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EXPECTATION AND PREVENTION

During a rare public address last June, the Director General of the UK Security Service referred briefly to the probability of a terror attack with chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear (CBRN) weapons. She said “Sadly, given the widespread proliferation of the technical knowledge to construct these weapons, it will be only a matter of time before a crude version of a CBRN attack is launched against a Western city”, adding “But before we become unduly alarmist it would be worth noting that the bomb and the suicide bomber remain the most effective tool in the terrorist arsenal.”

Her careful qualifications, and the non-specific basis of the assessment, seem to have been disregarded by other UK officials and by journalists, some of whom have since portrayed the statement by the Director General as meaning that Western intelligence services have specific evidence that biological attacks, in particular, are in the making. In the US, even more than in the UK, proclamations of inevitability – “not if, but when” — have become commonplace. Does this serve the interest of protecting the public? We think not.

Prudent measures to prepare for a biological attack and to limit its consequences, so far as feasible and affordable, are certainly in order. Those actually charged with protecting against or responding to such an event cannot discount the possibility. But proclamations of inevitability, while providing a modicum of pre-emptive political cover to government officials in case an attack happens, foster an atmosphere in which short-term approaches distract attention from the need for long-term measures intended to keep biological weapons from coming into use in the first place.

In an atmosphere of inevitability, emphasis shifts toward unilateral approaches, including biodefence programmes that generate new dual-use risks because they are offensively orientated. As the old Western and Soviet biological-weapons programmes receded into the past, the number of persons skilled in the specific technologies required to create catastrophically effective biological weapons was declining. But secret offensively orientated BW defence projects have begun to reverse that trend by incorporating a new generation of scientists and engineers into programmes that blur the line between defensive and offensive technological development. In the US, for example, some biodefence activities have been known to go beyond the limits for defensive research that President Ford enunciated in 1975, after President Nixon

had closed down the US offensive programme and categorically renounced biological and toxin weapons.

Can we really welcome a new biological arms race, even if motivated by wanting to know what novel threats could lie ahead, a race that applies advanced methods to the creation of ever more dangerous pathogens and methods of delivery? Is there not a danger that, in some countries, secret offensively orientated defence programmes will take on a momentum of their own, eventually becoming offensive programmes?

There is a further danger in an atmosphere of inevitability and the proliferation of secret state programmes. They foreclose options for an internationally agreed system of monitoring and transparency, backed up by agreed sanctions, designed to discourage and deter banned activities and to relieve some of the impetus for ultimately less effective unilateral measures. Such agreements are needed to forestall state-level offensive biological weapons programmes, to ensure cooperation and harmonization of measures to deter and detect violations, and to punish those who commit them.

A promising approach here, one that could be adopted by like-minded states in the near future, is the elaboration and implementation of a treaty to criminalize CBW armament in international law. The adoption by the UN Security Council of resolution 1540 (2004) on proliferation of weapons of mass destruction (see the 28 April UN entry in the *News Chronology*, page 52 below), has taken the world part way towards such a treaty, for it obliges all 191 UN member-states individually to “adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture,

<i>Editorial</i>	1-2
<i>Progress in The Hague</i>	2-12
<i>A note on SCR 1540 by Lisa Tabassi</i>	12-13
<i>Forthcoming Events</i>	13
<i>CWC Review Conference follow-up</i>	14-18
<i>News Chronology February-April 2004</i>	19-53
<i>The new WHO Guidance</i>	53
<i>Recent Publications</i>	54-56

acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes". The new treaty that is needed would build upon this resolution by requiring each of its states parties to establish criminal jurisdiction in its national courts over any person present on its territory, not excluding government officials (as the resolution does) and regardless of their nationality, who orders or knowingly lends substantial assistance to the use of biological or chemical weapons anywhere. Such a mechanism for asserting, without exception, individual accountability for acts of CBW armament

or use could extend very substantially the current array of sanctions against violation of the Biological and Chemical Weapons Conventions. Issue 42 of this *Bulletin* presents the draft for such a treaty that HSP has prepared in consultation with eminent international lawyers.

An international system of monitoring and verification, supported by credible sanctions, is an essential requirement for averting the hostile exploitation of biotechnology, whether by states or by terrorists utilizing weapons technologies developed by states. Proclamations of inevitability just get in the way of what needs to be done.

Developments in the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

The major event during the period under review was the thirty-sixth session of the Executive Council. This was a particularly productive session and several affirmative decisions were taken on, *inter alia*, destruction of chemical weapons, destruction or conversion of chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) and facility agreements. The Council also adopted a decision on the understanding of captive use in connection with production and/or consumption declarations under Parts VII and VIII of the Verification Annex to the Chemical Weapons Convention (the CWC or Convention). On a historical note, the Libyan delegation intervened for the first time at a Council session in its capacity as an observer.

The chemical weapons ban entered into its eighth year on 29 April. During that time, membership has steadily grown and the CWC currently has 162 member states. During the period under review, from mid-March to mid-June, the Convention was ratified by Rwanda in March and by the Marshall Islands and Saint Kitts and Nevis in May. The Marshall Islands and Saint Kitts and Nevis will become member states on 18 June and 20 June, respectively. Despite these welcome newcomers, however, the lack of universality in the Middle East and on the Korean peninsula remains a concern.

Thirty-sixth session of the Executive Council

The Executive Council met for its thirty-sixth session during 23-26 March 2004. This session was chaired, for the last time, by Amb Petr Kubernát of the Czech Republic.

The Vice-Chairmen and coordinators for clusters of issues reported to the Council on informal consultations during the intersessional period as follows: Amb José Antonio Arróspide of Peru on chemical weapons issues; Amb Alexander Olbrich of Germany on chemical industry and other Article VI issues; Amb Hossein Panahi Azar of the Islamic Republic of Iran on administrative and financial issues; and Amb Priscilla Jana of South Africa on legal, organisational, and other issues.

In his opening statement to the first session of the Council in 2004, the Director-General observed that the year has been

notably marked thus far by Libya's accession to the Convention. Mr Pfirter noted that in addition to his visit on 5 February—the date Libya became a member of the OPCW—experts from the Secretariat's Verification Division, Inspectorate and Office of the Legal Adviser made two technical-assistance visits soon thereafter to assist Libya in preparing its initial chemical weapons declaration, which it submitted on 5 March. After destroying 3,563 aerial bombs designed to carry chemical agent, Libya declared that it possessed, *inter alia*, 23.62 metric tons of mustard gas, over a thousand metric tons of Category 2 chemical agent precursors and almost 2,000 metric tons of precursors for manufacturing chemical weapons. It was also noted that Libya had requested an extension of its intermediate deadline for the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons. The Director-General noted that cooperation among the Libyan, British and American governments and with the OPCW was critical to the success of Libya's accession and acknowledged the presence of Amb Sahli and Mr Abu Huda, Head of Libya's National Authority, at the Executive Council session as observers. Mr Pfirter finished his remarks regarding Libya with the hope that its accession would be emulated in the Middle East and on the Korean Peninsula.

Concerning verification, the Director-General observed that destruction activities continue at Tooele, Anniston and Aberdeen in the United States and at Gorny in the Russian Federation. Mr Pfirter also discussed his visits to the Anniston and Pine Bluff chemical weapons destruction facilities (CWDFs). Mr Pfirter added that destruction has resumed in a state party of withheld identity and that additional destruction plans are soon expected from India and Albania. The Director-General indicated that the Technical Secretariat has intensified consultations with states parties, including the United States and the Russian Federation, on cost-effective verification. The Director-General also noted that CWPF destruction and conversion continues and that a destruction certificate has been issued to Bosnia and Herzegovina regarding a CWPF on its territory. Mr Pfirter concluded his remarks on verification by noting that industry verification continues but that more

must be done in this area, including comprehensive, better-focused declarations and a progressive increase in the number of inspections.

Mr Pfirter next turned to international cooperation and assistance, first noting that training programmes in civilian protection for first responders had been initiated in Saudi Arabia and Oman by the OPCW. It was also noted that the Secretariat had participated in an assistance and protection program in Thailand for ASEAN member states. The Director-General observed that the OPCW is cooperating with other regional and international organizations and, along with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization, attended a conference hosted by the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation and the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council. The Director-General indicated that the number of programmes for international cooperation has increased and that additional savings for International Cooperation and Assistance are now included in that program. Mr Pfirter noted that implementation-support activities continue, including most recently programs in Saudi Arabia, Senegal, and Bolivia. The Director-General added that the first progress report on the Article VII obligations action plan has been issued but cautioned that only a small number of states parties responded to requests for information about national implementation efforts. He urged states parties that could do so to lend assistance. Mr Pfirter thanked Japan especially for its contribution for international cooperation and assistance activities.

In respect of universality, Mr Pfirter observed that there are now 161 member states in the OPCW but that, in addition to Africa, the Middle East and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remain high priorities. The Director-General also discussed recent initiatives by the European Union in respect of non-proliferation, including its Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction, and increased efforts by the Secretariat on cooperation with the EU.

Turning to internal matters, the Director-General commented upon the tenure policy, noting in particular a report that he submitted to the Executive Council on this issue. Mr Pfirter indicated that it was too soon to assess the impact of the policy on the Secretariat or the OPCW but that transition-support measures are being developed for effected staff. Mr Pfirter also noted that he is considering changing the status of international general service posts to local once they have become vacant for further cost savings. Mr Pfirter turned to results-based budgeting (RBB) and stated that the Secretariat hosted a useful workshop on RBB in March.

Regarding other financial matters, the Director-General stated that he planned on submitting the 2005 budget in May. Mr Pfirter also discussed the establishment of a stabilisation mechanism including changes to the Financial Rules, as well as improvements in respect of the travel function, non-service-incurred death and disability insurance, and accrued and home leave entitlements.

Finally, the Director-General addressed inspections, noting that the Secretariat is launching a trial on-call inspection system for CWDFs, through the use of a specialised services agreement. Mr Pfirter noted that this system would allow for the same level of excellence at reduced cost, namely, EUR 40,000 per inspector.

Turning to the General Debate, seventeen states parties

made statements with each of them first expressing their condolences to the Netherlands, Spain and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia for, respectively, the death of Princess Juliana, the 11 March attacks in Madrid, and the unexpected death of the former president of Macedonia. The main issues that were touched upon by the states parties included universality of the Convention and implementation of Article VII obligations and the action plans in respect of each of these CWC pillars. The states parties were unanimous in their support of Libya's decision to join the Convention and many commented on the destruction of its chemical weapons stockpiles. Libya spoke as an observer at the Council session and described its motivation for initially developing and now ending its chemical weapons programme. The states parties also addressed administrative matters including progress in the implementation of RBB and the tenure policy. Additionally, Japan indicated that it would be providing EUR 30,000 for the implementation of the universality and Article VII action plans, EUR 10,000 for the Second Regional Meeting of National Authorities of States Parties in Asia which will take place in Beijing, China from 20 to 22 September 2004, and EUR 20,000 for the Associate Programme.

Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairmen

The Council elected by acclamation Amb José Antonio Arróspide of Peru as its new Chairman for the period 12 May 2004 to 11 May 2005. Four Vice-Chairpersons were also elected: the permanent representatives of Algeria, the Netherlands, Pakistan, and the Russian Federation. The Vice-Chairmen will hold office for the same period as the new Chairman.

Status of implementation of the Convention

The Executive Council at its twenty-third meeting adopted a plan of action on the universality of the Convention containing, *inter alia*, a request for the Secretariat to prepare a comprehensive annual document on planned universality-related activities in consultation with member states and to provide information to the Council on proposed initiatives (see the December *Bulletin*). The Council at its thirty-sixth session noted this report for the period 24 October 2003 to 20 February 2004. The report indicated that, *inter alia*, several steps were taken to implement the action plan during this time including preparation of a comprehensive annual document; the designation of Mr Huang Yu, Director of the External Relations Division, as the focal point for implementation and coordination of the plan within the Secretariat; a note from the Director-General calling for the voluntary designation of points of contact, in all regions and sub-regions relevant for promoting universality, for the implementation of the plan and effective coordination; and bilateral assistance visits to Belize and Madagascar. Additionally, initiatives by the Technical Secretariat and member states during the first half of 2004 were noted including a meeting in January to discuss the possible role of points of contact on universality, a meeting with representatives of the African Union Commission in January to discuss implementation of a decision adopted by the Organisation of African Unity regarding the universality and implementation of the Convention, a bilateral assistance visit to Rwanda, a meeting in Brussels with representatives of African states not party regarding forthcoming OPCW activities in Africa, and attendance at the General Cooperation

Meeting between the United Nations System and the League of Arab States and its specialized agencies and meetings with officials from the League of Arab States. Assistance visits to Cambodia, the Solomon Islands, and possibly Myanmar were noted as well as workshops in Senegal, Ethiopia and Malta during 24 to 26 February, 20 to 22 April, and 5 to 7 May, respectively.

The Council noted a report from the Director-General which provides an update on the Secretariat's readiness to conduct a challenge inspection and which was prepared further to a request by the First Review Conference. In particular, the report provides updates on the standard operating procedure for planning, launching, supporting and controlling challenge inspections; the availability of inspectors to carry out such inspections; relevant training and exercises; logistical matters such as the movement of personnel and equipment; stockpiling of equipment for such inspections; matters relating to laboratories and analysis; visas; and standing diplomatic clearance numbers.

The Council approved a decision on the clarification of declarations in which it urged all member states to expedite their responses to requests for clarification of their declarations when they do not involve other member states. The Council urged them to do so by sending an initial response within 90 days after the Secretariat has officially transmitted its request. The Council also recommended that when the Secretariat has issued such a request but has not received a response from the member state in question within 90 days, it notify the Council before its next regular session about the request and provide a reminder to the member state 60 days after issuing the original request.

Implementation of Article VII obligations

The Executive Council received a Note from the Director-General on the plan of action regarding the implementation of Article VII obligations, which was approved by the Conference of the States Parties at its eighth session. The Note was submitted to the Council further to a request in the action plan and contains four annexes including a progress report from the Technical Secretariat, the status of implementation of Article VII as at 17 February 2004, a survey of the contents of Article VII submissions, and a table of implementation-support measures taken by the Secretariat between 29 April 1997 and 31 December 2003.

The Note indicates that progress in following the requirements in the action plan has been slow, with only a small number of states parties formally responding to them. The Note adds that little progress has been achieved in respect of improving implementation since the last report on the issue, which was submitted to the Conference of the States Parties last year (see the December *Bulletin*). The underlying causes for failure to properly implement Article VII obligations are reported to include a lack of adequate awareness of the Convention's requirements and thus a lack of support for it, a failure to accord the requirements priority, a lack of resources, delays in establishing or designating National Authorities, and insufficient experience in respect of implementation. It was added that the Secretariat needs the assistance of states parties for implementation support but that offers of such support have been few in number. The Note concludes with several recommendations including (i) relevant states parties should identify what kind of implementation support they

require; (ii) those states parties which are already implementing their own outreach and assistance programs should coordinate with the Secretariat; (iii) states parties willing and able to offer implementation support should nominate experts whom the Secretariat could make available for implementation-support projects; (iv) states parties should suggest how the OPCW's implementation-support programme could be improved; (v) states parties could help develop closer cooperation between the OPCW and other regional and international organisations with respect, for example, to implementation of the action plan; and (vi) states parties may wish to revisit the Secretariat's staffing requirements in connection with action plan activities and implementation support generally.

The Technical Secretariat's progress report, attached as Annex 1 to the Director-General's Note, covers the period from 24 October 2003 to 1 February 2004. In brief, the report indicates that out of the 160 states party to the CWC at the time the report was prepared, only 95, or 59 percent, had made submissions regarding their Article VII legislative and administrative measures taken. Of these 95 states parties, only 52, or 33 percent, had legislation comprehensive enough to cover areas key to enforcement of the Convention. Some of the reasons for failure to implement Article VII obligations are noted above. The report adds that difficulties with implementation are particularly prevalent in some states parties in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, and Eastern Europe. Requirements for implementation support have been identified in the following areas (i) drafting legislation and regulations and reviewing drafts; (ii) identifying declarable facilities and preparing and submitting declarations; (iii) strengthening administrative means; and (iv) building awareness of and support for the Convention, including through outreach to stakeholders in government. The report describes the implementation support that has been provided by the Secretariat including basic and advanced training courses for National Authority personnel, regional workshops for National Authorities, an annual National Authority day, thematic workshops and seminars, and bilateral technical assistance and technical evaluations upon request. Activities during 2003 are also outlined including National Authority meetings, workshops, training courses, the establishment of the Network of Legal Experts, and publication of the *National Legislation Implementation Kit*. Implementation support projects for 2004 are noted, including targeted implementation support, implementation-support missions, legislative support through use of the Network of Legal Experts, bilateral implementation support activities by states parties, and development of partnerships with regional and international organizations. The report's recommendations to states parties reflect those in the Director-General's Note discussed above.

In response to the Director-General's Note, the Council reaffirmed the provisions in the action plan for the implementation of Article VII obligations, urged states parties to continue coming forward with offers of and requests for assistance and to keep the Secretariat abreast of their activities in respect of the plan, and encouraged the Secretariat to enhance the coordination of its implementation support activities with states parties offering or requesting assistance.

Destruction issues

The Council had before it a number of decisions on plans for

the verification of destruction of chemical weapons. One such plan for the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility was again deferred by the Executive Council until its next session. The Council also deferred consideration of a decision on the plan for the verification of destruction of chemical weapons at Explosive Destruction System (EDS), Phase 1, Unit 2/3 at Dugway Proving Ground, Utah in the United States. However, the Council approved plans for the verification of destruction of chemical weapons at Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility at the Pine Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas, the United States as well as a plan for the verification of destruction of Category 3 chemical weapons at the Al-Jufra STO-002 CWDF, Al Jufra Province, Libya.

The plan for the verification of destruction of Libya's Category 3 chemical weapons was carried out before the Executive Council could consider the matter at its thirty-sixth session. In the related Note, the Secretariat indicated that it might not have been possible for the Council to meet before its thirty-sixth session to consider the plan, given the timelines resulting from Libya's decision to proceed with the destruction of these weapons. The Council also noted the report from the Secretariat on their destruction. The report stated, *inter alia*, that 3,563 Category 3 weapons were stored at the Al-Jufra STO-002 CWDF, not 3,362 as had been initially declared. Libya indicated that it would amend its initial declarations accordingly. Destruction of the weapons began on 29 February 2004 after an initial inspection. In addition to two aerial bombs which had been declared already destroyed, the remaining 3,561 empty bomb casings were crushed by a 70 tonne heavy-duty tracked bulldozer which ran over the casings on a hard tarmac road.

A report to the Executive Council by the Russian Federation on the progress of destruction of chemical weapons stockpiles stated that the destruction of its Category 1 chemical weapons commenced at the Gorny CWDF on 19 December 2002. Between that date and 26 April 2003, it was reported that 401.406 tonnes of weapons had been destroyed, fulfilling the Russian Federation's obligation to meet its deadline for the destruction of one percent of its stockpiles. It was noted that destruction of mustard gas started again on 18 August 2003 after scheduled servicing of process equipment and that lewisite destruction started on 25 November 2003. The Russian Federation reported that 649.886 tonnes of chemical agents had been destroyed as at 19 March 2003 including 622.3 tonnes of mustard gas and 27.586 tonnes of lewisite.

The Russian Federation also reported that the amended Federal Special Programme "The destruction of stockpiles of chemical weapons in the Russian Federation" provides for the construction of five additional CWDFs in order to destroy all of its chemical weapons stockpiles. These include two facilities to be built and commissioned in 2005 (near Kambarka in the Udmurt Republic and Shchuchye in the Kurganskaya oblast) and three to be built and commissioned in 2006 (Maradykovski in the Kirovskaya oblast, Pochep in the Bryanskaya oblast, and Leonidovka in the Penzenskaya oblast). It was reported that construction of the Kambarka and Shchuchye CWDFs was being accelerated.

With regard to CWPFs, the Council had before it a number of combined plans for their destruction and verification. The Council again considered a combined plan for destruction and verification of the CWPF (QL Production and Fill Facility) at Pine Bluff Arsenal in the United States and the related draft

decision, which it had previously considered at its thirty-fifth session. The Council approved this plan. The Council also approved a combined plan for the destruction and verification of the CWPF (DC Production Facility) at Pine Bluff Arsenal in the United States and a plan for Phase 2 of the destruction and verification of the CWPF (lewisite production) at Open Joint Stock Company (OJSC) Kaprolaktam-Dzerzhinsk in Dzerzhinsk, the Russian Federation.

Conversion and verification of chemical weapons production facilities

The Council again considered a combined plan for conversion and verification of a CWPF (production of a VX-type substance and filling it into munitions: auxiliary buildings 352 and 353 and ventilation stack 366B) at OJSC Khimprom in Novocheboksarsk, the Russian Federation, which it had previously considered along with the draft decision at its thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions. The Council approved this plan.

The Council considered notifications from the Russian Federation on changes at former CWPFs being converted to purposes not prohibited under the Convention, both of which had been deferred for further consideration by the Council at its thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth sessions. The Council considered again the issue of the US objection to notification by the Russian Federation of changes to the conversion activity at the former CWPF at OJSC Khimprom in Volgograd (DF production). It decided to consider the issue further at its thirty-seventh session. The Council also considered again the issue of the US objection to notification by the Russian Federation of changes at the former facility for preparation for filling of non-chemical parts of chemical munitions at OJSC Khimprom in Volgograd. It decided to consider the issue further at the thirty-seventh session. Finally, the Council noted that no objections had been raised by any of its members within 30 days of receipt of notification and evaluation of changes at the former CWPF OJSC Khimprom in Novocheboksarsk (chloroether production).

Finally, the Council noted information submitted by the Director-General, in a *restricted* document, on the progress made at CWPFs where conversion is still in progress. The Council had asked the Director-General at its thirty-third session to inform the Council at its first regular session following the conduct of an annual usual inspection by the Secretariat of progress made at such facilities.

Facility agreements

In respect of Schedule 1 facilities for protective purposes, the Executive Council approved a decision on a facility arrangement with Belgium and adopted decisions approving facility agreements between the OPCW and Spain and the Slovak Republic regarding on-site inspections at their respective facilities. The agreements with Spain and the Slovak Republic were subject to the Secretariat not receiving objections from Council members before 23 April.

The Executive Council again deferred a decision on the facility agreement relating to the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility until its next session. The Council also decided to defer consideration of a new draft decision on a facility agreement with the United States for the Explosive Destruction System, Phase 1, Unit 2/3, at Dugway Proving Ground, Utah.

The Council considered and adopted a decision approving a facility agreement with the Russian Federation in respect of on-site inspections at the CWDF in Gorny, which was first introduced at the Council's thirty-fifth session. The Council also considered and adopted a facility agreement with the United States regarding on-site inspections at the Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility at Pine Bluff Arsenal, Arkansas.

The Council also took note of the Technical Secretariat's Notes informing the Council of agreed modifications and updates to two facility agreements for Schedule 1 facilities, five facility agreements for CWPFS, and five facility agreements for CWDFs—all with the United States.

Chemical industry issues

First introduced at its thirty-fourth session, the Council adopted a decision on the understanding of the concept of 'captive use' in connection with production and/or consumption declarations under the Verification Annex of the CWC, Parts VII and VIII. The Council recommended that the ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties decide that Schedules 2 and 3 chemicals production is understood, for declarations, to include intermediates, by-products, or waste products produced and consumed within a defined chemical manufacturing sequence, where these items are chemically stable and therefore exist for a sufficient time to make isolation from the manufacturing stream possible but where such isolation does not occur under normal or design operating conditions. It was also recommended that the Conference decide that states parties should implement their Article VII(1) obligations no later than 1 January 2005 and 1 January 2006 with regard to Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 chemicals, respectively.

Concerning other chemical industry issues, the Council decided to continue informal consultations regarding captive use of Schedule 1 chemicals, consider modalities for Schedule 2 facility agreements at its next session, and return to the issue of transfer discrepancies at a future session.

Technical issues

The Council adopted a decision on lists of new validated data for inclusion in the OPCW Central Analytical Database (OCAD).

The Council approved a decision recommending that the Conference of the States Parties at its ninth session approve for inclusion in the list of approved equipment an environmental temperature logger.

Further to the Council's consideration at its thirty-fifth session of a Note from the Director-General regarding proposed revisions to specifications for two items of approved inspection equipment (the OPCW sample-collection and GC-MS sample-preparation kits) and, having received no objections from states parties by 14 December 2003, the Council approved the proposed revisions.

Confidentiality

The report *Implementation of the Regime Governing the Handling of Confidential Information by the Technical Secretariat in 2003* was noted by the Council. *Inter alia*, the report notes the progress in the reorganization of the Office of Confidentiality and Security (OCS) including the completion of its functional transition from the Division of Special

Projects to the Office of the Director-General and the full incorporation of the OPCW Security Office into OCS as the Physical Security Section. The report addressed the status of amendments to the OPCW Policy on Confidentiality (OPOC) and indicated that amendments to the Manual of Confidentiality Procedure for staff were issued last August. As at 31 December 2003, it was reported that only 54 states parties had provided the Secretariat with details on the handling of confidential information provided to them by the OPCW. The report also stated that, during 2003, OCS processed 36 incident reports, 17 of which involved breaches of confidentiality procedures (none of which resulted in actual breaches), while the remaining 19 were security related. The sharp increase from the three reports in 2002 was attributed to improvements in the reporting system. Work was reported to be continuing on the project to centralize the registration and tracking of all confidential information held by the OPCW. The use of secrecy agreements and the confidentiality access clearance process were also discussed. The report outlined the classification of confidential pages and documents received from states parties—in 2003, 64 percent of documents were classified as either 'highly protected' or 'protected'. The handling and protection of such documents was stated to consume considerable resources and a statement recommending that states parties avoid over-classification has been incorporated into the amendments to the OPOC. Other matters were discussed in the report including security-critical network operations, the work of the Security Audit Team III, progress in implementing an information security management system in accordance with the ISO 17799 Code of Practice for Information Security Management, and internal training in confidentiality, information-systems security, and physical-security and external training in information-systems security. Finally, the report stated that recommendations of the Office of Internal Oversight (OIO) regarding confidential information were implemented to the greatest extent possible during 2003 and that the Confidentiality Commission had met twice for its Fifth Regular Annual Meeting during 2003 (see the December *Bulletin*).

The Council deferred until a future session further consideration of proposed amendments to the OPOC and a recommendation to the Ninth Session of the Conference of the States Parties to adopt these amendments.

Financial issues

The Council received reports on the OPCW's income and expenditure for the months of November and December 2003 and January 2004. As at 31 January 2004, 19.5 percent of the assessed contributions for 2004 had been received. Twenty-four states parties had fully paid their assessed contribution, and nine had paid in part. The amount outstanding was EUR 55,358,346.

With regard to Articles IV and V verification costs for 2004, EUR 3.9 million in reimbursements had been budgeted for. As at 31 January 2004, EUR 2,359,034 had been invoiced. Of that, EUR 1,693,092, or 71.8 percent, had been collected.

The Executive Council received a second report from the Secretariat on the OPCW's non service-incurred death and disability insurance policy for staff members. The report elaborates on certain elements of the findings and recommendations of the consultant initially engaged to examine the matter and which were contained in the first report (see

the March 2004 *Bulletin*). The second report also contains further information on this issue pursuant to the Council's request at its thirty-fifth session. The report recommends that the OPCW continue to contract for the policy in order to keep with the overall conformity of the OPCW's package of social-security insurance coverage, its remuneration system and its conditions of service with those in the UN common system. Otherwise, OPCW staff members would be at a material disadvantage in comparison to colleagues in the UN common system. The Secretariat concludes by suggesting that such coverage be continued with revised terms for 2004, including a substantial reduction in the cost of the premiums for the policy in question, or that a single master policy be developed for both service- and non service-incurred death and disability. The Council considered this report and requested the Secretariat to immediately take action by phasing out, while respecting acquired rights, the existing arrangements for non-service incurred death and disability insurance coverage and arrange for such insurance to be made available to newly recruited staff on a voluntary basis with the premiums to be paid by them.

The Council noted that consultations among states parties and the Technical Secretariat on RBB continued through the intersessional period between its thirty-fifth and thirty-sixth sessions.

A report on the reorganization of the travel-management function was noted by the Executive Council. This report was prepared further to a request by the Council at its thirty-fourth session. It was noted in the report that three changes were being made with respect to the travel-management function. First, all OPCW travel management was being integrated into one central and functional office within the Support Services Section. Second, an automated travel-management function was in the process of being installed, which would be used in conjunction with an outside booking and ticketing system. And, third, Secretariat staff in the travel unit were taking over responsibility for providing OPCW travel services with the assistance of an outside travel agency. The Council requested the Secretariat to report back to the Council once installation of the automated travel-management system was complete.

With regard to the OPCW's home-leave entitlements policy, the Council requested the Secretariat to modify its practice of paying staff members a lump sum based on full-fare economy rates with a view to providing the benefit in the most economical way and recommended that the policy be implemented such that total travel costs are the most economical rate plus any other home-leave related benefits to which staff are entitled together with any costs to the OPCW of administering the benefits. The Council also noted information provided by the Provident Fund Management Board (PFMB) further to a request by the Council at its thirty-first session that it be informed of the outcome of discussions between the PFMB and the former administrator of the Fund, Ernst & Young.

The Council was also notified by the Director-General on transfers made between or within OPCW programmes in 2003, as required by the OPCW Financial Regulations. The Note stated that in no instance did the total of all transfers in 2003 exceed 10 percent of the original appropriation for the programme to which the transfer was made nor did the total of all transfers in 2003 exceed 15 percent of the original appropriation for the budget subprogrammes to which the

transfers were made.

Other business

The Council considered and noted the report of the Fifteenth Session of the Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters (see the December *Bulletin*) along with the related Note from the Director-General regarding the status of implementation of recommendations in the report. The Director-General's Note indicated that no action was required by the Council on any of the recommendations.

The Council considered and noted the reports on the status of implementation of the recommendations in 2003 of the External Auditor and the OIO.

The Council welcomed a report from the Director-General on implementation of the tenure policy, which was prepared further to a request by the Council at its twenty-second meeting. The report first noted that an annual turnover rate of one-seventh was not reached for 2003 because the tenure policy decision was only adopted by the Conference in April of last year and because of the requisite notice periods for effected staff members. It was reported that the tenure policy applied to 35 staff members in 2003, 16 of whom were separated as a result of natural attrition and the remainder of whom did not receive contract renewals. The criteria used were those reported to the Council at its March 2003 session (see the March 2003 *Bulletin*). The report stated that the workload of the Human Resources Branch had increased in 2003 including advertising 107 fixed-term and short-term vacancies, holding 321 interviews and hiring 31 new fixed-term staff members. The increased costs to the organization for implementation of the policy were also noted, including additional costs for short-term assistance which will need to be met using funds from the 2001 cash surplus. The engagement of Jonathan A. Kusi, an external legal expert, was noted. Mr Kusi's services are being provided with respect to the OPCW's defence against complaints filed with the International Labour Organisation Administrative Tribunal regarding non-renewal of seven contracts as a result of the tenure policy. It was added that one major impact of the policy already has been a negative effect on morale for staff members whose contracts have not been renewed and on the remaining members of their functional units and Secretariat staff generally. To address these issues, it was reported that proposed transition support measures have been developed which may be complemented by measures to support the continued operational effectiveness of the Secretariat during implementation of the policy, including the possibility of converting internationally-recruited General Service posts to local status in order to reduce costs.

The Council received a report from the Chairman of the Executive Council regarding the meeting of government experts to review the findings of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB), which were submitted to the First Review Conference last year (see the June 2003 *Bulletin*). This meeting took place from 28 to 30 January with forty-six experts, delegates from 21 states parties and two SAB members in attendance. A facilitator's report of the discussions, following the structure of the agenda for the meeting, was attached to the Chairman's report as an annex. The Chairman's report contains its own recommendations.

In brief, some of the outcomes of the meeting were as follows. It was first noted that the schedules of chemicals to

the Convention should not be amended at this time and, more particularly, (i) the understanding that ricin should remain accountable as long as the A-S-S-B bond is not broken may be helpful for implementation purposes; (ii) it was confirmed that when salts of scheduled chemicals are not specifically mentioned in the schedules, only the corresponding free base is covered by the Convention; and (iii) CAS registry numbers were helpful for identifying scheduled chemicals but should have no regulatory effect in respect of the Convention. The experts also observed that there has been significant progress in chemical-production technology, that these developments should be taken into account with respect to implementation of the Convention, and that they should be followed by the SAB. The experts recognized that on-site and off-site analyses are an important aspect of inspections and are important requirements for the effective implementation of the Convention. It was noted that the SAB found on-site analysis to be preferable for routine inspections and that available analytical equipment (portable gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), OCAD, and AMDIS software) is effective. However, the experts observed that the OPCW's capability to conduct on-site analysis should be further developed and practised. The importance of trace analysis for investigations of alleged use, the need to revitalize work on biomedical samples and continue developing OCAD, and the need for better coordination of research efforts among states parties to improve the OPCW's analytical capabilities were also recognized. With regard to the verification of chemical weapons destruction, the experts noted the importance of optimising such verification but added that this should not slow destruction operations. The experts also addressed assistance and protection issues and observed that SAB efforts should focus on further development of the OPCW data bank on protection, advice for states parties on how to improve their national protective capacities, the capability of the OPCW to conduct investigations of alleged use, advance training for states parties, and assistance. Many experts also felt that the SAB should involve itself more actively in education, outreach and international cooperation and offer advice on these matters. Finally, the report by the facilitator of the meeting noted that it was generally recognized that the Secretariat's technical capabilities could be further enhanced and that relevant scientific and technological developments should be taken into account. There were observations in particular on inspector training.

The Council took no further action on this report by its Chairman but is expected to develop recommendations to the Conference of the States Parties later in the year, in time for the Ninth Session of the Conference in late November.

