

### **Box 1: US Proposals**

On 1 November 2001 President Bush further outlined US thinking in a short statement on 'Strengthening the International Regime against Biological Weapons', in which he called on all Parties to:

- Enact strict national criminal legislation against prohibited BW activities with strong extradition requirements.
- Establish an effective United Nations procedure for investigating suspicious outbreaks or allegations of biological weapons use.
- Establish procedures for addressing BTWC compliance concerns.
- Commit to improving international disease control and to enhance mechanisms for sending expert response teams to cope with outbreaks.
- Establish sound national oversight mechanisms for the security and genetic engineering of pathogenic organisms.
- Devise a solid framework for bioscientists in the form of a code of ethical conduct that would have universal recognition.
- Promote responsible conduct in the study, use, modification, and shipment of pathogenic organisms.<sup>7</sup>

Since the collapse of the 2001 Review Conference, governments, academics and NGOs have been attempting to explore ways forward. Innovative thinking on the issue is certainly necessary if the substantial differences between the States Parties are to be resolved. As Tibor Toth has emphasized, "we must move forward. No one will be safer with the control regime lying dormant... what we need now is a modus operandi on how to move forward, to involve an overlapping set of interests."<sup>8</sup> The need for such progress has been reinforced by a number of worrying developments over the last year that have demonstrated the many weaknesses in the current BW prohibition regime.

### **The International Security Environment**

There are currently three main areas of concern in relation to BW proliferation:

- the situation in Iraq (and possible BW proliferation in other 'rogue states');
- the legacy of the former Soviet Union's BW programme; and
- the threat of bio-terrorism, and in particular, the possibility of further anthrax attacks.

Each of these issues is briefly discussed in turn.

### **The Challenge of Iraq**

Six 'rogue states' were named by the United States at the November 2001 BTWC Review conference as suspected of having BW programmes: Iran, Iraq, Libya, Syria, Sudan and North Korea. A handful of other countries were also suspected but not named by John Bolton, although

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<sup>7</sup> Statement by the President, Strengthening the International Regime against Biological Weapons, 1 November 2001, For full text see <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/11/20011101.html>

<sup>8</sup> Interview with Tibor Toth, *BASIC Reports*, February 2002. For full text see <http://www.basicint.org/pubs/BReports/BR79.htm#Countries>