



Check against delivery

Remarks

**at the occasion of a panel discussion
on the Role of the Scientific Community
in Global Security Engagement**

**First International Conference
On Science and International Security**

**Madrid
8 November 2010**

Dear Mr. Chairman, Distinguished members of the panel, Ladies and Gentleman!

1. Introduction

At the beginning of my short contribution to the discussion, I would like to sincerely congratulate the organizers of today's conference on bringing together such a distinguished group of speakers, panel members and members of the audience.

I would like to thank the organizers very much for providing me the opportunity to say a couple of words.

I represent an international organization called International Science and Technology Center – ISTC - that has the subject of today's discussion, the promotion of the role of the scientific community in global security engagement, among its highest priorities.

2. What is ISTC?

The ISTC is an organization that works at the crossroads between science and non-proliferation. Since 1994 we have funded more than 2700 programs and projects with a total investment of more than 1 billion USD.

The basic activities of this organization are:

- the promotion of scientists' engagement in various scientific areas;
- the advancement of physical security at various research institutes;
- the improvement of the individual skills of scientists and engineers;
- the enhancement of the sustainability of research institutes;
- the support for commercialization of research results and last but not least

- the stimulation of awareness of the potential dual-use of certain scientific applications and materials.

A number of Targeted Initiatives are under implementation for example in relation to providing more advanced verification and safeguard methods for IAEA but also in the area of global security. Our projects have helped to create detectors for so-called “dirty” bombs, for the illicit trafficking of nuclear materials as well as to find methods to upgrade nuclear material protection and control systems.

ISTC has been a key instrument of the G8 Global Partnership Program. Recently, an independent evaluation characterized the Center as a “unique mechanism for fostering international collaboration, enhancing coordination of projects and sharing lessons learned”.

Therefore, the work of the International Science and Technology Center (ISTC) has assisted in the creation of a civil orientated research community in the countries of the former Soviet Union. New networks of national and international scientific contacts have been built up and scientists have been given new careers. But most of all trust and confidence among scientists has been built worldwide. Hence, the Center is an international model for dealing with the human dimension of non proliferation. The importance of this work has been acknowledged last year by the G8 through the adoption of the specific recommendations “for a coordinated approach in the field of WMD knowledge proliferation and scientists’ engagement.”

3. Trend

Experts tell us that the expansion of dual-use technologies worldwide to a more globally dispersed range of entities deserves more attention.

These challenges we are facing today do not only relate to the rapid spread of scientific knowledge but also to the rising number of actors involved and the relationships between them. The amount of information that is accumulating thanks to the rapid advances in science and technology is staggering. There is a need to respond to

the rapidity of this development as well as to the complex nature of the advances.

The nuclear renaissance is posing new proliferation challenges as a result of the worldwide expansion of nuclear power. And while there are great benefits to be had, a relaxed approach to safety and security as such a worldwide expansion of nuclear power takes place cannot be allowed.

Further, the breakthrough of biotechnology and rapid spread of applications worldwide poses serious questions with respect to our threat reduction capacities. Stockpiles of dangerous pathogens are present in poorly-secured and vulnerable facilities globally including in unstable regions.

The fundamental technology to construct chemical weapons is widespread and requests new responses in terms of security.

It is clear that all possible efforts should be made under the non proliferation policies to address these new tasks, be it from a preventive or from a curative point of view, including the need to be prepared in case of calamities.

It is in that context that more attention should be paid to grassroots level activities i.e. the individual scientists and engineers that are at the origin of new technologies and materials. A “culture of responsibility” among scientists, especially young scientists and among institutions dealing with high risk and sensitive materials should be promoted more actively. This is exactly what ISTC tries to achieve.

But, what is the reality today?

The reality is that organizations such as ISTC are struggling to continue instead of being given the possibility to expand their work. I therefore dare to say that the carefully developed “Nunn Lugar Legacy” is being endangered.

This is contrary to what experts and the scientists themselves say is needed: we need more scientists' engagement activities and not less.

To focus for a moment on the organization I lead, ISTC, almost all agree that working methods and modalities need to be changed to reflect current developments and changing global needs, and that work needs to be expanded beyond our current geographical remit. But, in a situation whereby the President of the Russian Federation, President Medvedev, has recently announced the withdrawal of Russia from the ISTC, and the major funding governments have reduced their commitments to the Center to almost base operational level, the Center has entered a period of uncertainty, not just in Russia but also with respect to its future activities in the other countries of the CIS and Georgia.

4. Way forward

However, all is not yet lost as long as our governments, the Funding Parties, start to accelerate their commitment to the establishment of a new organization and at the same time allow ISTC to continue existing work on the basis of the established and proven legal framework.

Considerable preparation has already been done by the ISTC itself. There is now, I believe, a convergence of views on the way forward i.e. the need to set up a new organization dealing with global scientific challenges, including non proliferation, scientists' engagement and activities aimed at further modernization of various economies also in view of the task to establish low-carbon economies.

I therefore take the liberty, and the opportunity of this high-level gathering, to call upon major Parties and Partners to take matters in hand, and by so doing, prevent the further deterioration of the current situation, weakening efforts to enhance global security worldwide.

Thank you for your attention.