New Member States

On 31 March, Rwanda deposited its instrument of ratification of the Chemical Weapons Convention with the United Nations. It became the 162nd state party with entry into force occurring on 30 April. On 19 May, the Marshall Islands deposited its instrument of ratification. It will become the 163rd state party on 18 June. Just two days later, on 21 May, Saint Kitts and Nevis deposited its instrument of ratification to the Convention. It will become the 164th state party on 20 June.

According to the OPCW and as at 25 May, there remain eighteen signatory states which have not yet ratified the

Convention, two which had deposited an instrument of accession or ratification and for which the Convention had not yet entered into force, and twelve states which have not signed or acceded to the Convention.

Technical Secretariat

Declaration processing

As at 30 April 2004, 151 member states had submitted initial declarations, with Afghanistan, Belize, Cape Verde, Chad, Mozambique, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sao Tome and Principe, Timor-Leste, Tonga and Tuvalu yet to do so. Nine states parties had submitted incomplete initial declarations: Côte d'Ivoire, Kiribati, Nepal, Seychelles, Suriname, Turkmenistan, and Yemen having failed to submit their Article VI initial declarations; and Nauru and Senegal, having yet to submit their initial declarations under Article III. Fifty-nine states parties have submitted annual declarations of past activities for 2003, and forty-two states parties are anticipated to submit annual declarations for 2004.

A Note was issued by the Technical Secretariat regarding the status of annual declarations on past activities (ADPAs) for 2003. It was reported that 28 states parties had submitted their 2003 ADPAs by the 30 March deadline for doing so while an additional 8 had done so by 31 March. The 30 March deadline takes into account that 2004 is a leap year.

Inspections and verification

As at 4 June 2004, 142 inspections had been completed at a total of 113 sites since 1 January 2004. The breakdown of completed inspections is as follows: 0 at an ACW, 38 at CWDFs, 11 at CWPfFs, 19 at CWSFs, 0 at destruction of hazardous chemical weapons sites, 34 DOC inspections, 2 at an old chemical weapons site, 8 at Schedule 1 facilities, 19 at Schedule 2 facilities, and 11 at Schedule 3 facilities. Also, as at 4 June 2004, 10 CWDF, 2 CWSF, and 1 DOC inspections were in the process of being completed.

As at 4 June 2004, 1,756 inspections at 737 sites had been completed since entry into force. The breakdown of completed inspections is as follows: 22 at ACW sites, 418 at CWDFs, 309 at CWPfFs, 239 at CWSFs, 8 at destruction of hazardous chemical weapon sites, 197 DOC inspections, 1 at an emergency destruction of chemical weapons site, 52 at old chemical weapons sites, 1 'other', 131 at Schedule 1 facilities, 252 at Schedule 2 facilities, and 126 at Schedule 3 facilities.

On 19 March, two teams of OPCW inspectors completed their initial inspection in Libya and verified the accuracy of the chemical-weapons related portion of the initial declaration, which Libya submitted on 5 March. The declared chemical weapons stockpile includes some 23 metric tonnes of mustard gas, over 1,300 metric tonnes of precursor chemicals, an inactivated CWPfF, and two CWSFs.

On 2 April, 19 trainees from 19 member states completed a six-week intensive inspector-training course.

Destruction

Official destruction figures reflect that, as at 30 April 2004, 8,832 metric tons of chemical agents, out of a declared total of 71,365 metric tons, had been destroyed. Some 2,031,516 munitions/containers, out of a declared total of 8,679,550, had also been destroyed.

The number of CWDFs in operation in April was six: four

in the United States, one in the Russian Federation and one in a state party of withheld identity.

The number of inspectable CWPFs totals 32, which takes into account a CWPF in India confirmed as destroyed but for which a destruction certificate has yet to be issued. A CWPF in the Russian Federation has been declared destroyed but on-site confirmation of destruction is pending.

Implementation of Article X

A Chief Instructor Training Programme (CITPRO) course took place in Spiez, Switzerland 8-12 March. The Swiss Emergency Field Training, Advanced Course (SEF-TRAD 2) also took place in Spiez, Switzerland 19-23 April. The Civil Protection International Course took place in Lazne Bohdanec in the Czech Republic from 17 to 21 May.

As part of the Central Asian Project (2003-2005) for the development and improvement of national and regional response capacity against chemical weapons, an Emergency Management Training Course will take place in Tashkent, Uzbekistan from 21-25 June and an Advanced Training Course on Protection will take place in Almaty, Kazakhstan from 23-27 August.

An invitation was issued in early May by Serbia and Montenegro and the OPCW for participants to be nominated for the first international basic course on assistance and protection. The course, which will provide training for up to 20 participants, is scheduled to be held in Kruševac in Serbia and Montenegro from 5 to 9 July. Training will cover planning and establishing a support team for the protection of civilian populations against chemical weapons; rescue operations in contaminated areas; responding to incidents involving chemical-warfare agents; using protective equipment; monitoring, detection, and decontamination techniques; and taking samples.

In late May, the OPCW and Slovakia invited member states to nominate participants for a training course on chemical weapons protection. The course will provide training for up to 20 participants who are or will be associated with training civilians in their countries in chemical weapons protection. It is scheduled to take place from 27 September to 1 October at the Institute of Civil Protection in Slovenska Lupca, Slovakia. Training will cover the effects of chemical-warfare agents and threat analysis; activities in contaminated areas; responding to incidents; protective equipment; monitoring, detection, and decontamination techniques and maintaining, testing and repairing material.

In mid-April, an invitation was issued for participation in the Eighth Annual workshop to coordinate assistance and protection under Article X. The workshop will be held in Plovdiv, Bulgaria during 4-8 October.

Implementation of Article XI

The Secretariat has confirmed that an analytical skills development course will take place from 25 June to 9 July at Technical University, Chemistry Department, in Delft, The Netherlands. This year's Associate Programme is scheduled to take place from 23 July to 1 October in The Hague and elsewhere in Europe and Japan. The University segment will once again take place at Surrey University in Guildford, England this year while the industry segment will take place in the Netherlands, Spain, France, Italy, Sweden, Belgium, Switzerland and Japan.

Proficiency testing, sampling and analysis

The OPCW, together with VERIFIN, has invited applications from representatives of laboratories in member states to take part in an international workshop on the analysis of chemicals related to the CWC (CW-LABEX). The workshop will be held at the University of Helsinki during 6 to 10 September. The workshop is particularly aimed at those laboratories active or planning to become active in the analysis of CWC-related chemicals and that participate or plan to participate in the OPCW proficiency tests.

In May, the Director-General released Notes evaluating the results of the Fourteenth Official OPCW Proficiency Test, held during 8 October 2003 to 27 February 2004, and reporting the status of laboratories designated for the analysis of authentic samples. Twenty-four laboratories, representing nineteen member states, were nominated to participate in the test, however, only twenty laboratories submitted reports of their results. The Verification Laboratory, Centre for Chemical Defence, DSO National Laboratories in Singapore prepared the test samples and the Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), Division of NBC Defence in Sweden evaluated the results. Fifteen of the twenty laboratories that submitted reports met the adopted criteria and qualified for scoring. Ten laboratories identified all of the spiked chemicals and reported them with sufficient analytical data. Eight laboratories failed the test either because they did not submit a report or because they reported one or more false positives.

In respect of the status of laboratories, sixteen laboratories from fifteen member states have been designated. Of this number, four laboratories—from the Czech Republic, Poland, the Russian Federation, and Sweden—are temporarily suspended from receiving authentic samples should such samples be taken off-site by OPCW inspectors. The twelve designated laboratories that retain their status are in Belgium (new), China, Finland, France, Germany, The Netherlands, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States (two).

Implementation support

On 26 May, the Secretariats of the OPCW and the Basel Convention signed a Memorandum of Understanding in which they agreed to establish working level cooperation on matters of common interest relating to national implementation of the respective Conventions, including sharing expertise, exploring synergies between international cooperation projects and capacity building activities.

The Secretariat has established an Exchange Programme for National Authorities with the following objectives: to develop the capacity of requesting National Authorities to implement the CWC; to facilitate the secondment of National Authority personnel to more experienced National Authorities to gain experience, skills and methods, and information; and to establish relationships between host and requesting National Authorities and links for follow-up support. Activities envisaged under the Programme relate to developing expertise in how to run a National Authority; establishing administrative measures for declarations purposes; drafting implementation legislation and administrative measures; chemical industry relations; declarable activities; declarations data; compiling data on transfers; and inspections. The Programme will have two modules: the first consists of National Authorities with more experience hosting staff from other National

Authorities while the second module consists of National Authorities with more experience sending experts to other National Authorities.

The Fifth Regional meeting of National Authorities in Latin America and the Caribbean took place in Bolivia 10-12 March. The third regional meeting of National Authorities in Eastern Europe took place in Bucharest, Romania from 17 to 19 May. Jointly organised by the Romanian National Authority, the National Agency for Export Controls and the OPCW, it provided a framework for review and discussion of issues relating to the practical implementation of the Convention, with a focus this year on transfers of scheduled chemicals. Representatives from twenty-five National Authorities, the World Customs Organisation and the European Council of Chemical Industry Associations attended. Participants discussed, in particular, practical measures for fulfilling the objectives of the Article VII obligations action plan and the status of the CWC's implementation in Eastern Europe with a focus on legislative and administrative provisions for monitoring and declaring scheduled chemicals transfers.

A number of invitations have been issued in relation to National Authority meetings to be held in 2004. The second subregional meeting of National Authorities in Central America, jointly organized by the government of Nicaragua and the OPCW, will take place in Managua, Nicaragua from 12 to 13 July. The meeting will focus, in particular, on the role of National Authorities with regard to implementation of the Convention, the administrative requirements for a successfully functioning National Authority, declaration-related issues, and implementing legislation.

A technical meeting of National Authorities on practical aspects of the CWC transfers regime will take place in Buenos Aires during 6-8 September. Jointly organized by the government of Argentina and the OPCW, the meeting will be a follow-up to related meetings in Rivas-Vaciamadrid and Barcelona. The meeting will focus on the role of customs services in effective implementation of the transfers regime, improving the tracking of scheduled chemicals shipments, applicable norms and sanctions for violations of the transfers regime, and customs terminology.

The second regional meeting of National Authorities in Asia will take place in Beijing from 20 to 22 September. The meeting will follow the tradition established by the National Authority meetings held in Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

Universality

A workshop on the universality and implementation of the Convention, jointly organized by the government of Ethiopia and the OPCW and in close collaboration with the African Union, was held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia from 20 to 22 April. The workshop had the objective of helping to increase awareness of the Convention in Africa as well as to promote further its universality and to contribute to the Convention's full and uniform implementation in that region (see the March *Bulletin* for more information).

A workshop on universality and implementation of the Convention was held for states party and states not party to the CWC from 5 to 7 May in Malta. The workshop included a review of the status of implementation of the Convention in the Mediterranean Basin, Middle East and neighbouring re-

gions; a discussion of practical measures to help reach this goal; and information sessions on the Convention tailored for signatory and non-signatory states. The workshop emphasized the benefits of adhering to the Convention and included discussions on international cooperation, protection, and assistance programmes. Bilateral consultations were also held.

New validated data

During 30-31 March, the Eighteenth Validation Group meeting took place. The report of the meeting stated that release of the seventh hard-copy version of OCAD, together with the fifth electronic version, was postponed because the size of OCAD now exceeds the capacity of a CD-ROM. Accordingly, release on DVD (or on two CD-ROMs if necessary) was approved. The Handbook on Chemicals was discussed and the Validation Group was agreed that the naming of the alkyl chain should be consistent with International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry rules. The Group noted that, in the second half of this year, assigned CAS numbers would be checked by the CAS for inclusion in the OCAD. A discussion of guidelines for removing existing data on the OCAD was again postponed to the Group's next meeting. Spectrum number 07-2-0120 was recommended for removal. The Validation Group is waiting for resubmission of 54 mass spectra from laboratory 22. It was also noted that the Secretariat had made an inventory of data from several laboratories on unscheduled degradation products of scheduled chemicals and riot control agents, and that these laboratories had been contacted and asked to resubmit the data for the Group's eventual evaluation. Finally, it was reported that the Group again discussed differences in GC(RI) values of some compounds measured by Laboratory 7 and other laboratories and it was determined that these are due to the column type used by Laboratory 7. It was agreed that before the data from Laboratory 7 is entered into the on-site database, a linear correction should be applied to the data measured in a DB5-MS column, used by laboratories 7 and 8, by multiplying each data point by 1.0087. The Nineteenth Validation Group meeting is scheduled to take place during 30-31 August.

In early June, the Secretariat released the latest version of OCAD on DVD. It contains electronic version 5 (e-OCAD v.5) and scanned hard-copy version 7 in portable data format (PDF-OCAD v.7). The electronic version contains mass spectrometry data (MS spectra) while the scanned hard-copy version contains mass spectrometry and infrared spectrometry data, gas chromatography retention indices, and nuclear magnetic resonance spectrometry data. Both versions contain updated data on chemicals which were approved for inclusion by the Council during its thirty-second and thirty-third sessions.

Financial figures

As at 30 April 2004, 49.1 per cent of the assessed contributions for 2004 had been received. Fifty-six states parties had fully paid their assessed contribution and nineteen had paid in part. The amount outstanding was EUR 34,975,768.

With regard to Article IV and V verification costs reimbursements for this calendar year, EUR 3.9 million in reimbursements has been budgeted for. Based on the most recent official information available, EUR 869,394 has been invoiced. Of that, EUR 0 has been collected. EUR 1,354,839 (or 31.5 percent) remains outstanding from 2003.

Legal issues

A roster of members of the OPCW Network of Legal Experts was issued by the Technical Secretariat on 16 April. An updated roster is now being maintained on the legal module of the OPCW website.

The Office of the Legal Adviser, along with the Office of the Deputy-Director General, the Implementation Support Branch, and the Industry Verification Branch, recently completed a Notes Verbales campaign to some 75 states parties. These Notes were sent further to a progress report on national implementation of Article VII obligations. They request information on the status of such implementation and describe the assistance that the Secretariat can provide to interested states parties.

Official visits

The Director-General met with the following personages during the period under review: the Cabinet and Foreign Secretaries of India and other senior Indian officials during a visit to India from 28 March to 3 April, the Minister for Foreign Affairs for Singapore on 13 April at OPCW Headquarters, the President of Ethiopia and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and Trade and Industry during a visit to Ethiopia from 20 to 22 April, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States during a visit to Cairo on 22 April, the Secretary-General of the Organisation of American States during a visit to Washington, D.C. on 27 April, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Croatia at OPCW Headquarters on 7 May, the President of Malta and other senior officials during a visit to Malta from 5 to 7 May, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of The Netherlands on 11 May in The Hague, President Iliescu and senior Romanian authorities in Romania from 17 to 19 May, the Foreign Secretary of the Ministry of External Affairs of India at OPCW Headquarters on 26 May, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Moldova on 1 June at OPCW Headquarters, and the King and Crown Princess of Sweden, the Chairman of the Swedish Commission of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Dr Hans Blix, and various officials in the Swedish government from 2 to 4 June in Sweden. The Director-General also visited the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) while in Sweden.

Mr Brian Hawtin, as Acting Director-General, met with the Deputy Foreign Minister for Security Policy of the Czech Republic on 10 March.

Staffing

The OPCW actual personnel strength as of 7 June 2004 was reported as 516. Of these, 450 are on fixed-term contracts and 309 are P-level staff. It was also reported that between 1 March and 1 July there were or will be two P-5, two P-4, four P-3, and three P-2 appointments. During the same period, there were or will be two P-5, four P-4, eight P-3 and 1 P-2 separations.

Subsidiary Bodies

The Scientific Advisory Board

The final report of the Sixth Session of the Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) was issued in late March, the sixth session itself having taken place from 16 to 18 February. The SAB elected Jirí Matoušek of the Czech Republic as its new Chairman

and Thomas Inch of the United Kingdom as Vice-Chairman.

The SAB had several items on its agenda. The SAB first received briefings on the results of the First Review Conference and on the meeting of government experts to review the SAB's findings to that Conference. The SAB also reported that it had decided to establish a temporary working group which would prepare an assessment of the analytical aspects of biomedical sampling and analysis and then forward recommendations to the SAB for consideration. On-site sampling and analysis was also discussed including sample preparation times and logistics, OCAD, replacement of the OPCW's gas chromatograph-mass spectrometer (GC-MS) with bench-top equipment, the GC-MS/OCAD/AMDIS package for scheduled chemicals detection, analysis of toxins, and correct sample-taking. Off-site sampling was also addressed. Further to observations on these issues, the SAB recommended that a temporary working group be reconvened for further study on the issues so as to advise the Secretariat on possible improvements and to submit recommendations to member states, through the Director-General, for their consideration. The SAB also addressed optimisation of the verification system, in particular, the reduction of inspection team sizes and procedures regarding equipment. Developments in science and technology were discussed and it was noted that inspector training is deficient with regard to new developments that affect the implementation of the Convention and its verification provisions in the chemical industry. The SAB discussed the need for awareness-building, outreach and education and possible partnerships on these matters with the International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry, and in a broader context with the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization. A recent research project for the development of a new process for the oxidative catalytic destruction of toxic materials and wastes was seen as an example of projects that the OPCW may wish to fund as part of its international cooperation programmes. Assistance and protection were next discussed by the SAB including the Technical Secretariat's activities in this field, training for States Parties to enhance their civil defence and first-responder capabilities, the preparation of a training manual for first responders or trainers, and the lack of good data on protection measures and their effectiveness after chemical attacks in urban areas.

The SAB recommended that the Director-General establish temporary working groups on biomedical samples and education and outreach and reconvene the working group on sampling and analysis. The SAB also concluded that its members would contact their respective National Authorities regarding the opportunity to observe an OPCW inspection and, second, review Secretariat and member state proposals regarding international cooperation, assistance and protection.

No report by the Director-General on the SAB report was published, as there were at this stage no recommendations that needed to be taken forward in the Executive Council and the Conference of the States Parties.

On a different note, the terms of office of 12 of the 20 SAB members will end at the end of July (and cannot be renewed again under the terms of reference of the SAB). It is expected that the Director-General, based on nominations received from Member States, will appoint new members to the SAB in due course.

The Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters

The Advisory Body on Administrative and Financial Matters is scheduled to meet for its sixteenth session from 14 to 18 June.

Future Work

The thirty-seventh session of the Executive Council was scheduled to take place after publication of the June *Bulletin*, accordingly, the outcomes of this session will be discussed in the September issue. Some of the major decisions to be taken at this session, during 29 June to 2 July, include the approval of facility agreements with Singapore and Australia regarding on-site inspections at Schedule 1 facilities for protective purposes, and the United States regarding on-site inspections at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility and the Explosive Destruction System at Dugway Proving Ground. With regard to destruction issues, the Council is scheduled to take decisions on detailed plans for the verification of

destruction of chemical weapons at the Aberdeen Chemical Agent Disposal Facility at the Aberdeen Proving Ground-Edgewood area as well as for the Explosive Destruction System at Dugway Proving Ground. The Council will also consider requests for extensions of deadlines from Libya and Albania for the destruction of their Category 1 chemical weapons. On other matters, the Council is scheduled to take a decision on lists of new validated data for inclusion in OCAD and on a recommendation to the Conference of the States Parties at its ninth session on proposed amendments to the OPCW Financial Regulations. The Council will also consider privileges and immunities agreements between the OPCW and Mauritius and Malta.

The Secretariat has confirmed that the ninth session of the Conference of the States Parties will take place in The Hague from 29 November to 3 December 2004.

This review was written by Scott Spence, the HSP researcher in The Hague

A note on UN Security Council Resolution 1540 (2004)

This note is an Addendum to *Impact of the CWC: Progressive Development of Customary International Law and Evolution of the Customary Norm against Chemical Weapons*, which was published in the March 2004 issue (no 63) of this Bulletin. That article pointed out the value of identifying which CWC obligations constitute codification of customary international law, binding on all states regardless of whether or not they are party to the CWC, and which are treaty obligations binding only upon states parties to the CWC. Through recent action by the United Nations Security Council, a number of heretofore CWC treaty obligations were extended to states not party, thus reinforcing the argument that much of the CWC is now universally binding.

On 28 April 2004, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1540, a Chapter VII resolution binding upon all member states of the United Nations, in which it decided that all states shall:

- refrain from providing any form of support to non-state actors that attempt to develop, acquire, manufacture, possess, transport, transfer or use, *inter alia*, chemical weapons;
- in accordance with their national procedures, adopt and enforce appropriate and effective laws which prohibit any non-state actor from manufacturing, acquiring, possessing, developing, transporting, transferring or using chemical weapons, in particular for terrorist purposes, as well as attempts to engage in any of the foregoing activities, including participating in them as an accomplice or assisting or financing them;
- take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of chemical weapons, including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials and to this end shall:

- (a) develop and maintain appropriate effective measures to account for and secure such items in production, use, storage or transport;
- (b) develop and maintain appropriate effective physical protection measures;
- (c) develop and maintain appropriate effective border controls and law enforcement efforts to detect, deter, prevent and combat, including through international cooperation when necessary, the illicit trafficking and brokering in such items in accordance with their national legal authorities and legislation and consistent with international law; and
- (d) establish, develop, review and maintain appropriate effective national export and trans-shipment controls over such items, including appropriate laws and regulations to control export, transit, trans-shipment and re-export and controls on providing funds and services related to such export and trans-shipment such as financing, and transporting that would contribute to proliferation, as well as establishing end-user controls; and establishing and enforcing appropriate criminal or civil penalties for violations of such export control laws and regulations;

- promote dialogue and cooperation on non-proliferation so as to address the threat posed by proliferation of chemical weapons; and
- further to counter that threat, in accordance with their national legal authorities and legislation and consistent with international law, to take cooperative action to prevent illicit trafficking in chemical weapons and related materials.

The Security Council recognised the utility of national control lists and called upon all states to develop them. It further recognised that some states may require assistance in imple-

menting this resolution within their territories and invited states in a position to do so to offer assistance as appropriate in response to specific requests to the states lacking the legal and regulatory infrastructure, implementation experience and/or resources for fulfilling the above provisions.

Through this resolution, UN member states which are not party to the CWC have now assumed the obligations to enact penal legislation covering the full scope of CWC prohibitions; establish domestic controls to prevent proliferation of chemical weapons; establish and enforce export and border controls to detect, deter, prevent and combat illicit trafficking in chemical weapons and related materials; and, upon request, cooperate and assist other states with implementation and enforcement.

In respect of the CWC, its states parties and the OPCW, the Security Council decided that none of the obligations set forth in the resolution shall be interpreted so as to conflict with or alter the rights and obligations of states parties to the CWC or alter the responsibilities of the OPCW. It called upon CWC states parties to:

- promote the universal adoption and full implementation of the CWC and, where necessary, the strengthening of it;
- adopt national rules and regulations, where it has not yet been done, to ensure compliance with their CWC

commitments;

- renew and fulfil their commitment to multilateral cooperation within the framework of the OPCW, as an important means of pursuing and achieving their common objectives in the area of non-proliferation and of promoting international cooperation for peaceful purposes;
- develop appropriate ways to work with and inform industry and the public regarding their obligations under such laws.

To monitor implementation of this resolution, the Security Council established a Committee to report to it and it required all states to present a first report no later than 28 November 2004 on the steps they have taken or intend to take to implement this resolution. It expressed its intention to monitor closely the implementation of this resolution and, at the appropriate level, to take further decisions which may be required to this end. Pursuant to the UN-OPCW Relationship Agreement, the UN and the OPCW may decide to cooperate on some aspects of this resolution, particularly the sharing of information on legislation and initiatives for capacity building in enforcement, to avoid the duplication of efforts.

Lisa Tabassi, Legal Officer, OPCW Technical Secretariat

Forthcoming Events

29 June - 2 July

The Hague, Netherlands
37th Session of the OPCW Executive Council

19-30 July

Geneva, Switzerland
Second BWC 'new process' Meeting of Experts

8 September

University of Essex, UK
British Association for the Advancement of Science, *Festival of Science 2004* (sessions on WMD and Ethics, and Bioscience Codes of Conduct) details on www.the-ba.net

25-30 September

Tblisi, Georgia
NATO Advanced Research Workshop, *Assessment of Preparedness of the Caucasus Countries for Bio-Terrorist Attacks and Planning of the Countermeasures.*

28 September

Saratov, Russian Federation
All-Russian Scientific-Practical Conference Medical Microbiology in the 21st Century, to include discussion of "the real threat of bioterrorism" details from "Microb" Scientific-Research Antiplague Institute.

8-10 October

Wiston House, Sussex, UK
Wilton Park Conference, *Chemical and Biological Weapons: Reducing the Threat* details on www.wiltonpark.org

12-15 October

The Hague, Netherlands
38th Session of the OPCW Executive Council

29 November - 3 December

The Hague, Netherlands
Ninth Session of the OPCW Conference of the States Parties

4-5 December

Geneva, Switzerland
22nd Workshop of the Pugwash Study Group on Implementation of the CBW Conventions.

6-10 December

Geneva, Switzerland
Second BWC 'new process' Meeting of States Parties

14-17 December

The Hague, Netherlands
39th Session of the OPCW Executive Council

The actions requested or recommended by the First CWC Review Conference How far have they got one year later?

Note: This is an update of the table published Bulletin 60, which set out those recommendations or requests in OPCW document RC-1/5 dated 9 May 2003 (the Review Document) that require some specific action by the Council or Secretariat. For the most part, it did not include reference to activities already being carried out by the Council or Secretariat, nor did it include general requests or encouragement to states parties to fulfil their obligations under the Convention. Except where in square brackets, the language used is that of the Review Document. The First Review Conference is the body recommending, requesting or calling for action in all cases.

Para	Recommendation/Request	Timeframe specified	Date completed/Action taken (as of 27 April 2004)
18	[Re universality]...recommended that the Council, with the co-operation of the Secretariat, develop and implement a plan of action to further encourage, in a systematic and co-ordinated manner, adherence to the Convention and to assist states ready to join the Convention in their national preparations to implement it.	None	ECM-23 adopted a plan of action for universality; CSP-8 noted the plan of action.
23	...requested the Council to consider the developments in relation to additional chemicals that may be relevant to the Convention, and assess, inter alia, whether these compounds should be considered in the context of the Schedules of Chemicals.	None	A meeting of government experts discussed these findings (28-30 January 2004), the EC chairman submitted a report on this meeting to EC-36; the EC is expected to continue discussing these issues with a view to preparing recommendations for CSP-9.
25	...called upon the Council to reach agreement on the declaration criteria for former chemical weapons development facilities... with a view towards promoting confidence among states parties.	None	
27	[Re the OPCW's verification system] ...also noted that a number of procedures and guidelines that the Convention requires remain to be finalised and adopted. The Council has already included these in its work programme, and should resolve them as soon as possible.	'as soon as possible'	
30	[Re the Scientific Advisory Board report in relation to developments in science and technology]... requested the Council, assisted by the Secretariat and members of the SAB, as appropriate, to study these recommendations and observations with a view to preparing recommendations to the Conference on them.	None	Meeting of government experts held 28 to 30 January; report by EC Chairman on meeting submitted to EC-36.
34	[Re the submission of declarations in electronic form]...requested the Director-General to further explore this possibility and to report to the Council, and recommended that an expert meeting open to all States Parties be convened to study all aspects of the proposed submission of declarations in electronic form.	None	Work at the Secretariat continues.
37	...requested the Council, assisted by the Secretariat, to intensify its study of how to further optimise the OPCW verification system, aiming at recommendations that should, if possible, take effect beginning in 2004. Such a study should take into account the findings of the SAB. The study should identify essential inspection tasks; assess how the different aspects of the inspection cycle, from planning to reporting, can be made more efficient; identify means that would further increase verification efficiency; and consider how best to meet the Convention's requirement in relation to sampling and analysis for verification purposes.	Recommendations should 'if possible' take effect beginning in 2004	A status report is expected for EC-37.
39(d)	[Re implementation of the Conference's previous decisions on the declaration of aggregate national data]...called upon the Council to review the progress of implementation, supported by reports by the Secretariat.	None	

Para	Recommendation/Request	Timeframe specified	Date completed/Action taken (as of 27 April 2004)
39(g)	...encouraged the Council and the Secretariat to work together to further improve the submission of information on verification results to the states parties, <i>inter alia</i> by further improving the form and content of the Verification Implementation Report, consistent with the provisions of the Confidentiality Annex.	None	
39(i)	...requested the Council to intensify its study of the issue of verification resource optimisation, aiming at recommendations that should, if possible, be phased in beginning in 2004.	Recommendations to be phased in, beginning in 2004 if possible	A status report is expected before EC-38.
39(j)	...requested the Council to resolve urgently the development of recommendations on the still-unresolved issues pertaining to the Convention's verification regime that the Convention requires it to adopt, and to submit draft decisions to the Conference as early as possible.	'[R]esolve urgently' development of recommendations, with draft decisions to be submitted 'as early as possible'	
44	...called upon the Secretariat to continue rendering technical assistance to the states parties on the preparation of chemical weapons declarations, by mutual consent, and to submit proposals to the Council on any measures that may be necessary to maintain the technical competence of the Secretariat in this respect.	None	At the request of the states parties concerned, technical assistance was provided to Libya in relation to declarations under Articles IV, V and VI and to Qatar in relation to declarable industry under Article VI. In addition, technical assistance was provided to requesting states parties in relation to identification of declarable industry under Article VI during National Authority Training Courses in Vietnam, United Arab Emirates, Senegal, Peru and Portugal and during Regional Seminars in Bolivia and Romania.
46	...recommended that the Secretariat continue working with the Council, with the appropriate involvement of the [possessor] states parties... towards mutually agreeable solutions for optimising chemical weapons verification, whilst maintaining the effectiveness of verification activities. The Review Conference requested the Council to oversee this work, and to submit to the Conference proposals for recommendations and decisions, with a view toward their implementation starting in 2004.	Proposals are to be submitted to the Conference 'with a view to' implementation starting in 2004	Discussions between the Technical Secretariat and possessor States Parties continue.
52	... noted the intention of the Secretariat to inspect, soon after 29 April 2003, all [CWPFs] that are subject to conversion for purposes not prohibited by the Convention, but that have not yet been certified as completely converted, and to report to the Council about the conversion status of each of these facilities.	None. Inspections to take place soon after 29 April 2003	The Secretariat submitted a report to EC-33 on the status of conversion of several CWPFs; EC-33 requested the Director-General to inform the Council at its first regular session following the conduct of an annual usual inspection of the progress made at CWPFs where conversion is still in progress.
53	[Re the verification of converted CWPFs] ...requested the Secretariat to submit a concept for these verification measures to the Council for consideration and to enable the Council to submit proposals for recommendations or decisions that may be needed to the Conference.	None	
54	...recalled the need to adopt decisions on a number of unresolved issues related to chemical weapons, [OCWs], [ACWs] and [CWPFs]. It noted that the Council has included several urgent and long-standing issues in its work programme, and requested the Council to continue working towards an early resolution of these issues.	The Council is to work towards 'early resolution of these issues'	

Para	Recommendation/Request	Timeframe specified	Date completed/Action taken (as of 27 April 2004)
63	[Re changes to annual declarations - refer C-I/DEC.38, dated 16 May 1997]... urged states parties to... on a voluntary basis, inform the Secretariat of cases when plants or plant sites that have been declared to undertake activities in relation to Schedule 2 or Schedule 3 chemicals cease to do so, and requested the Council to consider whether to require such submissions from states parties.	None	
66	[Re the number, intensity, duration, timing and mode of inspections at Schedule 1 facilities]... Guidelines on this... however, have yet to be considered and approved by the Conference... these guidelines would assist in the future optimisation of the use of resources set aside for verification, and requested the Council, assisted by the Secretariat, to prepare these guidelines for consideration and adoption as early as possible.	'as early as possible'	
67	[Re a proposed de minimis rule for the notification of transfers of Schedule 1 chemicals]... requested the Council to study this issue, and, if agreed, to prepare a proposal for consideration by the Conference at one of its forthcoming annual sessions.	'for consideration by the Conference at one of its forthcoming annual sessions	
69	[Re Other Chemical Production Facilities]... agreed that there was a need to: (a) fully implement all parts of the selection mechanism provided for in paragraph 11 of Part IX of the Verification Annex; (b) reach early agreement on what basis (e.g., regional) proposals by states parties for inspection should be presented to be taken into account as a weighting factor in the selection process...; (c) take account of the [OCPF] declared by the states parties, of their technical characteristics and activities, and of trends in science and technology that impact on these parameters, to increase the number of [OCPF] inspections to the extent found appropriate as the budget process unfolds in ensuing years; and (d) review the conduct of [OCPF] inspections to ensure that they are conducted in a way that efficiently fulfils the inspection aims set out by the Convention. The First Review Conference requested the Council to continue working on these issues, together with the Secretariat, and to prepare recommendations for the Conference's consideration at an early date.	Recommendations to be prepared 'at an early date'	Facilitation in the EC on the selection mechanism for OCPF inspections continues.
71	[Re optimization of the verification regime for the chemical industry] ...encouraged the Council, assisted by the Secretariat, to work toward: (a) resolving outstanding chemical industry cluster issues and submitting recommendations to the Conference at an early date; (b) improving the submission and handling of industry declarations (including, inter alia, common criteria and standards, simplified declaration forms, and the submission of declaration data in electronic form); (c) refining inspection conduct to improve consistency, efficiency and effectiveness (including, inter alia, a common approach to verifying the absence of Schedule 1 chemicals at inspected plant sites, the simplification of the format used to record preliminary findings, and sampling and analysis procedures); (d) providing guidance to the Secretariat in respect to reporting on verification results in the chemical industry in order to increase the utility of the information provided to the States Parties; and (e) studying the need for a recommendation about the future treatment of salts of Schedule 1 chemicals that are not explicitly mentioned in Schedule 1.	(a) 'at an early date' (b-e) None	(a) Decisions were taken in relation to the boundaries of production of Schedule 2 and 3 chemicals (C-8/DEC.7), declarations of captive use of Schedule 2 and 3 chemicals (EC-36/DEC.12) and for the expedition of responses by states parties to Technical Secretariat requests for clarifications within 90 days of the transmission of the requests (EC-36/DEC.7). Consultations by States Parties continued in relation to declarations of captive use of Schedule 1 chemicals, specification of low concentration limits for Schedule 2A and 2A* chemicals, modalities in relation to Schedule 2 facility agreements and implementation of Section B of Part IX of the Verification Annex. <i>continued....</i>

