



THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

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MESSAGE TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
Geneva, 14 June 2007

Excellencies and colleagues,

I have been following with close interest developments in the Conference on Disarmament this year. As your work has intensified, it has brought with it high hopes of a turning point in multilateral disarmament diplomacy. I have been encouraged by the concerted efforts of this year's Presidents to resolve the long-standing disagreement over your priorities.

I cannot emphasize enough just how important it is that you overcome your differences. This is a matter that transcends concerns about the effectiveness and utility of the Conference. It goes to the very heart of the current international security environment, and for that reason, Member States of the Conference bear a heavy responsibility.

Adoption of the draft Presidential Decision before you, supplemented if necessary in such a way as to overcome any reservations, would have a positive impact on the international security atmosphere. It would demonstrate to the international community at large that the security challenges before us are not overwhelming, but can be addressed collectively. If, on the other hand, you do not move forward, it would have a devastating impact on multilateral and bilateral disarmament efforts.

Compromise is never an easy reflex. Yet, finding a fair accommodation now would deprive no Member of the ability to assert its national position in the phases of the Conference's work to follow the adoption of the Presidential Decision.

The time has come for a decision. I call on you to reflect deeply on the historic opportunity that beckons you and the international community, and to consider the future of the Conference and of multilateral disarmament itself, if you do not take this opportunity. I urge you to take forward the vital work of the Conference in a spirit of compromise and accommodation.