

The logo features a blue background with a grid pattern and abstract red and white shapes resembling a microscope or a biological structure.

NATIONAL SCIENCE ADVISORY BOARD FOR BIOSECURITY

Working Group on International Collaboration

Progress Report
July 13, 2006

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Working Group Charge

To recommend strategies for fostering international collaboration on the oversight of dual use life sciences research

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Recent Activities

Initial queries were made to foreign researchers and governments via:

- **Alliance for the Prudent Use of Antibiotics (APUA);**
- **Diplomatic cable from the USG; and**
- **Miscellaneous discussions with colleagues in U.S. scientific societies with international interests, as well as international scientific and security organizations**

Diplomatic Cable: Scope

- **Initial inquiry to 37 countries;**
- **Conducted via U.S. diplomatic missions;**
- **Exchange of basic/preliminary information between U.S. Government (USG) and prospective partner countries**

Diplomatic Cable: Purpose

To develop collaborative, international partnerships to facilitate dialogue on dual use concerns, USG contacted countries on behalf of NSABB to:

- Share U.S. concerns regarding dual use research and USG initiatives to address these;**
- Identify government and non-government Points of Contact (POC);**
- Ascertain countries' views on dual use research; and**
- Determine how best to achieve international engagement and collaboration.**

Diplomatic Cable: Responses

Interim Analysis: In general, preliminary information received to date is fairly positive.

- **Most responders have indicated some level of awareness of the “dual use” issue;**
- **Most have indicated an interest in collaborating with USG on NSABB efforts;**
- **Several noted that they have “dual use” initiatives of some kind (a few countries have initiatives similar to NSABB); and**
- **Several identified “dual use” initiatives as security of laboratories or biosafety practices**

Diplomatic Cable: Responses (contd.)

POCs identified by governments generally represent a broad range of government and non-government entities.

Government POCs include:

- **Research institutions, including universities;**
- **Miscellaneous ministries/agencies (Health, Environment, Agriculture, Education, Foreign Affairs, etc.);**
- **“Science & Technology” ministries; and**
- **Agencies working on biological weapons-related issues, including the Biological Weapons Convention**

Diplomatic Cable: Responses (contd.)

Non-Government POCs include:

- **National Academies of Science**
- **Universities/research institutions**

Other Contacts for Collaboration

- **Researchers/scientists in other countries;**
- **International scientific organizations; and**
- **International committees of U.S. scientific societies**

Next Steps

International Meeting:

- In collaboration with World Health Organization (WHO);
- 2 days;
- Approximately 40-50 people (including POCs identified by countries);

Rationale:

To build/enhance awareness of the dual use issue and solicit input on principles and concepts for an effective national oversight strategy for potential dual use life sciences research.