in working toward a world free of chemical weapons. Since entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) 15 years ago, the OPCW has accomplished a great deal. (1,300 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

Thematic Discussion on Nuclear Weapons

U.S. Department of State, 17 October 2012, <http://www.state.gov>

Remarks by Ambassador Laura E. Kennedy, U.S. Representative to the Conference on Disarmament, U.S. Delegation to the UN First Committee in New York

Mr. Chairman, the United States is actively undertaking progressive, mutually reinforcing steps to move us closer to our shared goal of a world without nuclear weapons. This goal is at the heart of President Obama's nuclear agenda presented in Prague three years ago. Only a balanced approach to maintain international security will move us closer to a world without nuclear weapons. This requires strengthening the global nuclear nonproliferation regime, while working toward nuclear disarmament. (1,431 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (BWC)

Scientists Develop Hendra Virus Vaccine

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 01 November 2012, <http://www.nti.org/gsn>

Researchers from Australia and the United States have readied a vaccine against a disease that can be transmitted from horses to humans and is considered a potential bioterrorism tool, the Australian newspaper reported on Thursday. (152 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION (CWC)

Mustard Plant Can Hold Nerve Agent Secrets

Chemistry World, 25 October 2012, <http://www.rsc.org>

UK scientists have shown that plants can be used to detect nerve agents. Nerve agents, such as the acetylcholinesterase inhibitor VX, are extremely toxic substances banned by the Chemical Weapons Convention. Unfortunately, they can still be used to terrifying effect in the wrong hands, with one example being the sarin attacks in the Tokyo Metro in 1995. (318 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

COOPERATIVE THREAT REDUCTION (CTR)

White House: Russian Concerns with CTR Agreement Are "Valid"

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 06 November 2012, <http://www.nti.org/gsn>

A key White House official on Monday suggested that the changes Russian officials are looking to make to a bilateral agreement that allows the United States to help secure and dismantle Soviet-era weapons of mass destruction are not unreasonable. (808 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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FISSILE MATERIAL CUTOFF TREATY (FMCT)

UN Chief Advised to Pursue Dual-Track Approach on FMCT

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 26 October 2012, <http://www.nti.org/gsn>

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was advised on Thursday to implement a dual-track approach aimed at opening negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, according to a UN General Assembly press release. Such a track would have nations simultaneously working to achieve international consensus on the importance of the accord, while also studying scientific options that could provide technical support to any future pact. (272 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

NEW STRATEGIC ARMS REDUCTION TREATY (NST)

Russia to Keep Silo and Mobile ICBM Launchers in Future

Ria Novosti, 01 November 2012, <http://en.ria.ru>

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) will continue deploying silo-based and mobile ballistic missile launchers in the future, SMF Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. Valery Mazurov said on Thursday. (201 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

NUCLEAR NONPROLIFERATION TREATY (NPT)

Iraq Ratifies Additional Protocol with the IAEA

International Atomic Energy Agency, 24 October 2012, <http://www.iaea.org>

On October 23, 2012, the Iraqi Ambassador, Surood Rashid Najib, met [International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)] Director General Yukiya Amano at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna. Ambassador Najib notified the Director General that the Iraqi authorities had ratified the Additional Protocol to their Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and it had therefore entered into force. (146 words) [Click here for full text.](#)



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OPEN SKIES TREATY (OST)

U.S., Swedish Inspectors Fly over Russia, Belarus

Ria Novosti, 29 October 2012, <http://en.rian.ru>

Inspectors from the United States and Sweden will conduct inspection flights over Russia and Belarus under the Open Skies Treaty starting on Monday [October 29], the Russian Defense Ministry said on Sunday. (224 words) [Click here for full text.](#)

FULL TEXT OF BI-WEEKLY ARTICLES FOLLOWS:



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Many delegations have mentioned proliferation crises in the Middle East and Northeast Asia and concerns over strategic stability in South Asia. Other regions are making progress, for example, in consolidating nuclear-weapon-free zones, as we have noted in an earlier statement. The United States also shares the goal of a [weapon of mass destruction (WMD)] free zone in the Middle East, freely arrived at by the countries of the region that have primary responsibility for realizing this goal. We have been working with fellow [Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT)] depositaries in support of Middle East Conference facilitator Laajava's efforts, but the impetus for a WMD free zone must come from the region.