Para	Recommendation/Request	Timeframe specified	Date completed/Action taken (as of 27 April 2004)
(71)			<i>continued ...</i> (b) States Parties continued consultations regarding the formats of the Declaration Handbook and its Handbook on Chemicals. (c) The Technical Secretariat continued to discuss with interested States Parties opportunities to improve efficiencies without sacrificing the credibility of inspections under Articles IV and V. Additionally, with respect to sites for Article IV, V and VI inspections, the Technical Secretariat where possible attempted to plan and execute sequential inspections, perform inspections with minimum team sizes and emphasise to inspection teams that they should spend minimum time at inspections.
73	[Re whether there is a need for other measures in relation to transfers of Schedule 3 chemicals and the need for states parties to implement end-use certification]...requested the Council to continue working towards an early resolution of these issues, and to submit a recommendation on this matter to the next regular session of the Conference.	'Early resolution' - Recommendation to be submitted to next regular session of the Conference	States parties continued consultations in relation to the question of the need to establish other measures regarding transfers of Schedule 3 chemicals to states not party to the Convention.
83(h)	... agreed to develop, at its next regular session, a plan of action based on a recommendation from the Council regarding the implementation of Article VII obligations, with the objective of fostering the full and effective implementation of the Convention by all states parties.	Next regular session of the Conference	ECM-23 adopted a decision containing a recommendation to CSP-8 concerning a plan of action; CSP-8 approved the plan of action.
83(i)	...called upon the Council, in co-operation with the Secretariat, to closely monitor progress toward achieving effective implementation of Article VII obligations by all states parties, and, at an appropriate time, to make suitable recommendations to the Conference regarding measures to ensure compliance with Article VII.	'at an appropriate time'	An internal task force was established in the Technical Secretariat and regular meetings of it and open-ended consultations by states parties are taking place, for assessing initiatives and progress. A progress report on the Action Plan was made to EC-36.
90	...noted that a number of issues related to challenge inspections are yet to be resolved....requested the Council to continue its deliberations in order to expeditiously resolve them.	'expeditiously'	
91	...requested the Secretariat to continue maintaining a high standard of readiness to conduct a challenge inspection in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, to keep the Council informed about its readiness, and to report any problems that may arise in relation to maintaining the necessary level of readiness to conduct a challenge inspection.	None	An update by the Director-General was submitted to EC-36 on the Secretariat's readiness to conduct a challenge inspection.
94	[Re annual submission of information on national programmes related to protective purposes] ...requested the Council to expeditiously develop and submit for adoption the procedures called for by the Convention.	'expeditiously'	EC-34: The EC decided to continue work on assistance and protection against chemical weapons, including on procedures for annual submission by states parties of information on their national programmes related to protective purposes.
95	...requested the Secretariat to continue working on the OPCW data bank on protection...The First Review Conference expressed concern about the hitherto slow progress in establishing this data bank.	None	

Para	Recommendation/Request	Timeframe specified	Date completed/Action taken (as of 27 April 2004)
100	[Re investigations of alleged use or threat of use and delivery of assistance]...requested the Council to take up the possible function of the OPCW in facilitating the efficient delivery of assistance.	None	Cross-reference paragraph 94.
101	...encouraged the Secretariat to identify and engage relevant international organisations that are likely partners in situations where the OPCW needs to respond to an assistance request by a Member State, and to submit proposals to the policy-making organs.	None	On-going discussions with several national agencies and with regional and international organisations; some ten draft agreements are being discussed on a bilateral basis.
107	[Re Article XI] ...urged the Council to continue its facilitation efforts to reach early agreement on the issue of the full implementation of Article XI, taking into account earlier and recent proposals submitted.	'early agreement'	Discussion on this issue is continuing among the member states.
109	[Re the need to develop guiding principles for international co-operation programmes] The Council should elaborate such guidelines on international co-operation programmes, and apply them when evaluating both reports by the Secretariat on existing programmes, and proposals it makes for new ones.	None	
117	...noted the security audit team recommendation to adopt the ISO-17799 information-security management standard, and requested the Secretariat to evaluate what resources would be required to do this, and to inform the Council of its findings.	None	A report is expected for EC-37.
118	...encouraged the OPCW to take steps to reach agreement on developing and implementing guidelines regarding the long-term handling of confidential information.	None	Procedures for the handling of confidential information in other international organisations have been thoroughly researched by the Secretariat and a paper, expected for EC-38 and containing a related proposal, is currently undergoing internal Secretariat coordination.
123	...expressed concern about delays in the Council's implementation of Conference decisions on the resolution of unresolved issues. The First Review Conference noted that the Council had included important, long-standing, unresolved issues in its work programme, and urged it to increase momentum and strive to conclude all unresolved issues.	None	
124	[Re the Scientific Advisory Board]...recommended that the interaction between the SAB and delegations should continue and be further enhanced, in the context of the Council's facilitation process.	None	2 SAB members participated in the government expert meeting on the SAB findings submitted to the First Review Conference (28-30 January 2004).
127	[Re budgetary and financial mechanisms] ...encouraged the Director-General to move ahead with the stepwise introduction of results-based budgeting. Furthermore, the First Review Conference noted the need for the Council to accelerate its deliberations on the outstanding issues in relation to the OPCW's Financial Rules.	None	The Director-General submitted a progress report to EC-35 on preparations for the introduction of results-based budgeting.
128	[Re staffing] ...noted that the issue of the OPCW's Staff Rules and amendments to Staff Regulation 3.3, and the issue of the classification of posts, remain within the purview of the Council and should be resolved without delay.	'without delay'	An internal task force has been established in the Technical Secretariat and is meeting regularly.

What follows is taken from issue 64 of the Harvard Sussex Program CBW Chronicle, which provides a fuller coverage of events during the period under report here and also identifies the sources of information used for each record. All such sources are held in hard copy in the Sussex Harvard Information Bank, which is open to visitors by prior arrangement. For access to the Chronicle, or to the electronic CBW Events Database compiled from it, please apply to Julian Perry Robinson.

February The US Department of Defense's Office of the Deputy to the Secretary of Defense for Chemical and Biological Weapons starts drawing up a plan to identify projects or tests outside Project 112 that might have exposed members of the armed forces to chemical or biological agents. The action is being taken in accordance with the Department's obligations under the Defense Authorization Act 2003.

1 February In Qiqihar City, in Heilongjiang Province, north-east China, thirty-five victims of a Japanese chemical weapons leak [see 4 Aug 03] instruct their legal team to commence proceedings against the Japanese government. Ding Shuwen, one of the victims, says: "Though we got some money after the incident [see 25 Dec 03], the Japanese government didn't say what the money stands for, nor did we receive any apology from the Japanese government... We want an apology from the Japanese government... We also urged the Japanese government to destroy all chemical weapons abandoned in China as soon as possible."

1 February The London *Observer* reports senior US officials as having concluded at the beginning of last May that there were no weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, according to unidentified intelligence sources, policy makers and weapons inspectors "familiar with the details of the hunt for WMD". A "career intelligence official", speaking on condition of anonymity says: "We had enough evidence at the beginning of May to start asking, 'where did we go wrong?' We had already made the judgment that something very wrong had happened [in May] and our confidence was shaken to its foundations." The report also refers to David Albright, a former UN nuclear inspector with close contacts in both the world of weapons inspection and intelligence, as having last week said: "It was known in May that no one was going to find large stockpiles of chemical and biological weapons. The only people who did not know that fact was the public."

1 February North Korea used gas chambers to conduct human experimentation on political prisoners and their families, according to a former prison warden, who in 1993 was head of security at Camp 22 in Haengyong, an isolated area near the border with Russia [see 25 Jan]. In an interview on a BBC 2 'This World' television documentary *Access to Evil*, Kwon Hyuk says that, whilst stationed in Beijing and working as a North Korean intelligence agent in 1999, he was persuaded by South Korea to defect. He says that Camp 22 is one of a network of prisons in North Korea modelled on the Soviet Gulag, where hundreds of thousands of political prisoners are held and tortured in various ways. Hyuk describes the gas chambers as follows: "These laboratories are all made of glass. The glass chamber has three main sub-divisions. One is for blood experiments – another is for poison gas – and the third is for suffocation gas. The size of the lab is almost the same as this room. 3 or 4 people, normally a family are experimented on. Once inside the lab they are all stripped

naked and checked medically to ensure they're healthy before putting them in the chambers. When they're sure they are free of disease they put them inside. This is the room and these walls are all made of glass. This is all sealed – You have to walk up this ladder to go in and up here to watch from above. This is 3.5 meter wide, 3m long and 2.2m high. The scientists sit round the edge and observe the experiment from above, through the glass. The injection tube comes down like through the unit... Normally, a family sticks together ... individual prisoners stand ... separately in the corners. I watched the whole family being tested on suffocating gas and dying in the gas chamber. Parents, one son and a daughter. The parents were vomiting and dying, but till the very last moment they tried to save their kids by doing mouth to mouth breathing. For the first time it hit me that even prisoners are capable of powerful human affection." When asked by reporter Olenka Frenkiel how he felt when witnessing the victims being gassed, he replies: "At the time I felt that they thoroughly deserved such a death. Because we were all led to believe that all the bad things that were happening to North Korea was their fault... It would be a total lie for me to say I felt sympathetic about the children dying such a painful death. Under the society and the regime I was in that the time I only felt that they were the enemies. So I felt no sympathy or pity for them at all".

Kim Sang-hun, a human rights activist based in Seoul shows Frenkiel documents given him by a North Korean engineer claiming to have recently stolen them from Camp 22 prior to escaping. They are headed: 'Letter of Transfer', marked 'Top Secret' and dated 'February 2002'. Each document bears the name of a different prisoner. The text reads: "The above person is transferred from Camp 22 for the purpose of human experimentation with liquid gas for chemical weapons." Hyuk confirms, without prompting, that a 'Letters of Transfer' were issued as part of the procedure. However, two months later, the engineer, Kang Pyong Sop, confesses to having forged the documents. Speaking at a news conference in Pyongyang, he says that he had been tricked into forging the documents and into handing them over to Kim. "The documents on 'experiment of chemical weapons on human bodies' widely misused by enemies were false documents fabricated by my first son Kang Song Guk, who defected to the South seven years ago, and my family", says Kang. He says he met a Song Guk in China in November, and the son gave him fake, blank official documents and asked him to write in the accounts of gas chamber experiments. Kang says that his son had claimed such documents could fetch "a huge sum of money" from South Korean human rights activists. "I think that my brother was allured by some agents who sought to isolate and stifle the [North]", he says.

Meanwhile, a former prisoner in one of the prison camps, Sun Ok Lee, says: "An officer ordered me to select fifty healthy female prisoners. One of the guards handed me a basket full of soaked cabbage, told me not to eat it but to give it to the fifty women. I started to hand them out and heard a scream – "Oh my stomach my tummy, please save me" from those

who had started eating them. After giving them all out I turned around and saw a scene like hell. I can never forget that nightmare. They were all screaming and vomiting blood. Black blood was coming out from both ends. I never knew that a human being could vomit and bleed that much in such a short time. It was like a scene from hell. All fifty people were vomiting and screaming with pain. But after twenty minutes they had all collapsed.”

Four days later, a spokesperson for the North Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs responds to the above allegations thus: “The US let loose a string of balderdash against the DPRK over ‘the issue of drug’, ‘the issue of’ counterfeit money’ and ‘the issue of North Korean defectors’. Not content with this, it is spreading a lie about the ‘test of chemical weapons on prisoners’. This shows what a base anti-DPRK smear campaign the Bush group is engaged in... We do not feel any need to argue about this cheap US propaganda, but we can hardly overlook an ulterior aim sought by it.”

1 February The *Washington Post* cites unnamed senior US administration officials as saying that the cancellation of ten flights by three airlines – Air France, British Airways and Continental Airways – between the UK and France and the USA today and tomorrow were prompted, in part, by intelligence indicating al-Qa’ida was seeking to release a chemical or biological agent aboard an airliner, or transport a radiological device in a cargo hold. Meanwhile, Senate Intelligence Committee member Jay Rockefeller says that the USA would have no way to counter a biological or chemical attack on a US-bound airliner. “[It’s] partly the problem of not checking cargo, and it’s partly the problem of biological weapons, which nobody has figured out really what to do about yet. Nobody has any idea about what to do about them on an airplane or on the ground,” says Rockefeller. Later in the day Rockefeller adds: “We don’t know how to protect against any biological. ... You play it safe, and the plane doesn’t fly, and people are going to have to get used to that, and people are not going to like that, but it’s what you’ve got to do in this era.”

2 February US President Bush transmits to Congress a \$2.4 trillion budget request for FY 2005. Regarding Nunn-Lugar activities, the budget maintains overall spending at current levels of about \$1 billion annually; most of the proposed difference comes from a reduction in spending on Russian chemdemil to \$158 million, a decrease of 21 per cent. The President’s budget includes:

- \$409 million for the Department of Defense’s (DoD) Cooperative Threat Reduction program, a decrease of 10.2 per cent (\$451 million) allocated in FY 2004.
- \$13 million for the DoD to fund cooperative biological research with former Soviet biological weapons scientists, a decrease of 64.8 per cent (\$24 million).
- \$24 million for DoD programs aimed at promoting safe and secure storage of dangerous pathogens at former Soviet biological institutes, an increase of 54 per cent (\$13 million).
- \$40 million for the DoD’s WMD Proliferation Prevention Initiative, a 38 per cent increase (\$11 million). The Initiative focuses on former Soviet states other than Russia in improving their monitoring and security capabilities in order to detect and intercept the illegal movement of weapons of mass destruction and related technologies across borders.
- \$50 million for three Nunn-Lugar-related Department of State (DoS) programmes.
- \$30 million for the DoS to fund two international science centres in Moscow and Kiev aimed at finding commercial work for former Soviet weapons scientists.

- \$17 million for the DoS to fund the redirection of former chemical and biological weapons scientists toward civilian work.
- \$3 million for the DoS to counter the threat of bioterrorism by using large-scale former Soviet biological weapons production facilities to accelerate drug and vaccine development for highly infectious diseases.
- \$28.6 billion for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), an increase of 2.6 per cent (\$729 million) over the current year’s funding. The request includes \$1.74 billion – an increase of 7.5 per cent (\$121 million) – for basic research into microbial agents with potential bioterrorism application and for applied research to create new and improved diagnostics, vaccines, and therapies. It includes the establishment of two additional regional centres of excellence for biodefence and emerging diseases, bringing to the total number of such centres to ten. \$150 million is also requested to construct twenty BS-L3 laboratories at universities and research institutions. \$14.5 million is included in the Department of Health and Human Services request for countering bio-terrorism.
- \$274 million for the new inter-agency Bio-Surveillance Program Initiative [see 29 Jan] funded by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), NIH, CDC and others. The Initiative envisages the creation of a system to acquire real-time data on the well-being of the population, animals, plants, and food supply and would integrate the information obtained with environmental monitoring and intelligence data.
- \$25 million in additional funding for the Department of Homeland Security for the Container Security Initiative (CSI) [see 5 Nov 02]. The CSI is to be expanded to include an additional ten high-volume ports.

2 February President George Bush announces his decision to establish an inquiry to examine US pre-war intelligence on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. “I want to know all the facts ... and so I’m putting together an independent, bipartisan commission to, to analyze where we stand, what we can do better.”

Four days later, Bush signs an executive order establishing the ‘Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction’. The task of the commissioners – appointed by Bush – will be to: “Assess whether the intelligence community is sufficiently authorized, organized, equipped, trained, and resourced to identify and warn in a timely manner of, and to support US Government efforts to respond to [WMD-related issues]... Examine the capabilities and challenges of the intelligence community to collect, process, analyze, produce, and disseminate information [thereon]... Examine the intelligence prior to the initiation of Operation Iraqi Freedom and compare it with the findings of the Iraq Survey Group and other relevant agencies or organizations [on WMD-related matters]... Evaluate the challenges of obtaining information [relating thereto]... Compare the intelligence ... [on] Libya prior to its recent decision to open its programs to international scrutiny [see 19 Dec 03] and in Afghanistan prior to removal of the Taliban government with the current assessments of organizations...”

The Commission will have access to “information relevant to its mission ... in the possession, custody, or control of any executive department or agency to the maximum extent permitted by law”. It will report on its findings and recommendations to the President by 31st March 2005.

2 February In the US Senate, traces of ricin are found in an envelope in the office of Majority Leader Bill Frist. The

Dirksen building, where his office is located, and the other two main Senate offices are subsequently closed. "This is a criminal action", says Frist. Police chief Terry Gainer says: "It is not clear what package or what letter the powder may have come from but it was suspicious... They conducted two tests, one came back positive for ricin. We've undertaken procedures to decontaminate 16 people who were on the floor."

The next day, Frist says that a sophisticated analysis called a polymerase chain reaction "identified [the powder] to be ricin... so it's a definitive test".

Meanwhile, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) announces that a letter containing a vial of ricin was posted to the White House last November, but had been intercepted at an offsite mail facility before it could be delivered. Three months ago, letters addressed to the Department of Transportation (DoT) and signed 'Fallen Angel' were intercepted at a postal sorting office [see 15 Oct 03]. In that case a worker at the sorting office discovered a small metal vial of ricin in an envelope that stated: "Caution Ricin Poison Enclosed in sealed container - Do not open without proper protection". The DoT letter threatened mass poisonings if new regulations to limit the amount of time long-haul lorry drivers can spend behind the wheel were not repealed before 4 January. FBI spokesman Joe Parris says the authorities are investigating whether the latest incident is connected to the earlier letters. "We always look at similar type instances. That's simply prudent," says Parris.

Two days later, White House spokesman Scott McClellan says the White House was informed late on 12 November that the FBI "had identified and intercepted a suspicious substance at the offsite White House mail facility", at Bolling Air Force Base in Washington DC. The ricin, he says, was sealed in a keychain-type vial inside the letter. He defends the decision not to make public earlier the discovery of the aforementioned letter, saying that testing at the time had determined the substance "did not pose a public health risk".

3 February In Brussels, the European Commission issues a communication *On the Implementation of the Preparatory Action on the Enhancement of the European Industrial Potential in the Field of Security Research, Towards a Programme to Advance European Security through Research and Technology*. The communication – presented by EU Commissioner for Research Philippe Busquin – reads as follows:

"This Communication responds to repeated requests to the Commission by the European Parliament, Council and industry. It constitutes a specific response to the Presidency conclusions of the Competitiveness Council of 13 May 2003... The Preparatory Action focuses in particular on the development of a research agenda for advanced security and will take account of the decisions to be taken in the Council and the Intergovernmental Conference concerning an Agency in the field of defence capabilities development, research, acquisition and armaments...

"Europe has comparative technological strengths in many areas (including dual-use technologies) and more explicit security-related areas but there is: i. a significant degree of duplication and fragmentation of structures and programmes, ii. important problems of interoperability and cost-efficiency of security systems and infrastructures, iii. unrealised potential for the cross-fertilization of ideas and results between the civil and non-civil security-related research fields, iv. a recognised under investment in RTD in this area in comparison to other regions in the world...

"The activities subject to grants in the context of the Preparatory Action will be projects and supporting activities addressing the priorities [which] will be reviewed on a yearly basis... [Project C of Projects A to E relates to] [p]rotecting

against terrorism (including bio-terrorism and incidents with biological, chemical and other substances). [The aim of Project C is] to identify and prioritise the material and information requirements of governments, agencies and public authorities in combating and protecting against terrorism and to deliver technology solutions for threat detection, identification, protection and neutralisation as well as containment and disposal of threatening substances including biological, chemical and nuclear ones and weapons of mass destruction... Relevant issues for [Project C] are: demonstration of effective integration of active and passive sensor techniques, suitable for a wide range of platforms and data correlation techniques for detection and identification systems; development of models of large scale dispersion over large areas and using multiple routes of high risk pathogens of concern (smallpox, anthrax, *C. botulinum*, *Yersinia pestis*, haemorrhagic fever viruses, *Francisella tularensis* and genetically modified organisms) to produce a validated model for use by public authorities; demonstration of the viability of technologies and protocols for personnel, facilities and equipment decontamination against biological or chemical or other substances; assessment and identification of the overall needs of an enlarged EU for biosafety level 4 laboratories in order to guarantee optimal complementarity and development of an effective methodology for networking."

The proposed Preparatory Action will be allocated a budget of around EUR 64 million.

3 February UK Prime Minister Tony Blair announces the establishment of a six-member committee – to be chaired by former Cabinet Secretary Lord Butler – to examine the intelligence apropos Iraqi possession of weapons of mass destruction. The announcement follows on the heels of US President George Bush's decision to establish a similar inquiry into US intelligence [see 2 Feb]. The Liberal Democrats have decided not to be represented on the committee on grounds of the inquiry not having the remit to investigate the political decisions that led to the invasion of Iraq [see 20 Mar 03]. Blair says the inquiry would not be a repeat of Lord Hutton's report [see 28 Jan], as "the issue of good faith was determined by the Hutton inquiry". In addition to Lord Butler, the other committee members will be former Chief of the Defence Staff Lord Inge, former senior civil servant Sir John Chilcott, Labour Member of Parliament and Chairperson of the Commons Intelligence and Security Committee Ann Taylor, and Conservative Member of Parliament Michael Mates. Foreign Secretary Jack Straw says the inquiry – in part modelled on the Franks inquiry into the Falklands war – will meet in private, but some of the evidence may be published. Former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook says it is not feasible to "separate out the intelligence judgments on the threat and the political judgment to go to war on the basis of that threat."

Four weeks later, the Conservative Party withdraws its support for the inquiry due, in the words of party-leader Michael Howard, to Lord Butler having interpreted the committee's terms of reference in an "unacceptably restrictive" way. Nevertheless, Conservative Party MP Michael Mates will continue to sit on the committee. "I believe my duty is to continue to serve the review as best I can in the important tasks we have been given", says Mates."

3-4 February In Brussels, the European Commission hosts a conference on the ethical implications of research on bio-weapons and prevention of bio-terrorism in the context of research to develop vaccines and drugs designed to mitigate the effects of a biological attack [see also 3 Feb]. Discussion also focuses on ethical concerns, both in terms of the ultimate applications of such research and the methods used to validate

the products. Participants include Professor Emilio Mordini, the coordinator of an EU funded project on the bioethical implications of globalisation; Dr Charles Penn, from the UK Centre for Applied Microbiology and Research; and Professor Reidar Lie, from the University of Bergen in Norway. Participants concur that even in the case of classified bio-defence research, the ethical standards that govern human medical trials should still apply. Moreover, it is noted that according to the Council of Europe's convention on human rights and biomedicine, even if a country is facing war or conflict, the defence of its economic well-being, or a threat to national security, no exceptions are granted to these standards. Most participants agree on the necessity of maintaining an international dialogue on the issue in order to make any progress, and felt that discussions such as these would help to answer the challenges posed by this most scientific form of modern warfare.

4 February Russian Munitions Agency Director-General Viktor Kholstov says of the Russian chemdemil programme: "[The first priority is the] allocation of funds to provide antiterrorist equipment to ensure that the storage and destruction of chemical weapons is secure... The second important priority is recognized as providing a reliably functioning facility for the destruction of chemical weapons in the village of Gornyy." Speaking during a meeting of the State Commission on Chemical Disarmament, he says that all of Russia's chemdemil facilities should be ready for operation by the end of 2006. There are plans to build two large-scale plants in the provinces of Udmurtia and Kurgan during 2005 and three smaller plants in the regions of Kirov, Bryansk and Penza during 2006, he says. In this regard, however, Kholstov says that although the number of countries assisting the Russian chemdemil programme increased to fourteen over the past few years, the amount of financing provided has been considerably less than that promised. "We have to look at the realities of the day. For example, existing intergovernmental agreements state that by today, [the donor countries] should have allocated up to \$1.9 billion, but in fact the amount of financing received since 1992 is a little over \$286 million," says Kholstov.

A week later, Kholstov says that only 5.5 billion roubles were allocated for Russian chemdemil in 2003, which is one-third of that required and only 45 per cent of the amount stipulated by the programme for 2003. Speaking during a session of the Federal Council, the upper house of the legislature, he notes that the 2004 federal budget only provides for about 5.4 billion roubles for the implementation of the programme. He says this is less than 47 per cent of that which had originally been allocated, thus creating a funding gap in the programme in recent years of 18 billion roubles. "The overall amount of financial assistance provided to Russia for 2003 by all states participating in the programme was only about \$200 million, which is about one per cent of the amount announced for a 10-year period," says Kholstov. He adds, that it cannot be excluded that the earlier deadline set for completing the construction of the Shchuchye plant in Kurgan region will not be met [see 21-24 Oct 03].

On the question of security at chemdemil facilities, Kholstov says: "From 2003 all the facilities have come under protection including the anti-aircraft forces. Last year 305 million roubles were allocated specially towards the improvement of the technical protection of facilities for the storage and destruction of chemical weapons." He says that a special order was issued by the Russian Armed Forces General Staff for allocating additional forces and funds for ensuring the protection and defence of the facilities. Kholstov adds: "Exercises are being held for the protection and defence of these arsenals...

There is close cooperation with the local agencies of the Interior Ministry and the Federal Security Service. The exercises are being carried out taking into consideration the threat and possible illegal actions by extremists."

4 February Regarding the Gornyy chemdemil facility, the Russian Ministry of Natural Resources announces that an investigation into the condition of the environment at the industrial sites of the facility and the nearby residential area has revealed that the facility is not leaking. A communiqué from the Ministry states that "the examination showed that lakes do not contain hazardous substances such as mustard gas, monoethanolamine and lewisite, and the presence of these substances in the atmosphere is not more than half the permissible concentration." Furthermore, it says that nothing dangerous has been discovered in underground waters and that the condition of the flora and fauna near the facility is normal and "has not changed since 2002".

4 February At Vilnius international airport, a system – financed by the US Department of Energy at a cost of \$4 million – has been installed for *inter alia* detecting weapons of mass destruction and related materials, according to the Lithuanian Delfi news web site. In October 2002 Lithuania and the USA signed an agreement on co-operation in the prevention of the transportation of weapons of mass destruction and related materials. Under the agreement the USA undertakes to support the prevention of illegal transportation of weapons of mass destruction, as well as nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their components and production technologies.

4 February In the UK House of Commons, during a debate on the conclusions of the Hutton Report [see 28 Jan], Prime Minister Tony Blair is asked when he first became aware that the claim that Iraq could launch weapons of mass destruction in 45 minutes [see 24 Sep 02] related to battlefield munitions, and whether he knew it before the vote in the House on 18th March 2003. In reply, Blair says: "No. I have already indicated exactly when this came to my attention. It was not before the debate on 18 March last year. The hon. Gentleman says that a battlefield weapon would not be a weapon of mass destruction, but if there were chemical, biological or nuclear battlefield weapons, they most certainly would be weapons of mass destruction. The idea that their use would not threaten the region's stability I find somewhat eccentric." Former Foreign Secretary Robin Cook, who resigned from the government because of his opposition to the war, responds to Blair's answer thus: "If I heard him correctly, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister said no. I am bound to say that I was surprised by that answer. The House will recall that in my resignation speech I made the very point that we were considering battlefield weapons and that Saddam probably had no real weapons of mass destruction... I find it difficult to reconcile with what I knew, and what I am sure my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister knew when we had the vote in March."

4 February In the US Senate, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Joint Chiefs of Staff Vice-Chairman General Peter Pace testify before the Armed Services Committee in support of the President's 2005 defence budget request [see 2 Feb]. Asked about the existence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq, in light of the testimony of the former head of the Iraq Survey Group (ISG), David Kay, to the committee last week [see 28 Jan], Rumsfeld replies: "While it's too early to come to final conclusions as he indicated, given the work that's still to be done, there are several alternative views that are currently being postulated. First is the theory that WMD may not have existed at the start of the war. I

suppose that's possible, but not likely. Second, is that it's possible that WMD did exist, but was transferred in whole or in part to one or more other countries. We see that theory put forward. Third, it's possible that the WMD existed, but was dispersed and hidden throughout Iraq. We see that possibility proposed by various people. Next, that it's possible that WMD existed, but was destroyed at some moment prior to the end of the – beginning of the conflict, or that it's possible that Iraq had small quantities of biological or chemical agents and also a surge capability for a rapid buildup, and that we may eventually find it in the months ahead. Or finally there's the theory that some have put forward, that it could have been a charade by the Iraqis; that Saddam Hussein fooled his neighbors and fooled the world, or that Saddam Hussein fooled the members of his own regime, or that the idea that Saddam Hussein himself might have been fooled by his own people, who may have tricked him into believing he had capabilities that Iraq really didn't have."

4 February A US district court sentences a former supervisor at the Deseret chemdemil facility in Tooele, Utah, to six months imprisonment for having falsified records to indicate that chemical weapons destruction equipment was operating safely. David Yarborough was charged eighteen months ago [see 1 Nov 02] and convicted last summer. Judge Tena Campbell also orders Yarborough to pay \$10,700 in fines and fees.

5 February The US Department of Defense's Office of the Inspector General releases a *Report on the Management Structure of the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program*. The report states: "The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics did not fulfill his responsibilities for managing the implementation and execution of CTR Projects. For the four CTR projects on which we previously reported, the Government lost \$195.2 million because the disposal facilities for liquid propellant and solid rocket motors will not be used for their intended purposes. Also, although DoD has invested \$576.7 million on storage facilities for fissile materials and destruction facilities for chemical weapons, those projects are at risk of not being fully used for their intended purposes."

5 February In Washington DC, US Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet gives a speech on 'Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction' at Georgetown University. He says: "[With intelligence] the risks are always high. Success and perfect outcomes never guaranteed. But there is one unsailable fact – we will always call it as we see it. Our professional ethic demands no less... [In the National Intelligence Estimate] [see 4 Oct 02] we concluded that in some of these categories, Iraq had weapons. And that in others – where it did not have them – it was trying to develop them. Let me be clear: analysts differed on several important aspects of these programs and those debates were spelled out in the Estimate. They never said there was an 'imminent' threat. Rather, they painted an objective assessment for our policymakers of a brutal dictator who was continuing his efforts to deceive and build programs that might constantly surprise us and threaten our interests... [W]e recently discovered that relevant analysts in the community missed a notice that identified a source we had cited as providing information that, in some cases was unreliable, and in other cases was fabricated. We have acknowledged this mistake... Among the questions that we as a Community must ultimately reflect on are: did the history of our work, Saddam's deception and denial, his lack of compliance with the international community, and all that we know about this regime cause us to minimize, or ignore, alternative

scenarios?; did the fact that we missed how close Saddam came to acquiring a nuclear weapon in the early 1990s cause us to over-estimate his nuclear or other programs in 2002?; did we carefully consider the absence of information flowing from a repressive and intimidating regime, and would it have made any difference in our bottom line judgments?; did we clearly tell policy makers what we knew, what we didn't know, what was not clear, and identify the gaps in our knowledge?..."

Tenet continues: "After the UN inspectors left Iraq in 1998, we made an aggressive effort to penetrate Iraq. Our record was mixed. While we had voluminous reporting, the major judgments reached were based on a narrower band of data. This is not unusual. There was, by necessity, a strong reliance on technical data, which to be sure was very valuable, particularly in the imagery of military and key dual use facilities, on missile and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle developments – and in particular on the efforts of Iraqi front companies to falsify and deny us the ultimate destination and use of dual use equipment. We did not have enough of our own human intelligence. We did not ourselves penetrate the inner sanctum – our agents were on the periphery of WMD activities, providing some useful information. We had access to émigrés and defectors with more direct access to WMD programs and we had a steady stream of reporting with access to the Iraqi leadership come to us from a trusted foreign partner. Other partners provided important information. What we did not collect ourselves, we evaluated as carefully as we could. Still, the lack of direct access to some of these sources created some risk – such is the nature of our business."

6 February Croatia should accept an offer of assistance from the USA to create mechanisms for the effective protection against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, according to the head of a Croatian delegation speaking in Washington DC at the end of a one-week visit to the USA. "Croatia is at a point where different corridors intersect, which are not only connected with the trafficking in drugs and human beings but also very sensitive materials that pose a security threat to the modern world", says Kresimir Cosic. US officials are currently stationed in the Adriatic ports of Rijeka and Split and will soon visit Dubrovnik with a view to advancing the procedure of the control of cargo and prevention of the transit of dangerous materials. Cosic says that Croatia's 6,000 kilometre-long coastline is inadequately protected.

6 February In Washington DC, a district court rules that Steven Hatfill can proceed with his lawsuit against the US Justice Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigations [see 26 Aug 03] for improperly leaking information tying him to the probe of anthrax-laced mailings in 2001. The Defence had been seeking a six-month delay in responding to the lawsuit on the grounds that the anthrax investigation is at a critical stage [see 26 Jan]. District Judge Reggie Walton says Hatfill's lawyers can question journalists to get 'the ball rolling'; however he also says that they can put off for six more weeks answering or providing any government information to Hatfill. Walton says the Justice Department failed to convince him that responding to Hatfill's suit would jeopardize the investigation into the mailing of anthrax-laced letters to media and government offices in the fall of 2001. "I do agree with Mr Hatfill that, based on what he's alleging, he's been injured ... and is going to continue to be injured", says Walton. "To insist he remain in limbo indefinitely ... until the crime is solved is a problem."

