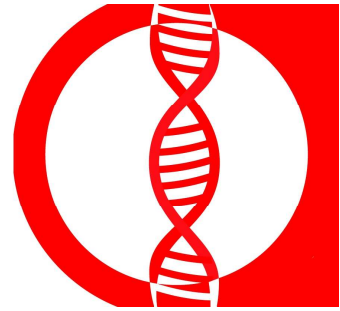


# Research Group for Biological Arms Control



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## News and Activities 6

August 2008

The first half of 2008 has been one of the busiest and most exhilarating periods in the Research Group's existence. Most importantly, we are happy to have been granted funding for two new projects, one studying the potential application of dual use life science research in bioterrorism, the other for continuing the development of a trade monitoring mechanism for biological dual use items.

The Research Group celebrated its fifth anniversary in August. We would like to use this occasion to express our gratitude to those who have contributed to our Group's work and supported us with encouragement, advice and assistance. The Research Group was founded in 2003 at the initiative of Dr. Jan van Aken, Prof. Regine Kollek and Prof. Götz Neuneck. Half a decade, three gruelling moves, more than 650,000 Euro, 10 projects, and a new home institute later, we are proud of what we have achieved and excited about the coming five year period.

In May, the Research Group retreated to Wendelstorf, near the Baltic Sea, for two days in order to look back on our work and to re-evaluate our goals and priorities. We focussed on the conceptual foundations of our group's work discussing in great detail and reworking our Mission Statement and Concept Paper. The amended Concept Paper will be available shortly on our website. The Mission Statement now reads as follows:

**The aim of the Research Group is to contribute, through innovative research and outreach activities, to the universal prevention of biological weapons development, production and use. The focus of activities is twofold. Firstly, the Research Group contributes to preventing the erosion of the universal bioweapons prohibition by opposing norm-harming activities. Secondly, it develops new concepts and instruments for monitoring bioweapon relevant activities and for verifying and enforcing compliance with the norm against bioweapons.**

Detailed information on the work of the Research Group, copies of publications and regular activity updates can be found on our website: [www.biological-arms-control.org](http://www.biological-arms-control.org).

## New Projects

### Dual use life science research and its potential application in bioterrorism

In June, the Research Group – in cooperation with the Federal Information Centre for Biological Security (IBBS) at the Robert Koch Institute in Berlin – started a new project aimed at assessing the threat to European and international public health from dual use biomedical research. The goals of the project are: 1) to assess which areas of life science might be considered useful by would-be terrorists, and 2) to assess

options designed to strengthen biosecurity. Key questions to be answered are: What type of research/results could be used for bioterrorism? What are the most reasonable means for preventing this from happening? The project is funded by the European Centre of Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC). Anna Zmorzynska is the principal researcher.

## **Tracking the Global Movement of Biological Dual Use Items**

In July, the Research Group started a new project aimed at refining the trade monitoring concept that we have developed over the past years and putting it into practice. The new project will address three topics: 1) trade monitoring for biological dual use items, 2) remote tracking of equipment, and 3) intangible technology transfer controls. The project will make a special effort to include views and experiences from Russia and China. The project is funded by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. Gunnar Jeremias is the principal researcher.

## **Ongoing Projects**

The following additional projects were undertaken at the Research Group during the first half of 2008. Detailed information on these projects is available on our website [www.biological-arms-control.org](http://www.biological-arms-control.org):

- ◆ Economic, social and legal aspects of biodefence research (funded by the German Ministry of Education and Research).
- ◆ Amending the WCO's Harmonized System to strengthen nonproliferation efforts for bioweapons (funded by the Volkswagen Foundation).
- ◆ The role of non-state actors in promoting nonproliferation and arms control against biological weapons (funded by the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond in Stockholm under the European Foreign and Security Policy Studies programme).
- ◆ Strengthening the Confidence Building Measure regime under the BWC (currently not funded).

## **New Publications**

### **Bioweapons on the Advance? The Consequences of the Lack of Verification and the Biotechnological Revolution**

The 30 year old Bioweapons Convention is under pressure. The two most important reasons – the lack of a verification and sanctions system and scientific and technological developments – are analysed in this paper. In addition, four ways to relieve the pressure on the Bioweapons Convention are described: making biodefence programmes transparent, stopping biodefence activities that weaponize biological agents, preventing sweeping exceptions to the ban on chemical and biological weapons for non-lethal weapons, and developing scientists' sensitivity for the security dimension of their work.

Hunger, *Wissenschaft und Frieden* No. 1, 2008, p. 33-36.

### **Challenges to the BWC, and Some Reasons for Optimism**

This article describes the status quo of the BTWC, its origins and principles, and some of the challenges it faces, both present and future. It then highlights several of the efforts that are being undertaken, both within the framework of the Convention, and by civil society actors to provide recourse to these norm-harming developments.

Isla, *INESAP Information Bulletin* No. 28, April 2008, p. 70-74.

