

Bio Terror Bible

EXPOSING THE COMING BIO-TERROR PANDEMIC

BIO**TERROR****BIBLE.COM**: Bio-terror and pandemic related conferences have occurred on a regular basis since 9/11, but have recently started occurring on a monthly basis since March of 2011.

Title: Last Chance For Biological Arms Control?: Peace Activists Urge North-South Cooperation On Verification Protocol

Date: July 19, 2001

Source: [Sunshine Project](#)

Abstract: What may be the final round of negotiations on a protocol to strengthen the Bioweapons Convention will start in Geneva on Monday, July 23rd. With a hard-fought compromise text on the table, all eyes are now on the US, which has repeatedly said it may back out. Without a show of strength from the rest of the world, the US may do for the Bioweapons Convention what it has already done for the ABM Treaty – pull the plug on international arms control efforts.

Global protections against biological weapons and six years of diplomatic work are at stake. Signed in 1972, the BTWC bans biological weapons; but contains no means to verify that governments are in compliance. In 1995 governments began to create a Verification Protocol to make the BTWC enforceable for the first time ever. This important process was scheduled to be complete this year. Failure would signal that major powers are no longer in agreement against biological weapons, lowering the political penalty for engaging in offensive biological weapons research and possibly signaling the beginning of the end of the global ban.

Non-Profit Peace Groups Appalled

"The Americans regularly deplore the danger of biological weapons and are pouring hundreds of millions into biodefense research," says the Sunshine Project's Edward Hammond, "If the US does another Kyoto and abandons these negotiations, it could be very destabilizing." The rest of the world will be forced to conclude that the US will go it alone on verifying compliance with the Bioweapons Convention. Sunshine Project attorney Susana Pimiento, who will attend the negotiations, says "Espionage and intelligence won't solve the biological weapons problem. That is a dangerous paradigm that could provoke belligerence and international crises. Cooperation on a strong UN verification regime can do far more than cruise missiles ever will. Political will to conclude the Verification Protocol is sorely needed."

Recently, an alliance of more than 100 international organizations including Friends of the Earth, Greenpeace, Third World Network and many others, called "on all governments to undertake every effort to reach consensus on a strong Protocol", a view that was also shared by the European Parliament in a resolution it passed. But with attention focused on Star Wars and the climate negotiations in Bonn, US backsliding on bioweapons control has escaped intense public scrutiny.

Europe's Special Role

Jan van Aken, a Sunshine Project biologist based in Hamburg, says that Europe has a critical role: "It is now time for Europe to make it unmistakably clear to the Bush Administration that they will not tolerate a third treaty to be trashed by short-sighted American policy." The US argues that the Protocol is too weak and would not catch violators of the Bioweapons Convention. But the US obstructed the negotiations during the past six years and played a major role creating the watered-down compromises it now says are weakness. "Rather than pandering to the US," says van Aken, "Europe must reassume the banner of its earlier positions on key issues, work with the rest of the world to reconcile differences and make the text stronger, bringing a verification system with global

support to the critical November-December Review Conference where the Protocol's future will be decided."

More Details

For a detailed but concise discussion of outstanding issues in the Protocol text, please consult the briefing paper [The Biological Weapons Convention and the Negotiations for a Verification Protocol](#) available on our website ([Sunshine Project, 2001](#)).

Title: Bioweapons Negotiations Focus On Forum, Not Substance

Date: December 6, 2001

Source: [Sunshine Project](#)

Abstract: Latin America Shines. Europe is Uninspired. A Quarrelsome U.S. Blocks Progress.

With talks scheduled to conclude tomorrow, December 7th, the outcome of the Fifth Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) remains in doubt. Presently the Review Conference appears unlikely to move ahead on substantive issues because countries are instead focusing on if and when to continue negotiations. Missing opportunities for more meaningful progress, the BTWC 5th Review Conference's "major decision" could be little more than an agreement to continue to talk. Key unresolved issues on substance include an unqualified reassertion of the BTWC's prohibition on all forms of biological warfare, the development of biological weapons for the Drug War ("Agent Green"), and the relationship between the BTWC and the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol.