7 February In the UK, a senior lawyer demands a public review of the issues surrounding Gulf War syndrome. In a

letter to Downing Street, Bar Council Chairman Stephen Irwin QC writes: "There is no doubt that many [Gulf War veterans] are ill. It is accepted by experts worldwide that the veterans suffer ill health which is associated with their active service in the Gulf. Science has not explained the mechanism or mechanisms of their illness, much less that their suffering has resulted from fault. Nevertheless, we firmly believe that for very many veterans, their suffering is genuine and has a significant impact on their daily lives and the lives of their families. We would ask government to consider instituting a full public review of the position of the veterans - as has been called for by the Royal British Legion - and to instigate a process of conciliation with the veteran groups. This should be designed to mark the effects of war service on the veterans who are suffering and to make good, by *ex gratia* payments, the deficiencies of the War Pension Scheme."

The veterans' own solicitors say that, despite a publicly funded probe, there is "insufficient evidence" against the Ministry of Defence regarding the existence of Gulf War syndrome. The finding is likely to mean that legal aid is withdrawn and with it the end of the eight-year legal challenge for compensation on behalf of more than 2,000 veterans. "We very much regret that we've not been able to support these claims," says Patrick Allen, senior partner at Camden firm Hodge Jones & Allen, which has some 600 veteran clients and was the lead solicitor in the action. "We have every sympathy for the plight of the veterans and acknowledge that many suffer significant ill health, which is linked to service for their country." Terry English, director of welfare at the Royal British Legion says: "The alleged collapse of the legal case comes as a great disappointment... There's no better time now that funds have been withdrawn, and with troops currently deployed in Iraq, to renew our call for a full public independent inquiry." Shaun Rusling, chair of the National Gulf Veterans and Families Association says: "Why collapse the case at this point, it just doesn't make any sense... The group fully believes that there's a case to answer here, and any decision to withdraw funding will be appealed." The Legal Services Commission said a decision on the case would be reached by the end of the month.

8 February From Stockholm, former Executive-Chairman of UNMOVIC Hans Blix says that the UK government used the 45-minute claim to dramatize its dossier on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction [see 24 Sep 02]. During an interview with David Frost, on the BBC's 'Breakfast with Frost', Blix says: "The intention was to dramatise it just as the vendors of some merchandise are trying to increase and exaggerate the importance of what they have... From politicians, from our leaders in the West, I think we expect more than that. A bit more sincerity". He also criticizes the intelligence community for placing too much reliance on the words of defectors and not taking seriously the evidence of the UN inspectors, the "eyes on the ground". The following week, in a speech to the American-European Friendship Club in Heidelberg, Germany, Blix says: "We as voters in a democracy expect critical thinking, and that politicians be very precise in the question of starting a war... To an extent I see [George Bush and Tony Blair] as salesmen".

8 February In Wales, an emergency preparedness and response exercise involving around 250 people takes place on an industrial estate near Wrexham. The purpose of the exercise - codenamed Damaged Dragon - is to evaluate how the Welsh emergency services would interact with the military in the event of a major terrorist incident. The scenario involves a terrorist preparing a chemical weapon for use on London. The exercise is the first of its kind in north Wales.

9 February The US Defense Department has now released details of its budget request for Fiscal Year 2005 [see 2 Feb and 4 Feb]. *Defense News* reports that, for the Defense-wide Chemical/Biological Defense Program, the FY05 research and development (RDT&E) budget includes \$36.8 million for Basic Research, \$104.4mn for Applied Research, \$117.3mn for Advanced Technology Development, \$104.2mn for Advanced Component Development & Prototypes, \$152.4mn for System Development and Demonstration, and \$42.7mn for RDT&E Management Support. Detailed breakdowns of each of these items is presented in the Program Element Descriptive Summaries.

The PEDS make no mention, as they once did, of the Novichoks or FGAs (Fourth Generation [Nerve] Agents), but instead refer to NTAs, or Non-Traditional Agents, which are the subject of numerous RDT&E projects throughout the budget. These include projects directed by Defense Technology Objectives, notably DTO CB57, *Nerve Agent Defense, Non-Traditional Nerve Agent Medical Countermeasures*. Current (FY04) Applied Research on this objective seeks to determine "the effects of NTAs on energy metabolism of cardiac cells and the effectiveness of decontamination on percutaneous NTAs" as well as conducting "electrophysiological evaluation of cardiovascular, respiratory, muscular and cortical dysfunction". Planned for FY05 Applied Research on CB57 is evaluation of "the effectiveness of anticonvulsants against seizures produced by NTAs, in vivo persistence of NTAs, and current medical countermeasures against NTAs". Current (FY04) Advanced Technology Development for CB57 comprises an evaluation in multiple animal models of the efficacy of bioscavengers for protection against NTAs. Detection and decontamination of NTAs are the subject of projects directed at other objectives. [Note: It is remarkable that, even though there is work on NTAs up to the level of anti-CW System Development and Demonstration, the chemical identity of these agents, which were reportedly first encountered in 1973 [see 31 Jan 93], has remained almost entirely undisclosed in public.]

9 February In San Francisco, a man pleads guilty to mailing an anthrax threat to the US Bureau of Customs and Immigration Enforcement in April 2002. Mohammed Lateef, 32, was indicted in August last year on one count of threatening to use a biological agent as a weapon. He faces a possible sentence of life in prison and/or a \$250,000 fine. He admits having mailed a letter containing white powder and stating: "'Antrax' [sic]; 'Hate Isreal [sic] and destroy America'; and 'Al-Qaida'". Lateef is scheduled to be sentenced on 17 May.

9-20 February In Kuala Lumpur, States Parties to the 1992 Convention on Biological Diversity agree - during the Seventh Meeting of the Conference of State Parties - to establish a Programme of Work on Technology Transfer and Co-operation, which will include consideration of systems that "present obstacles that impede transfer of relevant technologies from developed countries", a reference to, amongst other impediments, the Australia Group. Under the Programme of Work, the Secretariat of the Convention, working with a regionally-balanced group of experts, will prepare informational and technical studies of developed-country obstacles to technology transfer, such as export controls.

10 February In China, a man who leaked top secret government documents from a North Korean prison camp detailing chemical weapons and gas experiments on political prisoners [see 1 Feb], has been arrested, according to South Korean human rights activist, Kim Sang-hun. Kang Byong-

sop, 58, was stopped last month in Yunnan province while trying to cross into Laos and was detained with his wife and son and two South Korean helpers on 4 January, says Kim – who smuggled the documents out of North Korea. He says: “It appears the North Koreans have found out papers are missing. They offered a lot of bounty money to the Chinese authorities, who were waiting for him. This is a clear case where China is becoming an accomplice to North Korean crimes.” Kim says he had kept Kang’s identity secret, but that it was now clear North Korea and China knew who he was. “We don’t know what has happened to him, or if he has already been repatriated,” says Kim. “I fear it could already be too late.” The document in question was a transfer list ordering certain prisoners to be transferred to the chemical facilities near the Russian border, known as Camp 22. Kim travelled to London last week as part of an effort to pressurize China into releasing Kang and his relatives who were in imminent danger of being deported back to North Korea by the Chinese authorities.

In the UK House of Commons, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs is asked what representations the government has made to North Korea about its ownership and testing of chemical and biological weapons. Responding on his behalf, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Bill Rammell says: “As a State Party to the [BWC], the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) is obliged to comply with the ban on developing, testing and stockpiling biological and toxin weapons. DPRK is not a signatory to the [CWC], but the EU has recently urged all non-signatories, including DPRK, to accede immediately. We have also recently raised reports of chemical testing on DPRK prisoners with DPRK Embassy officials. We are committed to combating the proliferation of WMD wherever it may occur, and will continue to urge the DPRK to comply with its international obligations.”

10 February In Stockholm, presenting the newly-established Weapons of Mass Destruction Commission [see 29 Jan], former Executive Chairman of UNMOVIC Hans Blix says: “My ambition for this commission is that we will be able to provide realistic and constructive ideas and proposals aimed at the greatest possible reduction of the dangers of weapons of mass destruction. I am very pleased with the composition of the commission. Its members, both as a collective and individually, represent great knowledge and competence within this field and have extensive experience from, and insight into the politics concerning weapons of mass destruction.”

10 February In Strasbourg, the European Parliament adopts an Opinion to establish the new European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC) [see 27 Jan]. The legislation was fast-tracked following the presenting of the Draft law by the European Commission last summer [see 23 July 03]. The European Council is expected to endorse the Opinion in the coming weeks. The ECDC – the initial focus of which will include monitoring and preparedness-planning against bioterrorist attacks – is due to start its work in 2005; work to select a management board will start later this year. Based most probably in Sweden, it will tap into the expertise that already exists in national public health institutes, and take over management of the European communicable disease network which has operated since 1999. One of its first tasks will be to establish clear working arrangements with the World Health Organization. Seven weeks later on 31 March, the EU Council of Ministers approves the creation of the ECDC.

10 February UK Prime Minister Tony Blair is asked - in the House of Commons - whether Iraq was warned before and during the Gulf war that any use of battlefield chemical or

biological weapons would meet with a response using “(i) weapons of mass destruction and (ii) nuclear weapons”. In a written answer, he responds thus: “No. The Government have made it clear in the past that we reserve the right to respond appropriately to any use of such weapons, using the range of options available to us. The UK does not possess biological or chemical weapons. We would never use nuclear weapons in a manner contrary to international law.”

10-12 February In Berlin, there is a NATO Forum on ‘Business and Security’, the purpose of which is to address ways in which business can work with government towards promoting security in both the international business environment and wider civil society. The forum, the first of its kind, brings together 300 senior figures from business, government and the scientific community. It comprises plenary sessions and workshops, which address issues such as the security of major international events and the security of food and water supply. Alongside the conference, there is an exhibit of twenty leading international security solutions providers, in fields ranging from information and communications security to NCBR detection technology. The Business and Security initiative was created by NATO’s Security Through Science Programme (formerly the NATO Science Committee).

11 February In the UK House of Commons, asked for his definition of a weapon of mass destruction, Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon replies: “There is no universally accepted definition of the phrase ‘weapons of mass destruction’, but it is generally held to refer to nuclear, chemical and biological systems.”

11 February US President George Bush, in a speech to the National Defense University in Washington DC, announces “seven proposals to strengthen the world’s efforts to stop the spread of deadly weapons”, the first three of which relate to chemical and biological weapons. Bush sets out the first three proposals thus:

“First, I propose that the work of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) [see 30 Jan] be expanded to address more than shipments and transfers. Building on the tools we’ve developed to fight terrorists, we can take direct action against proliferation networks. We need greater cooperation not just among intelligence and military services, but in law enforcement, as well. PSI participants and other willing nations should use the Interpol and all other means to bring to justice those who traffic in deadly weapons, to shut down their labs, to seize their materials, to freeze their assets...”

“Second, I call on all nations to strengthen the laws and international controls that govern proliferation. At the UN last fall, I proposed a new Security Council resolution requiring all states to criminalize proliferation, enact strict export controls, and secure all sensitive materials within their borders. The Security Council should pass this proposal quickly. And when they do, America stands ready to help other governments to draft and enforce the new laws that will help us deal with proliferation.

“Third, I propose to expand our efforts to keep weapons from the Cold War and other dangerous materials out of the wrong hands. In 1991, Congress passed the Nunn-Lugar legislation... We have more work to do there. And as a result of the G-8 Summit ... [see 26-27 Jun 02], we agreed to provide \$20 billion over 10 years – half of it from the United States – to support such programs. We should expand this cooperation elsewhere in the world. We will retain [sic] WMD scientists and technicians in countries like Iraq and Libya. We will help nations end the use of weapons-grade uranium in research reactors...”

11 February In Washington DC, the USA and Liberia sign an agreement under which Liberia becomes a member of the US-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Liberia has held a US-based shipping registry since 1949 and now has a registry of more than 2,000 foreign vessels. In a press statement, US Department of State spokesman Richard Boucher says: "The boarding agreement provides authority on a bilateral basis to board sea vessels suspected of carrying illicit shipments of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems, or related materials... The conclusion of this ship boarding agreement is an important step in further operationalizing the [PSI] and strengthening the mechanisms that we have at our disposal to interdict suspect weapons of mass destruction-related cargoes. The ship boarding agreement is modeled after similar arrangements that exist in the counter-narcotics arena."

11 February In Washington DC, the National Security Archive at George Washington University releases another Electronic Briefing Book as part of its *Saddam Hussein Sourcebook*. This time on *Iraq and Weapons of Mass Destruction*, the compilation includes forty-three official documents, primarily from US and UK sources. Included are two formerly Top Secret papers: Central Intelligence Agency, *Prewar Status of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction*, March 1991, and Director of Central Intelligence, National Intelligence Estimate, *Iraq's Continuing Programs for Weapons of Mass Destruction*, October 2002. (Extract).

12 February In the US Senate, the Select Intelligence Committee votes to expand its investigation into the pre-war intelligence on Iraq by probing into whether the administration exaggerated intelligence information to make a case for war. Republicans on the committee had been resisting the move for months. Chairman of the committee Senator Pat Roberts says: "[The decision] illustrates the commitment of all members to a thorough review, to learning the necessary lessons from our experience with Iraq, and to ensuring that our armed forces and policymakers benefit from the best and most reliable intelligence that can be collected". Referring to the struggle between Republicans, who sought to keep the focus of the inquiry on the CIA and other intelligence agencies, and Democrats, who wanted to add a thorough probe into administration actions leading up to the war, committee vice chairman Senator John D Rockefeller says: "[The] agreement reflects a difficult and lengthy process, but in the end, we were able to reach consensus on the need to expand the investigation into several key areas".

12 February *USA Today* reports on a December 2002 classified intelligence study warning that US military tactics, guerrilla warfare, looting and lying by Iraqi officials would undermine the search for banned Iraqi weapons. According to the report, the study states: "Locating a program that from its conception has been driven by denial and deception imperatives is no small task. Prolonged insecurity with factional violence and guerrilla forces still at large would be the worst outcome for finding Saddam's WMD arsenal... [Weapons inspectors will be] trying to find multiple needles in a haystack ... against the background of not knowing how many needles have been hidden... [Fearing prosecution by Saddam Hussein], many [Iraqi scientists] are likely to try and cover their tracks by destroying or removing documents, refusing to cooperate, or even fleeing the country." Quoting three unidentified intelligence officials, the report states that fifty persons participated in the study, including high-level US intelligence analysts, CIA field operatives, representatives of the

Pentagon's Joint Staff, members of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld's staff, former UN inspectors and retired US government officials. The same sources say that the results of the study were distributed to the National Security Council and high-ranking officials at key cabinet departments, although the President was not specifically briefed thereon.

13 February Chad deposits its instrument of ratification of the CWC with the UN Secretary-General. In thirty days, Chad will become the 161st party to the Convention.

15 February On Israeli Channel 2 News, an Israeli Defence Force spokesman says that a military committee have recommended collecting gas masks – originally distributed in 1990 ahead of the first Gulf war – from members of the public with a view to saving money. The recommendation, which requires government approval before it can be implemented, follows a perceived reduction of the threat of a chemical attack following the US-led invasion of Iraq [see 20 Mar 03]. On the eve of the said invasion, members of the public were instructed to install a filter on their masks – which proved a costly exercise in financial terms – and to carry the masks with them at all times. The gas masks comprise part of the chemical protection kits provided to members of the public, which also include a needle with an antidote for nerve gas and powder for neutralizing chemicals. The news report says that Israel has spent more than NIS 2 billion shekels (\$440 million) on the gas mask kits so far, and maintaining them in the hands of the public costs another NIS 200 million (\$44 million) a year.

18 February From Russia, an aide to the Head of the State Commission for Chemical Disarmament, Sergey Kiriyyenko, announces that Canada is to grant Russia C\$300 million under the Global Partnership Against Weapon of Mass Destruction [see 26-27 Jun 02] to assist with its chemdemil programme. Aleksandr Kharichev says that "the money will be spent on building a plant outside Shchuchye, in Kurgan Region, where 5,440 t (13.7 per cent of total stocks) of combat toxic substances of the latest generation, classified as the most dangerous, are being stored." Asked about the financing of Russian chemdemil from the budget [see 4 Feb Russia], Kharichev says: "[A]llotments for these purposes have been steadily increasing over the past few years. In 2004, R5.36bn were allocated, which is in turn more than in 2003. This is a huge sum but foreign aid will come in handy too. Fourteen countries and the EU are helping Russia destroy its chemical weapons."

18-19 February Italy leads a multilateral aviation interdiction training exercise in the Mediterranean Sea under the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI). Exercise 'Air Brake 04' is the first aviation exercise in the PSI [see 11 Jan] series. In addition to Italy, the USA, Portugal, Spain and France contributed to the exercise by providing radar and air-defence data to assist in tracking the target aircraft and make possible its interception.

19 February The (London) *Times* reports scientists at the Ministry of Defence's Porton Down laboratory as having developed a vaccine against *Yersinia pestis*, which could be licensed "within one to two years". The team of scientists, led by Professor Rick Titball, identified two harmless proteins on the surface of the bacteria which were capable of triggering an immune response against them. "These two proteins are key parts of the plague organism which are recognised by the immune system and respond to them," says Titball. A spokes-

woman for Porton Down says: "This is a crucial stage, in that we have had one successful step to show the safety of the vaccine. Now we can move onto larger scale trials." Scientists at Porton Down have been working on a vaccine against the bacteria since the 1991 Gulf War, when it was believed that Iraq's stockpile of biological weapons included *Yersinia*. Of *Yersinia pestis*, Titball says: "[It] is one of the bio-terror agents about which we are most concerned... The Americans are very keen on our programme because we are well in advance of any other research projects developing a vaccine elsewhere in the world... [An existing vaccine in Australia - on which a US version based on the same principle was abandoned in 1999 - is] not particularly effective." Titball made the original breakthrough discovery in developing a possible vaccine and published the findings nine years ago. The results of the large-scale clinical trials are expected to be published in a scientific journal in around a year's time.

19 February In Ottawa, Minister of National Defence David Pratt and Minister of Veterans Affairs John McCallum announce that C\$50 million has been earmarked for Canadian veterans involved in chemical-warfare agent experiments in Suffield, Alberta, between 1941 to the mid-1970s and Ottawa during 1941-45. Eligible veterans are to be offered a one-off payment of C\$24,000 in recognition of their service, which is in addition to the pension benefits to which the veterans may be entitled. "Today, we show our appreciation for these extraordinary veterans, who served so that their comrades in arms might be spared the horrors of chemical warfare," says Pratt. "Today, we are recognizing these veterans for their sacrifice and their service to Canada. They served our nation without the recognition extended to those who served elsewhere and without appreciation of the risks they faced," says McCallum. An office has been established to expedite payments and is expected to be fully functional by 5th April.

20 February In Russia, the Gorny chemdemil facility has now disposed of 18.465 tonnes of lewisite, so the press service of the Russian Munitions Agency reports [see also 4 Feb].

20 February In Bucharest, Romanian Prime Minister Adrian Nastase and Hungarian Defence Minister Ferenc Juhasz hold negotiations on Hungaro-Romanian military co-operation. Among matters discussed is the extension of co-operation to communications, search and reconnaissance service, and "chemical weapons defence", in the words of Hungarian Duna TV.

20 February The US Naval Surface Warfare Center has been advertising for contractors to design and supply prototypes for a new 'non-lethal' chemical weapon, and today is the closing date for submission of quotations. The new weapon is to be a splash round for 12-gauge pump-action shotguns having as its payload a mixture of malodorant and irritant agent OC. Candidate malodorants are not identified in the presolicitation notice other than that they may be "mercaptans, sulfides, and possibly some amines".

21 February *The Australian* reports that Australian forces sent to Afghanistan in 2002 suffered adverse side-effects after having been administered the anthrax vaccine, and that ninety-seven personnel aboard HMAS Darwin in the Gulf last year reported ill after having received the same vaccine. Citing "confidential defence documents" obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, the paper says that officers of the Australian Defence Force (ADF) have expressed

private concern about anthrax vaccine batches on several occasions in recent years. The report quotes a briefing note from defence doctors to Admiral Barrie on 15 November 2001 as stating: "[ADF] has reported a very high rate of adverse events being suffered by personnel... [ADF] is concerned that such reactions could be operationally significant if the units concerned receive their vaccinations after being deployed... All units involved in this vaccination campaign have been told to cease use of the UK anthrax vaccine until further notice."

Responding to the story, Australian Director-General of Defence Health Service Tony Austin says that vaccinations were suspended for two months after many of the 1,500 troops deployed to Afghanistan in 2002 showed debilitating side effects. He continues: "We were in a position where all we would have been able to tell them was that there had been a problem. We had not been able to identify a cause from that and we had absolutely no evidence to suggest that we were likely to see that again, based on overseas experience and our own experience when we reinstated the program in Iraq... So, I think to have advised people of that would have been quite counterproductive. I think that would have increased anxiety levels among our people." At the time of the deployment to Iraq, Defence Minister Robert Hill said the anthrax shots, which were compulsory for the 2,000 military personnel despatched, were safe. He also received anthrax shots himself to show his confidence in the vaccination. Around forty Australian troops sent to the Middle East refused to have the shots and were sent home

Two days later *The Australian* reports that the ADF was forced to quarantine a new batch of the anthrax vaccine only seven months after troops bound for Afghanistan experienced severe side effects from an earlier batch. It further reports that more recently the ADF has been forced to destroy a large quantity of anthrax vaccine after concern over the refrigeration procedure raised doubts about its safety.

Six days later, Austin says that sailors aboard HMAS Kanimbla and HMAS Darwin in February last year may have felt they had no choice but to take anthrax vaccine regardless of the health dangers and that the navy had failed to properly inform sailors of the risks. Testifying during a Senate committee hearing, he says: "We were well aware of our obligations to provide a situation that was consistent with informed consent... We were also well aware this program was not announced to certain navy members until they were embarked on their mission... [This was] a failure on our part... It certainly could be construed it was taking away people's freedom of choice ... that there was an unintended but potential degree of coercion being exercised on these people because they were already on board ship and headed to an area of operations... [However, there had been] no reported long-term ill-health effects [relating to the vaccine, whereas exposure to] militarised anthrax [was fatal ninety-five per cent of the time]." Austin maintains that the side-effects suffered by the sailors, including "redness and swelling of the arm and flu-like symptoms", lasted less than forty-eight hours in most cases. "In some cases it resulted in an inability to use the arm" for up to forty-eight hours, he says.

21 February *The New York Times* reports the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) as acknowledging not having provided the United Nations with information about 21 of the 105 sites in Iraq singled out by US intelligence before the invasion of Iraq as those most likely to have housed illicit weapons. The acknowledgement – made by the CIA Director of Congressional Affairs Stanley Moskowitz to Senator Carl Levin in a letter dated 20 January – contradicts public statements made before the invasion by top Bush administration

officials. Last year, before the Senate Select Intelligence Committee, Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet claimed that UN inspectors had been briefed on all sites identified as 'high value' and 'moderate value' [see 11 Feb 03].

22-23 February In Suntec, Singapore, there is the Asia Pacific Security Conference (APSEC) 2004, jointly organized by Asian Aerospace Pte Ltd and the Institute of Defence and Strategic Studies. The conference brings together academics, analysts, and political and military leaders to discuss the subject of security with the aim of improving global peace. In his keynote address, Singapore Defence Minister Teo Chee Hean says: "[T]he nightmare scenario of terrorists and rogue regimes collaborating in the use of weapons of mass destruction is now well within the realm of possibility."

23 February In Beijing, seven Sino-Japanese friendship groups announce the creation of a foundation – with initial capital of 1 million Japanese yen (\$9,300) – the aim of which is to assist Chinese victims of chemical weapons abandoned by the Japanese Imperial Army during World War II [see also 25 Dec 03]. Muraoka Kyuhei, president of the Japan-China Friendship Association, says he expects to receive more donations from Japanese donors within political and business circles. Muraoka says the work of the foundation will focus on applying pressure on the Japanese government to deal with the problem and to promote friendship between the two peoples. Chen Haosu, president of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, says the chemical weapons issue is one of the major historical issues between the two nations that seriously threatens people's safety and the environment.

23 February In the UK House of Commons, responding to a question about evidence from North Korea of continuing human rights abuses, with specific reference to the use of chemical weapons on political prisoners [see 1 and 10 Feb], Foreign Office Parliamentary Under-Secretary Chris Mullin says: "[W]e raise the issue [of human rights violations] regularly with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) authorities... Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Bill Rammell raised the allegations concerning chemical weapons tested on North Korean prisoners with the DPRK Ambassador on 12 February and urged the DPRK government to allow independent monitors access to the country to verify or disprove such allegations, as called for in the Resolution adopted by the UN Commission on Human Rights in 2003. We will continue to encourage the DPRK government to co-operate fully with UN human rights mechanisms."

23 February UK Minister of State (Local and Regional Government) Nick Raynsford responds to a Parliamentary Question about how many nuclear, biological, chemical protective suits are available to emergency services and military personnel in the London area: "The London Ambulance Service currently has 400 Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) suits immediately available for use in response to CBRN incidents. The Service plans to increase the number of suits available to 1,400 during the next financial year. The London Fire Brigade has 1,500 gas-tight suits immediately available for use in response to CBRN incidents, as well as for day-to-day operations. The Military in London has approximately 1,000 PPE suits immediately available. The total number of CBRN trained police officers nationally is now over 5,000. This is in line with the Association of Chief Police Officers' desired level of training to ensure that police forces nationally have the necessary resilience to deal with a CBRN incident. It would

not be appropriate, on security grounds, to give more specific information regarding the CBRN response capability in each police force. The deployment of CBRN-protective equipment to the emergency services and to the Military is not tied to geographical regions and, depending on the nature and scale of any incident, London may receive extra equipment from or supply extra equipment to other regions.

23-24 February In Washington DC, the National Academies host the inaugural meeting of the Committee on Advances in Technology and the Prevention of their Application to Next Generation Biowarfare Agents, which is a joint committee of the National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine. The Committee is charged with conducting a 2-year study to examine current trends and future objectives of research in public health, life sciences and biomedical science that contain applications relevant to developments in biological weapons 5 to 15 years into the future and ways to anticipate, identify and mitigate these dangers. The new study will thus complement that of the Fink Committee [see 8 Oct 03 US]. The co-chairs of the new committee, which has 19 members, are Stanley Lemon, Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Texas Medical Branch at Galveston, and the microbiologist David Relman of Stanford University. Non-US members include the epidemiologist Roy Anderson of Imperial College London, the botanist Kameswara Rao formerly of Bangalore University, the bioethicist Peter Singer of the University of Toronto, and Julian Perry Robinson of the Harvard Sussex Program. Among the presentations during the open session of the meeting is one by James Petro of the US Joint Military Intelligence College entitled *Biotechnology: Impact on Biological Warfare and Biodefense*.

24 February At UN headquarters, the UNMOVIC College of Commissioners meets for its fifteenth [see 26 Nov 03] regular session. As on previous occasions, observers from the IAEA and CWC attend the session. The Commissioners express concern that there have been further resignations of expert staff, noting that trained and experienced experts, once dispersed, are difficult to reassemble at short notice.

24 February US Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge announces the inception of the Homeland Security Information Network – a data-sharing arrangement to allow federal authorities to share threat reports, investigative leads and potential evidence instantaneously. It is designed to prevent acts of terror and to give local police chiefs, mayors and governors greater access to federal intelligence.

24 February The US Senate Select Intelligence Committee [see also 12 Feb] conducts a hearing into 'Worldwide Threats'. Witnesses testifying include Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet. On terrorist acquisition of weapons of mass destruction, Tenet says: "[A]cquiring these kinds of weapons we know remains a religious obligation in bin Laden's eyes, and al Qaeda and more than two dozen other terrorist groups are pursuing CBRN materials. We particularly see a heightened risk of poison attacks. Contemplated delivery methods to date have been simple, but this may change as non-al Qaeda groups share information on more sophisticated methods and tactics. Over the last year, we've also seen an increase in the threat of more sophisticated chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. For this reason, we take very seriously the threat of a CBRN attack. Extremists have widely disseminated assembly instructions for an improvised chemical weapon using common materials that could cause a large number of casualties in a crowded, enclosed area. Although gaps in our understanding remain,

we see al Qaeda's program to produce anthrax as one of the most immediate terrorist CBRN threats that we are likely to face... We are concerned about the continued eagerness of Russia's cash-strapped defense, biotechnology, chemical, aerospace, and nuclear industries to raise funds via exports and transfers, which makes Russian expertise an attractive target for countries and groups seeking WMD and missile-related assistance."

When asked whether he agrees with former head of the Iraq Survey Group David Kay's statement [see 28 Jan] that the "consensus opinion" is that the two trailers found in Iraq last year [see 7 May 03] were not intended for the production of biological weapons, Tenet replies: "There is no consensus on that question... At this moment, I'm sitting right in the middle of a big debate. I have analysts in my building who still believe that they were for BW trailers. I have Defense Intelligence Agency analysts who have posited another theory. And the community has not – we don't have enough data and we haven't wrestled it to the ground yet." Asked whether he agrees with Vice President Dick Cheney's recent comments [see 22 Jan] that the said trailers were part of Iraq's BW programme and that he deems them conclusive evidence that Iraq did have a BW programme, he says: "I talked to the vice president after my Georgetown speech [see 5 Feb]. I don't think he was aware of where we were in terms of the community's agreement on this. I've talked to him subsequent to that. I've explained the disagreements, I've told him that there's one side that thinks one thing and one side that thinks another thing. So in fairness to him I think he was going off of an older judgment that was embodied in a paper."

Tenet is asked to explain the National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) [see 4 Oct 02] which states that Iraq has chemical and biological weapons, has begun renewed production of chemical warfare agents, probably including mustard, sarin, cyclosarin and VX, and that R&D, production and weaponization of its offensive BW programme are active, and most elements are larger and more advanced than they were before the Gulf War. He responds thus: "I tried to, in the speech I gave [see 5 Feb], to convey where I thought we were. But what we will do when Charlie Duelfer raises his hand and says that's about as much as we can do, we have to write another [NIE] that will take all of this data on board and form out what we found and ask our analysts to say what would you say today on the basis of all the data that you have at your disposal.... Analysts sat down, and the three individuals, primarily our national intelligence officers who wrote [the NIE] have been doing this for a very long time. They believe what they wrote. They didn't do it cavalierly, and they didn't do it frivolously, and they believe they had a connective logic and a tissue to get them to their judgments."

When asked to explain where the difficulties lay in penetrating the Iraqi regime, and what efforts were made to penetrate the regime, Tenet replies: "[A]fter 1998 when we lost the UN, we obviously realized that because of our intimacy and involvement with the UN, which has since been blown in public and everybody knows it, where we were on the ground, we recognize that we had to reconstitute our own unilateral capabilities... [O]n the [human intelligence] side. Yeah, we recruited a number of people. They were all on the periphery. His scientists and the people that you cared about never came out. We never got access to them in a way that would have been beneficial... But at the end of the day, my judgment was we didn't have enough of our own. So, let's not make any excuses and get on with it."

25 February In Israel, house demolitions are enforced in an Upper Galilee village by police using bulldozers and tear gas. The unusual feature of the episode is that a detailed

report on it, including eye-witness accounts, is later published by the Nazareth-based Arab Association for Human Rights under the title "*Let them suffocate: Police brutality during house demolition in the Upper Galilee village of al-Bea'neh, February 25, 2004.*" The publication, which presents itself as the first in a series of case-studies documenting instances of human-rights abuse inside Israel, states that the quotation in its title is from the response of a police officer to a remonstrance by the principal of a kindergarten that several dozen small children in her care had become trapped within an area of heavy and indiscriminate tear-gas employment. Several children and old people are reported to have died during subsequent Israeli police operations.

25 February In the UK House of Commons, Foreign Secretary Jack Straw makes a written statement on *Weapons of Mass Destruction*. His statement reads:

"Some 60 countries have indicated their support for [the Proliferation Security Initiative] and their intention to apply its principles. There is more that we can do to extend its possibilities. We are working in the International Maritime Organisation to secure amendment to the Suppression of Unlawful Acts at Sea Convention, which will make it an internationally recognised offence to transport WMD, their delivery systems and related materials on commercial vessels. It is already an offence under the Chicago Convention of the International Civil Aviation Organisation to transport WMD on civil aircraft. Agreements have been concluded in the past providing for the boarding of vessels which may be carrying drugs. We now plan to negotiate similar agreements with the main commercial flag states allowing for the boarding of vessels which may be carrying cargoes which could be used in WMD programmes [see 11 Feb]... We will consider with our partners whether new penalties should be introduced to deter air or shipping lines from seeking to transport such cargoes [for example, denying landing or port rights where they are] engaged in such transport [or] an international register of companies and individuals convicted of proliferation offences..."

"We support President Bush's call to use Interpol and all other means to help law enforcement agencies to work against the traffickers... Within the EU, we see a case for Customs experts considering how to tighten regulations and practices, and how better to exchange information in order to prevent the trafficking of WMD... We would like to see the Global Partnership [against the spread of weapons and materials of mass destruction] [see [26-27 Jun 02] expanded so that it is fully global in its geographical extent, and for the number of donor states to be expanded so that the target of 20 billion dollars can become a floor rather than a ceiling..."

"We ... believe that the [UN Security Council] should ... consider establishing [a body such as] a counter-proliferation committee, just as the council's Counter-Terrorism Committee... The Government set out in a Green Paper ... ideas on how to verify compliance with the [BWC] [see 29 Apr 02]."

"We continue to believe that we need a mechanism, possibly under the authority of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, for investigating instances of alleged use and suspect biological weapons facilities. We will be putting forward proposals to follow this up at the next meeting of states party of the convention in Geneva in July."

