IWG LNCV

REPORT ON THE BREAKOUT GROUPS OF THE G8GP-IWG CONFERENCE

The Global Partnership Process and the International Working Group Engagement and Cooperation with the Scientific Community for Global Security

By the IWG Executive Secretariat

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Breakout Groups for Brainstorming about the GP Future – Reports Session

Summary Notes

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Purpose

As bolstering cross-fertilization of ideas between a wide range of people with different backgrounds use to trigger innovative solutions, the IWG Board decided to organize this year edition of the G8GP-IWG Conference on Engagement upon keynote presentations, roundtable discussions and a brainstorming session.

Methodology

In order to encourage broader discussion, the 45 participants registered to this event were divided into three groups. The methodology adopted to split the whole group was rather simple. As each group had to answer the same set of questions, it was agreed to form similar blended groups of each 15 individuals with various backgrounds, as much as possible. No specific rules or recommendations were indicated by the organizers giving each group a certain freedom in conducting its work.

As well as a chair person, a rapporteur was also officially designated for each of the 3 groups. Chairmen's role was to bolster discussion upon the questions elaborated and reported onto the agenda. Rapporteurs' duties were mainly writing down minutes of the brainstorming as well as elaborating a short summary report in preparation for the report session scheduled the successive day.

Logistics

In order to work independently, each group were assigned a different meeting room. The Manzoni, Verdi and Rossini meeting Rooms were dedicated for this Workshop.

Questions

Eventually, the questions elaborated for the breakout groups were aimed at brainstorming about the GP Future.

1. How best to meet the challenges of the future and support a coordinated approach?

2. How to assess scientist engagement?

3. What types of knowledge and information are of greatest concern and how do existing tools and mechanisms deal with the proliferation of these types of knowledge? What else could be done in the future?

4. How best to promote a culture of professional responsibility in terms of awareness and adherence to best practices related to WMD-related material and knowledge?

5. Which role is envisageable for the IWG?

What types of knowledge and information are of greatest concern?

Smaller and regional tailored projects for a plurality of contexts and perspectives

As world has changed, CBRN challenges have evolved into an even more plural context composed by a multitude of stakeholders and intertwined issues. Through this brainstorming, it has been highlighted that the characteristics shaping the today's world have definitely led to the development of smaller scale projects dealing with various specific arguments. Indeed, there is clear evidence that issues vary and differ from one place to another. Also, local or national security issues have to be seriously taken into consideration in order to set up sound and sustainable programs benefiting the population. To illustrate this concept, the following example has been made during the brainstorming report session he main issues of concern in Africa are related to the Malaria and the Machete* rather than to nanotechnologies.

Also, a wide range of various organisms and stakeholders with different backgrounds is taking part in the CBRN safety and security struggle. As well as the missions of the institutions involved can vary, the perspectives, and hence the priorities, of the stakeholders differ from one to another. It becomes therefore quite difficult to define a scale of priority risks. Through the brainstorming, it has been overwhelmingly recognized that there is a need for regionally tailored and small projects coherent with local needs in order to efficiently tackle CBRN-related issues and to sustain long-term programs. That drives also at saying that there is no "one-size-fits-all" strategy and methodology suitable worldwide.

The dynamic of interconnections

It has been pointed out that the current dynamic of interconnections between cutting-edge and traditional technologies has given path to a complex system in which cross-cutting issues require adopting a holistic approach. Indeed, intertwined fields of advanced science and related concerns can hardly be tackled separately. Some examples reflecting this complexity were mentioned as follows: i) bio and nanotechnologies, ii) nuclear and cyber security, the latter combines both security of information and critical infrastructure, and iii) neurosciences.

The interdisciplinary nature of New Technologies combined with steadily increasing accessibility, have opened the door to increasing potential deliberate misuse of them even if it has been retained than individuals with malevolent purpose are still more focused on exploiting traditional and simplest technologies. This dual-use dilemma characterizing the sensitive technologies and expertise of the 21st century, well demand greater professional responsibility, awareness and "ad hoc" regulatory frameworks. Dual use directly involves human element and human responsibility. We will come back on the human dimension related to the dual use dilemma later in the paragraph concerning the tools and mechanisms for scientist engagement.

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*The machete is a large cleaver-like cutting tool (…) frequently used to cut through rain forest undergrowth and for agricultural purposes. (…) A machete may also be classified as a sword, because it can be used like one. In Africa, many killings are performed with this arm for instance.

How to support a coordinated approach

When talking about a coordinated approach, two main levels of actions came up. The political level on one hand and the practical level on the other hand have to be distinguished in order to develop sound strategies and set up effective programs. Throughout the brainstorming, these two categories have been further analyzed below.

A Coordinated Approach, the Political Level

At the political level, the GP role is to serve as a "hub" for sharing information, experience and lessons learned for security objectives through the organization of regular meetings gathering the key actors at stake, such as workshops among others examples. As much as meetings can give roots to coordinated actions between people enlarging their network, it has been clearly stated that meetings should strictly involve the right actors and partners to avoid useless and futile communication. While transparency and the exchange of experiences are fundamental, it is important to select the right players to avoid wasting time into dead-end discussions. Finally, too many partners can become difficult to manage.

As another key point reported by the breakout groups, the GP should also serve as a model for new members such as China, eventually interesting in learning from the GP activities and in sharing its objectives through a win-win partnership. The lack of resources and appropriate bodies dealing with CBRN related fields within certain countries, yet facing fast growing population, are one of the raisons for joining in and engaging into international cooperation.

