

model. A change of heart by the US is the only way that the situation will alter dramatically. Alternatively, like-minded states will need to take initiatives outside the treaty framework.

### ***Confidence-building measures***

The second BWC Review Conference in 1986 agreed that states should make annual declarations on various BW-related matters to increase transparency and act as confidence-building measures. These were revised and expanded at the third Review Conference in 1991. The current issues which states are invited to report on are:

A1: Data on research centres and laboratories

A2: Information on national biodefence research and development programmes

B1: Background information on outbreaks of reportable infectious diseases

B2: Information on outbreaks of infectious diseases and similar occurrences, that seem to deviate from the normal pattern

C: Encouragement of publication of results and promotion of use of knowledge

D: Active promotion of contacts

E: Declaration of legislation, regulations and other measures

F: Declaration of past activities in offensive and/or defensive biological research and development programmes

G: Declaration of vaccine production facilities

States parties are obliged to submit a CBM return by 1 April each year to the UNDDA, which collates and distributes the reports only to states parties. So far only two countries, Australia and the US, have made theirs public.

Participation in the CBMs has been poor, with only 53 states parties submitting a return in 1996, the peak year for submissions.<sup>41</sup> In 2003, only 33 states parties submitted declarations. Many states parties have never submitted one. Canada has prepared a guide to assist states to complete the CBM forms,<sup>42</sup> although the low level of participation is not solely attributable to a lack of understanding. As the data is not publicly reviewed and is unlikely to be substantially studied by states parties themselves there is little incentive for states to fully or accurately report. While the process does marginally increase transparency in regard to states which participate, it can in no sense be described as monitoring or verification.

### **The US/UK/Russian trilateral initiative**

The accidental release of anthrax at Sverdlovsk in the Soviet Union in 1979, combined with the testimony of Soviet defector Vladimir Pasechnik in 1989, increased US suspicions that the Soviets had maintained an offensive BW programme in violation of BWC. After considerable diplomatic pressure from the US and UK, the Soviets reluctantly agreed to allow a joint US-UK team to visit four facilities in January 1991. Rather than allay concerns, the visits heightened suspicions of Soviet non-compliance. The team was denied access to parts of a research facility, identified inconsistencies about smallpox research and heard explanations about purported peaceful purposes of test chambers which lacked credibility. Following a reciprocal visit by a Soviet team to four US

<sup>41</sup> 'Transparency under the BWC: CBMs', *BioWeapons Report 2004* (forthcoming December 2004)

<sup>42</sup> The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Confidence Building Measures: A Guide to Their Completion, DFAIT, Canada, 2004; [http://www.opbw.org/cbms/Guide\\_files/frame.htm](http://www.opbw.org/cbms/Guide_files/frame.htm)