Before the Commons Select Committee on Foreign Affairs, Straw refuses to answer in 'open session' a question posed by the committee as to who will be responsible for checking electronic communications leaving the country and how it will be possible to do so under the new Export Control Act [24 Jul 02]. In relation to US-led efforts to counter proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, Straw says: "[T]he United States' Government is very committed indeed to counter-

proliferation and generally to arms control, there are some of these issues, and BW is a good example, where their view of what is required is different from ours. Their view, in a nutshell, is that it is so difficult fully to enforce a BW regime that it may not be appropriate to try and we have a different view.”

25 February In Scotland, former UNMOVIC Executive-Chairman Hans Blix says – during a lecture at Edinburgh University – that Saddam Hussein “was dangerous to his own people but not a great, and certainly not an immediate, danger to his neighbours and the world.” According to Blix, “the justification for the war – the existence of weapons of mass destruction – was without foundation.”

25 February The US Department of Energy’s National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) Program issues a press release outlining a new programme to engage Iraqi scientists and to develop employment opportunities that will support the reconstruction of Iraq. Unlike its activities in the former Soviet Union, under the said programme the NNSA will not concentrate solely on the re-employment of former weapons scientists, but will work on a broader basis on matters pertaining to Iraqi scientific activities.

26 February In the UK, former International Development Secretary Clare Short says that the US and UK bugged the office of UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan during the period when they were pushing for a second Security Council resolution to internationalize the invasion of Iraq [see 20 Mar 03]. Speaking on the BBC Radio 4 ‘Today’ programme, Short says: “[T]he UK in this time was also getting – spying on Kofi Annan’s office and getting reports from him about what was going on... These things are done and in the case of Kofi’s office it’s been done for some time... I’ve seen transcripts of Kofi Annan’s conversations... In fact I’ve had conversations with Kofi in the run up to war, thinking ‘oh dear there will be a transcript of this and people will see what he and I are saying’.” The subject of the interview is the UK government’s decision to drop charges against Katharine Gun – a translator at Government Communications Headquarters (GCHQ) prior to the invasion of Iraq. In March last year, Gun was arrested and accused of having breached the Official Secrets Act by leaking to *The (London) Observer* a memorandum from US spies asking their UK counterparts to tap the telephones of UN Security Council members. Three months later she was dismissed from her post. Gun has always admitted leaking the e-mail but has argued that she had only ever followed her conscience to prevent an illegal war.

The next day, Richard Butler says that at least four countries – the USA, UK, France and Russia – bugged his conversations during his tenure as UNSCOM Executive-Chairman from 1997 to 1999. Speaking on Australian ABC radio, Butler says: “I was well aware of it... How did I know? Because those who did it would come to me and show me the recordings that they had made on others to help me do my job disarming Iraq. They would say ‘we’re just here to help you’ and they would never show me any recordings they had made on me... If I really wanted to have a sensitive conversation with somebody... I was reduced to having to go either to a noisy cafeteria in the basement of the UN where there was so much noise around and then whisper, or literally take a walk in Central Park.” Boutros-Boutros Ghali also expresses suspicions of having been bugged during his time as UN Secretary-General.

Two days later, former UNMOVIC Executive-Chairman Hans Blix says he suspected both his UN office and his home in New York had been bugged in the run-up to the Iraq war. In an interview with *The (London) Guardian*, Blix says that “if

you had something sensitive to talk about you would go out into the restaurant or out into the streets...” He says his fears were reinforced when US Assistant Secretary of State for Non-Proliferation John Wolf visited him a fortnight before the invasion of Iraq and presented him with two pictures of an Iraqi drone and a cluster bomb, which Blix believed could only have been secured from within the UN weapons office. He says that, when asked, Wolf refused to say how he got hold of them. Blix says he never delivered sensitive information electronically. “We would never talk about such matters on telephones, never use electronic devices at all. Instructions to inspectors were hand-carried.” He describes the suspected bugging as hypocritical: “You are cooperating with the people who sit across the desk one day and if the next they are listening to you, it is an unpleasant feeling.” Asked if it was morally questionable, he replies: “Well, I don’t know what morals they have. Questionable, yes.”

26 February In the US Senate, the Foreign Relations Committee conducts a hearing into ‘US-Libya Relations’. Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs William J Burns and Assistant Secretary of State for Verification and Compliance Paula DeSutter provide testimony. On Libya’s recent decision to abandon its weapons of mass destruction programme [see 19 Dec 03], DeSutter says: “[W]e have not gotten any evidence [that Libya has been involved in purveying WMD-related technology to other states or non-state actors] to date. One of the things that is certainly true is that we are certainly learning more as we go on the ground and we will begin putting a little bit more emphasis on having additional dialogue with them. For the first two months our emphasis has been on removing things. We’ll try to understand better. But thus far I can say that we have not seen such evidence.”

On the more generic matter of usage of the term ‘weapons of mass destruction’, Senator Lincoln Chafee poses the following question. “To use the example of Timothy McVeigh, I believe he used a truckload of fertilizer to kill 150-odd people. So the definition of weapons of mass destruction, as you negotiate [with regard to Libya], is there a clear internationally defined definition of that term?” DeSutter says: “Make no mistake, what Libya has agreed to eliminate, what they are eliminating right now really was in the classic sense a weapons of mass destruction program”.

26 February In the USA, an independent task force sponsored by the Council on Foreign Relations releases a report *Nonlethal Weapons and Capabilities*. The report concludes that the Department of Defense has not sufficiently prioritized investment into non-lethal weapons. Whilst recognizing that spending on non-lethal weapons has increased, the report argues that there should be a sevenfold increase in spending to bring the annual budget up to \$300 million. It also calls for research on longer-range non-lethal weapons to be stepped up. On non-lethal chemical weapons, the report says: “The Task Force believes that to press for an amendment to the CWC or even to assert a right to use RCAs [riot-control agents] as a method of warfare risks impairing the legitimacy of all NLW. This would also free others to openly and legitimately conduct focused governmental R&D that could more readily yield advanced lethal agents than improved nonlethal capabilities. While limited use of RCAs in accordance with the traditional US position does not totally avoid these risks, we believe they are outweighed by the potential benefits.” Accordingly, the Task Force judges that on balance the best course for the United States is to reaffirm its commitment to the CWC and the BWC and to be a leader in ensuring that other nations comply with the treaties. Thus, the United States should declare that it will not employ RCAs ‘as a method of

warfare' but will use them for law enforcement and other legitimate purposes, among which are controlling enemy prisoners of war and controlling crowds, in the exercise of its legal responsibilities as an occupying power. That is, the United States would comply with the CWC and the BWC but would not refrain from actions that are in its interest that it believes to be legal under the treaties.

27 February In Japan, at the end of a trial lasting nearly eight years [see 29 Jan 99], Tokyo District Court sentences Chizuo Matsumoto – the founder of Aum Shinrikyo (now called 'Aleph') – to death for masterminding thirteen separate incidents that led to the deaths of twenty-seven people and many thousands of injured, including an attack using sarin gas in Matsumoto [see 28 Jun 1994] and on the Tokyo subway [see 20 Mar 95]. Matsumoto, 48 – also known as Shoko Asahara – is the last Aum Shinrikyo member to be sentenced. Eleven high-ranking members of the group have already been sentenced to death and six others have received life terms. Presiding Judge Judge Shoji Ogawa says that Matsumoto ordered the murder of Tsutsumi Sakamoto [see 17 Jul 00], a high-profile, Yokohama-based lawyer who incurred Aum's wrath by helping former Aum members stay away from the clutches of the group. The motive for producing sarin gas, Ogawa says, was Matsumoto's desire "to rule the nation as king after destroying the capital by spraying Tokyo with 70 tons of sarin gas, toppling the state apparatus and constructing an Aum state in Japan." Matsumoto's lawyers had claimed he was innocent and that key followers who were out of control were responsible for the crimes. They say they will appeal the verdict. Throughout the trial Matsumoto refused to cooperate with his lawyers and declined to give a closing statement to the court in October of last year. Thousands of people queued in an attempt to gain admittance to the court for the sentencing of Matsumoto. Spectators were reportedly chosen by lottery.

27 February Libya commences the destruction of its entire cache of 3,300 unfilled aerial bombs, previously declared by it to the OPCW as comprising one component of its chemical weapons arsenal. OPCW inspectors – having carried out an inventory of the bombs – are present throughout the period of destruction. The destruction itself is effected by using bulldozers to crush the bomb casings. Five days later, the OPCW verifies the completion of the operation.

27 February In New York, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan transmits to the UN Security Council the sixteenth [see 26 Nov 03] quarterly report on the activities of UNMOVIC. Covering the period 1 December 2003 to 29 February 2004, the report states: "During the period under review, no official information was available to UNMOVIC on either the work of, or the results of, the investigations of the United States-led Iraq Survey Group in Iraq. Nor has the Survey Group requested any information from UNMOVIC... The Commission has continued to assess material that is in the public domain on the issues pertaining to Iraq's weapons of mass destruction and to compare it against what is known by UNMOVIC about Iraq's various weapons programmes... Another major effort under way is the compilation of a compendium on the nature and extent of Iraq's past proscribed weapons and programmes... As part of the 'lessons learned', the compendium will also explore specific signatures and indicators of activities relating to weapons of mass destruction and the identification of related facilities, and how the detection of those signs can be applied to future monitoring... A biological sampling, screening and analysis report has been compiled. The report contains detailed descriptions of all samples handled by the biological inspection team during the period from

November 2002 to March 2003, statistical data, and the results of screening performed by UNMOVIC and analysis performed by network laboratories. In addition, the report describes the analytical capability, techniques and procedures applied by UNMOVIC in this area...

"UNMOVIC continues to reduce its remaining local staff in Baghdad. On 1 January 2004, 10 staff members were transferred to the United Nations Assistance Mission for Iraq (UNAMI). By the end of February 2004, UNMOVIC will have 10 local staff members remaining in Baghdad to maintain and protect the nonexpendable equipment in the Canal Hotel, including two laboratories (chemical and biological) and a 40-foot mobile chemical laboratory... The Cyprus Field Office continues to store and maintain the UNMOVIC inspection and monitoring equipment recovered from Iraq... In addition, the office continues to manage the remaining staff in Baghdad... The premises of the UNMOVIC Field Office in Bahrain were handed over by UNMOVIC to Civil Aviation Affairs of the Ministry of Transport of Bahrain on 3 December 2003. The handover concludes a successful 13-year contribution of the Field Office in Bahrain to carrying out the Security Council mandate for the Special Commission, UNMOVIC and the [IAEA] in Iraq... The core staff of [UNMOVIC] in the Professional grades at Headquarters totals 51 weapons experts and other staff ... During the reporting period UNMOVIC has continued its training activities and resumed advanced training of experts from the roster."

Attached to the report are three appendices. Appendix I provides "a summary of Iraq's chemical and biological munitions"; Appendix II lists the "UNMOVIC network of laboratories"; Appendix IIIa sets out "a chronology of the destruction, removal or rendering harmless of items and materials by Iraq under the supervision of the Special Commission / UNMOVIC in accordance with Security Council resolution 687 (1991)"; and Appendix IIIb lists "major proscribed items and materials declared by Iraq as having been destroyed by the coalition during the 1991 Gulf war and unilaterally by Iraq in 1991".

27 February At UN headquarters, unidentified diplomats and observers say the USA is pressing the Security Council to endorse a draft resolution that would allow the use of force against "entities and individuals" suspected of trying to develop, possess or transfer weapons of mass destruction, according to the Inter Press Service news agency. The draft resolution is said to require member states to help prevent and "if necessary, interdict shipment of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, their means of delivery and related material in accordance with the international and national laws". An unidentified Asian diplomat says: "This is a dangerous concept. This can be misused by adversaries in the name of interdiction."

28-29 February In Monaco, forty members of the Club de Monaco, including former UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali and a number of former political leaders and foreign ministers, convene to discuss the subject of countering international terrorism and the potential of use of weapons of mass destruction. *Le Monde*, quoting AFP, reports an unidentified "specialist" as saying that Islamic extremists are covertly using Chechnya as a primary terrorist training area for, amongst other things, the use of chemical and biological weapons. "We are not in the domain of the possible, we are in the domain of reality," he says.

29 February - 3 March In Atlanta, Georgia, there is the fourth International Conference on Emerging Infectious Diseases [see also 24-27 Mar 02], co-sponsored by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Center

for Infectious Diseases, the US Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologists, the American Society for Microbiology, and the World Health Organization. The conference brings together 1,700 medical, public health and veterinary scientists to analyse current research, surveillance, and prevention and control programmes addressing all aspects of emerging infectious diseases. It comprises general and plenary sessions, symposia, panels of speakers, presentations on emerging infections activities, oral and poster presentations, and exhibits.

1 March The Australian Parliamentary Joint Committee on ASIO, ASIS and DSD releases its report on *Intelligence on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction*. The report clears the government of having lied about the threat posed by Iraqi weapons of mass destruction and that its presentation of the case for war was more moderate and measured than that of the UK [see 24 Sep 02] and the USA [see 4 Oct 02]. However, the report does state that the two Office of National Assessments (ONA) reports dated 12 and 13 September were markedly different. The 12 September report concluded that there was "no firm evidence of new CBW production". However, the 13 September report – provided at the behest of the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Alexander Downer – stated: "A range of intelligence and public information suggests that Iraq is highly likely to have chemical and biological weapons... Iraq has almost certainly been working to increase its capability to make chemical and biological weapons." The report says that it was the 13 September assessment which subsequently became the "basis for Government speeches". Apropos the ONA's intelligence assessments on the matter, the Committee recommends that the government conduct a further inquiry. Foreign Minister Alexander Downer says the report "vindicates the government's use of intelligence in stating the case for disarming Iraq".

1 March US Department of Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge announces the introduction of the National Incident Management System (NIMS) – a standardized management plan that creates a unified structure for federal, state, and local lines of government for incident response. "NIMS gives all of our Nation's responders the same framework for incident management and fully puts into practice the concept of 'one mission, one team, one fight'," says Ridge.

1 March In Rajasthan, India, during a military exercise – codenamed 'Divya Astra' ('Divine Weapon') – the Army performs operations with *inter alia* T-90 tanks armed, so ANI reports, "with a 125-mm gun, guided missiles and biological and chemical warfare systems".

2 March The US Institute of Medicine Board on Health Promotion and Disease Prevention releases *Veterans and Agent Orange: Length of Presumptive Period for Association Between Exposure and Respiratory Cancer*. The report states: "The available data on latency suggest that an increased risk of respiratory cancer occurs within 10 years of exposure. In many of the studies, the risk of respiratory cancer is still increased at the end of the follow-up period, or until 20 or 25 years after exposure began... Because there are no epidemiologic data on the length of time after exposure to TCDD ceases during which an increase in respiratory cancer is associated with that exposure, the committee cannot determine a period beyond which occurrence of respiratory cancer could no longer be presumed to be related to TCDD (that is, no upper limits on the latency or presumptive period could be determined). However, given the long latent period seen in epidemiologic studies (risks remaining increased up

to 25 years after exposure), the persistence of TCDD in the body, and the fact that the risk of respiratory cancer posed by some other agents remains increased for many decades after exposure has ended (50 years or more following cessation of exposure), the committee concludes that the effects of TCDD on respiratory cancer could last many decades."

3 March From Japan, the *Yomiuri Shimbun* reports the government as planning to stockpile sufficient smallpox vaccine for more than one hundred million people as an anti-bioterrorism countermeasure. The purpose of the move is to secure enough vaccine to fully deal with potential simultaneous terrorist attacks in Japan, and to be able to provide the vaccine as part of international medical support in case of attacks using smallpox virus overseas.

4 March The Canadian Foreign Affairs and International Trade Department announces that Canada has joined the International Science and Technology Center [see 15 Sep 03] in Moscow, which finances peaceful research by former Soviet WMD scientists. Canada plans to provide \$13 million annually to help fund projects conducted by the center, as part of its pledge to the G-8's \$20 billion Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction [see 26-27 Jun 02]. "Canada's accession to the center will allow us to contribute effectively to an organization that builds on international cooperation to enhance international safety and security," says Foreign Affairs Minister Bill Graham.

4 March US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Secretary Tommy Thompson announces the creation of the National Science Advisory Board for Biosecurity (NSABB). This follows last year's recommendation [see 8 Oct 03] by the National Research Council Committee on Research Standards and Practices to Prevent the Destructive Application of Biotechnology, chaired by Gerald Fink, that an advisory board be created given the potential misuse of the "tools, technology or potential knowledge base of research for offensive military or terrorist purposes". Managed by the NIH and advising the DHHS, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and all federal departments and agencies conducting or supporting life sciences research, the NSABB will specifically:

- i. advise on strategies for local and federal biosecurity oversight for all federally funded or supported life sciences research;
- ii. advise on the development of guidelines for biosecurity oversight of life sciences research and provide ongoing evaluation and modification of these guidelines as needed;
- iii. advise on strategies to work with journal editors and other stakeholders to ensure the development of guidelines for the publication, public presentation and public communication of potentially sensitive life sciences research;
- iv. advise on the development of guidelines for mandatory programs for education and training in biosecurity issues for all life scientists and laboratory workers at federally funded institutions; and
- v. provide guidance on the development of a code of conduct for life scientists and laboratory workers that can be adopted by federal agencies as well as professional organizations and institutions engaged in the performance of life sciences research domestically and internationally.

John Gordon, the President's special assistant for homeland security, says the new initiative would not directly regulate scientific research. "Our response must be carefully measured lest we do more harm than good in the name of biosecurity, and lest we somehow stifle the needed research that is so important to all of us," says Gordon. "Heavy-handed government regulation isn't the answer, but I think there is a

very appropriate government role," he adds.

4-5 March In London, there takes place the third Non-Proliferation and Disarmament Co-operation Initiative (NDCI) Conference, hosted by the UK government. With Lancaster House as its venue, the event brings together 180 participants, including representatives from the G8 countries, the European Commission and some Former Soviet Union (FSU) countries. The conference aims to: assess the current state of affairs of co-operative threat reduction in the FSU; assess the scale and nature of the task remaining; identify opportunities for new or expanded co-operation on specific project areas; and identify potential obstacles to early progress, lessons learned and new approaches. Formed three years ago [see 8-9 Mar 01], the NDCI is an informal group of countries involved in non-proliferation and disarmament activities in the FSU. Its projects include chemdemil, dismantlement of nuclear powered submarines and the retraining of ex-weapons scientists for peaceful purposes.

4-5 March In Lisbon, the fifth [see 8-10 Oct 03] plenary meeting of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), brings together representatives from Australia, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Singapore, Spain, the UK [see 25 Feb] and the USA. Following the meeting, the chairman releases a communiqué which reads thus: "Participants supported the call by US President Bush to expand the role of the PSI to not only interdict shipments of WMD, their delivery systems and related materials, but to cooperate in preventing WMD proliferation facilitators (i.e. individuals, companies, other entities) from engaging in this deadly trade... Participants agreed to pursue greater cooperation through military and intelligence services and law enforcement to shut down proliferation facilitators and bring them to justice. PSI participants agree to begin examining the key steps necessary for this expanded role, including: identifying national points of contact and Internal processes developed for this goal; developing and sharing national analyses of key proliferation actors and networks, their financing sources, and other support structures; undertaking national action to identify law enforcement authorities and other tools or assets that could be brought to bear against efforts to stop proliferation facilitators... While continuing to promote wide support for the Initiative, participants agreed to focus their outreach efforts particularly on states that have potentially unique contributions to make to interdiction efforts (i.e. flag states, transshipment states, overflight states, transit states and coastal states)... The participants discussed the proposed amendments to the Convention for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Safety of Maritime Navigation (SUA) that would criminalize the transport of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials on commercial vessels at sea... To commemorate the anniversary of the launching of the PSI [see 31 May 03], Poland offered to host a meeting in Krakow that will bring together all countries that support the PSI." A proposal by Portugal to invite African nations to a future PSI meeting "in a very near future" receives a positive response.

5 March In Beijing, a Sino-Japanese seminar on export controls brings together employees of around one hundred Chinese companies and high-ranking officials of trade-related ministries from both countries. Topics discussed include vigilance *vis-à-vis* products that could be diverted to the production of missiles and nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, and assembly methods for tracking systems that locate a product's end user. The seminar follows on from Japan's recent offer to share with China export-control expertise

and a list of export-restricted products. Starting in April, the Japanese government will hold similar seminars with other countries, especially in Southeast Asia, to strengthen the international export control network.

5 March At OPCW headquarters, having on 20 February made a partial declaration of its chemical weapons stockpiles, Libya submits a complete initial declaration of all its chemical weapons, chemical weapons production capacity and relevant, declarable commercial industrial activity. The declaration refers to approximately twenty-three metric tons of mustard gas, one inactive chemical weapons production facility and two chemical weapons storage facilities. No filled munitions [see 27 Feb] are declared. The OPCW will soon commence inspections at all declared sites and facilities and then, after the review and approval by the Executive Council, the final destruction process under international verification will commence. The complete destruction of Libya's chemical weapons and the capacity to produce them must to be completed by 29 April 2007.

5 March UK Prime Minister Tony Blair, during a speech in his constituency of Sedgefield on the continuing threat of global terrorism, speaks of the desirability of amending current international law to authorize pre-emptive military action [see also 20 Sep 02]. His remarks on the subject are as follows: "It may well be that under international law as presently constituted, a regime can systematically brutalise and oppress its people and there is nothing anyone can do, when dialogue, diplomacy and even sanctions fail, unless it comes within the definition of a humanitarian catastrophe... This may be the law, but should it be? We know now, if we didn't before, that our own self interest is ultimately bound up with the fate of other nations... Containment will not work in the face of the global threat that confronts us. The terrorists have no intention of being contained. The states that proliferate or acquire WMD illegally are doing so precisely to avoid containment. Emphatically I am not saying that every situation leads to military action. But we surely have a duty and a right to prevent the threat materialising; and we surely have a responsibility to act when a nation's people are subjected to a regime such as Saddam's. Otherwise, we are powerless to fight the aggression and injustice which over time puts at risk our security and way of life... It means reforming the United Nations so its Security Council represents 21st century reality; and giving the UN the capability to act effectively as well as debate."

5 March *The (London) Independent*, runs an interview with former Executive-Chairman of UNMOVIC Hans Blix, who says that the UK Attorney General's advice to the government, providing legal authorization for the invasion of Iraq [see 20 Mar 03] was erroneous. Blix – an international lawyer by training – says: "I don't buy the argument the war was legalised by the Iraqi violation of earlier resolutions... [I]t's the Security Council that is party to the ceasefire, not the UK and US individually, and therefore it is the council that has ownership of the ceasefire, in my interpretation." Blix continues: "I never said they had acted in bad faith. Perhaps it was worse that they acted out of good faith."

5 March In the USA, during a speech at the American Enterprise Institute, House Intelligence Committee member Jane Harman says "indications" were emerging from the committee's inquiry into pre-war intelligence that "potential sources may have been dismissed because they were telling us something we didn't want to believe: that Iraq had no active WMD programs." She adds: "The human sources we did have

were apparently less reliable than the intelligence community thought. That resulted in the skewing of our analysis.” [See also 17 Jun 03]

5 March In the USA, there is an International Peace Academy Conference on ‘Weapons of Mass Destruction and the United Nations: Diverse Threats and Collective Responses’. Participants include senior UN officials, diplomats, and members of think tanks and NGOs.

7 March *The (London) Observer* publishes an interview with the former UK Chief of Defence Staff, who reveals that a formal assurance, requested by him, that the invasion of Iraq would accord with international law, only arrived on 10 March 2003, and that the final authorisation only arrived on 15 March, just five days before the invasion commenced [see 20 Mar 03]. Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, who retired last May, says: “It would have been difficult for our people in the field, for the families of the troops and our commanders if we had not had the reassurance that what they were about to do was legal. Their doubts – if they had doubts – would have been exacerbated by the fact that we were signatories to the ICC [International Criminal Court].” The paper quotes an unidentified “senior Government legal source” as saying the Attorney-General Lord Goldsmith was then “sitting on the fence” and was forced to redraft this advice as the countdown to war continued. [See also 5 Mar]

9 March The US Armed Services Committee conducts a hearing on *Current and Future Worldwide Threats to the National Security of the United States*. Testifying before the committee are Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet and Defense Intelligence Agency Director Lowell Jacoby. In his testimony, repeating much of what he said two weeks previously to the Senate Select Intelligence Committee [see 24 Feb] Tenet says: “North Korea has longstanding CW and BW capabilities and is enhancing its BW potential as it builds its legitimate biotechnology infrastructure. Pyongyang is sending individuals abroad and is seeking dual-use expertise and technology... Damascus has an active CW development and testing program that relies on foreign suppliers for key controlled chemicals suitable for producing CW... [On a more general level,] unmanned aerial vehicles are also of growing concern. Under questioning from Senator Edward Kennedy, Tenet says there had been instances when he had warned administration officials that they were misstating the threat posed by Iraq. “I’m not going to sit here and tell you what my interaction was ...and what I did and didn’t do, except that you have to have confidence to know that when I believed that somebody was misconstruing intelligence, I said something about it”, says Tenet. “I don’t stand up publicly and do it.” He also says that he had told Vice-President Cheney that he was wrong in saying that two trailers recovered in Iraq were “conclusive evidence” that Saddam had a biological weapons programme [see 22 Jan].

9 March In the US House of Representatives, General Accounting Office (GAO) Director of International Affairs and Trade Joseph A Christoff testifies before the Committee on Government Reform’s Subcommittee on National Security, Emerging Threats, and International Affairs on *Nonproliferation: Improvements needed for Controls on Exports of Cruise Missile and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Technology*. Christoff’s testimony includes the following: “UAVs represent an inexpensive means of launching chemical and biological attacks against the United States and allied forces and territory... The widespread availability of commercial items, such as global positioning systems and lightweight

engines, has made it easier for countries and terrorists to acquire or build at least rudimentary cruise missile or UAV systems...[N]onmembers of multilateral export control regimes such as China and Israel continue to acquire, develop, and export cruise missile or UAV technology... This growing capability of nonmember supplier countries to develop technologies used for weapons of mass destruction and trade them with other countries of proliferation concern undermines the regimes’ ability to impede proliferation. In addition, the United States faces limitations in applying national export controls. [T]he US government finds it difficult to identify and track widely available dual-use items that are not on control lists but that can be used for cruise missile and UAV proliferation purposes... We recommended that the Secretary of State establish a strategy to work with other [Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) and Wassenaar Arrangement] regime members to enhance the effectiveness of the regimes by implementing a number of steps, including (1) adopting an automated information-sharing system in MTCR to facilitate more timely information exchanges, (2) sharing greater and more detailed information on approved exports of sensitive transfers to nonmember countries, (3) assessing alternative processes for reaching decisions, and (4) evaluating means for encouraging greater adherence to regime commitments... [The Department of] State has not been responsive in implementing the recommendation to establish a strategy to enhance the effectiveness of the regimes... [The Department of] Defense’s end-use monitoring program has conducted no end-use checks related to cruise missile or UAV transfers... “

Director of the Department of State Defense Trade Controls Directorate Robert Maggi testifies before the committee on the above findings of the GAO thus: “[T]he GAO paints an incomplete and fuzzy picture of our end-use check program and the level of controls over these exports... [B]ecause of MTCR controls the biggest threat of proliferation rest [sic] come from the United States and its allies, but rather from other countries that produce UAVs indigenously... [M]uch of the cruise missile/UAV proliferation that has occurred to date has posed a limited threat to the US homeland. The vast majority of cruise missiles and UAVs in the inventory of problem countries are battlefield models with short range and limited payload capacity – not longer-range land attack variants... We currently are engaged in a review of the United States Munitions List (USML), which lists the goods and services subject to State Department licensing authority. We are seeking to clarify the controls on UAVs by incorporating into the USML the range/ payload parameters for UAVs outlined in the [MTCR]. This change, which we intend to publish shortly, reflects our own increased attention to this potential threat.”

Also testifying before the committee is a senior fellow of the Monterey Institute Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Dennis Gormley, who says: “The notion that a terrorist group might entertain using a UAV is by no means far-fetched. One recent accounting of terrorist activity notes 43 recorded cases involving 14 terrorist groups in which remote-controlled delivery systems were ‘either threatened, developed or actually utilized,’ including al Qaeda plans to use unmanned airplanes to kill leaders at the 2002 G-8 summit in Genoa, Italy. Moreover, according to the London *Independent* newspaper, a British national held at Camp Delta, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, has confessed to being part of an al Qaeda plot to acquire a drone to attack the House of Commons with anthrax [see 30 Nov 03].”

10 March In Khanki, northern Iraq, as many as four hundred Iraqis belonging to the minority Muslim Yazid sect have been poisoned from apparently drinking water which had

been deliberately contaminated, according to the Kurdistan Democratic Party's *Daily Taakhi*. The report says that dozens of inhabitants were taken to hospital for severe poisoning with many subsequently dying from dehydration. The report says the incident was act of terrorism and follows a few days after graffiti was found on walls in Mosul, which called for the killing of the infidel Yazidis. The number of Yazidis who follow an offshoot sect of Shiism and consider themselves part of the Kurdish ethnicity is estimated at 10,000.

10 March Libyan leader Colonel Muammar Qadhafi's son Saif ul-Islam Qadhafi explains to a reporter from AFP why Libya decided to dismantle its weapons of mass destruction programmes [see 19 Dec 03]. The reasons he says were as follows: "The first reason is political, economic, cultural and military gains that were promised by the Western party with whom we were negotiating [the USA and the UK]... The temptation was really great. The second reason was that our problems with the West were a danger for us. So, if the West tells us it does not [want] to fight us and wants instead to build a partnership with us, why should we insist on being hostile to it? Third, and that's the main reason – we were developing weapons in preparation for a battle with the enemy [a reference to Israel according to AFP]. Then we saw that the Palestinians have achieved in five years of negotiations [with Israel] more than 50 years of armed struggle from Beirut, Tunis and Amman. Add to all this the fact that the leader [Muammar Qadhafi] had felt that the Arabs are exploiting him, mocking him and threatening him with the US card."

10 March The South African Constitutional Court denies the state leave to appeal against the acquittal of Wouter Basson by Pretoria High Court [see 11 Apr 02]. Nevertheless, it will have the opportunity to raise constitutional issues arising out of the Supreme Court of Appeal's dismissal of its application for leave to appeal the verdict [see 5 Nov 03]. Chief Justice Arthur Chaskalson says that Judge Willie Hartszenberg's decision not to recuse himself [see 7-16 Feb 00] – at the request of the Prosecution – was a constitutional matter as the impartial adjudication of disputes in both criminal and civil cases is the cornerstone of any fair legal system. On dropping six charges under the Riotous Assemblies Act as the crimes were committed outside SA, the court says there was a constitutional obligation on the state to prosecute offences that threatened the rights of citizens and an international obligation to prosecute crimes against humanity. With a view to considering an appeal, the court invites the state to submit further arguments, but it rejects the state's application to appeal against the acquittal of Basson.

10 March In the US Senate, the Armed Services Subcommittee on Emerging Threats Capabilities conducts a hearing on *The Defense Nuclear Nonproliferation Programs of the Department of Energy and the Cooperative Threat Reduction Programs of the Department of Defense in Review of the Defense Authorization Request for Fiscal Year 2005*. Deputy Under-Secretary of Defense for Technology Security Policy and Counterproliferation Lisa Bronson is one of two witnesses testifying before the committee. Of the CTR programme in Russia, she says: "[W]e estimate that there are approximately 40 institutes that were part of the Soviet biological weapons program. These institutes often contain extensive collections of dangerous pathogens. They face threats from within: underemployed experts, and from without: poorly secured facilities and weak inventory controls. We address this former Soviet BW threat by balancing carefully the risks of proliferation against Russia's compliance with international commitments... In the area of biological weapons

proliferation, we have asked the Russians to go ahead and sign with us a specific BW implementing agreement. The BW area is the only area where we don't have a specific implementing agreement. To date, the Russians have been intransigent and will not go ahead and sign that agreement. We are unable to go ahead and pursue additional funding to biological weapons proliferation issues with Russia until we get better assurances concerning their BW compliance."

The next day, Deputy-head of the Russian Munitions Agency Valery Spirande rejects Bronson's claims thus. "This is an old song. The United States attributes all of our medical institutions that work with pathogenic organisms to facilities that allegedly worked with weapons in the past. We need these pathogenic organisms to make vaccines, diagnostic, preventive and medical preparations. They have nothing to do with weapons... An official statement to this effect has been made at the United Nations. We supply information about facilities to international organizations every year. Such facilities are well known, and there is nothing secret about them."

10 March In the US Senate, the Committee on Foreign Relations conducts a hearing into *Nonproliferation and Arms Control: Strategic Choices*. Testifying before the committee are William Perry, Center for International Security and Co-operation, Stanford University; Arnold Kanter, Principal, Scowcroft Group; and Ashton B Carter, Co-Director of the Preventive Defense Project, John F Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University,

10 March In Florida, further to a previous application [see 27 Jan] to delay the consideration of a lawsuit brought by the widow of Robert Stevens, a journalist who died after coming into contact an anthrax-tainted letter, federal lawyers ask the court for a six-month suspension on national security grounds.

10 March In Lubbock, Texas, Dr Thomas Butler is sentenced to two years imprisonment for shipping plague samples to Tanzania without having first obtained the necessary permit and for defrauding Texas Tech University, his former employer [see 27 Jan], in unrelated research he performed for pharmaceutical companies [see 1 Dec 03]. Butler is also ordered to pay \$19,700 in federal fines and assessments and \$38,675 in restitution to his former employer. After being sentenced, Butler says: "I'm kind of disabled... I'm sitting here trying to endure it. I don't have any comment."