It has also been said that the GP could help "filling the gaps" on CBRN security, engagement and cross-cutting related-issues. The GP could eventually complement the tasks of international organizations such as the IAEA, OPCW, WHO, etc….

Coordinated Approach, the Practical Level

On the other hand, well coordinated programs need thinking about the practical level. As sound and coherent coordinated programs are based on capacity building and the implementation of regional programs, some participants emphasized on the need to address local security priorities and local cultural aspects. According to the groups, building trust to bolster coordinated programs was considered a keystone. Also, the promotion of a safety culture, together with the security one, can be an excellent tool to achieve better mutual trust. For instance, the strategy of linking nuclear security issue to nuclear safety in the current post-Fukushima nuclear accidents has been raised as a potential solution and relevant idea to stir-up political interests and obtain funds. Last but not least, one of the groups particularly stressed on the relevance of increasing coordination on illicit trafficking control.

However, one of the main issues to be faced for developing sound and sustainable coordinated projects often remains the financial question, as long as long-term projects need continuous funding in a context today even more difficult.

Scientists Engagement Assessment

As groups were brainstorming on how best to support a coordinated approach, it turned that without funds no programs for any of the multiple CBRN issues reported before would be possible

or even sustainable. Therefore, the discussion moved on to recommend the utmost importance of improving greater visibility and communication on the scientist engagement work.

In this frame, the groups basically focused on the possibility to create and deliver pertinent instruments for demonstrating tangible results. Highlighting scientist engagement through measurable results would hopefully encourage Parties to grant further funding. Some of the instruments mentioned encompass questionnaires, "metrics", surveys, as well as "on-line database" on scientist engagement programs and projects.

Tools and Mechanisms

CBRN-related issues involve directly the human factor since sensitive knowledge and expertise are in the hands of individuals driven by different interests and motivations. The tools and mechanisms that have been proposed by the groups are therefore mainly directed to improve human "responsibility" and "awareness", the latter one aiming at reducing the risks of accidental knowledge proliferation.

Education and Codes of Responsibility

Education has been retained as a cornerstone in the process for greater safety culture, human responsibility and awareness rising. Education should include special training programs like Classes of Responsibility. In that aim, successful national programs such as the US *Next Generation Program** could be expanded at the international level. Also, "codes of responsibility" as already existing in the nuclear industry have to serve as an example to be followed and replicated in other fields of concerns.

Incentives

Trainings could be awarded through the granting of credits usually easy to legislate and directly linked to the economic market. "Leading by example" through the establishment of a kind of "gold standard" - quite easy to put in place - would eventually serve as a good catalyze. Creating champions as examples to promote codes of ethics has also been proposed in this frame.

While incentives are good, it has been mentioned that creating norms and sanctions would also contribute to fighting CBRN-related issues. However, the acceptance of new regulations by the public highly depends on the societal environment that differs from one place to another, making universal implementation quite hard. Also, the regulations have to be well-balanced in order to avoid dumping and creating more constraints to scientific innovation. Basically, it has been retained that "soft norms" were more adequate.

Misuse risk assessment

Misuse risk assessments should take place from the inception of a project and continue during the whole project cycle to end up with a final assessment before publication. However, "publication regulations" must be well balanced and should not hamper transparency and further science advancement.

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*US Next Generation Program: *"The Center for a New American Security's Next Generation National Security Leaders Program is a central part of its mission to prepare and foster the next generation of national security and defense leaders."* http://www.cnas.org/projects

Research oversight

As long as regulations and "hard norms" may not be widely accepted and are not even practical, it has been rather emphasized on the elaboration of guidelines for good practices and manuals for Codes of Conduct in order to support "due diligence" of scientists in their research work. Finally, while the tools and mechanisms mentioned are mainly designed to tackle the complexities triggered by the human element implicated in CBRN-related issues, it was also reported that policies had to be created on research funding.

Challenges

How to promote a culture of responsibility in terms of awareness and adherence to best practices.

With reference to education, inserting "security programs" in science education might be somewhat a hard task to do. Indeed, one of the groups highlighted that scarce resource, educational offering programs and a lack of time, can represent huge obstacles.

Also, it was pointed out that responsibility and awareness rising may also take place within "basic" schools as a cultural component of the overall education of our society towards science and technology with the increase social responsibility. Finally, messages on awareness rising have to be delivered by the right actors such as experts working with scientific institutions, governmental agencies and academia.

It is also essential to get the industry involved in this matter and increase "corporate responsibility". Since misuse can be bad for business, the industry sector has already done a lot in terms of internal regulations and safety standards – which are often more stringent than the governmental guidelines. But still, it is pivotal to get the industrial sectors, as well as the "professional associations", involved more proactively and in different regions of the world.

Which role is envisageable for the IWG?

To conclude the brainstorming session, it has been agreed that the need for a strong and ongoing networking, and for continuous outreach on CBRN-related issues, had to be handled by the *International Working Group* (IWG). It has also been recognized that it offers a clearing house and a frank informal platform to deal with the issues addressed by the GP work.

It was also stressed that the IWG could bolster transparency and communication even across each single discipline. The IWG should be a solid delivering point of reference for all the stakeholders and institutions involved in CBRN security and safety-related issues.

Finally, the IWG could be a coordinating structure for GP projects development across the world. As well as an effective instrument for sharing experiences, lessons learned and best practices, the features of the IWG should also lead to further public-private partnership and coordination.