

NATIONAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL SECURITY AND ARMS CONTROL
2101 Constitution Avenue Washington, D.C. 20418

January 15, 1993

Academician Yury Sergeevich Osipov, President
Russian Academy of Sciences
Leninsky Prospekt 14
117901 Moscow
RUSSIA

Dear Academician Osipov:

I am writing to follow up on your conversations with NAS President Frank Press during the meeting of the NAS-RAN officers in November. We were very pleased to hear from Dr. Press of the continuing commitment of the Russian Academy of Sciences to our bilateral activities. Over the years our private dialogues have made a significant contribution to greater understanding and cooperation between scientists in both our countries. We want very much to see this cooperation continue during this time of great hope but also great challenge.

Our committee met recently and on the basis of our discussions I want to make some specific proposals for next steps for both our security dialogue and also for the Working Group on Biological Weapons Control.

CISAC's Bilateral Dialogue on Security and Arms Control. We propose that our counterpart group of the RAN send a delegation of 8-10 scientists to the United States for a meeting this summer. Among the topics for the agenda, which we discussed during our last meeting in Moscow in March 1992, could be: (a) the evolution of new military doctrines for the U.S. and Russia; (b) options for disposition of fissionable materials; (3) tactical ballistic missile defense issues; and (4) the proliferation of advanced conventional weapons.

We understand that, because of the constraints on the RAN's budget, we would need to support all the costs of the meeting, including travel from Moscow for our colleagues. We are prepared to do so.

There is much to discuss in preparation for these meetings. Their success will depend on having a chair for the Russian counterpart group with whom I can work to firm up the agenda and make plans for the meeting. A small group from CISAC, including myself, is planning to come to Russia in late February or early March in conjunction with a study we are conducting for the U.S. government on technical and policy options for the disposition of weapons-grade plutonium. We could use that occasion to convene an informal meeting of our two groups to set dates and make arrangements for session in the United States. We would also welcome the opportunity for substantive discussions with our colleagues.

Working Group on Biological Weapons Control. This group, which is chaired by Academician Joshua Lederberg, a Nobel Laureate and currently University Professor at Rockefeller University, has been in existence since 1986. Unfortunately, there has not been a meeting of this group since December 1990. We believe that it is important to revive its activities and were very pleased to learn from Dr. Press of your interest in the issues.

We hope that the RAN can send a delegation of 4-6 people to the U.S. this spring to plan a new program of activities for the working group. Again, our efforts to revive this important endeavor depend on having a new chair named to head the Russian counterpart group. In addition, since it has been so long since the two groups met and so many new issues have arisen that must be explored, we believe that there needs to be additional consultation before we can arrange the meeting in the U.S. We thus propose to include Dr. John Steinbruner, a CISAC member who is also a member of the BW group, in the delegation to Moscow in February or early March in connection with the plutonium study. Dr. Steinbruner would be able to set dates, choose an agenda, and make firm plans.

We are prepared to support the entire cost of the Biological Weapons Control Group meeting in the U.S. We would also be happy to arrange some additional meetings, such as with the National Institutes of Health, to discuss broader possibilities for cooperation in biological research after our formal sessions.

We value our contacts with our Russian colleagues highly and are distressed that so much time has elapsed since the last meetings of both activities. We want very much to see them continue. As soon as we have chairs for the Russian groups with whom Dr. Lederberg and I can communicate, we can begin to make plans for next meetings.

I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience, so that we can begin to make plans to resume our activities. We should probably communicate through Dr. Jo L. Husbands, the director of CISAC. Her fax number is 202-334-1730; the telex number is 490000 7626. With all good wishes for the new year and for our future collaboration.

With best personal regards,

Wolfgang K.H. Panofsky
Wolfgang K.H. Panofsky
Chair

cc: Frank Press
Joshua Lederberg