11 March In the USA, a research team from National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID) has found that a mild experimental smallpox vaccine known as modified vaccinia Ankara (MVA) is almost as effective as the standard smallpox vaccine in protecting monkeys against monkeypox, so the journal *Nature* reports. "This study shows that the MVA vaccine holds great promise as an alternative to the current vaccine," says Bernard Moss, the senior author on the paper. "Although MVA may not quite equal Dryvax (the only commercially available smallpox vaccine available in the USA) in its effectiveness, it did extraordinarily well, with all of the monkeys who were vaccinated with MVA..." In a separate study published in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Moss and his team found that, in addition to protecting healthy mice against a lethal form of the vaccinia virus, MVA protects mice with certain immune deficiencies as well. The team found that mice survived a deadly dose of vaccinia virus if they'd been immunized with MVA – even those mice that were lacking antibody-producing immune cells or special proteins that help alert killer T cells to an infection. The findings indicate that MVA may be a promising alternative to Dryvax in humans who are partially immuno-deficient.

12 March In southern Iraq, US forces have unloaded a cargo of parts for constructing weapons of mass destruction, according to the Iranian Mehr news agency, quoting "a reliable source from the Iraqi Governing Council speaking on condition of anonymity". The said source says that in order to avoid suspicion, ordinary cargo ships were used and the cargo unloaded during the night – with connivance of UK forces who are patrolling the southern Iraqi ports – at the time when attention was focused on the bombings in Karbala and the signing of Iraq's interim constitution. Shane Wolf, a security official working for the occupying forces, says he has received no reports on such events, but says he hopes that the coalition forces would find the Iraqi weapons of mass destruction one day.

12 March The *Washington Post* reports the US administration as preparing to purchase a further seventy-five million doses of experimental anthrax vaccine to the two million doses already ordered – enough to vaccinate twenty-five million people. Referring to bidding documents released the previous day, the newspaper states that VaxGen Inc, USA, and Avecia Ltd, UK, have won contracts to make an early stockpile of the vaccine, sufficient to inoculate two million people. The stockpile is projected to cost at least \$700 million on top of the \$200 million already spent.

15 March At OPCW headquarters, the Chairman of the OPCW Staff Council, Gordon Vachon, writes an open letter to the Director-General, Rogelio Pflirter, asking that it be copied to the Chairmen of the Conference of the States Parties and the Executive Council. The letter "reflects the views we have repeatedly heard from staff members, including their wish that these views be expressed in a tangible way." The letter states: "We are dismayed by the lack of transparency and harmonised procedures in relation to internal decision-making on the application of tenure, most notably in regard to the actual criteria being applied and the reasons being given to staff members for their non-extension. We are concerned that the implementation of current personnel policies are already having a negative impact on the operational effectiveness of the Secretariat, and that the negative impact will soon be greater due to voluntary departures as well as continued 'managed attrition' of excellent performers. We are concerned that irremedial damage will already have been done by the time it is possible, as stated in your recent report, 'to comprehensively assess the diverse and complex impact of the implementation of tenure on the Secretariat.'" The letter continues: "Let us banish the word 'transparency' from our vocabulary where personnel policy is concerned, as it incites ridicule among staff members. Let us also banish any reference to staff 'morale'. There is none or, if there is any at all, it is fast approaching the zero-mark on any conceivable scale. The Staff Council cannot simply sit idly by while all of this happens, to the detriment of the Organisation. It will, at the very least, make its voice heard." On the loss of expertise from the Technical Secretariat, the letter states that many staff members are "concerned about the deconstruction of something they helped to create. There is a need to assess, and to take determined action to compensate for, the loss of institutional knowledge arising from the many years of experience and preparation (for example, on how to conduct a challenge inspection or an investigation of alleged use, should there ever be a requirement to implement such provisions). We do not deny that good people will continue to be recruited. However, the point is that our pool of experience is already being depleted, and this will continue to happen at an increasing rate."

The following day, Vachon appears before the

Management Board of the Secretariat and repeats the request that the letter be copied to the Chairman of the Executive Council. In agreeing to this request, Director-General Pflirter advises the Staff Council to review the letter beforehand. The Staff Council meets again and drafts a revised letter which it sends to Pflirter and forwards to the Chairman of the Executive Council. The revised letter includes the following: "It is indeed regrettable that the situation has deteriorated to the point where the Staff Council believes it has no other recourse but to act publicly in this way. Unfortunately, many of our attempts to engage 'senior management' for over more than a year have received little or no substantive response on the crucial issues contained herein."

15 March The US Department of Defense releases a report, in redacted form, on the 2001 anthrax attacks, as had been requested a year earlier. Written by David Heyman of the Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) and entitled *Lessons from the Anthrax Attacks: Implications for US Bioterrorism Preparedness*, the report is based on a one-day forum convened by CSIS under contract to the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA) in December 2001. Since submitting the report to DTRA in April 2002, CSIS had been urging the DoD to release the report, but the Department refused. The redacted release is a response to a Freedom of Information Act request by FAS. On releasing the redacted report, the Chief of the DoD FOIA Policy Office informs FAS that "the information withheld from the report concerns vulnerabilities and capabilities of the US Government to respond to another Anthrax or similar WMD attack. The withheld portions, if released, could circumvent Department of Defense rules and practices established to prevent the spread of information associated with WMD. This material could potentially aid enemies of the US in development of techniques to defeat WMD response efforts of the US Government."

The report states: "Bacillus anthracis is the most studied pathogen of possible biological agents, the use of mailed letters as a delivery mechanism provided a readily identifiable, overt means of attack; and the areas attacked were for the most part easy to isolate. Despite this, the anthrax attacks revealed weaknesses in almost every aspect of US biopreparedness and response." It continues: "Biological weapons have the potential to cause casualties equal to, or far greater than, nuclear weapons. Thus, US preparations for a bio-attack should be of at least the same magnitude as those developed for responding to potential nuclear attacks." The report states that: "The failure to communicate a clear message to the public was one of the greatest problems observed during the anthrax attacks. Government officials (on all levels) were unsuccessful in mounting an effective public relations campaign because of failures in two key areas: (1) failure to provide timely and accurate information, and (2) failure to disseminate unified, coordinated messages to the public through consistent official spokespersons." An article in the *New York Times* reveals some of the information not included in the redacted version. The redacted version reads: "The fall 2001 anthrax attacks may turn out to be ... to confront." According to the newspaper, the deleted passage reads: "the easiest of bioterrorist strikes."

15 March Former Iraq Survey Group (ISG) head David Kay says that Iraq did not fully account for the destruction of its prohibited stockpiles because "some were destroyed in ways that [it was] embarrassed to admit". Making his comments during an interview with *Arms Control Today* Kay continues: "Some disappeared in the normal chaos and accidents that occurred. Realize they fought two wars they lost before this one – the Iran-Iraq war and the Persian Gulf War – and

so, and those weapons, the unresolved amounts, revolved around importation of goods prior to the 1991 Gulf War and had been used to a large extent in the Iranian War. We figured out exactly in each one by piecing it together ... and some of these explanations are terribly embarrassing to the Iraqis. Like I say, one major one involves disposal of weapons material and biological agents in ways that were not only not approved, but dangerous to the health of people in Baghdad, or thought to be. And so they just covered it up, and they weren't going to tell anyone that they had gotten rid of it that way." On international inspections, Kay says: "I actually have come to the conclusion that international inspection is even more important now than it ever was. The on-the-ground examination of what's going on is irreplaceable as to what it can do... I think if there is effective inspection, the need for unilateral pre-emptive action becomes much less critical. And the type of pre-emptive action that you might need, if you were to need it, becomes much less. You don't have to defeat a country, you may at some point decide you have to take out a facility [if] international inspectors are being denied access. That's really a lot different."

16 March In Iraq, there are ceremonies to commemorate the 16th anniversary of the chemical attack on the Kurdish town of Halabja [see 18 Mar 88 and 31 Jan 03]. In Halabja, Coalition Provisional Authority administrator Paul Bremer says: "[T]here is something especially evil and repugnant about the terrorism in Halabja. For here the government itself was the terrorist. The government itself turned its might and power on its own people, using the most odious chemical weapons to slaughter 5,000 people. For those in my country and elsewhere who unaccountably still ask if it was worth ridding the people of Iraq of Saddam Hussein, I say: come to Halabja." Bremer is also reported as saying: "I can promise you that justice will be done against the men who committed these acts. At the appropriate time, Saddam Hussein [...] and all the other criminals will face justice before the special tribunal." Bremer says that the coalition will establish a US\$1 million fund for the town.

16 March In Moscow, environmental and human rights activists criticize the Russian government's chemdemil programme. Lev Fyodorov of the Union for Chemical Safety, speaking at a news conference, says: "The entire state machine is deliberately violating all possible laws, regulations and procedures for disposing of chemical weapons." Other activists accuse the Russian government of mismanaging funds, including those they have received from Western countries.

16 March The UK House of Commons Defence Committee publishes its report on *Lessons of Iraq*. On the provision of NBC equipment to service personnel deployed on Operation Telic, the report states: "[T]here were serious shortcomings in the supply and distribution system and the required levels of detection and protection were not always available to everyone. [...] It was fortuitous that service personnel did not suffer as a consequence, but had the Iraqis used chemical weapons systematically, as employed in the Iran-Iraq war, the operational consequences would have been severe. The lack of armoured vehicle filters seems to us to be a matter of the utmost seriousness." [see also 11 Dec 03].

16 March In the US, there are media reports about the provision by the Iraqi National Congress of exaggerated information regarding Iraq's suspected weapons of mass destruction programmes. The reports cite a 26 June 2002 letter from the INC to the US Senate Appropriations Committee list-

ing 108 media articles based on information provided by the INC's Information Collection Program, funded by the US Congress. The information reinforced claim's that Iraq had links to al-Qaeda, was developing nuclear weapons and hiding chemical and biological stockpiles. The letter says that information had been fed to Arab and Western news media and to officials in the offices of US Vice-President Dick Cheney and Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. According to Knight Ridder news service, "many of the allegations came from the same half-dozen defectors, were not confirmed by other intelligence and were hotly disputed by intelligence professionals at the CIA, the Defense Department and the State Department."

16 March In Pahrump, Nevada, officials from the National Nuclear Security Administration's Nevada Site Office brief Nye County commissioners on proposals for open-air releases of chemical and biological agents at the Nevada Test Site and update them on progress in the preparation of the necessary environmental assessment. Mike Skougard of the NNSA tells the councillors: "We are looking at the potential for explosive releases, or releases from ground transportation from cars, and aircraft releases. These are all to try and allow [...] our customers, which in some cases includes parts of DOE, to try and learn how to identify and track potential releases of these chemicals." He says that agents to be released at the Hazmat Spill Center include non-lethal chemicals and four kinds of bacteria that are already common in the environment, as well as 'killed' or non-infectious influenza virus. He also says: "Release of some chemicals, probably not biologicals, could result in some slight mortality for small animals and plants" and that the NNSA hopes to conduct between five and twenty releases a year for local, state and other federal agencies.

16 March In Washington, a White House interagency group meets to consider which of the sanctions provided for under the *Syria Accountability Act of 2003* to impose, so it is reported. On a radio talk show, Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage says: "There is not a question of sanctions, there will be sanctions, and there will be very firm sanctions very soon."

16-17 March In Rome, at the NATO Defense College, the NATO Senior Politico-Military Group on Proliferation co-sponsors a conference on *Future Challenges for Non-Proliferation Instruments*. The conference includes a theme on "International Cooperation in Addressing the Risks Related to Biological Agents" to which Ronald McCoy, president of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW), and Jean-Pascal Zanders, director of the BioWeapons Prevention Project (BWPP), speak.

17 March In the US House of Representatives, the Armed Services Committee conducts a hearing on *Combating the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction*. Testifying are: Dr Larry Wortzel, Vice President and Director of the Heritage Foundation Davis Institute for International Policy Studies; Gary Milhollin, the Director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control; and Dr Ashton Carter, the Co-Director of the Preventive Defense Project at the Harvard University Kennedy School of Government.

18 March In Warsaw, President Aleksander Kwasniewski says that Poland was "misled" with regard to Iraq's possession of weapons of mass destruction. He says: "I personally think that today, Iraq without Saddam Hussein is a truly better Iraq than with Saddam Hussein. But naturally I

also feel uncomfortable due to the fact that we were misled with the information on weapons of mass destruction."

18 March From Paris, French Foreign Minister Dominique de Villepin repeats his proposal to establish a UN "disarmament corps" which would "in crisis situations ... go on the spot and inform the Security Council". Meanwhile, the Paris *Le Monde* reports from New York that only 51 staff remain at UNMOVIC headquarters but that Interim Executive Chairman Demetrius Perricos has succeeded in holding on to the US\$200 million budget which should fund the Commission for "at least" two more years. The staff are currently working on a guide to the bombs and munitions that exist in Iraq and a 'compendium' to take stock of the history that began in the 1960s, when Iraq formed a body of scientists supposedly to defend the population against the chemical threat. The newspaper reports that during one of the last inspections in 2003, Philippe Michel, a French specialist in biological weapons, was able to verify from samples that 130 R-400 biological bombs had indeed been destroyed at the Al-Aziziyah side [see 7 Mar 03], as the Iraqis had stated. But the inspectors had been seeking 157 such bombs. *Le Monde* quotes Michel as saying "we will never have definitive proof" of what happened to the other 27 bombs.

18 March The US Department of Commerce announces revisions to the Export Administration Regulations in the light of understandings reached at the most recent meeting of the Australia Group [see 2-5 Jun 03] and in a subsequent intersessional decision. A total of twelve viruses (Kyasanur Forest virus, Louping ill virus, Murray Valley encephalitis virus, Omsk haemorrhagic fever virus, Oropouche virus, Powassan virus, Rocio virus, St Louis encephalitis virus, Hendra virus [equine morbillivirus], South American haemorrhagic fever [Sabia, Flexal, Guanarito], pulmonary and renal syndrome-haemorrhagic fever viruses [Seoul, Dobrava, Puumala, Sin Nombre] and Nipah virus) and two bacteria (*Clostridium perfringens*, epsilon toxin producing types, and enterohaemorrhagic *Escherichia coli*, serotype 0157) are added to the Commerce Control List as a result of the AG meeting. As a result of the intersessional decision, two animal pathogens (lumpy skin disease virus and African horse sickness virus) are also added.

18 March In New York, US District Judge Jack Weinstein [see 29 Dec 94] convenes a pre-trial discussion of a civil lawsuit [see 10 Jan] brought by Vietnamese plaintiffs against 36 US companies, including Dow Chemicals and Monsanto, for exposure to Agent Orange.

The writ, lodged by the plaintiffs on 30 January, argues: "72. The herbicidal warfare program [during the Vietnam War] was considered by most of the international community to be a violation of international law and a war crime. As early as 1966, resolutions were introduced at the United Nations charging the United States with violations of the 1925 Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare. 73. In 1969, the United Nations General Assembly approved Resolution No. 2603-A, restating that the 1925 Geneva Protocol prohibited the use of chemical or biological agents against plants in international armed conflicts. The resolution specifically declared as a violation of that treaty, the use of any chemical agents of warfare, whether gaseous, liquid or solid, which might be employed because of their direct toxic effects on man, animals or plants. The United States did not accept this interpretation and voted against the resolution. The resolution was adopted, however, on December 16, 1969 by a vote of 80 to 3 with 36 abstentions."

According to reports, Judge Weinstein says it is unclear whether the 1925 Geneva Protocol ban on the use of poison gases in warfare also would apply to herbicides, which it did not mention. He notes, however, that the United Nations declared their use illegal in 1969. Judge Weinstein says: "This case involves human rights issues of great significance, and it has got to be decided promptly." The case is expected to last about six months.

18 March In the US, the Sunshine Project releases interim results from its transparency survey of Institutional Biosafety Committees at federally-funded US laboratories. Of the 389 IBCs which have received a request for information, 196 (50.4 per cent) have replied.

19 March In Libya, OPCW inspectors complete initial inspections during which they verify the accuracy of Libya's chemical weapons declaration [see 5 Mar]. The declared Libyan stockpile includes approximately 23 metric tonnes of mustard gas, as well as over 1,300 metric tonnes of precursor chemicals. In addition, one inactivated chemical weapons production facility, as well as two chemical weapons storage facilities, have been declared. The inspectors verify the inactivation of the chemical weapons production facility, inventory all declared chemical weapons and related equipment and verify that the chemical weapons and equipment have been secured. A day later, an unidentified US official is quoted as saying that Libya has submitted two options for the destruction of its mustard gas stockpile; either incineration or neutralization. The precursor chemicals will be either incinerated, neutralized or mixed with cement, the official says. The official also estimates that it will take up to two years to convert the Pharma 150 chemical weapons production facility to peaceful purposes.

19 March In New Jersey, a public meeting is held to discuss the US Army's plans [see 9 Jan] to ship VX hydrolysate from the Newport Chemical Depot in Indiana to DuPont's Secure Environmental Treatment facility on the Delaware River. The meeting is attended by over 300 local residents, many of whom are unconvinced by Army and DuPont officials who state that the process is safe. Another public meeting is held two days later in Wilmington, Delaware, at which similar concerns are raised. The public comment period ends on 19 April. Two days later, the US Army announces that it is to send samples of VX from Newport to the Edgewood Chemical and Biological Center and a contractor laboratory in Illinois where they will be neutralized. The resultant hydrolysate will be tested to ensure, according to Depot commander Lt-Col Joseph Marquart, "that we are prepared to safely destroy the VX at Newport". The plan to transport the hydrolysate from Indiana to Delaware has also provoked opposition from residents living along the proposed routes the shipments will have to take.

19-21 March At Wiston House in the UK, there is a Wilton Park conference on *Chemical and Biological Terrorism* convened in cooperation with the Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute (CBACI).

20 March In Tokyo, commemorations take place to mark the ninth anniversary of the Aum Shinrikyo sarin gas attack on the city's subway.

21-24 March In Washington, members of the UK Committee to Review Intelligence on Weapons of Mass Destruction [see 3 Feb], including its chairman Lord Butler, visit the headquarters of the CIA and meet with "senior

members of the US administration”, so the London *Independent on Sunday* later quotes a Cabinet Office spokeswoman as saying. The newspaper reports that the committee members receive a confidential briefing from CIA officials and also meet with their US counterparts from the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction [see 2 Feb].

22 March US Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, visiting Japan, tells the Tokyo *Asahi Shimbun* that a biological weapons attack in the US or Japan is certain. He says: “It is not if there is going to be an attack in Japan, it is when it is going to be. Japan is going to have a bio-terrorism attack sometime in the future, just like America is going to have.” In the interview, Thompson urges Japan to adopt a comprehensive plan to deal with bio-terrorism as the US has done: “I urge your government to come and see what I am doing and look at ways in which they could replicate the same things in Japan.”

22 March In Israel, the Supreme Court, sitting as the High Court of Justice, is petitioned to forbid continued spraying of chemical herbicide to destroy Bedouin crops in the Negev by the Israel Land Authority (ILA) [see 15 Feb 03]. The petition is submitted by The Legal Center for Arab Minority Rights in Israel (Adalah) on behalf of several non-governmental organizations, including Physicians for Human Rights and the Negev Coexistence Forum. ILA spraying had commenced in February, replacing physical crop-destruction methods: helicopters had sprayed some 190 hectares of unauthorized cultivation with the glyphosine salt marketed as Roundup. The following day, the Court issues a temporary injunction prohibiting any further spraying until the Court has had the opportunity to rule on the case.

22 March The UK government’s Security and Intelligence Coordinator, Sir David Omand, tells the *Security Threats in a Networked World* conference at the Royal Institute of International Affairs that al-Qaeda has a growing interest in getting hold of chemical and biological weapons.

22 March UK Defence Ministry Under Secretary of State and Minister for Veterans, Ivor Caplin, responds to a written parliamentary question on research into the health effects of anti-anthrax vaccines given to military personnel and medical auxiliaries involved in the Gulf War against Iraq in 1991 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003: “No research has been carried out specifically on the possible adverse health effects of the anthrax vaccine given to personnel involved in Operation Granby or Operation Telic. However, the results of a research project on the safety of the anthrax vaccine in randomly selected military personnel due to be deployed on Operation Bolton [the UK contribution to the enforcement of the no-fly zones] were published in the journal, ‘Vaccine’, in 2003. ... The study was funded by the Ministry of Defence, but the MOD had no editorial input into its conduct, methodology, or findings. No serious side effects were observed, and the study concluded that the modest incidence of side effects supported the stance that the anthrax vaccination is safe.”

22 March In the US, Free Press publishes *Against All Enemies: Inside America’s War on Terror* by Richard Clarke, who had served under both Presidents Clinton and Bush as National Coordinator for Security, Infrastructure Protection and Counter-Terrorism. In the book, Clarke reveals how, immediately after the 11 September attacks, President Bush asked him to investigate whether Iraq was behind the attacks.

Clarke argues that the Bush Administration was too focused on dealing with Iraq, that it failed to focus on the direct threat posed by al-Qaeda.

In the days following the book’s publication, senior members of the Bush Administration, including Vice-President Dick Cheney and National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, publicly criticize Clarke and dispute his version of events. Cheney says: “He was here throughout those eight years, going back to 1993, and the first attack on the World Trade Center; and ‘98, when the embassies were hit in East Africa; in 2000, when the USS Cole was hit. And the question that ought to be asked is, what were they doing in those days when he was in charge of counterterrorism efforts?” Rice responds by saying: “It makes perfectly good sense that when you’re thinking about against whom are you going to retaliate, that you keep an open mind. And the president asked about Iraq. It was a logical question, given our history with Iraq. But I can tell you ... that when we got to Camp David on Sept. 15, it was a map of Afghanistan that was spread out on the table.”

22 March In Washington, the US Administration releases estimates for coca production in 2003 in Colombia which show a 21 per cent decline in coca cultivation during the year. US Assistant Secretary of State for International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs Robert Charles says: “Thanks to President Uribe’s unwavering support for an aggressive, State Department backed Colombian National Police aerial eradication program, substantially less coca is being grown in Colombia, and real progress is being made against the scourge of cocaine. The numbers show the American taxpayers’ investment is paying off. This is good news for Colombians, others in the region and the United States.” The controversial US-funded eradication programme [see 13 Jun 03] uses aerial spraying of a glyphosate-based herbicide mixture to destroy the crops.

23 March The US Chemical Materials Agency announces that, by December 2003, the US had destroyed 80 per cent of its chemical weapons production capacity, 16 months ahead of the CWC-mandated deadline of April 2005. The milestone was reached during demolition activities at the Pine Bluff Arsenal.

23 March US Homeland Security Adviser John Gordon tells the 2004 Sam Nunn Bank of America Policy Forum at the Georgia Institute of Technology in Atlanta that “the biological threat is serious, it is real, it must be dealt with. There is nowhere where we are doing more right now, and nowhere in homeland security where we have further to go.” The theme of the Policy Forum is *Bioterrorism Preparedness: The Imperative for a Public-Private Partnership*. Besides Gordon’s keynote address, there are panels on “Bioterrorism preparedness: Assessment of capabilities and deficiencies”, “Developing working partnerships” and “Securing the food chain from bio-hazards”.

23 March In the US, *Salon* and *Rolling Stone* magazines publish a joint investigation highlighting deficiencies in the security of commercial chemical facilities in the US. In one case, the Environmental Protection Agency had to spend \$8.5 million decontaminating a commercial laboratory in Tennessee which had been used to produce and store large quantities of toxic chemicals such as perfluoroisobutene (PFIB), chlorine and phosgene. According to Dan Hawkins, an official with the Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation: “Nothing ever came close to this from a purely ‘this will hurt you today’ standpoint. I was shocked. I was scared. I was in a state of disbelief at all the things that

he had. Some of this stuff was so far off the chart as far as being dangerous. It was just the worst of all nightmares.” The chemist in charge of the laboratory, Edward Tyczkowski, had produced a quantity of PFIB under a \$137,000 contract for the US Chemical and Biological Defense Command in 1990 and had simply kept the surplus chemical. According to the magazines, the Army’s use for the chemical remains classified although the article notes that, at the time, US officials were concerned that the USSR or other Eastern Bloc states had weaponized PFIB.

23-26 March At OPCW headquarters, the Executive Council reconvenes [see 2-5 Dec 03] for its thirty-sixth regular session [see *Progress in the Hague* above for further details]. A delegation from Libya attends the session for the first time. The Technical Secretariat submits a report on its recently-completed initial inspection in Libya [see 19 Mar] and Council members express their appreciation for Libya’s contribution to the OPCW’s common goal of the complete elimination of chemical weapons.

Addressing the session, US Permanent Representative Eric Javits says: “[T]he threat of CW remains, not least because some countries still pursue chemical weapons programs. We must demonstrate consistently and forcefully to such countries that pursuing CW is unacceptable and will be counterproductive to achieving other key national objectives. Syria is a prime example of a State not party to the CWC that has sought CW-related precursors and expertise from foreign sources. We believe Syria has a stockpile of the nerve agent sarin, and is trying to develop more toxic and persistent agents. We urge Syria to follow Libya’s example and forgo these weapons, join the CWC, and work with the OPCW to destroy its stockpile and production capability.” Ambassador Javits continues: “North Korea is another State not party to the CWC that we believe has acquired dual-use chemicals that could be used to support its long-standing chemical warfare program. We believe North Korea’s chemical warfare capabilities include the ability to produce bulk quantities of nerve, blister, choking, and blood agent. We also believe North Korea possesses a variety of delivery means for these chemical weapons. We strongly urge North Korea to join the CWC and declare its stockpile and production capability. Working with the OPCW and other member states, it should destroy these weapons once and for all.”

24 March From New Delhi, the DRDO (Defense Research and Development Organization) chief and scientific adviser to the Defence Minister, Dr VK Atre, announces that the government is to establish specialized centres around India to respond to any possible chemical or biological attack. Each centre would have access to vaccines, antidotes and equipment. DRDO is hosting a meeting with pharmaceutical companies which it hopes can contribute to the new programme. DRDO is already developing an anthrax vaccine in association with the Institute of Genomics and Integrative Biology.

24 March In Russia, at the Gorny chemical weapons destruction facility, tests begin of an experimental process to neutralize the by-products of the destruction of mustard gas and lewisite. Since the facility destroyed its stockpile of mustard gas in late 2003, it has destroyed 29 tons of lewisite. Once the lewisite has been destroyed, the facility will then destroy the remaining lewisite-mustard gas mixture and the by-products from the chemdemil processes.

24 March In the UN Security Council, the UK and the US introduce a draft resolution on the proliferation of

weapons of mass destruction which has now been agreed with the other three permanent Council members during five months of negotiations since it was first proposed by US President George Bush [see 23 Sep 03]. P-5 agreement was finally reached when the US agreed to Chinese demands to drop references to the interdiction of shipping suspected of carrying weapons of mass destruction. Defending this concession, US Permanent Representative John Negroponte says: “There’s nothing in this resolution that precludes the continuation of the Proliferation Security Initiative ... which is being conducted under existing international law.” The draft resolution will now be discussed with the 10 non-permanent members of the Security Council but it is unclear when it will be put to a vote, although Ambassador Negroponte says that he hopes to move the draft forward “as expeditiously as possible”.

25 March In Israel, the Sub-Committee for Intelligence and the Secret Services of the Knesset Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee publishes a critical report entitled *The Committee of Enquiry into the Intelligence System in Light of the War in Iraq* [see also 4 Dec 03]. The report criticizes Israel’s intelligence services for not reacting quickly enough to the withdrawal of UNSCOM inspectors in 1998. The report states: “The Committee determines that the varied information that the intelligence services did manage to garner by various intelligence-collection means prior to the war did not succeed in providing unequivocal indicators of the existence of non-conventional capabilities or of the existence of ground-to-ground missiles and their launchers in Iraq. At the same time, they were incapable of disproving the existence of these means of warfare in Iraq and of reducing concerns about them.” It continues: “The likelihood of the destruction or concealment of these means of warfare in the vast expanses of Iraq, as well as the possibility that they were moved to Syria on the eve of the war, still exists.”

During the course of its inquiry, numerous senior members of the Government appeared before the Sub-Committee, including Prime Minister Ariel Sharon, Defence Minister Shaul Mofaz, Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Moshe Ya’alon and the heads of the intelligence and security services. The inquiry also had access to thousands of documents, including raw intelligence material on Iraq. On the major challenges to Israel’s national security over the past decade, Iran, Iraq and Libya, the report states: “With all due respect to innovative methods and brilliant operations which took place in all the above three cases these do not add up to the minimal achievement required in matters so essential to our national security. Thus, for example, the idea that a hostile Arab country like Libya, with a leader as unpredictable as Gaddafi, could have developed an elaborate nuclear industry without Israel’s intelligence services giving it the necessary early warning to tackle the threat, or at least to prepare for it in good time, is simply intolerable. So, too, is the thought that our partial blindness regarding the real scope of Libya’s nuclear development might be repeated in other countries.”

On the subject of international intelligence cooperation, the inquiry found that “the uniform international intelligence evaluation in relation to Iraq took root to a certain extent through a sort of vicious circle and by way of repeated reciprocal feedback, which often caused more damage than benefit.”

25 March In Italy, the Milan *Corriere della Sera* reports the interrogation of a Tunisian suspected of links to al-Qaeda who claims that the group were planning poison gas attacks on the metro systems in Rome and Milan. The authorities condemn the publication of the information and

announce that there is no concrete evidence of imminent threats.

25 March In Tripoli, UK Prime Minister Tony Blair arrives for the first visit by a senior Western politician to Libya since its renunciation of weapons of mass destruction [see 19 Dec 03]. After a meeting with Libyan leader, Colonel Gaddafi, Prime Minister Blair says: "If we can show nations with dangerous nuclear, or chemical, or biological weapons programmes that they can give them up voluntarily and be then met with a serious and considered response, it will offer us and them a way forward from the enmity of the past that will improve the lives and security of us all."

25 March In the UK, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs announces the publication of *The Strategic National Guidance for the Decontamination of the Open Environment Exposed to Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear Substances or Material*. Developed by the Home Office led Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear Resilience Programme, the guidance is designed to help those organisations that may be involved in responding to a release of CBRN materials – Government departments, local authorities, businesses, emergency services and the wider emergency planning community. Beverley Hughes, the Home Office Minister responsible for overseeing CBRN contingency planning says: "Publication of this guidance does not signal any new threat to the UK. It is part of a continuous process of sensible contingency planning for dealing with CBRN incidents, whatever the cause. The CBRN Resilience Programme is co-ordinated across Government, and is focused on developing the capabilities needed for a resilient response." The document states that "in order to provide further advice and assistance to those involved" the Government is "actively considering the establishment of a national decontamination and recovery service."

25 March In the UK, research is published which finds a 40 per cent increased risk of miscarriage among pregnancies fathered by veterans of the 1991 Gulf War than by non-Gulf War veterans and which also finds that male Gulf War veterans reported a higher proportion of offspring with any type of malformation than the comparison cohort. However, the researchers also state: "We found no evidence for a link between paternal deployment to the Gulf war and increased risk of stillbirth, chromosomal malformations, or congenital syndromes. Associations were found between fathers' service in the Gulf war and increased risk of miscarriage and less well-defined malformations, but these findings need to be interpreted with caution as such outcomes are susceptible to recall bias. The finding of a possible relationship with renal anomalies requires further investigation. There was no evidence of an association between risk of miscarriage and mothers' service in the gulf." The research was funded by the Ministry of Defence and is published in the *International Journal of Epidemiology*.

25 March The Office of Inspector-General of the US Department of Health and Human Services issues a *Summary Report on Select Agent Security at Universities* which reveals "serious weaknesses" compromising select agent security at all 11 universities reviewed. In early 2002, the OIG had initiated a programme to review select agent security at 11 unidentified universities that received National Institutes of Health funding for research involving select agents. The objectives of the review were to assess: physical security at the locations where select agents were used, stored, or planned

to be used or stored; compliance with the select agent transfer regulation; controls over select agent access by 'restricted persons' as defined by the USA PATRIOT Act [see 26 Oct 01]; and controls over information technology resources that process, store, or transmit select agent information.

The report states: "Serious weaknesses compromised the security of select agents at all universities reviewed. Physical security weaknesses at all 11 universities left select agents vulnerable to theft or loss, thus elevating the risk of public exposure. Inadequate inventory and recordkeeping procedures at all 11 universities prevented us from concluding that universities had complied with select agent transfer requirements. In the area of restricted persons, at least half of the universities had inadequate procedures to identify persons barred from accessing select agents under the USA PATRIOT Act. Finally, at five universities that used information technology resources for select agent data, we noted control weaknesses that could compromise the security and integrity of that data."

The OIG issued individual reports to each university reviewed containing recommendations with which the universities generally agreed and have begun to implement, although this has not been verified by OIG. The report notes that new requirements regarding select agent security were introduced by the *Public Health Security and Bioterrorism Preparedness and Response Act of 2002* [see 12 Jun 02] after the fieldwork was completed. It states that OIG will conduct further university reviews in 2004 to assess compliance with these new requirements.

26 March Greece has requested assistance from NATO – in the form of air-traffic control, joint patrolling of the sea and protection against a nuclear, biological or chemical attack – during the Olympic Games, according to a Foreign Ministry communiqué. NATO now agrees to the request, so it is reported. In addition, at the request of the Greek government, a Czech biological warfare detection battalion will be on standby for the Games. Two days later, Israel's security adviser to the Games, Major-General David Tsur, tells Reuters that "the one main gap the Greeks have yet to bridge is in preparing for the sort of coordination demanded by major terrorist attacks, especially when there are biological or chemical agents involved."

26 March In Brussels, the European Commission adopts a working paper on *Community Influenza Pandemic Preparedness and Response Planning*. The introduction to the paper says that it "should serve as a launchpad for a debate on co-ordinating preparedness against influenza and on recommendations that can be made in this respect. This will be done in parallel with the development of a general plan for public health emergencies that the Health Ministers requested following the SARS outbreak, and will provide the basis for a specific component of this general plan in order to fine-tune measures in respect of an influenza pandemic."

