

SPECIAL FEATURE: A DECADE IN BIOSECURITY

INTRODUCTION

IN THE 10 YEARS SINCE THE anthrax attacks of 2001, biosecurity has been increasingly recognized as a national and international priority, prompting new federal programs, legislation, and funding to address the threat posed by biological weapons, bioterrorism, and large-scale infectious disease outbreaks of natural origin, such as pandemic influenza. New federal efforts have, in turn, helped spur important state, local, and international efforts to improve biosecurity.

More than 2 years before the tragic events of 2001, the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation had taken special cognizance of these threats and encouraged a number of policy studies and special initiatives. In time, it was recognized as the largest philanthropy for programs focused on strengthening biosecurity policy and practice—work that has made substantial contributions to gains in federal, state, local, and international biosecurity. For example, a decade ago, there were few systematic efforts in the realm of civilian and business preparedness; today, there is a wide range of initiatives focused on improving civilian readiness. A decade ago, there was little awareness of the possible consequences of misuse of the life sciences or the power of synthetic biology; now, there are institutions, national advisory groups, and professional meetings that address these issues. The Sloan Foundation programs were critical to these and to many other advancements in scholarship, policy, and

practice in the field both in the United States and around the world.

To document and synthesize the achievements of the past decade and help chart the direction of future efforts, the Center for Biosecurity, with support from the Sloan Foundation, has assembled this series of 7 review articles as a special feature titled *A Decade in Biosecurity*. These articles, commissioned by the Center and peer reviewed, describe the current state of affairs in biosecurity policy and practice, identify remaining challenges and priorities, and articulate priorities for the field in the years ahead. The articles are authored by leaders in the field, with topics chosen to address the most critical policy issues and to offer recommendations for the future.

The articles assembled here deal with major aspects of biosecurity: the governance of life sciences research, public health preparedness, biosurveillance, the legal arena, community engagement, the need for medical countermeasures, and our overall approach to biosecurity.

We are grateful to the Sloan Foundation for supporting this effort and to the authors who have presented their research, thoughts, and expertise in what we believe is a thought-provoking issue.

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This article has been cited by:

1. Ruoyu Zhang, Xiaolei Cai, Guangxue Feng, Bin Liu. 2017. Real-time naked-eye multiplex detection of toxins and bacteria using AIEgens with the assistance of graphene oxide. *Faraday Discuss.* . [[CrossRef](#)]