

14 January 2009

Chem-Bio News

1. DHS APPROVES \$450M BIOTHREAT LAB AT KANSAS STATE: *"The Department of Homeland Security has approved a site at Kansas State University for a \$450 million lab to study livestock diseases and some of the world's most dangerous biological threats."*

2. OBAMA TO BECOME PRESIDENT AMID TIGHTEST SECURITY EVER: *"Nondescript boxes that can detect the airborne releases of chemical or biological weapons such as lethal anthrax spores will be scattered among the crowds."*

3. EXECUTIVE ORDER: STRENGTHENING LABORATORY BIOSECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES: *"There is hereby established, within the Department of Defense for administrative purposes only, the Working Group on Strengthening the Biosecurity of the United States (Working Group)."*

4. IRAQ JOINS THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION: *"The government of Iraq has deposited its instrument of accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) with the Secretary General of the United Nations and within 30 days, on 12 February 2009, will become the 186th State Party to the Convention."*

5. ICRC: ISRAEL'S USE OF WHITE PHOSPHORUS NOT ILLEGAL: *"The international Red Cross said Tuesday that Israel has fired white phosphorus shells in its offensive in the Gaza Strip, but has no evidence to suggest the incendiary agent is being used improperly or illegally."*

CB Daily Report

Chem-Bio News

DHS APPROVES \$450M BIOTHREAT LAB AT KANSAS STATE

By John Milburn

Associated Press on Google News

January 13, 2009

"The Department of Homeland Security has approved a site at Kansas State University for a \$450 million lab to study livestock diseases and some of the world's most dangerous biological threats.

The agency's final record of decision — a document obtained by The Associated Press — confirmed a decision announced in December to build the National Bio and Agro-Defense Facility at the Manhattan, Kan., campus to replace an aging lab at Plum Island, N.Y."

"The laboratory is to be built on 59 acres at Kansas State near the Biosecurity Research Institute, where similar activities are conducted on plant and animal diseases.

University officials have said that the lab could conduct a portion of the research that will be done at NBAF until that facility is completed, which is expected to be by 2015."

The full article can be found at: http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jmf-rVYLzqr_0u37pjHZ0ceupbWgD95M0B4G0

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OBAMA TO BECOME PRESIDENT AMID TIGHTEST SECURITY EVER

By Greg Gordon

McClatchy Newspapers in The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

January 09, 2009

"The level of protection is no surprise, given that the throng stretching 2 miles from the west lawn of the U.S. Capitol to the Lincoln Memorial is expected to be around 2 million — with some estimates as high as 4 million, quadruple the usual turnout — and that Obama already has been the target of numerous threats."

"How do you search all of these people?" asked one retired Secret Service agent, who spoke only on the condition of anonymity because of the sensitive nature of security work. "If a suicide bomber or two or three got loose in that crowd, God only knows what would happen. It would be disastrous."

The former agent said that even a smoke bomb could cause spectators to try to flee in panic, heightening risks that people could be trampled."

"Nondescript boxes that can detect the airborne releases of chemical or biological weapons such as lethal anthrax spores will be scattered among the crowds."

The full article can be found at: http://www.ajc.com/services/content/travel/otherdestinations/us_stories/2009/01/09/inauguration_security.html

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EXECUTIVE ORDER: STRENGTHENING LABORATORY BIOSECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES

White House News Release

January 9, 2009

"STRENGTHENING LABORATORY BIOSECURITY IN THE UNITED STATES

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy. It is the policy of the United States that facilities that possess

biological select agents and toxins have appropriate security and personnel assurance practices to protect against theft, misuse, or diversion to unlawful activity of such agents and toxins.

Sec. 2. Establishment and Operation of the Working Group. (a) There is hereby established, within the Department of Defense for administrative purposes only, the Working Group on Strengthening the Biosecurity of the United States (Working Group).

(b) The Working Group shall consist exclusively of the following members:

(i) the Secretary of State;

(ii) the Secretary of Defense, who shall be a Co-Chair of the Working Group;

(iii) the Attorney General;

(iv) the Secretary of Agriculture;

(v) the Secretary of Commerce;

(vi) the Secretary of Health and Human Services, who shall be a Co-Chair of the Working Group;

(vii) the Secretary of Transportation;

(viii) the Secretary of Energy;

(ix) the Secretary of Homeland Security;

(x) the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency;

(xi) the Director of National Intelligence;

(xii) the Director of the National Science Foundation; and

(xiii) the head of any other department or agency when designated:

(A) by the Co-Chairs of the Working Group with the concurrence of such head; or

(B) by the President.

