

secure a compliance protocol. In fact, consideration of the "sunk costs" which attend the protocol option may not only work to increase resentments against those opposing it but to reduce the ability of states parties to insure not only a successful conclusion to the fifth review, but to fashion a viable game plan for improving the regime in the years which follow.

Should this occur, the regime's future would be placed in still greater jeopardy. Indeed, such outcomes would signal a loss of confidence in the ability of the regime to address the threat of BW -- and thereby -- cause further erosion of its credibility and effectiveness. Absent effective international measures to address the threat of BW, the threat itself will likely increase -- as accessibility to the knowledge and technology required to develop BW spreads throughout the international system. And while stronger efforts at national defence may well serve to help deter the potential threat, they alone cannot eliminate it entirely.

Accordingly, all states parties to the regime -- including Canada -- must put aside past disagreements and resentments and focus on reconciling the desirable with the possible. This involves recognition of the fact that measures capable of achieving swift, decisive improvements in the area of a verification/compliance are limited. Most notably, political realities strongly suggest that the creation of a comprehensive, legally-binding compliance protocol for the BTWC is unlikely any time soon.

Yet it also involves recognition that active pursuit of a number of more limited measures -- both in the realm of compliance and elsewhere -- can pay handsome dividends in terms of strengthening the regime. To this end, room exists not only for the adoption of a range of voluntary measures capable of increasing confidence in the regime but for improving the institutional capacity of the Convention itself.

Beyond this, and to the extent that states parties are willing to adopt a flexible attitude toward the development of a verification/compliance mechanism, opportunities may exist for the creation a limited agreement -- based on the US call for a strengthened UN field investigation procedure focussed (at least initially) on allegations of BW use. While clearly not the "ideal" solution to the compliance issue, such a measure may well offer a means of achieving limited gains while at the same time not foreclosing possibilities for the pursuit of a more comprehensive mechanism in future.

Properly pursued, such measures would offer not only a much-needed boost to the regimes credibility in the short term, but would help lay the foundations for better oversight and development of the regime over the longer haul.⁶⁵ The ultimate result would be a stronger, more robust regime and most importantly, a more effective barrier against the threat of biological and toxin weapons.

⁶⁵ Crucial is a willingness to adopt a pro-active approach -- offering where ever and whenever possible -- the political, technical and financial tools by which to facilitate adoption of the measures themselves as well as insure their effective implementation and observance once they are in place.