The United States has played a significant role, alongside our European partners, in post-Cold War Europe. We have made a serious investment in building the current security architecture in Europe. Each regime – the Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) Treaty, the Treaty on Open Skies, and the Vienna Document 2011 on confidence- and security-building measures – is important and contributes to security and stability in a unique way, but when they are working in harmony and implemented fully, the result is greater confidence for all of Europe. The very successful Open Skies Treaty, which entered into force ten years ago, is one of the most wide-ranging international arms control efforts to date to promote openness and transparency in military forces and activities. The observation flights serve to enhance military transparency and provide an opportunity for representatives of the 34 signatories – in most cases, military personnel – to regularly and effectively work together.

The Vienna Document, with its confidence and security building measures, which apply to all 56 participating States of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, contributes to Europe-wide confidence and reassurance by promoting greater military transparency. It is also a useful template for other regions, as they look to build confidence in the military intentions of their neighbors. With roots in the 1975 Helsinki Final Act, we are actively engaged with our partners to modernize the Vienna Document to make it more relevant for 21st century military capabilities and security realities. Going forward we have two goals in mind: we want to

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strengthen existing provisions and we want to ensure that the Document remains relevant to today's security challenges and budget realities in Europe.

If we look back over the course of the CFE treaty's implementation, the regime has been a historic success story, eliminating more than 72,000 pieces of Cold War military equipment since its entry into force. Thousands of inspections have taken place at military sites all over Europe, dramatically increasing confidence and military transparency. The CFE regime remains important to the United States, and for European security as a whole, despite the fact that Russia ceased implementation of its CFE obligations in December 2007. After trying for several years to convince Russia to resume implementation, in November 2011, the United States and our NATO allies that are party to the treaty, as well as Georgia and Moldova, ceased carrying out certain obligations under the CFE treaty with regard to Russia. Since that step, we are consulting with allies and partners about the lessons learned from the implementation of CFE and other existing agreements and how arms control can most effectively address 21st century challenges.

The fact is, the problem addressed by the CFE treaty originally – the destabilizing surplus of conventional arms on the continent – has been resolved, in no small part through implementation of this important treaty. Today, for the most part, quantities of conventional armaments across the European continent are way below the negotiated ceilings, and are likely to continue to drop. While the global security environment has changed significantly since 1989, conventional arms control, when done right, can significantly improve security on the continent and provide confidence regarding the military forces and intentions of neighbors, especially in sensitive areas. We must devote adequate resources to keep the arms control regimes going strong. We must adapt and improve our efforts to meet our current and future security needs, and do it in a way that is efficient and effective for all countries involved.

The United States sees great value in collaborative approaches across the whole spectrum of our arms control initiatives in Europe and beyond. The Cooperative Threat Reduction [CTR] Program initiated by Senators Sam Nunn and Richard Lugar after the fall of the Soviet Union was a success story with regard to safeguarding the materials, facilities, and expertise needed to develop WMD. Under the CTR program in Russia, we have successfully partnered to deactivate nuclear warheads, implement security upgrades at nuclear storage sites, neutralize chemical weapons, safeguard fissile materials, productively engage thousands of former weapons scientists in civilian research, and mitigate biological threats. We believe there is much left for us to accomplish in cooperation with Russia and third countries. We hope to extend the CTR program with Russia as a broader basis for our cooperation on securing WMD and related issues globally. The United States is committed to continuing our longstanding and successful

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cooperation and identifying a broader basis for partnership on securing WMD and related issues globally. From its initial focus twenty years ago on Russia and the newly independent states, the Nunn-Lugar program has withstood the test of time and is expanding its reach to other parts of the world.

Developing partnerships between regions and international organizations is also key to moving ahead. One such example of effective regional cooperation is the effort of some regional groups of States Signatories of the [Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT)] working together to increase the capacity of those states to effectively participate in establishing the treaty's verification regime. This is being achieved through joint regional exercises as well as workshops to share best practices. In some cases, regional groups are discussing ways to share resources through the creation of Regional Data Centers that receive and distribute treaty-related verification data and products.

