

BioWeapons Prevention Project

BioWeapons Prevention Project (BWPP), an international non-governmental organisation, is a global civil society activity that aims to strengthen the norm against the weaponization of disease. BWPP was launched on November 11, 2002. With its headquarter located in Geneva, Switzerland, it seeks to increase openness and precision in all matters relating to biological weapons (BW). In order to achieve the objectives of the BWC (prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of bacteriological (biological) weapons and their elimination), BWPP was launched.

The BWPP tracks governmental and other behaviour that is pertinent to compliance with international treaties and other agreements, especially those that outlaw hostile use of biotechnology. The project works to reduce the threat of bioweapons by monitoring and reporting throughout the world. BWPP supports and is supported by a global network of partners.¹

Among its activities, the BWPP monitors political, societal, scientific and technological developments with possible implications for the use of disease as a weapon. It also monitors threat reduction efforts undertaken by governments and other entities, including the implementation of the legal and political obligations of States under the BTWC and other relevant international agreements.² It also tracks efforts by governments and other entities to reduce the BW threat and aims to be a vital interlocutor with regard to matters relevant to the prevention of the weaponization of disease.³ BWPP publishes its findings in annual reports, occasional papers and through its web site. The cardinal aim of the BioWeapons Prevention Project is to contribute towards the strengthening of the BTWC through its own independent analysis and that by its member organisations. The threat of biological weapons and bioterrorism is looming large and elimination of such threats is part of such endeavors taken by it.

It aims to create awareness among civil society organisations, the media and the public about the bioweapons threat and how they can contribute through their publication and works in minimizing such threats by making complex issues accessible to the layman.

The BWPP released the First Edition of its BioWeapons Report on December 9, 2004 Meeting of States Parties to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC) in Geneva, Switzerland. The report highlights the dangers posed by both traditional and potentially new biological weapons, and delineates some of the measures governments can and should take to reduce the impending threat.

The Bioweapons Monitor is one of the leading publications of the BWPP. It is an online searchable database with open-source information on topics related to international accords controlling biological weapons and relevant developments in specific regions and countries. The BioWeapons Report is the more analytical component of the BWPP publications. It is an annual printed book containing contributions from various authors. The current Strategic Programme 2004-06 is a concerted effort to generate an agenda to monitor and strengthen the norms against the use of disease as a weapon for and beyond the 2006 Review Conference of the Biological and Toxin Weapon Convention. BWPP aims to fill this gap by monitoring implementation of the legal and political obligations never to develop, produce or use biological weapons. Since April 2006 the BWPP has been involved in the technical implementation of the Joint Action in support of the BTWC, which was adopted by the Council of the European Union in February 2006. The activities involve the organisation of 5 regional seminars to promote the universalization of the convention and assist with national implementation legislation of States Parties to the Convention.⁴

BWPP has contributed significantly in spreading awareness regarding the threat of BW and is incessantly working in the same direction to curb the impending threat of the same.

Endnotes:

1. <http://www.bwpp.org/about.html>
2. www.armscontrolcenter.org/policy/biochem/articles/bio_weapons_project_report/ -
3. www.bwpp.org/documents/2004-06BWPPstrategicprogramme.pdf
4. <http://www.bwpp.org/>