

Closure of the 2nd OIE Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction

Enhancing health and security for all



©OIE/M.Pinder

The World Organisation for Animal Health 2nd Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction, which has been held over the past three days in Ottawa, Canada, has come to a close. It gathered more than 300 participants with the goal of encouraging and strengthening links between the health and security sectors and improving international cooperation on biological threat reduction issues. Effective cross-sector collaboration on the prevention of, preparation for, and response to these threats was the subject of extensive discussion.



Ottawa, 3 November 2017 – More than 300 people took part in the World Organisation for Animal Health 2nd Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction, which was held in Ottawa from 31 October to 2nd November 2017. It brought together relevant international organisations, national delegates of several OIE Member Countries, renowned scientific experts, representatives from security organisations, donors, and stakeholders working in animal production, animal trade, animal health and welfare, and public health.

The circulation of infectious pathogenic agents and toxins in human and animal populations is a considerable, ongoing threat to animal

and public health, as well as to agricultural economies, food security (cereals and livestock) and food safety. The vast majority of disease outbreaks and cases of food poisoning have a natural origin; nevertheless, the risk of diseases spreading in animal and human populations following the deliberate or accidental dissemination of a toxin or pathogenic agent is all too real.

Building on the momentum created at the 1st OIE Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction, and in view of increased collaboration to improve health and security for all, the participants at this second conference recognised that mitigating biological threats, be they natural, deliberate or accidental, requires multilateral, cross-border approaches and multisector, interdisciplinary solutions.

The participants also recognised that it is necessary to strengthen international non-proliferation tools and investigative mechanisms, which play a key role in mitigating biological threats. These tools are essential for all those engaged in efforts to reduce biological threats.

In addition, the participants underlined the need for governments, regional and international organisations, universities, and civil society to place more emphasis on coordination and collaboration. The Conference also called for concerted efforts to create connections between specialist silos that have traditionally been separate, so that different sectors can work together to pursue their common objective of strengthening national and international capacity to prevent, detect and prepare to respond to the threat of infectious diseases.

Some of the related issues given prominence at the Conference:

- Global strategies for improving health and security are effective means of encouraging political commitment to invest in cooperation and infrastructure in this area.
- At a time when pathogens are spreading further and more quickly than ever before, the availability of systems and networks of reliable information is essential for following and preventing potential outbreaks. Intersector collaboration is therefore key for developing suitable prevention and response strategies. Stakeholders must identify and remedy any gaps in order to ensure the interoperability of emergency management mechanisms.
- Ensuring the sustainability and autonomy of laboratories remains a challenge that can be met, in part, by strengthening laboratory networks and mainstreaming appropriate biosecurity measures for risk management.
- As there has been progress in research and development, scientists and decision-makers must now promote science in a transparent and responsible way for the public good. A culture of responsibility in research and development can be developed and strengthened through education, training and awareness-raising.

The report and the recommendations of the Conference will be posted online mid-November at: www.oie.int/biothreat_conf2017

The Conference in pictures:

Some of the sessions and interviews of the Conference can be viewed on our [YouTube](#) channel.

The official photos of the event are now available on [Flickr](#).

Follow the Conference discussions on [Twitter](#).

For more information

- [Press release – Opening of the 2nd OIE Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction](#)
- [Fact sheet on biological threat reduction](#)
- [OIE Biological Threat Reduction Strategy](#)
- [Website of the 2nd OIE Global Conference on Biological Threat Reduction](#)



2nd OIE Global Conference on
Biological Threat Reduction
Enhancing Health and Security for All

OTTAWA, CANADA
31 Oct-2 Nov 2017