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Closing of International Symposium on NBC threats and hazards in SPIEZ LABORATORY

This Friday, 30 April 2004, the international Chemical and Biological Medical Treatment Symposium (CBMTS V) comes to an end. It is a world-wide prestigious meeting of leading experts within the field of current NBC threats, held in Spiez for the 5th time in a row. During the last week approx. 120 professionals from around 30 countries have intensively discussed new research findings and exchanged their professional experiences. The topics varied from medical treatment of affected people and organisational aspects of emergency management in case of a NBC incident, to the international efforts for disarmament and arms control in the area of NBC weapons.

While the main emphasis of earlier symposia was about effects of chemical warfare agents, this year's programme mainly reflected the threat brought by biological warfare agents such as bacteria and viruses, as well as by radioactive substances. Especially remarkable, was the open discussion of former classified research activities and the willingness to cooperate on an international level.

The Symposium was organised by SPIEZ LABORATORY under the patronage of the Federal Department of Defence, Civil Protection and Sports (DDPS). On behalf of Federal Councillor Samuel Schmid, DDPS Secretary General Juan F. Gut emphasised: "No country can elude its responsibility for peace and security. Only a comprehensive approach to security on the basis of international co-operation can possibly meet such challenges." The Swiss 'Security through Cooperation' strategy requires active contributions. Thus Secretary General Juan F. Gut added: "With SPIEZ LABORATORY we have a centre of expertise at our command, which has gained high merits, also on an international level. We feel the obligation connected with this, and we are willing to contribute to the world-wide promotion of peace."

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