Years of experience in Europe and elsewhere have affirmed that disarmament initiatives at the global and regional levels are mutually reinforcing. As we all know, effective global norms and instruments are implemented at regional, sub-regional and national levels. At the same time, efforts at the sub-regional and regional levels can build momentum towards disarmament initiatives at the global level. These relationships and interconnections shape our collective work and activities. But we also know from history that strong partnership between us takes sustained effort.

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Mr. Chairman, I would like to emphasize that the United States remains encouraged by the progress made by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) in working toward a world free of chemical weapons. Since entry into force of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) 15 years ago, the OPCW has accomplished a great deal.

This is a notable milestone for the OPCW since it remains an indispensable multilateral body with a global responsibility. With a near universal membership of 188 member states, 75 percent of all declared chemical weapon stockpiles verifiably destroyed, and over 4,700 inspections conducted at military and industry sites since entry into force, we are certainly pleased with what the OPCW has accomplished. This progress is due to the combined efforts and commitment of member states, along with the OPCW's Technical Secretariat which is led by its distinguished Director General, Ahmet Üzümcü.

For our part, the United States has safely destroyed approximately 90 percent of its chemical weapons stockpile under OPCW verification, before the April 2012 deadline. The United States continues its steadfast commitment to the Chemical Weapons Convention and will continue working in a transparent manner towards the complete destruction of our remaining small amount of chemical weapons.

The United States also remains fully committed to the nonproliferation of chemical weapons and for working to ensure that there will be no re-emergence of chemical weapons. Such a goal will take commitment from all States Parties and a continued effort in a number of areas to include universality. We recognize that preventing the re-emergence of chemical weapons requires a strong inspectorate, a credible industrial verification regime, and enactment by all States Parties of the necessary domestic legal regimes to fully enforce the CWC. These are all areas of vital importance for the success and longevity of the CWC and the organization responsible for its implementation.

The Third Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention next April provides a good opportunity to reinforce these concerns and to work with international partners to ensure that the CWC remains an important instrument for ensuring global peace and security. Mr. Chairman, while we remain proud of the accomplishments and cooperation from States Parties and the OPCW, we recognize that there remain real challenges and sobering realities, such as the acknowledged possession of chemical weapons by Syria and its stated willingness to use them in response to "external aggression." President Obama has made it clear that the use of

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chemical weapons in Syria would have enormous consequences. The UN Secretary-General and the OPCW Director General also have emphasized that the use of chemical weapons would be reprehensible. Other world leaders have stressed this same point.

Mr. Chairman, the world is now faced with a situation where the possibility of the use of chemical weapons is very real. These chemical weapons pose a grave threat to peace and international security, and further underscore the vital importance and role that the OPCW and States Parties can play in working to ensure the elimination of such weapons and strengthening international security. The United States applauds the on-going cooperation between the UN and the OPCW and encourages continuation of such efforts.

We continue to call on the Syrian government to eliminate its chemical weapons arsenal and join the Chemical Weapons Convention, and we will continue to work with the international community toward that end. In the preamble of the Chemical Weapons Convention, all States Parties “determined for the sake of all mankind, to exclude completely the possibility of the use of chemical weapons through the implementation of the provisions of this convention.” We must stand together to make this goal a reality.

Mr. Chairman, turning to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention [BWC], the Seventh BWC Review Conference [RevCon] was indeed an opportunity for greater imagination and greater collective effort in confronting the threat of biological weapons and an opportunity to continue the important work of adapting our international efforts to a changing world and a changing threat. That Conference, conducted under the distinguished Presidency of Ambassador van den Ijssel, was challenging. Not everyone was ready to seize the opportunity to do something new. And among those who were ready, not everyone agreed on what that something new should be. But it is in the nature of things that multilateral discussions on important issues are complex; that there are competing views; that dialogue and understanding are important; and that change may only occur through gradual processes.

