

Priority Area 4: Redirection of Former Weapons Scientists

The dissolution of the Soviet Union left tens of thousands of weapons scientists in the FSU without gainful employment—literally overnight. Finding a way to redirect the skills and knowledge of these scientists to peaceful research pursuits was identified as a priority by the Global Partnership. The international community felt that, without sustainable, peaceful employment opportunities in their field, these scientists might well be tempted by offers from terrorist interests and states of proliferation concern.

The Moscow-based International Science and Technology Center is an intergovernmental organization currently funded primarily by Canada, the United States and the European Union.

The ISTC coordinates the efforts of governments, international organizations and private sector industries to provide former weapons scientists from Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, the Kyrgyz Republic, Russia and Tajikistan with opportunities to use their expertise and engage in international partnerships for peaceful purposes.



Governing Board and a participant in its Scientific Advisory Committee.⁶ Canada has pledged up to \$18 million annually to support ISTC research projects, various redirection programs and day-to-day operations.

Between March 2004 and March 2005, Canada committed \$10.6 million to 38 scientific research projects involving 881 former weapons scientists in nuclear, chemical, biological and other sciences. These projects involve collaborators from the Government of Canada, industry and academic institutions from coast to coast.

A new Department of Global Security and Strategic Planning was created as a result of Canadian accession. Its mandate covers technologies relevant to safety and security at weapons institutes, counterterrorism, and other non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament issues. In December 2004, the ISTC Governing Board approved a deputy executive director from Canada to head the new department.

"The mandate of the ISTC is a noble one. Many of us have had the opportunity as students to debate the guns and butter trade-off or the swords into ploughshares transition. The ISTC has taken this type of academic discussion one step further and actually made it happen."

—Allan Poole, Senior Coordinator, Global Partnership Program, DFAIT, Remarks at the ISTC 10th-Year Anniversary Conference, October 28, 2004.

Project: Support to the International Science and Technology Center

When Canada formally acceded to the ISTC as a full party in March 2004, it became the third largest contributor to the work of the Center (after the United States and European Union), a member of the six-nation



ISTC Acting Executive Director Didier Gambier (left) and DFAIT's James R. Wright (right) after signing of Canada - ISTC MOU, March 2004

⁶ Canada brings 10 years of relevant experience to the ISTC, through a program supporting the Science and Technology Center in Ukraine (STCU); the STCU is currently managed by the Canadian International Development Agency.