## Workshops and Seminars

### Expert Talk with Prof. Barry Kellman in Berlin

The Research Group, in cooperation with the German Council on Foreign Relations, organized an expert talk with Prof. Barry Kellman on “Preventing Biological Terrorism and Crime: Transatlantic Strategies” on 26 February 2008 in Berlin. Mr. Kellman, Director of the International Weapons Control Center and Professor of International Law at DePaul University Law School, Chicago, presented his strategy for reducing bioviolence dangers. Dr. Volker Beck from the Federal Foreign Office and Dr. Iris Hunger from the Hamburg Research Group provided comments on his presentation.

### Workshop on Trade Monitoring in Brussels

The Research Group, on 17 and 18 April 2008, hosted a workshop entitled “Amending the WCO’s Harmonized System to Strengthen Non-Proliferation Efforts for Bioweapons” at the Hanse-Office in Brussels. The aim of the workshop was to bring together a diverse group of experts, among others, on trade and customs, biological arms control and civil society verification to discuss steps forward in developing the trade monitoring system. Most pressing was the need to discuss ways and means to achieve the necessary changes to the Harmonized System (HS) codes to identify biological dual use items separately. Presentations were given by representatives from SIPRI, WHO, OPCW, FAO, the Environmental Investigation Agency, the Center for International Trade and Security at the University of Georgia, the Tariff and Trade Affairs Directorate of the World Customs Organisation, and the Hamburg Research Group. Participants discussed the implications of the proposed HS amendments for verification of the Bioweapons Convention, for companies and for customs and border services. Lessons for the ways to reach an amendment of the HS were drawn from the experiences of international organisations and NGOs which in the past repeatedly proposed such amendments for different reasons. It also became clear that the HS is by definition a multipurpose instrument and that the HS Secretariat has been open to adapt the nomenclature to serve different purposes as long as the proposed changes fit the structure of the HS.

## Teaching

During the first half of 2008, members of the Research Group were engaged in the following teaching activities:

- ◆ Lecture “Contributions of the Natural Sciences to Peace Research”, University of Hamburg;
- ◆ Lecture “Science, Peace Research and International Security”, University of Hamburg;
- ◆ Seminar “Ethics for Biologists”, University of Hamburg;
- ◆ Seminar “Natural Science and Peace Research”, University of Hamburg;
- ◆ Seminar “The Politics of Science”, Technical University Hamburg-Harburg.

## Staff Activities

Besides managing the Research Group in all its aspects, **Iris Hunger** started work on her new project “Economic, social and legal aspects of biodefence research” and went to Jena in January for the opening meeting with the project partners. She spoke on “Controlling Bioweapons by Controlling Science?” at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Forum on Biosecurity in March/April in Budapest. In April, she participated in the Third International Symposium on Agroterrorism in Kansas City. In June, she spoke on the roles and forms of trust-building in arms control at the third meeting of the Multilateral Study Group on a Missile Free Zone in the Middle East/Gulf in Berlin. Iris went to Brussels three times in relation to the trade monitoring project, in March, April and May, and participated in an expert meeting on scientific developments and codes of

conduct at the Federal Foreign Office in June. In August, she discussed, together with Anna, the dual use project with experts at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and went to Geneva for the BioWeapons Prevention Project's Board Meeting.

**Nicolas Isla** continued to work on his research project on the role of non-state actors in biological arms control. He spent the first three months of 2008 with friends and colleagues at the Harvard Sussex Program on Chemical and Biological Weapons in Brighton, UK, making use of their expert knowledge and extensive archives. Nicolas also went on a 3-week research visit in the US interviewing prominent scholars, members of government and of industry. Nicolas was invited on 19 March to speak at the BWPP's Diplomatic Training Course in Geneva on Confidence Building Measures and their compilation. He continued to undertake administrative responsibilities of the Research Group such as design and maintenance of the website.

**Gunnar Jeremias** continued working on the trade monitoring project. He was busy organising the Brussels workshop in April. In March, he presented a paper on "Non-State Actors and Overlappings – Repairing Ineffective Regimes. Bridging Regime Theory and Global Governance" at the ISA conference in San Francisco. Gunnar participated in a meeting of the CBRN Task Force (Bio Sub-Group) of the Directorate-General for Justice, Freedom and Security of the European Commission in May. Also in May, he represented, together with Iris Hunger, the Research Group at the Harmonized System Committee meeting where our proposal for HS amendment was on the agenda. In August, Gunnar was appointed as the coordinator of a multidisciplinary research project on new trends in monitoring and verification of international treaties, led by the ZNF at the University of Hamburg.

**Anna Zmorzynska** prepared and in June started to work on the ECDC-funded dual use project. She also supported Gunnar in organising the Research Group's workshop in Brussels. In March, Anna participated in the workshop "Biosecurity in Synthetic Biology – Technical Solutions" in Munich organized by the Industry Association of Synthetic Biology. She participated in an expert meeting on scientific developments and codes of conduct at the Federal Foreign Office in June. In August, together with Iris, she discussed the dual use project with experts at the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control and gave a presentation on "Biosecurity: history, current debate and implications for public health" during an ECDC seminar.



Trade monitoring workshop in Brussels (April 2008)



The Hamburg Research Group in Wendelstorf (May 2008)

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