

Young Women and Next Generation Initiative

Opportunities, Threats and Proliferation Challenges deriving from Bio-Technology and Bio-Engineering

16th January 2023

The International Affairs Institute (IAI) of Rome and the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP) in the framework of the Young Women and Next Generation Initiative (YWNGI) will hold an event titled: “*Opportunities, Threats and Proliferation Challenges deriving from Bio-Technology and Bio-Engineering*”.

The meeting will take place on Zoom on **16th January 2023, from 3.00 pm to 4.30 pm Central European Time (CET)**.

The event will feature introductory presentations by Dr Angela Kane, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs and Senior Fellow at the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP), Dr Filippa Lentzos, Associate Professor in Science & International Security at King’s College London, and Dr James Revill, Head of the WMD and Space Security Programmes at the United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR).

The panellists will speak about the challenges and risks associated with biological agents and the rapid advances in biotechnology. In particular, Dr. Kane will discuss the global impact of the spread of biological agents given their potential weaponization, and will provide an overview of the role of the Biological Weapons Convention (BWC) in countering such spread. Dr Lentzos will continue the discussion by illustrating the main outcomes of the Ninth BWC Review Conference, held in Geneva in November and December 2022, assessing prospects for the future of the regime. Dr. Revill will explore the convergence between biological agents, artificial intelligence and biosecurity/bio-technology and bio-engineering.

Speakers will also illustrate career opportunities in the field of biological non-proliferation and disarmament.

The event is aimed, in particular, at students and young specialists interested in learning more about the field of arms control, non-proliferation and disarmament, but also open to the general public.

The working language will be English.

Background

The International Affairs Institute (IAI) of Rome and The Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP), in the framework of the [EU Non-Proliferation and Disarmament \(EUNPD\) Consortium](#) have launched a *Young Women and Next Generation Initiative*, a new initiative to encourage young women and the next generation to enter the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament field.

Driven by the widely shared awareness of the persistent age and gender imbalances among experts and practitioners in the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament field, the *Young Women and Next Generation Initiative* aims to help address such imbalances by exposing college and university level students to arms control issues, increasing their awareness of them and encouraging their participation in events and workshops. The initiative also aims to respond to the very limited offering of relevant courses on WMD issues in colleges and universities at undergraduate and master’s level. The goal is to help students understand how to pursue a career in the field, making the best use of their own skills. The Initiative includes



the creation of a mentorship programme, the conveying of workshops and meetings, and the organization of outreach visits at universities.

Agenda

14.50 Registration and Access to the Virtual Room

15.00 **Welcome Address**

Ettore Greco, Executive Vice President, International Affairs Institute (IAI)

15.10 **Moderator**

Federica Dall'Arche, Senior Research Associate, Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non Proliferation (VCDNP)

Panellists

Angela Kane, former UN High Representative for Disarmament Affairs; Senior Fellow at VCDNP

Filippa Lentzos, Associate Professor in Science & International Security at KCL

James Revill, Head of the WMD and Space Security Programmes at UNIDIR

Q&A

16.30 **Meeting Ends**

