

## **PRESS ADVISORY**

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For more info: Elisabeth Mueller  
+41-44-363-3038

### **GREEN CROSS CALLS FOR RENEWED COMMITMENT TO ABOLISH CHEMICAL WEAPONS GLOBALLY**

*Green Cross Experts to Speak at CWD 2008 Conference in Interlaken*

The international Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), which entered into force in 1997, just celebrated its eleventh anniversary in The Hague where its implementing agency, the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) hosted the second Five-Year Review Conference. The CWC has now been signed by 183 countries and has verified the safe and sound destruction of over 27,500 metric tons of deadly chemical weapons in five declared possessor states.

Over 150 weapons demilitarization and nonproliferation experts from many nations will convene this month, May 19-22, in Interlaken, Switzerland at “CWD 2008,” an annual international conference to discuss and evaluate progress in implementing the global abolition and nonproliferation of chemical weapons. The conference will take place at the Victoria Jungfrau Hotel.

Three experts from three Green Cross national affiliates – Dr. Sergei Baranovsky, President of Green Cross Russia; Dr. Stephan Robinson, International Program Director from Green Cross Switzerland; and Dr. Paul Walker, Legacy Program Director from Global Green USA – will host a roundtable discussion on Wednesday afternoon, May 21, 13:15-15:15, on chemical weapons destruction in Russia, the United States, and beyond. The Green Cross “Legacy of the Cold War Program,” managed by Baranovsky, Robinson, and Walker for over a decade now, has been involved in facilitating chemical weapons elimination in the two largest CW possessor states and manages local Green Cross offices at six of the seven Russian CW stockpile sites.

Dr. Walker has emphasized that “although we’ve now eliminated about one-third of the world’s chemical weapons, some 45,000 tons and millions of munitions containing the world’s most deadly and toxic chemicals remain; particularly important for global security is the safe and timely destruction of all of these dangerous stockpiles, with continued financial support of Russia’s efforts from the G-8 Global Partnership, including Switzerland.”

The Director-General of the OPCW, Ambassador Rogelio Pfirter, will also speak at the conference on Tuesday morning, May 20. Baranovsky, Robinson, Walker, and Pfirter will all be available for press interviews.

*Green Cross Switzerland in Zurich is the Swiss national affiliate of Green Cross International founded by former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in 1993.*