



CANADA AND NTI CONCLUDE AGREEMENT TO HELP DESTROY CHEMICAL WEAPONS IN RUSSIA

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2005 -- In an example of the kind of international cooperation that is essential for reducing the global threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons, the Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) today concluded an agreement with the Government of Canada to provide funding for critical infrastructure work at the Chemical Weapons Destruction Facility in Shchuch'ye (Kurgan Oblast), in central Russia. The project is part of Canada's \$1 billion pledge under the G8-led Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction.

Under this Agreement, NTI will contribute US\$1 million towards the construction of an 11-mile rail spur connecting the chemical weapons storage depot near Planovy to the Destruction Facility at Shchuch'ye. NTI's funds will be applied to the construction of a bridge across the Miass River.

The railway is required to safely and securely transport the approximately 1.9 million chemical munitions located at Shchuch'ye from storage to destruction. Canada has committed up to US\$25 million (CDN \$33 million) for the construction of the railway.

"Canada is very pleased to join forces with the Nuclear Threat Initiative in the critical campaign to keep chemical weapons out of the hands of terrorists and those who would harbour them," said Canadian Ambassador to the United States, Michael Kergin, who signed the contribution agreement on behalf of Canada. "A threat of such global significance can only be countered by a true Global Partnership, where the resources and energies of many are combined. Canada applauds NTI for its significant financial contribution to chemical weapons destruction at Shchuch'ye."

"The United States and Russia agreed years ago to destroy their chemical weapons, but this critical work has been delayed on both sides by technology disputes, bureaucratic roadblocks and a lack of funding," said former U.S. Senator Sam Nunn, co-chairman of NTI, a charitable organization working to reduce the threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. "These dangerous weapons need to be destroyed as quickly as possible, and I am pleased that we could partner with the Canadian government on this important project. The Canadians have a long and impressive record on threat reduction work. Canada has played a very important role in the G8 Global Partnership Against Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction -- in both creating this important initiative and in working diligently to get it funded."

The United Kingdom is also playing a key role in this project. The project will be managed as part of the Russia Assistance Programme of the UK Ministry of Defence,

under the terms of a UK-Russia bilateral Agreement. The US Department of Defense, through the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, is funding the construction of most of the Shchuch'ye facility, at a cost of some US\$1 billion.

Russia has the world's largest declared stockpile of chemical weapons. More than 40,000 tonnes, mostly consisting of modern nerve agents, is stored at seven sites in the west of the country. Destruction of these stocks is a key requirement of the Chemical Weapons Convention, and an important part of the global fight against WMD proliferation.

Canada and NTI consider the Shchuch'ye chemical weapons destruction facility the top priority in this area, as it will destroy many of Russia's most lethal and proliferation-prone chemical weapons (approximately 1.9 million artillery shells filled with the nerve agents Sarin, Soman and VX).

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Backgrounder Global Partnership Program and Canada-NTI Cooperation Announcement

At the 2002 Kananaskis Summit, leaders united to launch the G8 Global Partnership Against the Spread of Weapons and Materials of Mass Destruction. They agreed to raise up to US \$20 billion to support cooperation projects, initially in Russia. The initiative addresses one of the most serious security threats facing our world today by preventing terrorist groups from obtaining weapons and materials of mass destruction (WMD).

Assistance with Russian chemical weapons destruction is a key element of the G8 Global Partnership. Other priority areas include the dismantlement of decommissioned nuclear submarines, the disposition of fissile materials, and the employment of former weapons scientists.

Canada has announced that it will contribute up to C\$1 billion (approximately US \$810 million) over the ten years of the Global Partnership, in support of projects in the four priority areas agreed on at the Kananaskis Summit.

Several other states are also committed to providing support to Russia to help it meet its obligations to destroy its chemical weapons stocks, including the US, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, France, the Czech Republic, Finland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Sweden, and Switzerland, as well as the European Union.

The Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI) is a charitable organization working to reduce the threats from nuclear, biological and chemical weapons. Since its inception, NTI has committed approximately US\$50 million in support of projects to reduce the dangers from weapons of mass destruction.

Destruction of chemical weapons stocks is a key requirement of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), not least because of the risks of proliferation. Under the terms of the Convention, Russia is responsible for meeting the costs of its destruction activities.

Joint Canada-NTI Chemical Weapons Destruction Assistance

Canada and NTI have joined to support the construction of a key Russian chemical weapons destruction facility at Shchuch'ye, in the Kurgan Region. Shchuch'ye will be used for the destruction of lethal nerve agents, including nearly 2 million artillery munitions.

Canada is contributing up to CDN\$33 million for construction of an 18km (11-mile) railway connecting the chemical weapons storage depot near Planovy to the destruction facility at Shchuch'ye. NTI will contribute US\$1 million to help build this railroad to carry weapons from the storage depot to the destruction facility. NTI's funding will be used to build a bridge over the Miass River.

The joint Canada-NTI railway project, which will be managed as part of the UK Ministry of Defence's Russia assistance programme, will be carried out in close cooperation with the US and Russia.

Canadian Chemical Weapons Destruction Assistance

Before the Global Partnership was formed, Canada contributed C\$5.35 million to the construction of the chemical weapons destruction facility (CWDF) at Shchuch'ye. Past projects funded by Canada include construction of an access road to the site's industrial area, construction of a 10 kV power line to supply electrical power for the CWDF, and partial funding (together with Italy) of a 105km natural gas line that will supply gas service to the CWD. Canada is contributing the \$33 million for construction of an 18km railway as an initial project under the Global Partnership, to be implemented by the United Kingdom under a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed on 19 November 2003.

On 18 January 2005, Canada and the United Kingdom signed a second MoU in Moscow on co-operation to support Russia in destroying its chemical weapons stocks. This MoU provides the framework for Canada to make further significant financial contributions to the construction of the Shchuch'ye facility, including an initial \$10 million for further key industrial infrastructure projects at Shchuch'ye. These projects will include construction of a 3.8 kilometre access road, construction of a local warning system at the facility and construction of intra-site communication lines. Canada, in partnership with the United Kingdom, is now planning to carry out further projects at Shchuch'ye, which will include procuring processing equipment for one of the two buildings in which chemical warfare agents and munitions will be destroyed.

For more information on Canada's Global Partnership Program, visit http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/foreign_policy/global_partnership/

For more information on the Nuclear Threat Initiative, please visit www.nti.org

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