

Scientists to Lobby UN for Destructive Embryonic Stem Cell Research

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New York, NY (LifeNews.com) -- Although it has yet to cure a single patient and clinical trials have shown it has produced convulsions in patients who have received treatment from it, leading scientists will gather at the United Nations this week to lobby for embryonic stem cell research.

While they favor prohibiting human cloning for reproductive purposes, they want the international body to fund researchers' efforts to clone human embryos and extract embryonic stem cells from the days-old unborn children. The process kills the developing human beings.

Professor Ian Wilmut, of England's Roslin Institute, will be one of the speakers at an event to lobby for the destructive research.

Wilmut is credited with creating Dolly the Sheep, the first cloned mammal. Dolly was finally created after 300 failed attempts, resulting in miscarriages and malformed offspring. Ultimately, the "successful" result, Dolly, aged too rapidly and had to be euthanized.

Other speakers will include Dr. Woo Suk Hwang, the Korean scientist who has been involved in human cloning efforts in the Asian country. Former Superman actor Christopher Reeve, a leading promoting of the unsuccessful research, will provide a taped introduction.

Wilmut told the London Telegraph newspaper that embryonic stem cell research should not be banned because it offers so much medical potential.

But the destructive research draws opposition from pro-life organizations, the Bush administration and many other pro-life countries.

They say adult stem cell research has already cured many or reduced the effects of debilitating diseases. Adult stem cells come from noncontroversial sources such as umbilical cord blood, bone marrow, fatty tissue, and the enamel of teeth.

The Bush administration, last year, had signed on to a complete human cloning ban put forward by Costa Rica and 60 other nations that would ban both human cloning for reproduction as well as research purposes.

However, a smaller group of nations led by Belgium and other European countries preferred a ban on only reproductive cloning.

The tension prompted a bloc of more than 50 Islamic nations, led by Iran, to propose delaying the vote for two years so the issue could be studied further. Advocates of the partial ban joined forces with them while the Bush administration lobbied heavily in an attempt to defeat it.

The U.N. General Assembly vote was close with 80 countries voting favor of the delay, 79 voting against it and 15 abstaining.

The Bush administration and its anti-cloning allies were eventually able to persuade other countries to reduce the delay to one year. This means the proposal will be taken up by the U.N. next September when it begins its next session.

Wilmot and the other scientists hope that the U.N. will vote in favor of the Belgian-led proposal to ban reproductive human cloning but allow human cloning for research.

The U.S.-Costa Rica total human cloning ban has the support of dozens of other nations including many Latin American, African and Islamic nations as well as some Catholic European countries such as Italy, Spain, Portugal and Ireland.