



## Global Biological-Chemical Training Event

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Opening Address  
Bangkok, Thailand  
June 24, 2008

[\[Photos\]](#)

I want to join in thanking each of you for taking the time to participate in this important training conference. I know that many of you have traveled a great distance to be here today, and that each of you has an essential role to play in further promoting chemical and biological safety and security. I applaud your interest and proactive collaboration.

I also thank our local hosts in Thailand, who continue to provide an invaluable resource for these regional events, as well as our Embassy staff and technical trainers, without whom this event would not be possible.

I am pleased to be here today to open this event and to highlight the importance of ensuring that nonproliferation, safety and security measures are integral components of scientific research and economic applications in the biological and chemical fields. In April 2004, the U.N. Security Council highlighted in UN Security Council Resolution 1540 the importance of nonproliferation measures to ensure appropriate controls on nuclear, chemical, and biological materials, including dual use items. The United States is committed to working with governments, industry and the scientific community to augment these protections as called for by the United Nations Security Council, while doing so in a way that advances legitimate economic and scientific activities in these fields.

As you know, our programs provide assistance and partnership through training programs like this conference, as well as long-term projects to enhance global biological and chemical security. Biological and chemical threats come not only from transnational terrorist groups with ill-intent, but also from infectious disease outbreaks, capabilities inherent in dual-use scientific research and from the supply of ubiquitous materials, such as pathogens and commercially available chemicals.

Even as we work to augment the benefits of biological and chemical research, we are all affected by the potential threats posed by those who would seek access to this work for illicit purposes. On terrorism, we all are gravely aware of the challenges we face. I need not recite examples from around the globe that we have all endured. The rise of transnational terrorist groups and readily available biological and chemical materials in South and Southeast Asia make the potential for a chemical or biological weapons attack of critical concern not only to the region, but also to the world. Protecting materials, equipment, and expertise in South and Southeast Asia is a key element in preventing biological and chemical terrorism, and your leadership is an indication of the seriousness with which your governments are taking this potential threat.

In my previous position as the Staff Director of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I personally experienced the impacts of the biological terrorism attack in the United States in 2001. The anthrax attacks on the United States Senate via the U.S. postal service resulted in several deaths and displaced hundreds of Senate staff and senators for months. To this day, we have not identified the perpetrator of that attack.

Today we are fortunate to have programs, such as the Biosecurity Engagement Program and the Chemical Security Program, to strengthen international collaboration on preventing and responding to bio-chem attacks around the world.

On another front, more than 35 million people die each year from infectious disease worldwide, the vast majority of which are preventable. Of course, infectious diseases recognize no border, need no passports or visas, and respect no legal agreement. These are global threats. By strengthening our collaboration on biological and chemical security, we inevitably enhance public health infrastructure and scientific collaboration, thereby benefiting global security in an important way.

Indeed, we already have examples where our collaboration on biosecurity has proven fruitful. Over the past two years, a range of scientific, safety and security exchanges have taken place fostering a number of new connections between our countries. Across Pakistan, our scientists and technical experts have participated in joint trainings and workshops, as well as scientific exchanges. In Karachi, biosecurity and biosafety exercises have helped raise awareness on both pathogen security as well as improved best research practices. Similar work has been done in Islamabad, Lahore, Peshawar, and here, in Bangkok. Likewise, we have been able to host Pakistani and other global scientists across the United States.

We benefit as much as you in gaining new perspective on the priorities and opportunities of working together on these issues. It is worth noting that Pakistani and American participants alike have come home with new tales of adventure and friendship in addition to all the hard work that has been done. Suffice to say, this has truly been a pioneering journey for both countries.

I want to be sure and give a special welcome to our Afghani participants, who are attending this kind of event for the first time. We are glad to see you here, and are eager to hear your perspective on this work. We hope that this exchange is the first of many more.

While I know getting here took some effort, it is important to point out that this event is not a destination, but a starting point for our collaboration. We hope the work we are undertaking together can be a model for the region and the world. The United States has made this work a priority and we look forward to continuing this cooperation and collaboration.

Thank you.

Released on June 24, 2008