So while the Review Conference did not achieve everything my government certainly hoped it would, we are satisfied with the outcome, and believe the stage is set for enhancing the important work of this forum. For the first time ever, a U.S. Secretary of State led the U.S. delegation to the BWC Review Conference. When Secretary Clinton addressed that gathering, she spoke about how the biological weapons threat is evolving and the importance for the world community to adapt its outlook in the face of new challenges. She also highlighted the value of transparency and efforts to build mutual trust among Parties to the convention; we may not always agree on how to do it, but we all agree that it is important to have confidence that our treaty partners are living up to their obligations.

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As part of this initiative, the United States hosted a number of ambassadors for a tour of our national bio-defense campus in July. We also hosted a large number of countries, organizations, and other stakeholders at an international conference on health and security in September which highlighted the value of collaboration and preparedness.

Secretary Clinton, at the Review Conference, also called for renewed work in three broad areas:

- Strengthening national implementation measures to combat proliferation and the threat of bioterrorism;
- Understanding and addressing the implications of developments in science and technology, including taking steps to guard against the misuse of scientific knowledge; and
- Building international cooperation and assistance, particularly in detecting and responding to outbreaks of infectious disease.

The Review Conference adopted a five-year workplan whose structure reflects these key areas. These are broader topics than we have addressed in the past – intentionally so. And for the first time, the new program will allow us to address each of these topics every year. That means that over the next five-year cycle we will come back to the same issues systematically in order to make real progress and generate momentum for the Eighth Review Conference in 2016. This approach also will enhance our ability to have coherent and predictable interaction with other organizations and international actors who are stakeholders in the interconnected health security field.

But the real challenge is before us now. The RevCon set the stage, but it is up to us – the BWC States Parties – to take meaningful action. In July, BWC States Parties held the first expert-level consultations of the new process under the very able and distinguished chairmanship of Ambassador Delmi of Algeria. Overall, my delegation was impressed with the seriousness with which delegations engaged the issues. Some important proposals were put forward by a number of delegations – mine included – for consideration at the BWC Annual Meeting this December. I hope all member states will join together in making the most of this opportunity to strengthen international security and advance global health.

All 165 BWC States Parties should work together as well to support universalization of this important treaty. In that regard, as one of the depositaries of the BWC, I am particularly pleased to congratulate Ambassador Kabua of the Marshall Islands. The legislature, the Nitijela, has approved the accession of the Marshall Islands to the BWC. Once the instruments of ratification have been duly deposited, the Marshall Islands will become the 166th member state of this important treaty. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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A year ago, the United States initiated consultations among the P5 and other countries to unblock Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament (CD), and to prepare our own countries for what we expect to be technically challenging negotiations. These countries have met several times over the past year to discuss the way ahead. Bringing these countries to the table is our best means to move an FMCT forward and unblock negotiations in the CD.

There are calls for alternate, whole-scale approaches to achieve a world without nuclear weapons. While we share this goal, we do not share this approach at a fundamental level. Disarmament, as we all know, is hard work. There are no shortcuts and no practical alternatives to the step-by-step approach. Trying to accomplish everything at once will distract from more realistic efforts. It is for that reason that we do not support proposals to set up new UN mechanisms to address nuclear disarmament. Such mechanisms would fare no better than existing bodies.

The five Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) nuclear-weapon states [P5] are engaging intensively on a wide range of topics related to all three pillars of the NPT Action Plan: nuclear disarmament, nonproliferation, and peaceful uses. Washington hosted the latest in a series of P5 Conferences this past June to review and plan P5 progress in fulfilling the NPT Action Plan. This followed the 2009 Conference in London and the 2011 Conference in Paris. As my good colleague Ambassador Wu reported last week, we are working on a common glossary of nuclear terms; focusing on transparency, reporting, confidence building, and verification; working toward entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and commencement of FMCT negotiations; and engaging on International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards and the NPT withdrawal issue. Let me commend to your attention copies of the P5 statement from that conference, which are at the back of the room.

