

Remarks by Ambassador Bonnie Jenkins  
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US Department of State

Good Morning.

It is really a great honor for me to be here this afternoon.

As you look at the title of today's conference, you note the phrase: "Building Partnerships for Biological Threat Prevention, Preparedness, and Response."

It is this phrase "Building partnerships" that really brings me to be here with you today.

The Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction, or Global Partnership, or just GP, is an initiative of 24 partner nations and this year it has become a champion in promoting the larger US vision to bring together the health and security communities to promote Global Health Security. The GP is taking on promoting this vision on an international scale. This effort in the GP includes not just working with its partner nations on this vision, but also working with relevant International Organizations, or IOs, and now increasingly, relevant think tanks and NGOs.

And in this way, the Global Partnership now serves as a model of what can be accomplished when promoting an important goal through discussion, shared vision, and then the programming of activities funded by interested nations.

Today we have heard about the importance of bringing together the health and the security communities so that we can more successfully combat biological threats. We need a whole of government approach that also is whole of society in that it must also, to be successful, reach out to those outside of government as well to play a role in combating the threat, whether from the health or security perspectives.

Partnerships are key here. Partnerships are important because in today's world, much of our everyday existence is based on a global system where we are

connected to so many around the world. As such, the way in which we achieve success is increasingly through the establishment and nourishment of partnerships.

What we are discussing today and tomorrow is a threat that is global in nature. As such, a global effort to address the threat, building upon the whole of government approach and whole of society approach, must be implemented. The Global Partnership, an initiative of funding nations of various sizes and over 12 international organizations that funds programs and activities to combat chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear terrorism, was recognized early on as a very good place to take on the task of promoting global health security.

The Global Partnership was established in 2002 as a 10-year, \$20 billion initiative to prevent terrorists, or states that support them, from acquiring or developing weapons of mass destruction. To date, the Global Partnership has spent over \$21 billion towards preventing terrorists from acquiring or developing weapons of mass destruction. The Global Partnership has been a positive model of cooperation for combating these threats.

For those first 10 years, the majority of work within the Global Partnership was focused on destroying Russian nuclear submarines and Russian chemical weapons, though funding also went to some other activities and programs within Russia and the former Soviet Union. In those years, the Global Partnership has achieved the following:

- Improved accounting, control, and physical protection of nuclear and radiological materials;
- Enhanced nuclear, biological, and chemical security;
- Dismantled nuclear submarines and safe storage of removed spent fuel;
- Improved detection of nuclear and radiological materials and prevented illicit trafficking by improving border security capabilities;
- Engaged and redirected to peaceful purposes scientists, technicians, and engineers who have WMD, missile, and related expertise; and
- Provided enhanced training on nuclear safeguards and security.

However, as the Global Partnership neared its 10 year conclusion year, this year 2012, the partners began to realize that the programs and activities of the initiative had to evolve to reflect the increasing change in the threat of WMD terrorism that faced the world. The threat of WMD terrorism does not originate from any one region; the threat is not so limited to nuclear submarines and chemical weapons but

also from threats posed in the area of bio-security and weak borders, for example; and more nations need to play a role in the work to reduce the threat. With this in mind, the Global Partnership worked towards extending the mandate of the Global Partnership beyond 2012 and to be much more global in its activities and in its spirit.

At the G8 Summit in Deauville, France in 2011, the Leaders decided to extend the Global Partnership beyond 2012 and to bring it more in line with what is needed to combat today's WMD threats.

While funds will still be dedicated towards activities in Russia, the Leaders mandated that the partners also focus more programming globally in the area of nuclear and radiological security, bio-security, scientist engagement, and implementation of UNSCR 1540. The Leaders also agreed that new members should be sought so that the partnership will have a truly global representation.

As a result of the extension, many Global Partnership partners are for the first time considering funding activities and projects in areas and regions of the world they had not done before. Much of that increased funding will be in the area of bio-security and for regions in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia. Promoting funding through the work of the GP and with the relevant international organizations provides a coordinated mechanism for addressing bio-security threat throughout the world.

As Chair of the GP this year, the United States wanted to provide a road map to guide the GP towards being more of a coordination mechanism for activities and programs under its mandate.

From early on this year, the US, working with our partners, decided to focus on bio-security. This decision reflects activity in the United States that, again, highlights the necessity to address biological threats through the promotion and enhancement of global health security.

To make all this happen, the U.S. established a GP Bio-Security Sub-Working Group, or the BSWG, that promotes a program of work that brings together health and security sectors so that Global Partnership members can provide coordinated assistance to other nations to counter biological threats. The BSWG promotes efforts to reduce risks associated with biological threats, regardless of cause, through collaboration with other member nations, International Organizations, and health and science sector counterparts. These sectors can help prevent, detect, and

respond to health emergencies. As partners, these communities can also build the capacity needed to address biological events, whether the result of an international action or by accident or because of a naturally occurring infectious disease outbreak. The GP is one place where the concept of building bridges across silos is a basic premise of what the GP does.

