

Canada's GPP has been active in encouraging and assisting FSU countries with the development of modern standards and guidelines.

### Biosafety Associations

Canada has committed to assist with the establishment of national or regional biosafety associations in the FSU, and is convinced that efforts to enable leading scientists and practitioners in the region to meet regularly to discuss current and emerging threats and other biosecurity-related issues will facilitate the creation of a self-sustaining biosecurity culture.

Canada is also helping experts from the FSU to become more active and integrated with the international biosecurity community, including by facilitating the establishment of contacts and links with the International Biosafety Working Group (IBWG), the American Biological Safety Association (ABSA), ABSA Canada, the European Biological Safety Association (EBSA) and the International Veterinary Biosafety Working Group (IVBWG).

### Biosecurity/Biosafety Training

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union, many biological laboratories and institutes in the FSU have lacked the financial resources or the required knowledge to provide modern biosecurity/biosafety training for their personnel. This situation represents a serious threat, as poor training increases the risk of a biological accident or of improper pathogen accounting, storage and transportation.

To address this challenge, Canada's GPP has been working with institutes and scientists throughout the FSU to improve awareness of modern biosecurity/biosafety practices and concerns. An important ongoing Canadian activity in this area is the establishment of a Central Asian Biosafety and Biosecurity Training Centre at the Kazakh Scientific Centre for Quarantine and Zoonotic Diseases (KSCQZD), in Almaty, Kazakhstan.

### Facility Upgrades

The historical record suggests that bioterrorists are generally opportunistic and seek out the most accessible source of pathogens. In this regard, inadequately secured laboratory facilities in the FSU represent a prime target, a fact supported by the numerous reported break-in attempts at biological facilities in the FSU in recent years. To help remedy the situation, Canada's GPP completed its visits of priority institutes in 2006, and identified the facilities in most pressing need of biosecurity and biosafety upgrades. While it was determined that some facilities require only minor upgrades and repairs (e.g. reinforcement of the security perimeter), others were deemed irreparable. In the latter cases, Canada is exploring the possibility of supporting the construction of new facilities to ensure that dangerous pathogens are properly stored and secured.

### BIOLOGICAL REDIRECTION ACTIVITIES

In addition to biosecurity/biosafety, the GPP supports a broad range of biological non-proliferation projects and initiatives, including dozens of projects aimed at redirecting former biological weapons scientists. To date, most of these activities have been supported through Canada's contribution to the ISTC and STCU.



Maureen Ellis, recipient of a lifetime achievement award from ABSA

### LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

In 2006, the Global Partnership Program's Senior Biosecurity and Biosafety Advisor, Maureen Ellis, received a lifetime achievement award from the American Biological Safety Association (ABSA) for her outstanding contribution to the development, promotion and enhancement of Canadian and international biological safety standards and practices. Ms. Ellis's key role in the GPP team has helped strengthen Canada's programming and provided expert advice on how best to pursue biological non-proliferation activities in Russia and the former Soviet Union (FSU).