(c) The Co-Chairs shall convene and preside at meetings of the Working Group, determine its agenda, and direct its work. The Co-Chairs may establish and direct subgroups of the Working Group, as appropriate to deal with particular subject matters, that shall consist exclusively of members of the Working Group.

(d) A member of the Working Group may designate, to perform the Working Group or Working Group subgroup functions of the member, any person who is a part of the

member's agency and who is an officer of the United States appointed by the President, a member of the Senior Executive Service (SES), or the equivalent of a member of the SES.

Sec. 3. Functions of the Working Group. Consistent with this order, and to assist in implementing the policy set forth in section 1 of this order, the Working Group shall:

(a) review and evaluate the efficiency and effectiveness, with respect to Federal and nonfederal facilities that conduct research on, manage clinical or environmental laboratory operations involving, or handle, store, or transport biological select agents and toxins, of the following:

(i) existing laws, regulations, and guidance with respect to physical, facility, and personnel security and assurance; and

(ii) practices with respect to physical, facility, and personnel security and assurance;

(b) obtain information or advice, as appropriate for the conduct of the review and evaluation, from the following:

(i) heads of executive departments and agencies;

(ii) elements of foreign governments and international organizations with responsibility for biological matters, consistent with functions assigned by law or by the President to the Secretary of State; and

(iii) representatives of State, local, territorial, and tribal governments, and other entities or other individuals in a manner that seeks their individual advice and does not involve collective judgment or consensus advice or deliberation; and (c) submit a report to the President, through the Co-Chairs, not later than 180 days after the date of this order that is unclassified, with a classified annex as required, and sets forth the following:

(i) a summary of existing laws, regulations, guidance, and practices with respect to security and personnel assurance reviewed under subsection (a) of this section and their efficiency and effectiveness;

(ii) recommendations for any new legislation, regulations, guidance, or practices for security and personnel assurance for all Federal and nonfederal facilities described in subsection (a);

(iii) options for establishing oversight mechanisms to ensure a baseline standard is consistently applied for all physical, facility, and personnel security and assurance laws, regulations, and guidance at all Federal and nonfederal facilities described in subsection (a); and

(iv) a comparison of the range of existing personnel security and assurance programs for access to biological select agents and toxins to personnel security and assurance programs in other fields and industries.

Sec. 4. Duties of Heads of Departments and Agencies. (a) The heads of departments and agencies shall provide for the labor and travel costs of their representatives and, to the extent permitted by law, provide the Working Group such information and assistance as it needs to implement this order.

(b) To the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, the Secretary of Defense shall provide the Working Group with such administrative and support services as may be necessary for the performance of its functions.

Sec. 5. Termination of the Working Group. The Working Group shall terminate 60 days after the date of the report submitted under subsection 3(c) of this order.

Sec. 6. General Provisions. (a) Nothing in this order shall be construed to impair or otherwise affect:

(i) authority granted by law to a department or agency, or the head thereof; or

(ii) functions of the Director of the Office of Management and Budget relating to budget, administrative, or legislative proposals.

(b) This order shall be implemented consistent with applicable law and subject to the availability of appropriations.

(c) This order is intended only to improve the internal management of the executive branch and is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its agencies, instrumentalities, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

GEORGE W. BUSH
THE WHITE HOUSE
January 9, 2009."

The full article can be found at: <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2009/01/20090109-6.html>

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IRAQ JOINS THE CHEMICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION

Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Press Release
January 14, 2009

"The government of Iraq has deposited its instrument of accession to the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) with the Secretary General of the United Nations and within 30 days, on 12 February 2009, will become the 186th State Party to the Convention."

"Iraq will now be eligible to benefit from the OPCW's international cooperation and

assistance programmes, which provide support in drafting and enacting the legislation necessary to implement the Convention at the national level. This legislation enables States Parties to detect, prosecute and punish any breach of the chemical weapons ban committed on their territory or by their nationals anywhere in the world.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.opcw.org/news/news/article/iraq-joins-the-chemical-weapons-convention/>

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ICRC: ISRAEL'S USE OF WHITE PHOSPHORUS NOT ILLEGAL

By Bradley S. Klapper

The Associated Press in Google News

January 13, 2009

“The international Red Cross said Tuesday that Israel has fired white phosphorus shells in its offensive in the Gaza Strip, but has no evidence to suggest the incendiary agent is being used improperly or illegally.

The comments came after a human rights organization accused the Jewish state of using white phosphorus, which ignites when it strikes the skin and burns straight through or until it is cut off from oxygen. It can cause horrific injuries.”

The full article can be found at: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5j2vQ8GynRSG8IBEQir4RtXL9Ib2AD95MLHHG0>

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