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LOCAL ACTIVIST HEADS TO GENEVA TO ADDRESS STATES PARTIES TO THE BIOLOGICAL WEAPONS CONVENTION; WILL TELL NUCLEAR WEAPON STATES TO FORESWEAR COLLOCATING ADVANCED BIOWARFARE AGENT RESEARCH INSIDE CLASSIFIED NUCLEAR WEAPONS LABS

Loulena Miles, Staff Attorney at Tri-Valley CAREs, will be in Geneva, Switzerland December 3 through 10 to present remarks to the Delegates to the Meeting of States Parties of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) during a special Non-Governmental Organization session. Ms. Miles will speak about the dangers inherent in recent moves by the United States to collocate advanced bio-warfare research within classified nuclear weapons laboratories. She will call upon all nuclear weapons states to voluntarily geographically segregate advanced biological warfare agent research from nuclear weapons research and design facilities.

Ms. Miles will bring documentation about Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory's recent aggressive expansions into the area of bio-warfare research, including aerosolization (spraying) of agents and genetic modification of these agents. Livermore is not only planning to open an advanced Bio-safety Level 3 (4 being the highest level possible) Laboratory onsite, but, under the umbrella of the Department of Homeland Security, it has taken on a component of President Bush's National Biodefense Analysis Countermeasure Center (NBACC). This center will conduct activities necessary to develop, characterize, produce, and weaponize both new, genetically engineered biological agents and existing ones. This center has been openly criticized for these activities by many including Ambassador James Leonard who led the negotiations for the establishment of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention.

While in Geneva, Tri-Valley CAREs will meet with delegates to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and international NGO's to discuss how to strengthen the Convention and ensure its continued existence. In addition to presenting at a formal session of the states parties, Ms. Miles will co-present on all aspects of the U.S. Biodefense Building Boom with Edward Hammond of the Sunshine Project of Austin, Texas at a special lunchtime session.

"U.S. biological weapons research is at a crossroads," noted Miles, "I will travel to Geneva to ensure that the United States and all nuclear weapons states send the right signal to the rest of the world; specifically that they will be accountable and transparent – as all states should be. Advanced bio-warfare research should not be conducted in the super-secret rooms of nuclear weapons laboratories. I will call upon the nuclear weapons states to forswear collocation of 'bugs and bombs' as a confidence building measure within the treaty regime."

Tri-Valley CAREs is located in Livermore, California and has monitored activities at the Department of Energy's Livermore Lab since 1983. The organization is currently working with a network of NGO's throughout the United States to advocate against haphazard efforts by the U.S. government to fund dozens of new advanced bio-defense laboratories with little coordinated oversight or safeguards.