Hopes for substantive progress were reduced early by a destructive US opening salvo on November 19th. A US Under Secretary of State sent from Washington unilaterally declared the Verification Protocol "dead, dead, dead" and announced US opposition to new multilateral efforts to stop development of biological weapons. On the other hand, China and several members of the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) are advocating for the Verification Protocol and insist that the mandate of the Ad Hoc Group that negotiated the Protocol over the past six years is still alive. This conflict overshadows other discussions and could even prevent consensus on a Final Declaration, causing a complete failure of the Review Conference.

In a move to overcome the deadlock, the European Union (EU) tabled a compromise that would allow for ongoing negotiations while burying the Ad Hoc Group. This proposal includes annual Conferences of the Parties as well as the establishment of expert groups. While some NAM countries have expressed interest in this proposal, the US still has not openly announced its position.

While the EU sought to be a peacemaker in the harsh conflicts between the NAM and the United States, it was in a defensive posture from the outset, hesitant and intimidated by US belligerence. Outshining other regions on proposals to address substance, the new ideas are coming from Latin America, whose diplomats are trying to advance important proposals under difficult circumstances.

Scope

Perhaps the most vexing issues confronting the Review Conference are the problems posed by so-called "non-lethal" biological weapons. These include new biochemical crowd control agents and genetically engineered anti-material microbes that degrade and destroy supplies and infrastructure, such as fuel, asphalt, plastics, and food stocks. These types of weapons are being researched by the US, at the Pentagon's Joint Non-Lethal Weapons Program and the US Naval Research Laboratory, and possibly by other countries.

While such weapons clearly fall within the BTWC's Article I prohibition on all biological weapons, formulating language to address this new technology in the Conference's Final Decision is proving difficult. Taking the lead are Brazil, Chile, Peru, and Mexico, who are encouraging the strongest possible decision with respect to the Convention's scope and have argued for inclusive and unambiguous language for the Final Declaration. Mexico, in particular, is working actively to ensure that the Conference asserts that biological warfare prohibitions apply everywhere in countries' territories, including all areas or under their jurisdiction or control.

Agent Green

A number of countries have expressed concern about the development of biological weapons (called "Agent Green") to forcibly eradicate narcotics-producing crops such as coca, poppy, and cannabis. In an embarrassing gaffe, US Ambassador Don Mahley told diplomats that the US opposes Latin America's proposals on scope and needs items like Agent Green "to fight the Medellín Cartel". The Ambassador was confused because the Medellín Cartel, a drug smuggling group prominent in the 1980s, was dismantled by law enforcement a decade ago and its leader, Pablo Escobar, was killed in a 1993 shootout with Colombian police. Delegates privately pointed out the US double standard: While the US would surely condemn Iraq if it used biological weapons in its internal conflict with Kurds, it refuses to accept proposals that would restrain US promotion of biological or chemical weapons in the Drug War or "internal" conflicts.

The Review Conference may have missed the opportunity for action on Agent Green. Proposals by Mexico to explicitly link development of Agent Green with BTWC concerns are being fought by the US and are unlikely to succeed. A proposal by South Africa to require transparency and declaration of activities at facilities capable of producing arms such as Agent Green may be put off for consideration at a future meeting.

Biosafety Protocol

After a US proposal for countries to adopt national biosafety laws, but not under any binding international framework, a number of countries proposed Final Declaration text to build linkages between the BTWC and the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol, a new legally-binding biosafety agreement opened for signature last year. Mexico and Peru encouraged States to use ideas from the Cartagena agreement to prevent acquisition and transfer of biological weapons, and for countries to study ways that the BTWC and Biosafety Protocol can be implemented together. These proposals also ran afoul of a nay-saying US delegation, which objects to multilateral efforts in general, and the Biosafety Protocol in particular because it incorporates the Precautionary Principle, a concept used in international law and policy to encourage countries to exercise caution (to protect the environment and human health) when adopting new technologies, particularly in the life sciences. But given the degree of influence that US biotechnology industry exercises over its government's policy, the US opposition isn't surprising.

More disturbing is the European Union's failure to rally behind the Latin American proposals and defend the Precautionary Principle, which is said to be a cornerstone of EU biosafety policy. If Europe fails to correct its course in the final phase of Review Conference negotiations, it will be the second time in a month that the EU has buckled under US pressure to abandon the Precautionary Principle, raising questions about the EU's true commitment to supporting international efforts to scrutinize biotechnology risks. In November, US delegates returned from the Doha, Qatar meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO) gleeful that they had convinced the EU not to include the Precautionary Principle in new agriculture negotiations ([Sunshine Project, 2001](#)).