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We also recognize our responsibilities, along with the Russian Federation, as the countries holding the largest nuclear arsenals. The United States and the Russian Federation are successfully implementing the New START treaty, which is the most comprehensive nuclear disarmament agreement in 20 years. When treaty reductions are completed, we will have cut American and Russian deployed nuclear weapons to their lowest levels since the 1950s. On-site inspections, data exchanges, notifications, and consultations are providing a very detailed picture of U.S. and Russian strategic forces, enabling each side to confirm the accuracy of each other's nuclear disarmament activities. Its verification regime is, in some ways, the most intrusive nuclear disarmament verification regime yet, and it is setting an important precedent for future negotiations.

The United States is committed to step-by-step reductions, including the pursuit of further reductions with Russia in all categories of nuclear weapons – strategic and non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed. We have begun a bilateral dialogue on strategic stability that can lay the groundwork for future negotiations.

Now, as we make deep reductions and pursue additional ones, I would like to underscore that U.S. policy prohibits the development of new nuclear warheads. The United States is neither developing new nuclear weapons, nor are we pursuing any new nuclear missions. The expenditures we are making in infrastructure and necessary safety improvements should not be conflated or confused with nuclear weapons development.

Another area where we have seen significant progress this past year is in the advancement of nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties. The United States has worked actively to extend legally binding negative security assurances under these treaties. We have submitted to the U.S. Senate for advice and consent to ratification the relevant protocols to the Treaties of Pelindaba and Rarotonga. We are working for P5 signature of the Protocol to the Treaty of Bangkok as soon as possible. After some preliminary discussions we expect that the pace of consultations with the parties to the Central Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty will begin to accelerate. We are also very pleased to report that the P5 and Mongolia recently made parallel declarations regarding Mongolia's nuclear-weapon-free status. This is the capstone of many years of effort by Mongolia, the P5, and the United Nations, and will be included in a First Committee resolution that we sincerely hope will be adopted by consensus.

More broadly, the United States has in place a declaratory policy that it will not use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear weapon states that are Party to the NPT and in compliance with their nuclear non-proliferation obligations.

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In that spirit, we continue our work to implement the 2010 NPT Review Conference Final Document Action Plan and strengthen all three pillars of the NPT. In addition to our disarmament activities, we are working with the IAEA and Member States to resolve all cases of noncompliance with nonproliferation obligations and to strengthen safeguards, including by ensuring the IAEA has the support necessary to fulfill its essential verification mission, and we are continuing our efforts to make the Additional Protocol universal.

We continue, as many states here have noted, to have grave concerns about non-compliance by Iran, the DPRK, and Syria with their nonproliferation and UN Security Council obligations. As noted by Acting Under Secretary Gottemoeller in our opening statement, these cases undermine confidence in the nonproliferation regime and they stand in the way of our shared disarmament goals. They also threaten international security. The international community must insist on a return to compliance, in keeping with the NPT Action Plan.

We are enhancing support for the NPT's vital third pillar, the peaceful use of nuclear energy, not only to strengthen the regime, but to contribute to economic development. In addition to our long-standing support to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Fund, we pledged \$50 million to the IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative between 2010 and 2015, and we have already provided approximately \$21 million. Funded projects are benefitting over 120 countries under that new program. We welcome the partnership of the twelve other countries that have joined by contributing to this important IAEA initiative.

We believe that the entry into force of the CTBT will play a central role in leading the world towards a diminished reliance on nuclear weapons, reduced nuclear competition, and eventual nuclear disarmament. The CTBT will constrain the development and qualitative improvement of nuclear weapons as well as the development of advanced types of nuclear weapons. We are fully committed to pursuing ratification of the treaty and its eventual entry into force.

The United States is actively working to reduce its holdings of fissile material stocks that could be used in nuclear weapons. Under the U.S.-Russian Plutonium Management and Disposition Agreement (PMDA), each side will verifiably dispose of no less than 34 metric tons of weapon-grade plutonium – enough in total for 17,000 nuclear weapons. The PMDA entered into force in 2011, and our two countries are working toward an agreement on verification provisions with the IAEA. Once disposed of, this plutonium will be in a form that cannot be used for nuclear weapons. It is irreversible.