26 March From OPCW headquarters, the Technical Secretariat announces to states parties that all official-series documents issued since the beginning of 2003 are to be made available on the OPCW's external database. Documents from previous years will be uploaded to the external server as resources allow. The new system, which utilizes standard web browser software and pdf format documents replaces the previous system under which states parties had to have Lotus Notes software installed on their computers and documents were posted in Microsoft Word format. Access to the database will only be granted on request to the OPCW Information Systems Branch and will require passwords for secure access.

26 March In the US, a report on *Future Strategic Strike Forces* by the Department of Defense Defense Science Board which proposes exploring the use of calmativ chemicals as strategic weapons is posted on the internet. The report is intended to suggest a broad range of strategic strike options for deployment over the next 30 years. The report states: "Calmatives might be considered to deal with otherwise difficult situations in which neutralizing individuals could enable ultimate mission success. The principle technical issue is the balance between effectiveness (i.e., the targets are truly "calmed") and margins of safety (i.e., avoiding overexposure and resulting fatalities of neutral bystanders)." However, the report also notes that: "The treaty implications are significant." The report goes on to propose the development of "non-lethal effects directed at the physiological or psychological functions of specific individuals or the populace". It continues: "Applications of biological, chemical, or electromagnetic radiation effects on humans should be pursued. R&D into sophisticated psychological operations designed to change the minds of individuals or the populace is needed. Techniques could include projection of sounds and images to specific points in space. The Joint Non-lethal Weapons Program Directorate should broaden its tactical and operational focus to consider the strategic applications and associated treaty issues of non-lethal weapons."

28 March - 7 April In Amman, the World Health Organization organizes a meeting on *Assessment of National Health Preparedness, Mitigation, and Response to Natural and Man-made Disasters*. The objective of the assessment process is to assist Jordan in reviewing and ultimately strengthening its existing health preparedness, mitigation and response programmes for natural and man-made disasters. In addition to experts from Jordan, AusAID and Health Canada, the assessment is conducted in association with the OPCW, the Jordanian Red Crescent, UNICEF as well as the WHO Programme for Preparedness for Deliberate Epidemics and the WHO Regional Office for the East Mediterranean.

28 March In the UK, police drop charges against four men arrested in December 2003 on terrorism charges. Usman Choudhary, Omar Ijaz and Arshad Farid had been charged with receiving training in the making of chemical and biological weapons. A statement by West Midlands Police explains that: "[The men] had been on police bail before the notices of discontinuance which were issued because court deadlines for submission evidence could not be met in the time allowed. However police enquiries are continuing and the charges may be resurrected in due course if appropriate."

28 March US claims [see 5 Feb 03 and 28 May 03] that Iraq possessed mobile biological weapons production facilities were based mainly on intelligence from a now-discredited Iraqi defector codenamed 'Curveball', so the *Los Angeles Times* reports. US officials did not have direct access to the defector as he was an asset of the Bundesnachrichtendienst, the German Federal Intelligence Service, whom he had approached after arriving in Germany as a refugee in 1998. The newspaper reports that 'Curveball', a young chemical engineer and a brother of one of Ahmed Chalabi's top Iraq National Congress aides, was probably coached to provide false information confirming existing Western suspicions that Iraq had mobile BW production facilities. He first came to the attention of Western intelligence after UNSCOM inspectors had asked Chalabi to help search for intelligence on suspected mobile facilities. 'Curveball' told the BND that he was the head of the mobile laboratory programme and gave seemingly credible details of the

programme during his debriefing sessions. However, after his staff visited 'Curveball's' family and workplaces in Baghdad, the then leader of the Iraq Survey Group, David Kay, came to the conclusion that the informant was an "out-and-out fabricator".

Later, unidentified security sources in Germany reject the allegations that they provided false information that may have contributed to the case for the invasion of Iraq. They claim that they informed the CIA of their concerns about 'Curveball's' credibility as early as August 2002 and that they had "various problems" with his account, which they had shared with the US long before Colin Powell's presentation to the UN Security Council in February 2003. Later still, it is reported that the CIA and DIA are each blaming the other for the handling of 'Curveball'.

29 March In the UK, the Public Health Sciences Working Group convened by the Wellcome Trust issues its report, *Public Health Sciences: Challenges and Opportunities*. The report states: "The current microbiological research deficit within the UK is a matter of major concern. ... Capacity must be expanded in relation to biosecurity, potential pandemics, modern microbiological diagnostics, surveillance, epidemiology, modelling, antibiotic resistance and blood borne viruses, among others."

29 March The US Army Chemical Materials Agency announces that the destruction process for mustard agent stored at the Deseret Chemical Depot at Tooele in Utah is to be modified due to the discovery of significant levels of mercury contamination in some mustard gas storage containers and munitions. The modification is necessary to prevent potentially harmful mercury emissions. The changes will cost US\$50 million and are described by the Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility's operator as "the largest facility modification effort ever in an active chemical weapons disposal facility." The chemdemil facility will begin destroying the mustard agent once the current VX destruction campaign is completed.

29 March In Washington, District Judge Reggie Walton grants the US Administration its request to postpone for six months the defamation lawsuit brought against it by Steven Hatfill [see 6 Feb]. Judge Walton rules that confidential information recently provided to him by the Justice Department shows that the investigation into the 2001 anthrax attacks is now at a "critical" and "sensitive" stage. He says that the investigation could unearth significant leads by early July and that it should therefore be allowed to proceed "in an unfettered way". He further says that, for now, the search for the person who sent the anthrax-laced letters outweighs Hatfill's claim.

30 March Chechen rebel leader Abdallah Shamil Abu-Ildris [Basayev] issues a statement threatening *inter alia* the use of chemical weapons. The statement, as appearing on the web site of Kavkaz-Tsentr news agency, reads thus: "[Rebels on Russian territory] will, as far as possible, bomb, blow, poison, burn, arrange explosions of natural gas and arson ... I state officially that military and poisonous substances as well as various poisons have been actively used against us. That is why, we have the right to use and poisonous substances as well as similar poisons against [Russia] this year."

30 March In the US Senate, head of the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) Charles Duelfer, testifies on the activities of the ISG. He says: "I do not believe we have sufficient information and insight to make final judgments with confidence at this

time. Interim assessments could turn out to be misleading or wrong. I believe there is more work to be done to gather critical information about the regime, its intentions, and its capabilities, and to assess that information for its meaning...

On biological and chemical weapons, Duelfer says: "The ISG has developed new information regarding Iraq's dual use facilities and ongoing research suitable for a capability to produce biological or chemical agents on short notice. Iraq did have facilities suitable for the production of biological and chemical agents needed for weapons. It had plans to improve and expand and even build new facilities. For example, the Tuwaitha Agricultural and Biological Research Center has equipment suitable for the production of biological agents. While it conducts civilian research, ISG has also determined that it was conducting research that would be important for a biological weapons program. For example, we are continuing to examine research on *Bacillus thuringiensis* that was conducted until March 2003. This material is a commercial biopesticide, but it also can be used as a surrogate for the anthrax bacterium for production and weapons development purposes. Work continued on single cell proteins at Tuwaitha as well. Single cell protein research previously had been used as the cover activity for BW production at al Hakam. We are now focusing on what such activities meant. With respect to chemical production, Iraq was working up to March 2003 to construct new facilities for the production of chemicals. There were plans under the direction of a leading nuclear scientist/WMD program manager to construct plants capable of making a variety of chemicals and producing a year's supply of any chemical in a month. This was a crash program. Most of the chemicals specified in this program were conventional commercial chemicals, but a few are considered 'dual use'. One we are examining, commonly called DCC (N,N-Dicyclohexyl carbodiimide), was used by Iraq before 1991 as a stabilizing agent for the nerve agent VX. Iraq had plans before OIF for largescale production of this chemical. Again, what do these activities mean?"

31 March At Frankfurt/Main Airport, German authorities host the first airport interdiction exercise of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) [see also 18-19 Feb]. Exercise 'Hawkeye', is exclusively designed for civil defence personnel and is under the leadership of the German Customs Department. The primary focus of the exercise is the prevention of the delivery and a coordinated approach by the competent authorities which are able to shape their collaboration during the exercise in a realistic fashion and as authentically as possible. International experts from 29 countries as well as the European Commission and the EU Council Office observe the event.

31 March At UN headquarters, Rwanda deposits its instrument of ratification of the CWC with the UN Secretary-General. In thirty days, Rwanda will thus becoming the 162nd state party to the treaty.

31 March In the US Congress, the General Accounting Office transmits to the House Armed Services Committee a report on *Nonproliferation: Delays in Implementing the Chemical Weapons Convention Raise Concern About Proliferation*. The report states: "Nearly 7 years after entry into force, the CWC's nonproliferation goals have proven more difficult to achieve than originally anticipated. CWC member states and the OPCW face difficult choices in addressing the delays in Russia's destruction program, the limited number of inspections at dual-use commercial sites, and the slow progress in passing laws criminalizing CWC-prohibited activities. Decision-makers will have to make some

combination of policy changes in these areas if the CWC is to continue to credibly address nonproliferation concerns worldwide... Even with significant international assistance, Russia may not destroy its declared chemical weapons until 15 years beyond the extended CWC deadline... Several options exist, however, for the United States and other donors to reduce the proliferation risks from Russia's chemical weapons stockpile. Such options may include (1) increasing funding for security improvements at Russia's chemical weapons storage sites, (2) deferring financing for Russia's chemical weapons destruction effort until the Russian government develops a credible destruction plan, or (3) financing the construction of additional destruction facilities... [T]echnical advancements in the chemical industry and the increasing number of dual-use commercial facilities worldwide challenge the CWC and the OPCW's ability to deter and detect proliferation. Member states will need to determine the best policies for addressing potential proliferation at dual-use commercial facilities. CWC member states could decide that the OPCW should conduct more commercial inspections, which would require member states to provide more funding and subject their national chemical industries to additional inspections. Alternatively, member states may determine that the current level of commercial inspections is sufficient to detect and deter activities prohibited by the CWC... [M]any member states have not yet adopted national laws to fully implement the convention, or have not submitted complete and accurate declarations of their CWC-related activities. These problems undermine confidence in overall treaty compliance. It is important for the OPCW and member states to reinforce member states' obligations to adopt national laws, enforce them accordingly, and submit accurate and timely declarations. Challenge inspections may also be a vehicle to ensure member states' compliance with the CWC."

31 March In the US, the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction which President Bush established two months earlier [see 2 Feb] holds its first organizational session under the chairmanship of former Senator Charles Robb and Judge Laurence Silberman. The Commission's Executive Director, retired Vice-Admiral John Redd, is currently in Iraq with the Coalition Provisional Authority and will not return until May. The Commission will also have to wait until May until it can move into its permanent office space and recruit 60 to 75 staff members.

1 April In Australia, the Melbourne Age reports the case of an Iraqi defector who claims to know the locations of secret underground storage bunkers for chemical weapons in Iraq. The defector, identified only as 'Rashid', has been granted refugee status by Australia's Refugee Review Tribunal, but also wants visas for his wife and four children, currently living in Damascus. According to the newspaper, 'Rashid' knows the locations of five multi-storeyed storage bunkers around Baghdad, Basra and Tikrit which he says were 15 metres below ground and constructed from reinforced concrete by foreign companies, including one from China. He is quoted as saying: "The lethal chemicals were stored in drums and the bunkers were air-conditioned. But there were also artillery shells and 122-millimetre rockets armed with chemicals." He adds: "They were reserved for emergencies such as another Shiite uprising. They could have been moved after I escaped Iraq, I cannot say for sure, but I doubt that. These places took years to build." The Age also reports that, despite his willingness to identify the sites, 'Rashid's' information has not been followed up by the Australian Security Intelligence Organization. A spokesman for Attorney-General Philip

Ruddock says: "It is the information that is important [...] the information he has provided was found not to be credible."

1 April From Japan, the *Asahi Shimbun* reports that the government has decided to postpone a maritime Proliferation Security Initiative exercise which it was due to lead in May due to concerns that the exercise could incense North Korea and adversely affect ongoing bilateral negotiations. Citing unidentified government sources, the newspaper says that the government also took into consideration reservations and concerns expressed by Japan's Asian neighbours over US intentions and possible repercussions from China.

1 April From Russia, it is reported that scientists at the State Research Center for Applied Microbiology (Vektor) in Koltsovo have developed a new smallpox vaccine. Deputy Director Sergei Netesov says: "The centre has, so far, produced a laboratory version of the vaccine on the basis of the smallpox virus cell culture." He continues: "What we have developed is not a radically new anti-smallpox vaccine, but it is less dangerous and causes much less side-effects on the body."

1 April At UN headquarters in New York, a number of NGOs come together to criticize the recently-circulated [see 24 Mar] draft Security Council resolution on the non-proliferation of WMD. The criticisms focus on the fact that the draft ignores the role of disarmament in promoting non-proliferation and that it would confer upon the Security Council the authority to require states to modify their national legal systems and policies.

1 April The US State Department lifts sanctions imposed almost nine years ago [see 951117] on Russian Academician Anatoly Kuntsevich for involvement in chemical weapons proliferation activities. The notice, which appears in the *Federal Register*, says that, according to "reliable information", Kuntsevich has ceased to "aid or abet any foreign government, project, or entity in its efforts to acquire chemical and biological weapons capability". A day later the a possible reason for the US action emerges – Kuntsevich in fact died two years earlier [see 29 Mar 02].

The State Department also announces new sanctions on 13 foreign companies or individuals under the *Iran Nonproliferation Act of 2000* for "for the transfer to Iran of equipment and technology controlled under multilateral export control lists (Missile Technology Control Regime, Australia Group, Chemical Weapons Convention, Nuclear Suppliers Group, Wassenaar Arrangement) or otherwise having the potential to make a material contribution to the development of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) or cruise or ballistic missile systems." The sanctioned entities, some of which have been previously sanctioned, are: Baranov Engine Building Association Overhaul Facility (Russia); Beijing Institute of Opto-Electronic Technology (BIOET) (China); Belarus Belvneshpromservice (Belarus); Blagoja Samakoski (Macedonia); Changgwang Sinyong Corporation (North Korea); China North Industries Corporation (NORINCO) (China); China Precision Machinery Import/Export Corporation (CPMIEC) (China); Elmstone Service and Trading FZE (LLC) (United Arab Emirates); Goodly Industrial Company Ltd. (Taiwan); Mikrosam (Macedonia); Oriental Scientific Instruments Corporation (OSIC) (China); Vadim V Vorobey (Russia); and Zibo Chemical Equipment Plant, aka Chemet Global Ltd., aka South Industries Science and Technology Trading Company, Ltd. (China). Two days later, a spokesman for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs says: "Russia rejects the very principle of the imposition by one state of sanctions on some structures of other states. As far as genuinely nonproliferation aspects

of such matters are concerned, we want to emphasize that Russia has a strict internal export-control legislation conforming to high international standards that enables effectively cutting short any unapproved activities involving the trade in sensitive materials."

1 April In the US House of Representatives, Democrat members of the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence propose wide-ranging reforms to the US intelligence community in the *Intelligence Transformation Act of 2004* (HR 4104). The proposed legislation would create a Director of National Intelligence with statutory and budget authority over all aspects of the Intelligence Community and a new WMD Proliferation Threat Integration Center to provide integrated tasking of collection and analysis on the WMD proliferation threat.

1 April In the US House of Representatives, the Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats and Capabilities of the Armed Services Committee conducts a hearing to review the Department of Defense programmes for destruction of the US stockpile of lethal chemical warfare agents and munitions and the fiscal year 2005 budget request for the programme. Testifying are: Raymond Decker of the General Accounting Office; Dale Klein, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs; Claude Bolton, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology and Logistics; Pat Wakefield, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Chemical Demilitarization and Counterproliferation; Mike Parker, Director, US Army Chemical Material Agency; and Craig Conklin of the Homeland Security Department.

In updating its earlier report and testimony [see 5 Sep 03], the GAO states: "[T]he Chem-Demil Program continues to fall behind its schedule milestones, which were extended in 2001. These schedule delays led to increased program costs and very little agent destruction over the last 6 months. [...] If these delays persist, we continue to believe that program costs will rise substantially higher than the October 2003 estimate of more than \$25 billion. [...] Because of schedule delays, the United States will not meet CWC's April 2004 deadline to destroy 45 percent of the chemical stockpile. The United States asked the governing body of the convention for and received an extension for this deadline to December 2007. Although it has received an extension for this task, it is questionable if the program will meet this deadline. Moreover, DOD has said it will ask for an extension of the final deadline to destroy 100 percent of the stockpile beyond 2007. Unless the Chem-Demil Program is able to resolve the problems that have caused schedule delays to destroy the stockpile, the United States also risks not meeting CWC's deadline to destroy the entire stockpile, if extended to 2012."

2 April US Secretary of State Colin Powell, during a press briefing en route from Europe to Washington, casts doubt upon the intelligence behind his assertion to the UN Security Council [see 5 Feb 03] that Iraq possessed mobile BW production facilities [see also 28 Mar]. Secretary Powell tells reporters: "It was presented to me in the preparation of that as the best information and intelligence that we had. And I looked at the four elements that they gave me for that one and they stood behind them. Now it appears not to be the case, that it was that solid. But at the time that I was preparing that presentation it was presented to me as being solid. Now, the commission that is going to be starting its work soon, I hope will look into these matters to see whether or not the intelligence agency had a basis for the confidence that they placed in the intelligence at that time. They certainly indicated

to me as I was working on that, that it was solid. I'm not the intelligence community, but I probed and I made sure, and as I said in my presentation, these are multi-sourced. And that was the most dramatic of them and I made sure it was multi-sourced. Now, if the sources fell apart then we need to find out how we've gotten ourselves in that position. I've had discussions with the CIA about it."

Two days later, the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, Senator Pat Roberts, tells CNN "I think there is a preponderance of evidence that those mobile labs did not exist, in regards to any kind of biological weaponry". Roberts, whose committee is undertaking an investigation into the pre-war intelligence focusing in part on the mobile laboratories, adds that the claim is "embarrassing to everybody who used the intelligence [...] especially Secretary Powell."

Another two days later, Iraq Survey Group leader Charles Duelfer says in Canberra where he is meeting Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer that his staff are still "looking at the potential of mobile biological weapons laboratories". Duelfer continues: "There is varying assessments [sic] on whether they are for production of hydrogen for weather balloons or whether they're for biological weapons."

5 April In Australia, an adviser to former Chief Defence Scientist Dr Ian Chessell is sacked, reportedly for refusing to compile media advice on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction for Defence Minister Robert Hill prior to the US-UK invasion [see 20 Mar 03]. The adviser, Jane Errey, believed that the advice would have misled the Australian public. She says: "[T]o have to brief the minister and fundamentally give him - even though I didn't write it - lines of propaganda that I didn't believe with respect to the war was beyond what I was prepared to do. I wouldn't lie or mislead the public." As an adviser to Dr Chessell, Errey had access to intelligence reports from the Defence Intelligence Organization and the Office of National Assessments. However, she says: "There wasn't enough substantiated evidence from the reports I was seeing to justify the war." Rather than write the advice, Errey went on holiday, then took sick leave and then applied, unsuccessfully, for leave without pay. However, after nine years service, Defence wrote to her saying that her employment has been terminated on "performance grounds". Defence Minister Robert Hill says: "The result of management differences on her future was such that she is leaving, but it's got nothing to do with work that she may have done in the past."

5 April At Vyskov in the Czech Republic, a new NATO training centre for chemical defence is opened. The centre is the only one of its kind in NATO. Although it is not scheduled to receive official NATO accreditation until next January, it has already played host to 400 foreign specialists.

5 April In Washington, Russian Audit Chamber Chairman Sergei Stepashin meets the Director of the US General Accounting Office, David Walker to discuss Russia's chemdemil programme and US financial contributions to it. On his return to Moscow, Stepashin says: "US officials argued that these resources are being spent ineffectively and reproached Russia for not fully informing the USA about its stock of chemical weapons. Individual senators do not want former Russian prime minister Sergey Kiriyenko to chair the joint commission on the Russian side. They said that during his tenure as prime minister, 4.8bn dollars allocated to Russia by the International Monetary Fund disappeared." Stepashin continues: "The Russian Audit Chamber and our US colleagues checked the spending twice. All figures have been handed over to the US side and this problem has now been settled. The USA has also been provided with complete information

about Russia's chemical weapons stocks, as well as the results of the Audit Chamber's checks on the spending of IMF money before the 1998 financial crisis. [...] Therefore, the USA has no grounds for suspending resources allocated for the disposal of chemical weapons in Russia."

6 April From the US, ABC reports that British police have foiled a terrorist plot to explode a bomb containing the chemical osmium tetroxide somewhere in the UK, according to unidentified sources. The broadcaster links the plot to the arrests a week earlier of eight British citizens of Pakistani descent. ABC has been told that the individuals were arrested when electronic intercepts identified their interest in osmium tetroxide and that Gatwick airport, the public transport system and enclosed shopping areas were potential targets.

6 April In the US, the *Washington Post* reports that Federal investigators have examined about 20,000 letters in their investigation of the ricin sent to Senator Bill Frist [see 2 Feb] but have not found anything to lead them to a suspect. The absence of a contaminated letter in Senator Frist's office means that investigators are unsure how the ricin got there and whether it is linked to discoveries of the toxin in letters last year [see 15 Oct 03]. However, the possibility of a linkage to the 'Fallen Angel' case is being strongly pursued by the FBI.

6 April In Chile, Judge Alejandro Madrid requests the extradition of four members of the Uruguayan military suspected of being involved in the murder in 1993 of Eugenio Berrios, a chemist, who was himself linked to the murder of former Chilean president Eduardo Frei [see 11 Oct 03] and to the alleged production of sarin in Chile in the 1970s [see 6 Dec 91].

7 April In Australia, ABC broadcasts *Deadly Enemies*, a documentary about the development of biological weapons in the Second World War and particularly during the Cold War. The programme also includes the last recorded interview with British biological weapons inspector Dr David Kelly [see 17 Jul 03]. In his interview, Dr Kelly says that there is no clear distinction between offensive or defensive weapons, "except for intent - and intent is very difficult to determine."

7 April In Russia, the government adopts *Fundamental Principles of State Policy on Chemical and Biological Security of the Russian Federation in the Period to 2010 and the Long Term*. The principles will be attained by creating a state system of chemical and biological security (as a subsystem of a single state system for the prevention and elimination of emergencies) providing for the categorization, prediction, warning and countering of threats to chemical and biological security, and for recovery from emergencies resulting from the influence of chemical and biological factors. Priority areas for action are identified as: improving state regulation and the body of laws and standards; developing industrial policy, fundamental and applied science, technologies, and engineering; providing warning of emergencies and for recovery therefrom; anti-terrorist activity; and training and advanced training of personnel. In addition, a chemical and biological security commission will be established.

7 April In Johannesburg, the BioWeapons Prevention Project (BWPP) organizes a regional seminar on international networking. Its general purpose is to inform southern African non-governmental organizations about BWPP and its goals and to introduce the principles upon which the organization has been established. More specifically, the

meeting identifies the areas of overlap between the goals of southern African NGOs and those of the BWPP and explores opportunities for collaboration. Participating in the seminar are representatives from the African Centre for Biosafety (South Africa), Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace (Zimbabwe), Centre for Conflict Resolution (South Africa), Centre for Human Rights and Rehabilitation (Malawi), Institute for Security Studies (South Africa), International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (Zambia), Safer Africa (South Africa), South African Institute for International Affairs (South Africa), South African Police Service (South Africa) and Transformation Resource Centre (Lesotho).

8 April From Prague, the Czech Foreign Ministry announces that the Czech Republic has joined the Proliferation Security Initiative.

8 April From Damascus, the *Washington Post* reports that negotiations between the European Union and Syria on a trade agreement have stalled over the inclusion of a non-proliferation clause in the agreement. Late last year [see 17 Nov 03], the EU decided to insert a non-proliferation clause into all future trade agreements with third countries. Although the EU-Syria negotiations were largely complete, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK pushed for stronger language on WMD, which Syria rejected in January saying that the EU had not made similar demands of Israel. The newspaper quotes Syria's Minister of Expatriate Affairs, Buthaina Shabaan, as saying: "We feel the wording is a deliberate attempt to raise impossible issues. This negatively affects us a great deal." A non-proliferation clause has already been inserted into the draft Partnership and Cooperation Agreement with Tajikistan, and discussions are ongoing regarding insertion into the Interregional Association Agreement with MERCOSUR, which is currently under negotiation, and during the review of the Cotonou Agreement with the countries of Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

8 April Syria has been sending missiles and WMD components to Sudan, according to unidentified Western intelligence sources cited by Middle East Newsline. Shipments of SCUD C and D missiles and WMD components have been flown to Khartoum on civilian airliners since at least January, according to the reports. MENL quotes an unidentified senior intelligence source as saying: "There is widespread concern in the Syrian regime that Damascus will be the next to face heavy US and international pressure to open its WMD facilities in the wake of the Libyan example. The Syrians have decided that they want to take some of their assets out of the country."

8 April In the US, there is press reporting of Project BioSense, the third element in US bioterrorism preparedness, alongside BioShield and BioWatch. BioSense is intended to improve early detection of possible bioterrorist events though the implementation of near real time reporting of health data, the implementation of enhanced connections between clinical care and public health and the advancement of early detection analytics. The Project was launched quietly in October 2003, but its implementation has only now been acknowledged by the authorities. Sources of data for the project include: Department of Defense medical treatment facilities in the US; Veterans Administration medical facilities; the 18 Laboratory Response Network Laboratories for BioWatch and Category A agent result reporting; data from over 10,000 pharmacists nationwide; and national clinical laboratory tests orders.

8 April In Washington, US National Security

Adviser Condoleezza Rice testifies under oath before a public session of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, the 9-11 Commission. The Bush Administration had only reluctantly agreed to Rice testifying in public and the Commission notes that "Dr Rice's appearance before the Commission is in response to the special circumstances presented by the events of September 11 and the Commission's unique mandate and should not be viewed as a precedent for future requests for public testimony by White House officials." Rice reveals that the Bush Administration's first substantive National Security Presidential Directive, approved on 4 September 2001, was directed against al-Qaeda. NSPD-9 had been a highly classified document, but portions have been declassified for the 9-11 Commission and Rice describes them in her testimony. Quoting from NSPD-9 she says that it directed the Secretary of Defense to "ensure that the contingency planning process includes plans: against al-Qaida and associated terrorist facilities in Afghanistan, including leadership, command-control-communications, training, and logistics facilities; against Taliban targets in Afghanistan, including leadership, command-control, air and air defense, ground forces, and logistics; to eliminate weapons of mass destruction which al-Qaida and associated terrorist groups may acquire or manufacture, including those stored in underground bunkers."

9 April In Sofia, dozens of people are reportedly injured when a man accidentally drops a capsule of what the Health Ministry initially identifies as chloropicrin in the offices of the Road Traffic Control Directorate. According to reports, 17 people, including four in a serious condition, were treated at the Military Medical Academy and another 11 people were sent to the Pirigov Emergency Hospital. A spokesman for the Interior Ministry later says that the device was a "self-defence tear gas spray" which was "freely available in shops". The man responsible, a 51-year-old butcher, is later arrested.

10 April In Israel, Chief of Staff Lieutenant General Moshe Ya'alon tells Channel Two TV that he believes weapons of mass destruction will still be found in Iraq. However, he says that Israeli intelligence always spoke of "a capability, of small amounts". He adds: "When we heard inaccurate statements by the British and the Americans we made them aware of this, before the war. They said something on the nuclear subject and we made it clear to them that according to our information, this was not correct." Two weeks later, Ya'alon tells *Yediot Ahronot* that Iraq had chemical weapons before the US-UK invasion but might have shipped them to Syria or buried them. Ya'alon says: "There is no doubt that in the eight months leading up to the war, the Iraqis prepared an ability to deliver by air chemical weapons, at least at us." He says that Russian-built Tupolev-16 and Sukhoi aircraft, along with unmanned drones, were being fitted to carry up to hundreds of kilograms of chemical agents but that the aircraft were destroyed in the first two days of the invasion. The weapons however, were better hidden and, according to Ya'alon, "perhaps they transferred them to another country, such as Syria. We very clearly saw that something crossed into Syria. Perhaps they buried them."

10 April In Kirkland, Washington State, FBI agents arrest and charge a man for possession of ricin. One of the agents tells a local TV station: "Ricin was found in his apartment after agents went in there Friday. It is enough that it could cause concern that it could harm someone, could kill someone." However, the man, 37-year-old Robert Alberg has autism and investigators reportedly do not believe he had plans to poison anyone. Alberg's possession of the ricin came to

light when an employee of the Sheffield Seed Company informed the FBI in November that Alberg had ordered five pounds of castor seeds, an unusually large order. During Alberg's court appearance a few days later, documents are released which show that he sent letters and e-mails to friends and family threatening to poison water supplies and saying that he hoped to die on 'Death Row'. He e-mailed his sister: "It's so exciting working with poisons perhaps I'll find a way to end all life on Earth through some interesting items."

11 April In Paris, an unidentified senior French counter-terrorism official tells the *Financial Times* that terrorists have more advanced plans for using chemical weapons in Europe than previously suspected. The official tells the newspaper: "We have underestimated the terrorists' willingness and capacity to develop chemical weapons." Referring to recent arrests in France [see 10 Jan] and the UK [see 6 Apr], the official says that the groups appear to operate separately from other cells planning attacks with conventional explosives. Several of the groups appear to have links to Islamic militants in Chechnya where Western intelligence agencies allege that extremists linked to al-Qaeda have tested chemical weapons, according to the newspaper. The official adds: "The thing that is most clear is that the people with the knowledge of chemicals are very organised. There are links between the groups that have chemical expertise. These groups are not present everywhere, though Chechnya is where they learned this skill." However, the *Financial Times* report prompts denials from both the Russian government and the Chechen rebels that chemical weapons are in Chechnya or have been tested there. A day later, French Foreign Minister, Dominique de Villepin says that the threat of a chemical attack in Europe is "limited". He continues: "A very high degree of technical expertise is in effect required to handle such materials, so it is a limited threat. But that should not lead us to minimize the risk."

12 April From Basra, MNA reports that US forces are unloading weapons of mass destruction in southern Iraq and planting them at unspecified locations throughout the country. The weapons are reportedly transported in Maersk containers with others disguised as Red Cross or USAID relief shipments. MNA also reports a professor at Baghdad University as saying that Iraqi scientists specializing in military, chemical and biological fields have been threatened or bribed to provide written information on the possible storage of WMD equipment. Ten days later, the commander of US military forces in Iraq, Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt, tells a press conference in Baghdad: "I can categorically deny that we are bringing any weapons of mass destruction into Iraq either [to] facilitate the military campaign or the election campaign."

13 April In Amman, King Abdullah praises the Jordanian security services for foiling a terrorist plot. He says that Jordan has "lived through an extremely delicate situation in recent days." He adds: "[D]ivine protection has thwarted the plans of these criminals and saved the lives of thousands of civilians in what would have been a crime never before seen in the kingdom." In a later interview with the *San Francisco Chronicle*, King Abdullah calls the plot "a major, major operation" and says "it would have decapitated the government." Three days later, the London *Al-Hayat* reports that the plot involved the explosion of a "chemical bomb" at the headquarters of the Jordanian intelligence services and the use of "deadly gas" against the US Embassy and the Jordanian prime minister's office. The terrorist cell, who have all been arrested, are believed to be linked to al-Qaeda suspect Abu-Mus'ab al-Zarqawi. The newspaper quotes an unidentified

Jordanian official involved in the investigation as saying that "had the bomb exploded, over 20,000 people would have been killed and all buildings in a radius of one kilometre would have been completely destroyed."

On 26 April, Jordanian state TV broadcasts videotaped confessions by four of the suspects. In the tape, the leader of the cell, Jordanian Azmi al-Jayyusi, says that he first met al-Zarqawi at an al-Qaeda training camp in Herat, Afghanistan, where he took part in "high-level explosives and poison courses." A commentary over the broadcast says that the men has prepared enough explosives to kill 80,000 people. The TV channel shows still pictures of a total of ten men, including four who were killed in an earlier police raid. Three of the dead men are identified as Syrians. Also shown are pictures of vans containing what the commentary describes as "blue jugs of chemical explosives". A few days later, an audio tape, purportedly of al-Zarqawi, is broadcast by an Arabic satellite TV channel. In the tape, al-Zarqawi confirms that al-Qaeda did intend to attack Jordanian intelligence, but he denies that they planned to use a chemical weapon. The full text of his statement, posted on an Islamist website, includes the following: "[T]heir claims of unimaginable casualties and that it was a chemical bomb that would have killed thousands of people is a pure lie. ... The chemical and poisonous bomb is a fabrication by the evil Jordanian mechanism. God knows, that if we possessed such a bomb that we would not have hesitated for a second to avidly seek to strike Israeli cities such as Eilat, Tel Aviv and others."

13 April From Israel, *Ha'aretz* reports that police have foiled an alleged suicide attack using HIV-infected blood during the Passover holiday period. However, the Israel Defence Force and Shin Bet both said that planning for the attack had not reached a practical stage, according to a Shin Bet spokeswoman: "The terrorist cell apparently planned to obtain contaminated blood from some Palestinian hospitals but they had not passed the preliminary stage in their preparations." Fox News later reports that a Palestinian engineering student, Rami Abdullah, was searching for an HIV-infected blood donor when he was arrested and adds that he says he still intends to build a biological weapon once he is released if the intifada is continuing.

13 April From the UK, Acambis announces that it has suspended the recruitment of additional volunteers into its Phase III clinical trials involving its investigational smallpox vaccine ACAM2000 and Dryvax, the currently licensed smallpox vaccine against which ACAM2000 is being compared in the trials. The precautionary measure is taken after three suspected myopericarditis cases were discovered in both ACAM2000 and Dryvax-vaccinated subjects. All three suspected cases are among the first Phase III trial which involves subjects that have never received the smallpox vaccine. To date, 1,132 such individuals have been vaccinated and the suspected myopericarditis cases have occurred in both ACAM2000 and Dryvax-vaccinated subjects. The US government has ordered over 200 million doses of ACAM2000 from Acambis.

