

**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**

THE UNIVERSITY SCIENCE PERSPECTIVE

Prepared by Germany

1. The publication of performed science is essential for the entire scientific community and the interaction between scientists in order to improve our knowledge. But it is also essential for each scientist, since only publication can prove the value of his work. Of course, all this counts also for the science fields of microbiology and infectious diseases. The misuse of infectious agents or their products for war and also possibly terrorism is obviously a sad fact, which has to be offensive to every serious scientist. To do so, it may be necessary to restrict publication of data, which immediately and feasibly could lead to such a misuse, especially if the few denominated dangerous microorganism are concerned. However, to aim at the exclusion of every possibility of misuse of data even with respect to “dual use” would lead to an unacceptable situation: a major part of research in the fields of microbiology and infectious diseases, especially in molecular and cellular basic research, cannot be published anymore or just with major restrictions. The probable consequence would be to stop the accumulation and exchange of knowledge to fight global emergence of old and new pathogens and infectious diseases produced by nature. The only solution is the careful education of students from the very beginning, the promotion of special training of graduate students and postdoctoral students, the achievement of generally accepted guidelines and self-control of science and scientist on local, national and global levels. This can help to minimize risks, knowing that – as in all life situations – some risk will remain. But science and publication and thus exchange of science must go on, otherwise we have lost already.
