



**ORGANISATION FOR THE PROHIBITION
OF CHEMICAL WEAPONS**

Office of the Deputy Director-General

OPCW
Berdennikov
19 May 1998

Professor Matthew Meselson
Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology
Harvard University,
7 Divinity Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138
USA

Dear Dr Meselson,

Attached is the package of documentation submitted by the Russian delegation to the international conference on assistance to Russia for the destruction of chemical weapons held in the Hague on 18 May 1998. You may publish it in "The CBW Conventions Bulletin". The documentation was made freely available to the press at the end of the conference.

As for the idea you shared with me during the Pugwash meeting I did discuss it with the representatives of the Ministry of Defence on Monday. Frankly speaking, I did not sense any considerable interest on their part even though they indicated that they may get back to you directly in relation to this offer. They said they did appreciate your personal role in the joint experiment and held you both professionally and personally in very high esteem. In general terms they said that they would be open to any meetings in the margins of the Geneva BWC meeting in the autumn but they felt that contacts at official levels - which apparently are ongoing - were quite sufficient and they doubted that the "walk in the woods" at this stage would help resolve any of the remaining differences. They apparently have no desire at present to get "reacquainted unofficially".

I was honoured to meet you in person, having heard so much about you and your work on security issues. I was, in particular, impressed by the concept you have presented at the Pugwash meeting for establishing the precedent of universal jurisdiction for crimes related to the weapons of mass destruction. I very much hope that we would be able to meet again in the future. My direct office phone number in The Hague is (3170) 4163834, fax is (3170) 4163792, and E-mail address is: michael.berdennikov@opcw.org.

Yours sincerely,

Mikhail Berdennikov
Assistant to the Deputy Director-General