A verifiable treaty to prohibit the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons is necessary if we are to create the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons. An FMCT is

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an absolutely essential step for global nuclear disarmament and the next logical step in halting the increase of nuclear arsenals. As a practical matter, the CD – which includes every major nuclear capable state, operates by consensus, and allows members to ensure their national security concerns are met.

It remains the optimal place to negotiate a multilateral FMCT. However, when it comes to what is in the best interest of international security, the venue for FMCT negotiations is less important than achieving a credible treaty, and for a treaty to be credible, the states most directly affected by an FMCT should be involved in its negotiation.

Mr. Chairman, I have just detailed for you how the path that the United States is on has produced tangible results. We think it's got a proven track record, the NPT Action Plan is being implemented, and this path will lead us to our final destination of a world without nuclear weapons. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Scientists Develop Hendra Virus Vaccine

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 01 November 2012, <http://www.nti.org/gsn>

Researchers from Australia and the United States have readied a vaccine against a disease that can be transmitted from horses to humans and is considered a potential bioterrorism tool, the Australian newspaper reported on Thursday.

Development of Equivac will allow for vaccinations of horses across the Australia, where the Hendra virus was first identified in 1994.

"I regard this as a high-impact achievement because it's something that's actually come off the laboratory bench into the Australian community," said Deborah Middleton, a veterinary pathologist with the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization, who headed the joint research project. "We can save not only horses' lives, we can save people's lives."

It is possible that the vaccine could also be used to defend troops from infection by the related Nipah virus, according to the U.S. collaborators. Nipah is also considered a possible bioterrorism agent and, unlike Hendra, is known to be transmissible between humans.

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Mustard Plant Can Hold Nerve Agent Secrets

Chemistry World, 25 October 2012, <http://www.rsc.org>

UK scientists have shown that plants can be used to detect nerve agents. Nerve agents, such as the acetylcholinesterase inhibitor VX, are extremely toxic substances [listed as a Schedule 1 chemical in] the Chemical Weapons Convention. [...]

The V nerve agents, of which VX is the most famous, were discovered by accident during work on organophosphate pesticides. It is therefore very important to be able to determine when they have been used. However, this can prove difficult as the chemicals can be absorbed by soil, making them hard to recover, or they can leach into groundwater.

Matthew Baker and Matthew Gravett and their team at the Defense Science and Technology Laboratory, Porton Down, and University of Central Lancashire, Preston, have found a way to counter this. They showed that plants such as mustard can take up VX and its degradation products from contaminated soil, negating the concern that evidence may be washed away. They were then able to extract the nerve agents using an ethanol extraction, which was analyzed using gas chromatography and liquid chromatography-mass spectrometry.

“If someone had used VX, we’ve shown the possibility that you can collect local flora, extract it and then possibly identify [the VX],” Baker explained. They also demonstrated that the analytes remained in the plants for at least 28 days, providing a large window for analysis and detection.

Hilary Hamnett, a toxicologist at Environmental Science and Research, New Zealand, praises the work and particularly its ease of use. “Chemical weapons are a very real and deadly threat,” she said, “this work outlines a simple and elegant method for analyzing evidence left behind by their use or manufacture.”

The researchers are now looking to extend the test to longer times and looking at different soils. They also plan to investigate how the VX interacts with the plant’s enzymes, with the aim of using the plant’s uptake of nerve agents as a remediation technique.



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White House: Russian Concerns with CTR Agreement Are "Valid"

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 06 November 2012, <http://www.nti.org/gsn>

A key White House official on Monday suggested that the changes Russian officials are looking to make to a bilateral agreement that allows the United States to help secure and dismantle Soviet-era weapons of mass destruction are not unreasonable.

The future of the Cooperative Threat Reduction (CTR) program in Russia was thrown into question last month when officials there said publicly their government was not interested in extending the pact that has enabled the initiative to operate within the country since the early 1990s.

During the past two decades, the United States has used the program to provide Russia with more than \$7 billion in funds, equipment and expertise for securing and eliminating Soviet-era nuclear arms and other unconventional weapons. The U.S. government and its contractors are shielded from virtually all liability from incidents that could occur during the course of CTR work under the enabling umbrella agreement – an issue that has long been contentious in Moscow.

