

strengthening EU legislation and co-operation, rather than immediately moving towards a legally binding inspections regime, although this is not ruled out in the medium to long term.

Potential benefits of an EU BW regime include: facilitating best practice among member states; creating a staging post for a global regime; developing expertise which could be used by the UN Secretary General (and others) to investigate allegations of non-compliance; engagement with Russia in working to control its huge and ageing BW infrastructure; and enhancement in the standing of the EU both in eyes of its citizens and 'abroad'. For these benefits to be realised, an EU regime will need to demonstrate that: there is significant utility in policing low-risk states; fears over national security violations and industrial espionage are misplaced; and European cohesion and national approaches to BW controls will be advanced.