

PASCC

Research in Progress

FY17-18

REGIONAL WORKSHOPS ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES FOR THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

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ABSTRACT:

Continuing rapid advances in the life sciences have profound implications for the future of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC). The BWC's 8th review conference in November 2016 ended without agreeing on any significant steps forward to enhance the treaty's effectiveness, including the creation of a regular science advising mechanism to assist in monitoring and assessing relevant developments. A number of BWC member states, including the United States, are seeking ways to support constructive activities outside the treaty, while also working to develop potential future activities within it. Fortunately, the European Union (EU) had already funded a series of regional workshops on science and technology (S&T) issues for the BWC to be held in 2017-18. The Board on Life Sciences of the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, in cooperation with international scientific partners, has been asked to assist the BWC with the preparations for the workshops by identifying potential participants from its extensive networks and providing information about the status of S&T developments in each region. The proposed activities will continue the Academies' engagement with the BWC, including international assessments of S&T trends for the 6th, 7th, and 8th review conferences, and a number of meetings on focused topics. The new regional workshops are an opportunity to make the BWC's post-review conference discussions of S&T genuinely global and diverse and to provide a baseline for future review and assessment. The regional workshops will provide direct inputs to understanding treaty effectiveness issues that must be addressed. The results can also identify and consolidate regionally unique issues for use in planning tailored regional strategies for nonproliferation.

Research in Progress describes ongoing PASCC research. For more information please contact INSS@usafa.edu.