The agreement expires in June. The Obama administration earlier this year proposed extending the deal but received a chilly response from Moscow. “The basis of the program is an agreement of 1991 which, by virtue of the time when it is conceived, the way it was worked out and prepared, does not meet very high standards,” Reuters quoted Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergei Ryabkov as saying in October. “The agreement doesn’t satisfy us, especially considering new realities.”

Ryabkov’s statement came on the heels of a Russian newspaper report that quoted unidentified Foreign Ministry insiders calling the current agreement “thoroughly discriminating” and adding that a new arrangement would need to be “based on the principles of equality and mutual respect.”

Laura Holgate, senior director for weapons of mass destruction terrorism and threat reduction at the National Security Council, suggested on Monday that such a balance is attainable. “I think the Russian point that they are not the Russia of 20 years ago is a valid point,” Holgate said during a nuclear nonproliferation discussion at the Virginia Tech Research Center. “They talk about the desire for a more balanced agreement and I’m optimistic that such exists in our common negotiating space.”

Obama administration officials have previously insisted that talks with Moscow were ongoing and that the Russian statements did not necessarily spell doom for the program. Holgate on

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Monday appeared to go a bit further by validating some of the Russians concerns. She suggested, however, that progress on the matter had suffered somewhat due to negotiations “happening too much in public and not enough in private.” “For some reason, the Russians chose to respond in public before they responded in private” to the administration’s proposal this summer to extend the existing agreement, she said. “We need to get back to the normal diplomacy and we’re on a path to do that,” Holgate added.

She declined to discuss the details of what the two sides have looked for in a new agreement behind the scenes. However, “what the Russians have said in public I think actually shows a lot of overlap with U.S. interests,” she said. “They are interested in continuing cooperation and they have reflected positively on the 20-year history of cooperation that we’ve had and the benefits that Russia has received from that.”

In addition, Russian statements have focused “on third-country work which has really been a growth area over the last decade or so of work together,” Holgate said. She did not elaborate, but the two nations have been involved with various joint nonproliferation projects in other countries in recent years, such as the repatriation of Russian-origin highly enriched uranium from Uzbekistan.

“They say they want to proceed, they want a legal basis to proceed,” Holgate said, referring to the Russians. Moscow’s stance on the CTR agreement is consistent with those it has taken on other international issues since Vladimir Putin reassumed the Russian presidency in May, suggested Andrew Semmel, a consultant to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

“What [Putin] has done now is to alert all of his emissaries around the world to take a tough position on a number of issues and I think [the CTR stance] is one of the manifestations of this,” Semmel said during the panel discussion. “I think this is something that has pervaded in a number of issues including the CTR program.”

In addition to the Russians’ concerns about the liability provisions – which nearly caused the umbrella agreement to lapse when it was last up for renewal in 2006 – some observers have suggested that Moscow may have other objections to the current pact. Kenneth Luongo, President of the Partnership for Global Security, told Global Security Newswire previously that Russia might raise objections to a Defense Department requirement that it conduct inspections to ensure that any equipment it pays for in Russia has been properly installed. He said Russian officials “balk” at this requirement.

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UN Chief Advised to Pursue Dual-Track Approach on FMCT

Nuclear Threat Initiative, 26 October 2012, <http://www.nti.org/gsn>

UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon was advised on Thursday to implement a dual-track approach aimed at opening negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty [FMCT], according to a UN General Assembly press release. Such a track would have nations simultaneously working to achieve international consensus on the importance of the accord, while also studying scientific options that could provide technical support to any future pact.

The chairman of Ban's special advisory panel on disarmament affairs, H.M.G.S. Palihakkara, told the General Assembly's First Committee that the panel had extensively studied whether to do away with the principal of consensus, which guides decision-making within the international Conference on Disarmament. The 65-member nation body successfully negotiated such nonproliferation accords as the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty, but the organization for the past 16 years has been unable to achieve unanimity in agreeing to a new work program.

Palihakkara said it was the opinion of the secretary-general's advisory board that doing away with consensus would not fix problems at the conference, which he said were the result of political disagreements, not bureaucratic failings.

