

Statement by the President of the Conference on Disarmament
H E Mrs. Sarala Fernando (Sri Lanka)
at the Plenary of the Conference on 30 March 2007

At the informal and formal Plenaries held during the Sri Lanka Presidency it became apparent that there was very broad support from delegations across the regions in support of the Presidential Draft Decision contained in document CD/2007/L.1. At the same time there were a few delegations who sought further clarifications, mainly in relation to methods of work and procedures. Through the Presidential statements of 27 March and 29 March, the 2007 Presidents of the Conference (P-6) has addressed in the spirit of transparency, points of clarifications sought by delegations. Since these Presidential statements were made in the formal plenaries, they are on record.

At yesterday's formal plenary it was also concluded that a few delegations needed more time to receive instructions from capitals on the Presidential Draft Decision CD/2007/L.1. May I ask if there are any new developments in this regard? Providing more time as requested by delegations would indeed have the positive effect of encouraging a greater sense of ownership of the Presidential Draft Decision and the process involved. At the same time, it must be recognised that many delegations have already made enormous efforts towards getting positive instructions on the basis of compromise and flexibility towards our common goal of getting the CD back to work. These efforts should be reciprocated.

It would also be clear to all of us, that for practical reasons, a decision will have to be taken on the document CD/2007/L.1 sooner rather than later in order to enable the P-6 to propose a schedule of activities for the second part of the session. The sooner this is done, it would facilitate all capitals with regard to arranging for their representation at the forthcoming meetings and the participation of experts. Therefore, in the inter-sessional period, the P-6 will remain in regular contact with those member states that have requested more time, in order to ascertain their readiness to move forward towards a decision on the document CD/2007/L.1. Furthermore, the P-6 proposes to convene a special session of the CD for the sole purpose of providing a timely opportunity to proceed towards action on the Presidential Draft Decision before the commencement of the second part of the 2007 session in May. In order to consult with the member States on this proposal, I will now suspend this formal Plenary and resume in an informal meeting. Thereafter we will resume the formal Plenary. This meeting is suspended for five minutes.