

weapons technologies, or instructions related to BW development and production. Seed cultures of pathogens might also be smuggled out of the BRPCs.

In June 2002, the *New York Times* painted a typical scene in its description of the Pokrov Biologics Plant and the security guarding the deadly viruses housed there:

The plant's alarm system is 30 years old. The military garrison at Pokrov is gone, the guards now are mostly old men. Security for the virus freezers is a lock and a string with a seal of soft clay.<sup>25</sup>

This situation should demand intense international concern. It highlights some longstanding weaknesses of the BTWC regime, which was never intended to ensure physical protection for dangerous pathogens or create Co-operative Threat Reduction (CTR) schemes to lessen the proliferation danger created by previous illicit BW programmes.

Since the mid-1990s the United States has earmarked significant resources to tackle this problem throughout the former Soviet Union. Since 1995, more than forty BRPCs have been involved in cooperative projects with the United States. One example of such a program is the US Department of Defense's Biological Weapons Proliferation Prevention Program (BWPP) which has three major components – biosecurity and biosafety enhancements, collaborative research and facilities and equipment dismantlement. In FY2002 Congress appropriated \$17 million to this program.<sup>26</sup>

Key members of the international community, including four EU Member States, agreed to join more fully in such initiatives through the Group of Eight's (G8) new Global Partnership.<sup>27</sup> Leaders of the G8 nations have agreed to spend up to \$20 billion over the next 10 years to help Russia initially, and then other nations dismantle their WMD stockpiles. The agreement builds on the long-standing US Nunn-Lugar programme supporting the decommissioning of Russia's nuclear weapons. Provided that the pledges of support are realised and turned into concrete programmes, and that the right balance is struck between support for nuclear, biological and chemical CTR programmes, the Global Partnership has the potential to bring Russia's BW capabilities back within the realms of more accepted international norms and standards. As discussed later in section 5, an EU BW regime could be aligned with and play a central part in that effort.

### **The Anthrax Attacks: The New Reality of BW Use**

On 4 October 2001, the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and local public health authorities reported a case of inhalation anthrax in Florida. The victim, a picture editor for a tabloid newspaper, later died in hospital. The anthrax seems to have come from a letter sent to the newspaper's offices. Following screenings of co-workers and associates further cases of anthrax exposure were subsequently confirmed. The CDC later reported that the confirmed cases of anthrax had resulted from:

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<sup>25</sup> 'Security Fears raised at Biological Factory', by Joby Warwick, *New York Times*, 23 June 2002.

<sup>26</sup> Preventing Proliferation of Biological Weapons: US Assistance to the Former Soviet States, Congressional Research Service, 10 April 2002

<sup>27</sup> Statement by G8 Leaders, 'The G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction', 27 June 2002, [http://www.g8.gc.ca/kan\\_docs/globpart-e.asp](http://www.g8.gc.ca/kan_docs/globpart-e.asp)