The advisory board "recommended that the secretary-general continue his efforts to achieve a breakthrough in the stalemate and consider initiating a process of consultation to build consensus to commence substantive work on negotiations in respect of a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty," the press release stated.

In addition, Ban should study the merits of prodding member nations to organize their own committees of researchers for the purposes of investigating technical matters that would surround any formal international effort to implement and enforce a ban on the generation of new warhead-grade nuclear material, according to the board's recommendation.



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Russia to Keep Silo and Mobile ICBM Launchers in Future

Ria Novosti, 01 November 2012, <http://en.ria.ru>

Russia's Strategic Missile Forces (SMF) will continue deploying silo-based and mobile ballistic missile launchers in the future, SMF Deputy Commander Lt. Gen. Valery Mazurov said on Thursday.

The two-component structure of the SMF reflects its purpose as part of Russia's nuclear triad. Silo-based ICBMs serve as a preventive nuclear deterrent of any potential aggression while road-mobile ICBM launchers ensure the capability to respond to nuclear strikes by potential foes.

"This SMF structure will most likely remain unchanged for years or even decades to come," Mazurov said in an interview with Rossiya 24 television. "The composition of ICBM systems [within the SMF structure] is based on a thorough analysis of potential military conflicts of varied intensity that involve the use of nuclear weapons," the general said.

According to open sources, the SMF currently operates at least 58 silo-based SS-18 Satan ballistic missiles, 160 road-mobile Topol (SS-25 Sickle) missile systems, 50 silo-based and 18 road-mobile Topol-M (SS-27 Sickle B) systems, and 18 RS-24 Yars systems.

The SMF said last year that the Topol-M and RS-24 ballistic missiles would be the mainstay of the ground-based component of Russia's nuclear triad and would account for no less than 80 percent of the SMF's arsenal by 2016.

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Iraq Ratifies Additional Protocol with the IAEA

International Atomic Energy Agency, 24 October 2012, <http://www.iaea.org>

On October 23, 2012, the Iraqi Ambassador, Surood Rashid Najib, met [International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)] Director General Yukiya Amano at the IAEA headquarters in Vienna. Ambassador Najib notified the Director General that the Iraqi authorities had ratified the Additional Protocol to their Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement [with the IAEA] and that it had therefore entered into force.

The news of the Additional Protocol's ratification and entry into force was transmitted via an official letter from the Iraqi Foreign Minister Zebari to the Director General. With Iraq's ratification, the number of states with an Additional Protocol in force has now reached 119.

Director General Amano said, "The ratification of the Additional Protocol is clearly a significant step for Iraq in demonstrating its resolve in meeting its nonproliferation commitments under relevant treaties, agreements, and resolutions. It is very welcome and can serve as a laudable example for the region and the world."

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U.S., Swedish Inspectors to Fly over Russia, Belarus

Ria Novosti, 29 October 2012, <http://en.rian.ru>

Inspectors from the United States and Sweden will conduct [observation] flights over Russia and Belarus under the Open Skies Treaty starting on Monday, the Russian Defense Ministry said on Sunday.

“In the period from October 29 to November 2 a joint group of U.S. and Swedish inspectors will conduct surveillance flights on board a SAAB-340B Swedish surveillance aircraft over the territory of the treaty participants, namely the Russian Federation and Belarus,” a ministry spokesman said.

The flights will be executed along the route coordinated earlier with Russian and Belarusian specialists, who will be on board the aircraft monitoring implementation of agreements on the use of technical equipment for the observation flight, he said.

He added that the U.S. and Swedish inspectors will be conducting these flights on board an aircraft that is not intended to carry weapons and that has been certified by international experts and specialists.

The Open Skies Treaty, signed in 1992 on an initiative of U.S. President George H.W. Bush, established a regime of unarmed aerial observation flights over the territories of its member states to promote openness and transparency of military forces and activities.

The treaty entered into force on January 1, 2002, and its regime covers the national territories (land, islands, internal and territorial waters) of all 34 States Parties. It is an important element of the European security structure.

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