13 April In Washington, US President George Bush tells a news conference that Iraq was a threat justifying the US-UK invasion [see 20 Mar 03] even though no stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction have yet been found. President Bush says: "Even knowing what I know today about the stockpiles of weapons, I still would've called upon the world to deal with Saddam Hussein." He continues: "Saddam Hussein was a threat. He was a threat because he had used weapons of mass destruction on his own people. He was a

threat because he coddled terrorists. He was a threat because he funded suiciders. He was a threat to the region. He was a threat to the United States." During the news conference, President Bush twice mentions "the 50 tons of mustard gas in a turkey farm" which he says Libya declared after renouncing its WMD [see 19 Dec 03]. However, the next day a State Department spokesman has to clarify the President's comments. He says that Libya declared 23 metric tons of mustard gas to the OPCW [see 5 Mar] and that what was found at the turkey farm was a stock of empty shells that could have been used to deploy the mustard gas.

13 April In Charleston, South Carolina, US Magistrate Judge George Kosko signs a warrant allowing four OPCW inspectors and 11 US government escorts into the Schedule 2 King Street Extension plant owned by Rhodia SA. The federal government requested the warrant after an unidentified employee of the plant mistakenly objected to the routine CWC inspection. The manager of the plant, Mike Duffy, is quoted in local newspapers as saying: "Somebody overstepped their boundaries. Denying access to inspectors is not company policy. In fact, my instructions are to grant voluntary access." With the warrant granted, the routine inspection, a follow-up to an earlier inspection at the plant in 2000, goes ahead.

13 April The US National Nuclear Security Administration Nevada Site Office releases for public comment a *Preapproval Draft Environmental Assessment for Activities Using Biological Simulants and Releases of Chemicals at the Nevada Test Site* [see 16 Mar and 1 Oct 03]. The 77-page document considers the environmental impact of four alternatives: the release of biological simulants and low concentrations of chemicals at various NTS locations (the proposed action); the release of only biological simulants; the release of only low concentrations of chemicals; and no action. The six biological simulants proposed to be released are listed as: *Bacillus subtilis* var. *niger*; *B. thuringiensis*; *Clostridium sporogenes*; *Erwinia herbicola*; Bacteriophage MS2; and Noninfectious (killed) Influenza A Virus. Regarding the biological releases, the assessment states: "All proposed releases would be conducted in accordance with the International Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production, and Stockpiling of Bacteriological and Toxic [*sic*] Weapons and Their Destruction". Regarding the chemical releases, the document states: "NNSA/NSO does not know which specific chemicals could be required for testing or training. Therefore, rather than compile an exhaustive list of possible chemicals that could be released, NNSA has developed detailed criteria for chemical release events that would be protective of the environment, workers and the public. ... The chemicals used may simulate a chemical weapon or may be an expected emission/effluent from a chemical weapons production facility or other process or facility type of interest. In no case would a chemical prohibited [*sic*] by the Chemical Weapons Convention be used." Potential release scenarios are listed as: stack release; building/tunnel release; open pan/ground spill release; water-borne release; instantaneous release; ground transportation release; and aircraft releases. The public comment period on the proposals finishes on 14 May.

14 April From Jakarta, a senior Foreign Ministry official says that Indonesia is committed to fulfilling its CWC obligations. Makmur Widodo says: "As a party to the CWC, Indonesia is legally bound to fully implement the provisos of the convention. Indeed, Indonesia is now in the process of doing just that." However, he also says that Indonesia has yet

to establish a permanent CWC national authority and to pass "unified robust national legislation" to implement the treaty.

14 April In Copenhagen, sacked military intelligence analyst Major Frank Soeholm Grevil is charged with breaching Denmark's official information act for leaking classified assessments of Iraq's WMD programmes he had co-written to two reporters from the Copenhagen *Berlingske Tidende*, who later published them. The journalists are charged with exploiting information emerging from a crime. In an interview with the Copenhagen *Information*, Grevil says: "It cannot be right that an intelligence service is misused politically. Anders Fogh continued to use us as a basis for claims that Iraq probably had weapons of mass destruction, even though we issued at least 10 threat assessments which are completely unequivocal on this point." He continues: "Our professionalism was attacked. Several of us would have liked to have seen the head of the Defence Intelligence Service, Joern Olesen, correct the prime minister. I felt enough was enough. Somebody had to do something. So I did it."

Danish Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen makes the following announcement: "A very extraordinary situation has arisen which has given rise to doubts about the government's credibility. On this basis I have today asked the defence minister to initiate the declassification of the Defence Intelligence Agency's assessment of whether Iraq possessed weapons of mass destruction in the period leading up to the initiation of military action."

Five days later, 10 intelligence assessments prepared by the Danish Defence Intelligence Service *Forsvarets Efterretningstjeneste* (FE) are partially declassified and published. Releasing the reports, FE chief Rear Admiral Joern Olesen says: "These reports that have been made public document that Iraq, according to the entire DDIS's evaluation, probably had biological and chemical weapons just before the war." One report dated 22 October 2002 states: "Iraq is believed to hold fully functional chemical and biological weaponry which it is capable of delivering," but then qualifies this assertion. Another report, dated 15 March 2003, states: "There is no definitive information that Iraq has operative weapons of mass destruction, as Iraq has largely succeeded in suppressing any active weapons programme. It is believed, however, that Iraq does possess biological and chemical weaponry (B- and C-grade weaponry), as well as the ability to deliver these arms." Referring to the documents, Grevil is quoted as saying: "They've blocked out too much. It will still fuel serious doubts as to whether the government has something to hide."

14 April In the US, the Sunshine Project releases preliminary results from its Institutional Biosafety Committee transparency survey [see 18 Mar] which, the Project asserts, demonstrate "widespread noncompliance with federal biotechnology research rules." A Sunshine Project news release states: "Survey results to date strongly suggest that increased biodefense spending is triggering a collapse in the public accountability of biological research across the US." To date, despite the 389 IBCs surveyed having an obligation to provide meeting minutes, only two out of five (42.9 per cent) IBCs have provided meeting minutes, almost half (44.5 per cent) have failed to reply to the survey at all and the remaining 12.6 per cent have replied but have not provided minutes.

15 April In Geneva, the 60th session of the UN Commission on Human Rights adopts a resolution expressing its deep concern about continuing reports of systematic, widespread and gross violations of human rights in North Korea [see 1 Feb]. The resolution refers to the existence of a large number of prison camps in the country. Most signifi-

cantly, the resolution calls for the appointment of an individual of recognized international standing and expertise in human rights to serve as a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in North Korea.

15 April In the US, the *Washington Post* reports that the US government is contemplating buying massive quantities of the Modified Vaccinia Ankara (MVA) smallpox vaccines currently being developed by Acambis and Bavarian Nordic [see 030225]. Given recent problems [see 13 Apr] with Acambis's new version of the current Dryvax vaccine and reported successes in animal trials with the MVA vaccine, the newspaper reports that the government is considering making the MVA vaccine the mainstay of its stockpile, rather than using it as a niche vaccine for those unable to be immunized with the current vaccine as was originally intended.

15 April The deadline for the submission to the UN Department for Disarmament Affairs of the 2004 returns under the confidence-building measures agreed by BWC states parties in 1987. For the first time, the US return is posted on the internet, as was Australia's 2002 return.

16 April In Ottawa, the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade hosts the sixth meeting of the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) operational experts working group.

19 April UK police in Greater Manchester, Staffordshire and the West Midlands arrest nine men and one woman of Iraqi Kurdish and North African origin in connection with an alleged terrorist plot to bomb a target in Manchester. Media speculation connects the people with suicide attacks in Manchester, either against the Old Trafford football stadium or the Trafford Centre shopping complex, possibly involving a chemical weapon. However, within two weeks, three of the suspects have been released without charge, six are released under the Terrorism Act but rearrested and bailed for other minor offences and the tenth is deported to North Africa. Two of the men are even invited to attend Manchester United's last game of the season by the Independent Manchester United Supporters Association. After meeting with national Kurdish community representatives, Greater Manchester Police issue a statement saying that they "regret the impact this has had on the wider community." The statement continues: "We discussed the negative community implications of media coverage of the background of those detained being of Iraqi Kurdish origin, including the fact that Greater Manchester Police confirmed those details."

19 April In London, the Royal Society, which is the UK national academy of science, releases a report on *The Individual and Collective Roles Scientists Can Play in Strengthening International Treaties*. In the paper, to be presented at an experts' roundtable on biological threats to security later today in Washington, the Royal Society calls for the formation of an international scientific advisory panel to keep up with the rapid pace of technological advance relevant to the BWC. It also urges the research community to "exercise judgement in the publication of their work and raise awareness of the ethical and legal requirements related to their research." With respect to the existing national and international legal constraints against the development of biological weapons, the paper says that consideration should be given to "what needs to be done to strengthen such laws and how they can be built in to an enforceable code of practice."

19 April The US Department of Defense announces

that an atmospheric dispersion survey, dubbed *Pentagon Shield*, will be conducted in and around the Pentagon for the next three weeks. The DoD says: "Knowledge gained about the airflow around the Pentagon, and the associated transport of gases and their infiltration into the building, will allow the development of improved systems for protecting other Department of Defense facilities." Researchers from the National Center for Atmospheric Research, the University of Colorado, and Coherent Technologies are conducting the month long exercise using lasers, an airship and other sensors to gather data on the airflows around the Pentagon as part of an effort to develop protections against chemical or biological attacks. The researchers will release sulfur hexafluoride over a three-day period in May to trace its dispersion around and through the Pentagon.

19 April In Washington, the United Nations Foundation, the Nuclear Threat Initiative and the National Academies co-host an international experts' roundtable on biosecurity. The meeting, organized in support of the UN Secretary-General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, explores the role of the UN in responding to biological threats to international security – both the natural hazards of emerging and re-emerging microbial threats to health and the risk that states or terrorists would deliberately use disease as a weapon. Experts discuss the approaches that the UN has taken and could take to address these closely interrelated threats. Key ideas from the papers commissioned for this roundtable will be used to inform the High-Level Panel.

19-22 April In the Mediterranean Sea, Italy leads a Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) maritime interdiction exercise, *Exercise Clever Sentinel 04*. France, the Netherlands, Spain and the US all contribute a ship while 12 other PSI countries send observers. According to a US Sixth Fleet spokesman: "The basic scenario is participating naval forces will intercept, escort and perform a compliant boarding of a vessel at sea. The overall objective is working on communications and techniques with the other countries involved."

At the same time, in Wroclaw, Poland, there is the first PSI ground interdiction exercise which concludes on 21 April. Taking part are PSI participants Poland, Germany and the US, as well as Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Romania and Hungary. Also present are observers from PSI countries Australia, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain. The exercise focuses on customs and border control procedures connected with movements of dangerous chemicals and other substances used for weapons of mass destruction.

20-22 April In Addis Ababa, the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the Ethiopian government host an international workshop on the universality and implementation of the CWC, arranged in close collaboration with the Commission of the African Union (AU). The workshop is attended by over 90 representatives of 38 CWC states parties, six states not party to the CWC, the General Secretariat of the Council of the European Union, the League of Arab States and the UN High Commission for Refugees. Participants at the workshop urge the OPCW and AU to exert every effort to make Africa a Chemical Weapons Free Zone and they commend Libya's decision to abandon its WMD programmes [see 19 Dec 03].

During the workshop, OPCW Director-General Rogelio Pflirter meets with Ethiopian President Girma Woldegiorgis. President Woldegiorgis says that the OPCW has been providing Ethiopia with technical assistance in the elimination of chemical weapons which, the President says, were left in Ethiopia after the Italian invasion in the 1930s [see 3 May 03 and 2 Aug 00] and the more recent Somalian invasion.

21 April In Russia, the chemical weapons destruction facility at Gorny has destroyed over 38 tonnes of lewisite, so it is reported. A line for the destruction of lewisite was recently opened at the chemdemil facility [see 24 Mar].

21 April In Strasbourg, the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union adopt a regulation establishing a European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control [see 10 Feb]. The regulation states that the Centre's mission will be "to identify, assess and communicate current and emerging threats to human health from communicable diseases." The regulation states that the Centre should be operational by 20 May 2005. It will be located in Stockholm.

21 April In London, the Royal Society, which is the UK national academy of science, publishes a report on *Making the UK Safer: Detecting and Decontaminating Chemical and Biological Agents*. The 56-page report is the product of a Royal Society working group [see 13 Mar 03] chaired by Professor Herbert Huppert of the University of Cambridge which has taken evidence from key government departments, emergency service staff, emergency planners, the academic community and industry. The report recommends the establishment of a new centre to coordinate and direct the work required to improve the UK's capability and to minimise the impact of any civilian chemical or biological incident.

22 April In Tokyo, a Chinese-Japanese working group agrees to build a chemdemil facility in north-eastern China to destroy chemical weapons abandoned there by Japanese forces in the Second World War, so the Tokyo *Asahi Shimbun* reports. The facility will be built four kilometres west of the Harva district of Dunhua, in Jilin province, where the bulk of the yet-to-be recovered chemical weapons are believed to be buried. Construction of the two incinerators will begin in early 2005. Japan has pledged to contribute \$157 million to fully fund construction of the facility.

22 April In Singapore, officials from the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry and Singapore Customs sign an agreement on strengthening bilateral export control cooperation against WMD proliferation. The two countries agree to enhance export control implementation and enforcement through exchange of related information, to conduct outreach activities to encourage companies to implement effective internal export control compliance measures and to encourage other Asian countries to introduce domestic legal framework to implement export controls. The agreement builds upon ongoing regional consultations on export controls [see 28-30 Oct 03]. The newspaper cites Japanese government officials as saying that they hope to conclude a similar agreement with Hong Kong in May.

A press release issued by the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry states: "Despite active efforts by some Asian countries and regions to strengthen domestic legal frameworks to implement more effective export control systems, illicit procurement of WMD-related materials by countries of concern have not abated. Perpetrators have in fact become more cunning and creative in circumventing existing controls. The two authorities thus believe that it is essential for countries in this and other regions to collectively establish strong channels for cooperation and information exchange in order to prevent the illicit procurement of, and trade in, WMD-related material."

22 April At UN headquarters, the Security Council issues a presidential statement welcoming "the decision by

the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to abandon its programmes for developing weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery and the positive steps taken to fulfil its commitments and obligations, including its active cooperation with IAEA and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW)." The statement continues: "The Security Council encourages the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya to ensure the verified elimination of all of its weapons of mass destruction programmes. It welcomes the roles played in that regard by IAEA and OPCW in facilitating the fulfilment of the Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's commitments, demonstrating the importance and usefulness of existing international treaty regimes."

The Security Council spends most of the day engaged in an open debate, requested by Canada, Mexico, New Zealand, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland, on weapons of mass destruction and the draft resolution currently under consideration [see 1 Apr].

22 April In the US, the FBI has questioned more than 3,000 pilots and aircraft owners, most of them in the past year, regarding persistent concerns that terrorists might use crop-dusting planes [see 16 Sep 01] to mount a biological or chemical attack, so it is reported by AP. The operation, which is much more extensive than previously disclosed, is revealed in documents submitted to the 9-11 Commission [see 8 Apr]. According to the documents, under its Agricultural Aviation Threat Project the FBI has reviewed a list of some 11,000 agricultural aircraft provided by the Federal Aviation Administration. Working from the list, agents interviewed and did background checks on 3,028 operators and owners of the planes. No arrests have been made, but investigations are continuing and the FBI has urged pilots and owners to be vigilant. Four days later, the National Agricultural Aviation Association responds to the AP article by stressing the enhanced security measures adopted by the industry after 11 September and stating: "Never in the history of agricultural aviation has an aerial application plane been involved in any terrorist activity. The complexity and sophistication of aerial application aircraft, combined with the level of skill required to operate these planes make it unlikely that they could be used in attacks by terrorists with training."

23 April In the UK, the Ministry of Defence publishes the results of a two-year medical study of Porton Down veterans which finds "no clinical evidence linking ill-health with participation in a volunteer programme at the research establishment." A total of 111 former volunteers were referred to the Porton Down Volunteers Medical Assessment Programme (PDVMAP) at St Thomas' Hospital, London, between February 2001 and July 2003. The head of the PDVMAP, Professor Harry Lee, says: "On a clinical basis, we could find nothing to support the idea that participation in the Porton Down Volunteer Programme had produced any adverse long term health effects. Similarly, we were unable to find any unusual patterns of disease." However, veterans groups criticize the small size of the MAP study and state that it is "not necessarily representative of all veterans as 20,000 attended Porton Down over 40 years." They also criticize the timing of the study's publication, coming just one week before the new inquest [see 28 Sep 03] into the death in 1953 of Airman Ronald Maddison at Porton Down.

23 April In Washington, the White House announces that the US is lifting many of its sanctions against Libya in recognition of the steps the country has taken since its renunciation of weapons of mass destruction [see 19 Dec

03]. The application of the *Iran Libya Sanctions Act of 1996* to Libya is terminated allowing the resumption of most commercial activities, financial transactions and investments. However, Libya remains on the State Sponsors of Terrorism List meaning that restrictions will continue to apply to exports of dual-use items with military potential, including potential for WMD or missile applications. Exports to Libya of military articles and services on the US Munitions List also remain prohibited.

23 April In the US, a PowerPoint presentation detailing the proposed activities of the Department of Homeland Security's new National Biodefense Analysis and Countermeasures Center (NBACC) is removed from the website of the US Armed Forces Pest Management Board. The proposed activities listed include many which could be seen as violating the BWC, such as "Red teaming; Aerosol dynamics; Aerosol animal model development; Novel delivery of threat; Novel packaging; Environmental stability; Genetic engineering; Susceptibility to current Rx; Host range studies; and Bioregulators/immunomodulators." Among the "task areas" of the Center are listed: "Apply red team operational scenarios and capabilities"; and "Acquire, grow, modify, store, stabilize, package, disperse." The NBACC is due to be housed in a new facility at Fort Detrick for which \$200 million has been appropriated. The *Baltimore Sun* quotes Milton Leitenberg of the University of Maryland as saying: "If any other country presented this list of tasks, the US intelligence community would say it's an offensive program."

The presentation, entitled *The Leading Edge of Biodefense*, was made by Lt Gen George Korch, deputy director of the NBACC, and was originally given at the 2004 DoD Pest Management Workshop which took place during 9-13 February. The file is removed from the AFPMB website soon after its address is circulated on the BWPP Discussion Forum. However, a copy of the 35-slide file is later posted on the website of the Biodefense and Bioweapons Freedom of Information Fund.

23-24 April In Moscow, the PIR [Policy Studies in Russia] Center and the Board on Sustainable Partnership for Russia organize a conference on *The G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction*. The conference is attended by 270 officials and experts from 21 countries. The conference includes panels on "Biological Security: Prospects for International Cooperation" and "Chemical Disarmament: Problems and Prospects".

Addressing the conference, US Ambassador to Moscow Alexander Vershbow says that in recognition of the threat of bioterrorism the US government has "proposed a plan of action to other G-8 members. As a starting point, we believe that we need to cooperate in enhanced surveillance of infectious diseases. We need a clearinghouse of emergency health response assets so we can quickly identify the tools available to us in the case of a bioterror attack. We need to strengthen the protection of the food supply chain. And Russia, with its vast reservoir of scientific talent, has the potential to be an important partner in this effort."

Also during the conference, a Swiss Foreign Ministry official tells reporters that Switzerland is to assist Albania in destroying its small stockpile of chemical weapons [see 18-21 Mar 03]. Andreas Friedrich says that Albania's stockpile consists of "very old" mustard agent which was found in some of the many bunkers built during Albania's Communist past. He says that Switzerland will cover the cost of OPCW inspections in Albania, which could amount to \$60,000. A team of Swiss experts has visited Albania to assess the condition of the weapons. Friedrich says that Switzerland might also aid

the actual destruction process.

25 April At Spiez Laboratory in Switzerland, there is the fifth in the series of Chemical and Biological Medical Treatment Symposia, CBMTS V [see 28 Apr – 3 May 02].

26 April In Baghdad, there is an explosion in a building which US forces had been searching for signs of suspected chemical weapons production. Two US troops are killed in the blast and five are injured. According to US Brigadier General Mark Kimmitt: "It was a chemical store from which the owner and his associates were suspected of supplying chemical agents to terrorists, criminals and insurgents. There is also information that these individuals were involved in the production of chemical munitions. That could be any number of chemical munitions. It could be smoke bombs, it could be anything." However, local residents say that the warehouse contained chemicals for making perfume, make-up and other cosmetics. The London *Times* reports that the two victims were members of the Iraq Survey Group (ISG) and that locals had found ISG identification cards, classified ISG documents and aerial photographs of the building in the wreckage of the team's vehicles. Eye witnesses say that they saw six people, including at least one woman, dressed in bright yellow chemical protective suits go down into the building's basement. However, other witnesses said the team had all been wearing normal military uniforms. Following the explosion, there are reportedly no signs of measures being taken to protect against chemicals in the local area.

26 April In Tokyo, the High Court begins hearing an appeal [see 3 Oct 03] by the Japanese government against the decision of a lower court [see 29 Sep 03] which ruled that the government should pay compensation to 13 Chinese people for injuries sustained from a leaking World War Two-era Japanese chemical munition.

26-27 April In Singapore, the US Office of the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS) and the Chemical and Biological Arms Control Institute (CBACI) co-host a meeting on *The Future of the Biotechnology Industry: Safeguarding the Opportunities and Managing the Risks* as part of a joint three-year project. Opening the meeting, Singapore's Deputy Prime Minister Dr Tony Tan says: "[T]he threat of rogue scientists or terrorist organizations creating potentially dangerous biological agents through recombinant DNA technology cannot be lightly dismissed. The series of Anthrax attacks in the US in October 2001, just one month after the 911 attacks, is a stark reminder of this possibility." The conference organizers, Terence Taylor of IISS-US and Michael Moodie of CBACI, tell reporters after the meeting that they are looking to establish a International Council for the Life Sciences next year. The council would draft a global life sciences code of conduct for governments and related industries, such as pharmaceutical companies, research institutes and nongovernmental organizations, adherence to which would be a prerequisite if they wanted to join the new body. The council would also organize annual seminars on industry issues and help governments develop policies related to the life sciences.

27 April In Brussels, Libyan leader Colonel Ghadaffi arrives for talks with Belgian Prime Minister Guy Verhofstadt and European Commission President Romano Prodi. The talks with President Prodi deal with the "full normalization" of relations between the EU and Libya and with Libya's decision to renounce weapons of mass destruction

[see 19 Dec 03]. During his visit, Colonel Ghadaffi says: "Libya calls on all countries, from America to China, to discard and get rid of all WMD. Libya has become an example to be followed. The noose will be tightened gradually on those with weapons of mass destruction. Libya has secured itself more by discarding such programs. [...] The whole world pledges and honours the security of Libya because Libya has forged the road on the path of peace."

27 April - 11 May In the US near Oklahoma City, the US Army conducts further [see 15-18 Apr 02] trials of its Homeland Defense Chemical Biological Umbrella. Under the US Army project, which has been allocated \$15 million by Congress, 45 Doppler weather radars belonging to the Federal Aviation Administration are to be updated so that they can act as an early warning system for the aerosol dissemination of chemical and biological agents. The tests involve the dissemination of water from a Cessna crop-spraying aircraft and are being conducted in collaboration with MIT's Lincoln Laboratory. The US Army hopes to have five radar stations updated by the end of the year.

28 April From Tehran, IRNA reports that an Iranian court has ordered the US government to pay \$600 million in compensation for supplying former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein with chemical weapons. According to the news agency, the money in the case, brought by Iranian war veterans, should be paid to survivors of chemical weapons attacks on the town of Sardasht.

28 April In Rome, a court acquits nine Moroccans who had been charged with attempting to poison the water supply of the US Embassy with cyanide [see 19 Feb 02]. The acquittal is a blow to Italy's anti-terrorism police and prosecutors say that they will appeal the verdict.

28 April In Kersik, southern Thailand, army and police forces use tear gas to storm a mosque in which 34 rebels had taken cover following an earlier attack on an army checkpoint. During the operation, all 34 rebels are killed.

28 April At UN headquarters, the Security Council unanimously adopts a resolution on the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction to non-state actors, following weeks of consultations [see 22 Apr]. Despite opposition from Pakistan and others, resolution 1540 is adopted under Chapter VII of the UN Charter, potentially allowing for military enforcement of its provisions. The resolution is sponsored by France, Romania, Russia, Spain, the UK and the US.

Resolution 1540 affirms that the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons and their means of delivery constitutes a threat to international peace and security and reaffirms the Council's 1992 presidential statement [see 31 Jan 92] on non-proliferation. All 191 UN member states are required "in accordance with their national procedures" to "adopt and enforce appropriate effective laws which prohibit any non-State actor to manufacture, acquire, possess, develop, transport, transfer or use nuclear, chemical or biological weapons and their means of delivery, in particular for terrorist purposes". All member states are additionally required to "take and enforce effective measures to establish domestic controls to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons and their means of delivery, including by establishing appropriate controls over related materials". Only for the purposes of the resolution, "related materials" are defined as "materials, equipment and technology covered by relevant multilateral treaties and arrangements, or included on national control lists, which could be used for the design, development,

production or use of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and their means of delivery." The resolution also establishes a Security Council Committee made up of all Council members to report on its implementation. States have to submit a first report on steps taken or planned to implement the resolution nationally within six months. The resolution stresses that none of its obligations "shall be interpreted so as to conflict with or alter the rights and obligations of State Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention or alter the responsibilities of the International Atomic Energy Agency or the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons". The resolution also grants a degree of legitimacy to the Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI) by calling upon states, "in accordance with their national legal authorities and legislation and consistent with international law, to take cooperative action to prevent illicit trafficking in nuclear, chemical or biological weapons, their means of delivery, and related materials".

28 April In Washington, at a joint press briefing Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson, Secretary of Homeland Security Tom Ridge and Deputy Secretary of Defence Paul Wolfowitz unveil unclassified details of Homeland Security Presidential Directive 10, entitled *Biodefense for the 21st Century*. President George Bush had signed HSPD-10 on 21 April, following a 10-month review of national biodefence initiatives by the Homeland Security Adviser, John Gordon. According to a White House fact sheet, the classified directive "builds on past accomplishments, specifies roles and responsibilities, and integrates the programs and efforts of various communities – national security, medical, public health, intelligence, diplomatic, agricultural and law enforcement – into a sustained and focused national effort against biological weapons threats." The directive outlines four pillars of the US biodefence programme: Threat awareness; Prevention and protection; Surveillance and detection; and Response and recovery. The plan calls for the Department of Homeland Security to undertake a national risk assessment every two years on new biological threats and to perform a "net assessment" of biodefence effectiveness and vulnerabilities every four years.

29 April In Israel, the Knesset adopts a new *Export Control Order* which strengthens Government control over transfers of chemical, biological and nuclear items and consolidates existing practices in this field. Adoption of the order had been requested by the National Security Council as "part of the country of Israel's efforts to maintain world peace and stability and to prevent unconventional weapons and unconventional terror." The Israeli ambassador to the Conference on Disarmament later explains that the new Order is intended to prohibit exports of goods, technology and services designed to be used in weapons of mass destruction programmes and to establish a licensing system for the export of dual-use goods, technology and services. Additionally, the new legislation includes a wide catch-all provision which forbids the export of any good, technology and service if intended to promote the development or manufacturing of weapons of mass destruction. In order to ensure compliance, violation of any substantial provision of the new order, or violation of any condition included in export licenses issued according to the new Order, will be a criminal offence carrying with it a maximum penalty of three years imprisonment. The new order enters into force on 1 July.

29 April The US State Department's Office of the Co-ordinator of Terrorism releases its twenty-third annual

terrorism report [see 30 Apr 03], *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003*. The report says there were 190 terrorist incidents in 2003 as compared with 198 during 2002. The report emphasizes the fact that “the figure in 2003 represents the lowest annual total of international terrorist attacks since 1969.” A total of 307 people were killed and 1,593 were injured by terrorists in 2003, as compared with 725 killed and 2,013 injured in 2002. The figures do not include attacks on US forces in Iraq and Afghanistan as only attacks against non-combatants fit the definition of terrorism used in the report. The report states that “although terrorists will probably continue to rely on traditional terrorist tactics, several groups— including al-Qaida—increasingly look to chemical, biological, radiological, or nuclear (CBRN) materials as a means to cause mass casualties rivaling or exceeding those of September 11. Troublesome amounts of dangerous materials, and information about how to create and deliver CBRN weapons, remain available to terrorists.” The list of designated state sponsors of terrorism remains as before (Cuba, Iran, Iraq, Libya, North Korea, Sudan and Syria). However, the report notes “significant steps to cooperate in the global war on terrorism” by Libya and Sudan and that “the liberation of Iraq removed a regime that had long supported terrorist groups.”

Two months later, the State Department is forced to issue a correction to *Patterns of Global Terrorism 2003*. Rather than showing the much-heralded lowest annual total of international terrorist attacks since 1969, the corrected total for 2003, 208, is actually higher than that for 2002. Rather than 307 people killed by terrorists in 2003, the revised report more than doubles this figure to 625. It also reports a 21-year high in the number of “significant attacks”. The mistake is explained by Secretary of State Colin Powell as the result of computational and accounting errors by the new Terrorist Threat Information Center which compiles the data for the State Department. Responding to claims that the original figures had been deliberately underestimated to show success in the “war on terrorism”, Secretary Powell says: “We have only one goal with this report, and that is to accurately reflect the pattern of terrorism that existed throughout the world during the period of the report. The report is not designed to make our efforts look better or worse, or terrorism look better or worse, but to provide the facts to the American people.”

30 April In the US Congress, the Congressional Research Service issues a report on *Greece: Threat of Terrorism and Security at the Olympics*. The report states that: “The Greek government is planning unprecedented security measures to deal with possible terrorist threats. Attacks by Al Qaeda or its allies in Europe and elsewhere heightened the government’s awareness of the potential for terrorism at the Olympics.” It also mentions steps that have been taken to deter and respond to attacks with chemical and biological weapons. Greece has formally notified NATO [see 26 Mar] of its need for, among other things, assistance with biochemical defences. In addition, the UK Health Protection Agency has been approached by the Greek authorities to provide additional diagnostic services during the Games and a number of Greek scientists and medical officers have already attended an anthrax workshop at Porton Down.

This Chronology was compiled by Nicholas Dragffy and Daniel Feakes from information supplied through HSP’s network of correspondents and literature scanners

World Health Organization

Public Health Response to Biological and Chemical Weapons: WHO Guidance has now been published in its full version, technical annexes and all, in time for the 57th World Health Assembly that took place in Geneva during 17-21 May 2004. Parts of earlier versions had been appearing on the WHO website from November 2001 onwards. Russian and Spanish translations have already been web-posted, and Arabic, Chinese, Farsi and French translations are in preparation. The volume constitutes the second edition of *Health aspects of chemical and biological weapons: Report of a WHO group of consultants* (1970). Work started on it in February 1998, at a time when its subject was starting to emerge into its current public prominence. So an increasingly wide consultation became necessary as the work progressed: ninety-nine contributors from twenty-one countries and seven international organizations are identified in the final text. The Executive Editor for this elaborate enterprise was furnished by the Harvard Sussex Program, as were several other contributors.

The primary purpose of the publication, which is some 350 pages long, is to guide preparedness for the deliberate use of biological and chemical agents that affect health. While noting that the probability of an attack with such weapons may be low, the guide underscores the magnitude of potential impacts on civilian populations and the corresponding need for public health authorities, in close cooperation with other parts of government, to develop contingency plans, with due regard to other health priorities. For such plans to be effective, collaborative arrangements involving all partners have to be established and tested well before an incident or emergency occurs.

The guide has six main chapters. Advice on assessing the threat to public health posed by the deliberate use of biological and chemical agents that affect health is followed by a review of the characteristics of these agents that influence dissemination patterns and help predict short- and long-term consequences. Implications of the possible use of such weapons for both warfare and terrorist objectives are covered.

The most extensive chapter, on public health preparedness and response, sets out the principles for planning, moving stepwise from threat and risk assessment, hazard identification and evaluation, through the introduction of risk management strategies, to the many specific actions required for an effective and appropriate response. Details range from situations in which use of special protective equipment can actually hamper the ability to respond, to advice on the evaluation of biological hoaxes, to lessons extracted from terrorist attacks on civilians using chemical or biological agents. The guide also explains why response plans should be developed as an integral part of existing national emergency plans, and discusses the need for strong systems of disease surveillance and early warning that detect natural as well as deliberate outbreaks. Other chapters cover the preventive legal framework provided by treaties and describe international sources of assistance.

A review of a representative group of biological and chemical agents, including toxins, is provided. Various technologies and strategies used to protect individuals against physical contamination by chemical and biological agents are described, as well as precautions that can be taken to prevent sabotage of drinking water, food and other products.

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Annual Report of the UK National Authority

Subscribers to *The CBW Conventions Bulletin* will find enclosed with this issue the just-published Annual Report 2003 of the UK CWC National Authority. With a view to promoting transparency of implementation of the CWC, the Harvard Sussex Program remains happy to distribute similar reports from other Article VII(4) national authorities. Requests to this end should be directed to the Managing Editor, Carolyn Sansbury, at the address given below.

Of special interest in the UKNA report is the section (pages 30-32) that addresses the General Purpose Criterion, which is the provision enabling the prohibitions set out in the CWC both to escape technological obsolescence and to control 'dual use' technology. Although the General Purpose Criterion is therefore crucial to the future well-being of the CWC, states parties are evidently finding it discouragingly difficult to implement adequately. The UKNA report provides an informative account of one country's attempt at doing so.

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