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Non-State Actors and the Globalization of CBW Technologies
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Project summary

Chemical and biological weapons are a major threat to international security, but their control is being made increasingly difficult by the global diffusion of technological capabilities through non-state channels. Unfortunately, chemical and biological warfare (CBW) counter-proliferation policy, and analyses of it, remains within a “national security paradigm”, that emphasizes international norms codified in treaties. This fails to address the globalization of increasingly advanced science and technology, the possibility that non-state militant networks or international terrorists might acquire CBW weapons and the entry into this issue area of regulatory actors who are not state-based. Consequently, new policy solutions to protect against the economic, environmental and social risks of CBW are being considered. This raises the question of what role non-state actors play in the new governance architecture of dual-use CBW technologies, and how this is understood.

This project is about the implications of globalization for the governance of dual-use technologies relevant to CBW. It focuses on:

- a) the importance of multilateralism and new approaches to CBW given the recent emergence of “regressive globalism”
- b) the role of non-state actors in the governance of dual-use CBW technologies
- c) the pressure from civil society groups for global constraints.

The project seeks to discover how and why non-state actors become involved in the governance of CBW technologies and what, if any, barriers to entry or structures of co-operation were encountered by them.

Detailed overview

Recognizing that the state-centric “national security” model, which has dominated security studies, does not offer a useful explanatory framework for technology governance policies, this project responds to calls for new analyses of CBW issues in a security environment where, as the UN High Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change notes, “no State, no matter how powerful, can by its own efforts alone make itself invulnerable to today’s threats”.

Our project introduces concepts from the literature on globalization into an area of “hard” security. Globalization has increased and dispersed worldwide the number of actors involved in governing dual-use CBW technologies and has opened up new governance spaces in which these actors can interact and through which they can influence policy processes. Rather than using a regime-based framework

we utilize concepts from global governance and cosmopolitan democracy which offer more useful frameworks to analyse the activities of non-state actors in a globally interactive context.

This research project asks four detailed research questions:

Question 1: *How has the globalization of CBW technologies and their dual-use nature changed the CBW security problem?*

The need to shift away from a state-focused paradigm, and the wish to investigate the role of different actors in CBW technology governance, and their impact upon it, is driven in part by the issue of dual-use. This project is exploring the underlying transformations of dual-use technologies. For these purposes findings in the literature on innovation provide a constructive framework in which to reassess the role of non-state leaders in technological development, largely supplanting states in relevant fields. In particular, this project rejects the linear model of technological innovation in favour of viewing the development of CBW weapons as a complex process involving a series of decisions to acquire, develop, produce and eventually use CBW technologies as weapons. Each of these decisions is regarded as being separate and conceptually different with the potential to be complex, uncertain and difficult.

This view of the innovation process allows the influence that the dual-use problem has on current threat analyses to be established. Whilst the complexity and uncertainty of the innovation process ought to reduce the number of actors willing to invest in the production of CBW weapons, the global nature of relevant technologies is recognised as reducing entry and innovation costs. Combined with these reductions in costs, the spread of technical capabilities means that the number of actors able to invest in the development of CBW weapons is perceived as increasing.

Question 2: *What effects has the globalization of dual-use CBW technologies had on state action?*

Globalization is a significant complicating factor in attempts to control transfers of dual use tangible and intangible technologies. Our project analyses the Australia Group and various proposals for reform in current export control systems. Central to this analysis is a growing body of literature emphasizing the monitoring of trade flows rather than the static control of trade at borders. Also examined will be the new policy solutions introduced and implemented as a response to the “proliferation-terrorism nexus” because policy solutions such as the Proliferation Security Initiative and UN Security Council resolution 1540 go beyond the traditional option of multilateral treaties and actively engage with new actors.

This research question gives a frame of reference within which to describe and analyse the impact of non-state actors. Whilst successful multilateral treaties such as the BWC and CWC have constrained state actions, efforts are now being made to constrain other actors, most notably international terrorists. It is now realized that there is no one solution to the problems posed, rather they require ongoing and permanent management.

Question 3: *What is the role and interaction of non-state actors in dual-use CBW technology governance?*

Governments have increasingly sought to engage actors not normally associated with security in their efforts to reduce the threat from CBW weapons. The chemical industry, for example, played a major part in the CWC negotiations and its continuing involvement is an essential element in the treaty’s successful implementation. However, attempts to enrol other actors have not always been successful: efforts to include the biological industries in the negotiation of a BWC protocol, for example, failed.

This project assesses the role, impact and influence that the chemical and biological industries have had on the respective international negotiations and the influence which they have on current debates.

While the role of civil society has been analysed with respect to the regulation of nuclear technology, there has been no similarly detailed examination with respect to dual-use CBW technologies. This project begins to fill this gap by plotting interactions between civil society and other actors and developing an analytical framework based on studies of other areas of global civil society.

Question 4: *What impacts are non-state actors having on the globalization of CBW constraints?*

To answer this question a mapping technique will be used. First a database will be created detailing what can be seen of traditional state and international initiatives and non-state initiatives, based on the empirical information gathered in answering our second and third research questions. These data will be used to create two policy maps – one outlining traditional regulatory policies, the other depicting non-state initiatives. They will then be merged to reveal the entirety of efforts to govern dual-use CBW technologies by both traditional regulators and non-state actors and to identify areas of convergence and diverging efforts. An overall review of these efforts will be made to reveal the role and impact that non-state actors are having on the CBW governance architecture. This will be of value for both types of actors and will prevent unnecessary duplication.

Project stages

The project is being undertaken in four stages:

- o First, a review is being conducted of currently visible traditional methods of dual-use technology governance in the CBW area. This includes literature on the dual-use problem in order to assist in the identification process of relevant actors and the development of interview questions. The results from this review are being validated and supplemented by interviews with regulators in Europe and the USA.
- o Secondly non-state actors involved in regulatory initiatives appropriate to the CBW technology governance are being identified. A purposive sample of non-state actors within the same European states selected above and the USA are to be interviewed in order to understand their role, their contributions to dual-use technology governance and their interactions with traditional regulatory actors. For other actors a website will soon go live that contains an area to facilitate secure communication with the researchers. The data collected in these activities is being entered into a customised database. This database will be accessible to users of the website as a searchable work in progress.
- o Thirdly, the information housed in the database and collected during interviews will be used to create two maps outlining traditional regulatory policies and non-state initiatives. These maps will be overlapped to reveal the entirety of efforts to govern dual-use technologies as offered by both traditional regulators and non-state actors in a number of European countries and the USA.
- o A fourth stage, concurrent with the previous stages, will involve user engagement and dissemination of research findings back to all user groups. We are preparing to convene one large and two smaller seminars per year. The meetings will provide an opportunity for critical constituencies to come to grips with the implications of the dual-use dilemma, promote shared understandings and act as occasions for the cross-fertilization of ideas.

The project is currently in stage one.

A project website found at <http://www.sussex.ac.uk/Units/spru/nonstateactors/> will soon go live and contain more information about the project and details of our planned activities for 2006 which provisionally include two workshops and a conference.

We are keen to meet and talk with you about your activities and hope that some of you will participate in our upcoming meetings. We would also welcome news of other groups or individuals not present at

this meeting who are also involved in CBW technology governance activities, who you think might wish to participate in this project.

Should you or they wish to know any further information about this project, please contact either Daniel Feakes at d.feakes@sussex.ac.uk or Caitríona McLeish at c.a.mcleish@sussex.ac.uk

