

**Third Meeting
Geneva, 5-9 December 2005**

**Meeting of Experts
Geneva, 13-24 June 2005**

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

Consideration of the content, promulgation, and adoption of codes of conduct for scientists

Codes of Conduct Relevant to the Life Sciences or Biotechnology Which Do Not Refer to Biological and Toxin Weapons

Summary of Background Paper prepared by the Secretariat¹

INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

1. These codes are typically aimed at a range of actors, including governments, national regulators, corporations, and individual scientists, farmers and other workers. They deal with items (e.g. pesticides) that could potentially involve, or be diverted to, biological weapons.

United Nations and Specialised Agencies

Food and Agriculture Organization

International Code of Conduct on the Distribution and Use of Pesticides

http://www.fao.org/WAICENT/FAOINFO/AGRICULT/AGP/AGPP/Pesticid/Code/PM_Code.htm

Code of Conduct for the Import and Release of Exotic Biological Control Agents

http://www.fao.org/documents/show_cdr.asp?url_file=/docrep/x5585E/x5585e0i.htm

^{1/} This background paper has been prepared at the request of the Chairman. The contents of the paper are intended to be indicative rather than exhaustive, and to provide an overview and starting point for States Parties who may wish to conduct further research. Comments, additions and corrections from States Parties are welcome.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Voluntary Code of Conduct for the Release of Organisms Into the Environment

http://binas.unido.org/binas/show.php?id=7&type=html&table=international_sources&dir=regulations

Other Intergovernmental Organizations

World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE)

Terrestrial Animal Health Code

http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/mcode/en_sommaire.htm

Aquatic Animal Health Code

http://www.oie.int/eng/normes/fcode/A_summry.htm

PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, BODIES AND INSTITUTIONS

International and Regional Academies and Federations

2. International and regional academies of science tend not to have codes of conduct as such, but do have statements of objectives, mission statements, statutes or constitutions which include ethical elements. Some have committees dedicated to ethical issues, and have issued declarations or statements which could be interpreted as being similar in effect to codes of conduct.

3. The International Council for Science (ICSU), the global umbrella organisation for national and international academies of science, has a relevant mission statement. (http://www.icsu.org/5_abouticsu/INTRO_IntroMiss_1.html). The InterAcademy Panel on International Issues (IAP) is a global network of the world's science academies, which issues "statements" on major topics of scientific and political interest (<http://www4.nationalacademies.org/IAP/IAPHome.nsf/>). The Association of Academies of Sciences in Asia (AASA), a regional association of 18 science academies, has a relevant constitution (<http://www.aasa-net.org/intro/cons.asp>). ALLEA, the European Federation of National Academies of Sciences and Humanities, has a Standing Committee on Science and Ethics which *is concerned with a wide range of problems, 'internal' (within the scientific community) and 'external' (relations between science and society)* (<http://www.allea.org/index.html>). The International Union of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (IUBMB), has statutes which specify its mission as *to foster and support the growth and advancement of biochemistry and molecular biology as the foundation from which the biomolecular sciences derive their basic ideas and techniques in the service of mankind.* (http://www.iubmb.org/Standing_Orders/Statutes_and_Bilaws/Statutes_Bylaws_2000.pdf).

National Academies of Science and Professional Associations

4. The Australian Academy of Science has a *Statement on Ethics* (<http://www.science.org.au/reports/ethics.htm>). The Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, has a *Science Policy* (<http://www.cas.cz/en/Documents/principles.html>). The *Constitution* of the Academy of Science of South Africa, as well as setting out the objectives of the Academy, requires members to subscribe to an *Obligation* and envisages the possibility of expulsion of a member. (http://www.assaf.co.za/assaf_con.html). The Royal Society of New Zealand has an explicit *Code of Ethics* (http://www.rsnz.org/directory/code_ethics.php). The American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology (ASBMB) also has a *Code of Ethics*, which includes a sections on *obligations to the public* (<http://www.asbmb.org/asbmb/site.nsf/Sub/CodeofEthics>). The Institute of Biology in the UK has both a *Code of Conduct and Guide on Ethical Practice* which bind all of its members (<http://www.iob.org/downloads/CoC.pdf>).

COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BODIES

International, Regional and National Federations and Associations

5. While many international, regional and national biotechnology federations and associations have codes of conduct which include specific mention of biological weapons, this appears not to be the case for the pharmaceutical research and manufacturing sector. At the global level, this industry is represented by the International Federation of Pharmaceutical Manufacturers and Associations (IFPMA). IFPMA and its member organisations (as well as individual corporations) do carry out *Corporate Social Responsibility* (CSR) activities. These may be philanthropic in nature, but may also involve undertakings on corporate conduct in the areas of environment, fair labour practices, and human rights.

Individual Corporations

6. Individual corporations in the pharmaceutical industry generally do have comprehensive codes of conduct, covering a wide range of ethical aspects of research and commerce, but none has a specific reference to biological weapons. Bayer's *Program for Legal Compliance and Corporate Responsibility* does, however, mention the Chemical Weapons Convention, export controls, and genetic engineering. (http://www.bayer.com/about_bayer/corporate_compliance/page1134.htm). Most other examples have only general references to respecting relevant laws. See, for example, the *Business Principles* of Akzo Nobel – Organon (<http://www.akzonobel.com/corporategovernance/principles.asp>) and the *Code of Conduct* of Novartis International (http://www.novartis.com/downloads/code_of_conduct.pdf). The AstraZeneca *Code of Conduct* adds the idea of compliance with industry practices and codes of practice (http://www.astrazeneca.com/sites/7/imagebank/typeArticleparam11110/COC_2003.pdf).

7. There are three areas of typical codes of conduct of pharmaceutical corporations that might be of relevance, or serve as models, when considering how biological weapons issues might be included in codes of conduct. These are provisions on money laundering, on

environmental protection, and on the use or misuse of company equipment and assets. The *Summary of Pfizer Policies on Business Conduct* includes a provision on money laundering (http://www.pfizer.com/download/investors/corporate/business_conduct_policies_summary_2003.pdf#page=1). Schering-Plough's *Corporate Governance Guidelines and Standards of Global Business Practices* contains environmental provisions that could serve as an analogue for provisions on biological weapons (<http://phx.corporate-ir.net/phoenix.zhtml?c=89839&p=irol-govhighlights>). Similarly, the provision on *protection and proper use of assets* in the *Code of Business Conduct and Ethics* of Schering AG may be relevant to the possible misuse of assets for criminal or terrorist purposes (http://www.schering.de/scripts/en/10_about/ethic/standard/index.php)