Of the 12 IOs now attending the Global Partnership meetings, in the area of biosecurity, those IOs include the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention Implementation Support Unit, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Organization for Animal Health, the World Health Organization, and INTERPOL. These five organizations continue to play a vital role in the discussions of the GP and especially the BSWG.

As a result of this hard work, the GP, along with relevant international organizations, and led by the work of the BSWG, agreed to a set of five deliverables to be annually reviewed and the outcome assessed after a period of five years. This is a significant achievement. The five deliverables are as follows:

1. ***Secure and account for materials that represent biological proliferation risks.*** This includes assistance to support global biosecurity and biosafety activities such as implementing existing international and developing national systems for managing biological materials, including stores of pathogens/toxins that represent proliferation risks in a safe and secure manner, with the goal that all nations may adhere to existing international standards and/or guidelines for biorisk management and oversight appropriate to their circumstances.
2. ***Develop and maintain appropriate and effective measures to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the deliberate misuse of biological agents.*** In recognition that full and effective implementation of international health regulations, standards and guidelines contribute to preventing, preparing for, detecting, reporting, and responding to biological attacks, assistance includes building and strengthening sustainable national capacities to meet these requirements, taking into account multisectoral approaches.
3. ***Strengthen national and global networks to rapidly identify, confirm and respond to biological attacks.*** This includes assistance to support the identification and implementation of shared approaches for deploying and strengthening coherent national and global biosurveillance,

information systems, and networks to better detect, identify, confirm, and respond to biological attacks, with the ultimate goal of achieving near real-time identification and reporting for potential biological attacks.

4. ***Reinforce and strengthen biological nonproliferation principles, practices and instruments.*** This includes assistance in promoting the universalization and full implementation of existing non-proliferation obligations, such as under the BWC, the 1925 Geneva Protocol and United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1540, and ensuring the effectiveness of existing tools, such as the UN Secretary General's mechanism, to investigate alleged uses of biological and chemical weapons.
5. ***Reduce proliferation risks through the advancement and promotion of safe and responsible conduct in the biological sciences.*** This includes assistance to support implementation of practicable and shared approaches to advance safe and responsible conduct in the life sciences to lower these risks – recognizing that, while life sciences research is essential to advances that underpin improvements in the health and safety of the public, animals, and the environment, some research may provide knowledge, information, products, or technologies that could be misused for harmful purposes.

The GP has worked closely with the relevant IOs in agreeing upon the document, and we are also beginning to reach outside the GP in promoting the message and bringing in countries who might be interested in working on the deliverables.

The GP has also begun to work closely with Ambassador Kennedy and her team in Geneva, particularly regarding the work of the Biological Weapons Convention, or BWC. For example, this past July, the US, on behalf of the GP, hosted an outreach side event during the BWC Experts Meeting. We invited the experts to a Global Partnership panel to discuss with the BWC attendees the connection between the work being done by the GP BSWG and the BWC. In fact, deliverable 4, once again, notes that the GP will “reinforce and strengthen biological nonproliferation principles, practices and instruments,” and in that respect, lists the BWC, the 1925 Geneva Protocol and United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1540. Through biosecurity projects, GP member countries can help promote the implementation of the BWC, and in turn, BWC member states and the BWC Implementation Support Unit can increase awareness of the Global Partnership's

biosecurity, biological response and preparedness efforts, and scientist engagement efforts. The panel was very well attended with over 175 people.

Through the GP and BSWG meetings, we are also developing “flagship projects” that will provide an approach for GP countries to contribute resources to IOs to undertake significant programs which would be difficult to accomplish alone. Partners can contribute resources to IOs to undertake significant programs which would be difficult to accomplish alone. Having such a flagship idea for each of the deliverables will make those deliverables really come to life and provide a focus for coordinated efforts and funding by GP partners and the relevant international organizations. This is what the GP can do.

Some examples of flagships include promoting a standard Global Biorisk Management curriculum and train the trainer program, promoting common Laboratory Biorisk Management Standards, identification of International Health Regulation priority gaps, and support the reduction of the number of existing rinderpest virus stocks in the world.

The BSWG has now taken the step of engaging many other very relevant organizations, NGOs and think tanks in the discussions to broaden dialogue internationally and to find ways to bridge the health and security divide in our partner nations, also again working with relevant international organizations. For example, last week, the GP co-hosted two events. The GPWG held its fourth meeting under the US Chairmanship, this time in Stockholm, Sweden. During last week, we co-hosted an event with the Danish Institute for International Studies in Copenhagen, Denmark and a second event with the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

In both cases, we focused on the idea of partnerships: the importance of the security and health community partnership and the importance of initiatives such as the GP to help bring together the two sectors internationally. Some of the speakers at the two events included the Director of Communicable Diseases, Health Security and Environment from the WHO Regional Office for Europe, the Minister of Health from the Republic of Georgia, the Director General of the Korea Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, The President of the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters, the Director, European Center for Disease Prevention and Control, and representatives from the FAO and OIE. These conferences, co-sponsored by the GP, help to promote the important message of partnerships we are discussing today.

The GP and especially the BSWG have accomplished a great deal this year to promote partnerships between the health and security community on an international level. We will continue to engage in these efforts and to promote the funding of programs and activities in the area of biosecurity.

Thank you.