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Biolab opens in Ukraine by [Tina Redlup](#) on June 18, 2010

Sen. Dick Lugar

U.S. Sen. Dick Lugar applauded the opening of the Interim Central Reference Laboratory in Odessa, Ukraine, this week, announcing that it will be instrumental in researching dangerous pathogens used by bioterrorists.

The level-3 bio-safety lab, which is the first built under the expanded authority of the Nunn-Lugar Cooperative Threat Reduction program, will be used to study anthrax, tularemia and Q fever as well as other dangerous pathogens.

“The continuing cooperation of Nunn-Lugar partners has improved safety for all people against weapons of mass destruction and potential terrorist use, in addition to advancements in the prevention of pandemics and public health consequences,” Lugar said.

Lugar said plans for the facility began in 2005 when he and then Senator Barack Obama entered a partnership with Ukrainian officials. Lugar and Obama also helped coordinate efforts between the U.S and Ukrainian researchers that year in an effort to study and help prevent avian flu.

The Nunn-Lugar Act, which established the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program, was established in 1991. Since that time it has provided funding and assistance to help the former Soviet Union dismantle and safeguard large stockpiles of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. The program has also

been responsible for destroying chemical weapons in Albania, Lugar said.

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