



PERMANENT MISSION OF SWEDEN

Statement by
H.E. Elisabet Borsiin Bonnier
Ambassador of Sweden
in her capacity of
President of the Conference on Disarmament

May 31, 2007

Having assumed the Presidency of the CD the first thing I wish to do is to pay tribute to those who have gone before me, my P6 colleagues the ambassadors of Sri Lanka, Spain and South Africa who so eminently have lead our work this year . I also want to pay tribute to the Co-ordinators for their diligent efforts to bring us forward. And most importantly, let me express my sincere appreciation to the delegations that throughout the first part of the session has worked hard and in good spirits to give meaning and substance to our agenda.

All these efforts together with meticulous consultations with each and every delegations, on an equal basis, made it possible for the P6 to put before you our proposal for work during the remaining parts of this session. L.1. The L.1. was not designed to be a grand overall platform of compromises between political or substantive positions, ambitions or priorities of neither the delegations nor the P6. Such attempts at grand political compromises have been tried many times before. And have stymied our conference for almost a decade.

Instead the L.1 is a simple practical proposal for our work. It takes as its basis where we actually stand at this point in time, the fruit of our collective work so far. And it proposes a way to organize and focus our work for the remaining part of this session. Nothing more and nothing less. There are no preconditions. The results are not prescribed or assured in advance, but will have to emerge in the course of actual work. It is an inclusive and enabling proposal. No political or substantive position taken here, or elsewhere, is compromised. All delegations will be able to pursue their respective priorities in the course of the work. Furthermore, L.1 upholds the negotiating perspective that this forum is established for.

L.1 has now been on the table for about two months. Questions have been asked and replied to in a number of formal and informal meetings open to all. Delegations have expressed their views, and been listened to. Most delegations are ready to move forward on the basis on L.1. But a few are still hesitating, or awaiting instructions. The positive spirit and optimism prevailing during the first part of the session is gradually giving way to more negative attitudes, and concerns that we might slide back into the old futile deadlock. This, as I see it, is the delicate situation today as I take over the Presidency.

My first and foremost task now is to try to establish whether we will be able to find a way to move forward on the basis of L.1 – or not. Some of you have told me that you are about to give up hope. Others have suggested that there might actually still be ways and means to handle remaining concerns and move forward. As of today, I for my part simply do not know. But I pledge to spare no efforts to explore whatever possibilities there might be.

Together with my P6 colleagues, I will now need some days to establish what way forward I could possibly propose to you with a reasonable degree of confidence. I will try to work expeditiously and as soon as I feel able to propose anything, or draw any conclusions, I will put it to you all for consideration - collectively and in an open-ended fashion.

From you - all of you - I ask the following: Be patient, try to contain your frustrations and, please, refrain from accusing, blaming or lobbying against each other. We are in this situation together and if there is a way out we will have to walk it together. Do your best to rekindle the co-operative and constructive spirit that prevailed during the first part of the session.

As regards the work lead by the Co-ordinators, and after consultations with them, I do not intend to schedule any informal meetings with them during next week. The overall situation for their work is unclear, and it is not possible to pretend business as usual. If we will be able to proceed along the lines of L.1 we will have one situation. If not, we will have another situation. Either way we all need to know where we stand in order to organize our work in a meaningful way.

We have two working-days until the next plenary meeting. Friday and Monday. On these two days I will be in the President's Office between 9 and 10 in the morning, should you wish to call on me. Or, if it suits you better, please, feel free to call me at any time. I am here for you.