

Report on the International Roundtable on Dual Use Life Sciences Research



**NSABB Meeting
April 19, 2007**



International Roundtable

- **Co-sponsors**

- **World Health Organization**
- **US Government**

- **Location**

- **Bethesda, Maryland**

- **Date**

- **February 26-27, 2007**



Countries of Participants

- Australia
- Argentina
- Bulgaria
- Georgia
- India
- Israel
- Morocco
- Netherlands
- People's Republic of China
- Poland
- Uganda
- United Kingdom
- United States
- Spain
- Switzerland



Participating Organizations

- **Intergovernmental Organizations**

- ❑ World Health Organization
- ❑ World Organization for Animal Health (OIE)
- ❑ Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)

- **Scientific Professional Associations**

- ❑ International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB)
- ❑ International Union of Microbiological Societies (IUMS)
- ❑ International Council for Life Sciences (ICLS)
- ❑ American Society for Microbiology (ASM)



Participant Perspectives

- **Basic Science**
- **Medicine**
- **Ethics**
- **Scientific Association Officials**
- **Government Scientific Agency Officials**
- **Scientific Journal Editors**
- **National Research Councils**





Fundamental Purpose

- **Engage individuals from different countries**
- **Explore ideas and concepts about biosecurity and dual use research**
- **Identify common concerns and issues**
- **Foster communication and ongoing dialogue**



Objectives

- **Determine scope of other countries' activities, interests, and concerns pertaining to dual use life sciences research**
- **Inform individuals from other countries and professional societies about NSABB draft work products and obtain feedback**
- **Establish communication with individuals from other countries and the international community on dual use research issues**
- **Collaborate with other countries and the international community to establish a more robust understanding of dual use life sciences research issues and how to approach them**



Agenda Overview

- **Origins and Evolution of Concern Regarding Dual Use Life Sciences Research**
- **The Dual Use Dilemma and its Importance**
- **Recognizing Dual Use Potential when Advancing Global Health Research**
- **Balancing Public Health Priorities and National Security Concerns**
- **US Government Activities in Dual Use Life Sciences Research**



Roundtable Sessions

1. The Dual Use Dilemma—What is it and Why Does it Matter?

- **Objective:** Determine the scope of countries' interest and concerns regarding dual use life sciences research

2. Recognizing Dual Use Potential While Advancing Global Health Research

- **Objective:** Determine the scope of countries' initiatives in dual use life sciences research



Roundtable Sessions, cont.

3. Balancing Public Health Priorities and National Security Concerns: Addressing the Dual Use Dilemma

- ❑ **Objective: Establish global communication on the dual use issue**

4. US Initiatives in Dual Use Life Sciences Research

- ❑ **Objective: Obtain input on draft work products of the US NSABB**



Consensus Points

- **Maintain a productive scientific enterprise and minimize the potential for harm**
- **Provide guidance on dual use to the broader scientific community, defining the problem and the challenges**
- **Promote continued awareness of the dual use research issue**
 - **Build a layered, integrated, international web of prevention, protection, awareness and understanding**



Consensus Points, cont.

- **Strengthen and sustain a culture of responsibility and accountability**
 - **Humans control science for good or ill**
- **Science is a powerful tool of good for society**
 - **Science and our understanding of biological processes are advancing very rapidly**



Consensus Points, cont.

- **Science is a global enterprise and becoming ever more so**
 - **Addressing the challenges of dual use science is therefore a global issue**
 - **Different approaches may be required in different regions/countries**



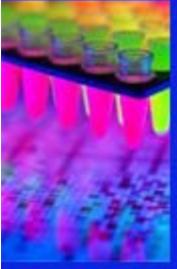
Consensus Points, cont.

- **There are a variety of ways to help in addressing dual use issues:**
 - **Define criteria for identifying dual-use research**
 - **Provide educational materials for scientists, students (of all ages), the public, government decision makers**
 - **Develop codes of conduct**
 - **Develop a “Hippocratic Oath” for scientists**
 - **Provide guidance for considering potential publication of scientific research**
 - **Provide oversight processes, including a framework for risk assessment and risk mitigation/management**
 - **Provide guidance for science funding agencies**

Challenge

***Prevent use of science for harm
yet...***

***Protect scientific discovery
Preserve scientific creativity***





Possible Next Steps

- **Learn more about the needs of individual countries regarding dual use research issues**
- **Consider how best to engage/educate stakeholders**
 - **Academia**
 - **Industry**
 - **Government**
 - **Policy-makers**
 - **General public**
 - **Scientific/medical journal editors, publishers**



Possible Next Steps, cont.

- **Develop strategies for engaging potential collaborators**
- **Consider how to develop a communications network**
- **Continue to integrate International Working Group efforts and activities with the NSABB**
- **Consider strategies for ongoing international dialogue**
- **Consider drafting a White Paper for submission to a scientific journal**



Possible Contents of a White Paper

- Define dual use problem and challenges
- Acknowledge previous and ongoing international discussions
- Describe the International Roundtable
 - Outline objectives and consensus points
- Describe basic “tool-kit” and the potential use of individual tools