

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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**LETTER DATED 29 MAY 2006 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT
ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE CONFERENCE
TRANSMITTING THE ADDRESS BY THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

I have the honour to forward to you the address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, H.E. Sergei Lavrov, to the Conference on Disarmament.

I would be grateful if you would issue this address as an official document of the Conference on Disarmament and distribute it to all member States and non-member participants of the CD.

(Signed): Valery Loshchinin
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of the
Russian Federation to the
Conference on Disarmament

RUSSIAN FEDERATION

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

To the States members of the Conference on Disarmament

Greetings to the delegations of member States of the Conference on Disarmament.

The Conference on Disarmament is a unique and irreplaceable international forum with an unparalleled intellectual and professional potential. It has made a substantial contribution to strengthening peace, security and disarmament by drafting major international legal instruments that laid the foundation for the present-day global system of security and non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

Yet the past accomplishments of the Conference do not offer a comprehensive solution to the problems of arms control and disarmament. The annual agenda of the Conference clearly demonstrates that it continues to play a key role in resolving the most pressing issues of our times - nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, security assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States, prevention of an arms race in outer space, etc. Russia advocates the fullest possible involvement of the Conference in efforts to make the world more stable and secure.

At the same time, the state of affairs in this forum, which impedes the resumption of substantive work, largely reflects the overall situation in the world. In his message to the Federal Assembly of the Russian Federation on 10 May 2006, the President of the Russian Federation, V.V. Putin, emphasized that:

“... against the background of the acute threat of international terrorism, the key disarmament issues have all but disappeared from the international agenda, and yet it is too early to speak of an end of the arms race.

“What is more, the arms race has now entered a new spiral and is attaining new levels of technology, raising the danger of the emergence of a whole arsenal of so-called destabilizing weapons.”

We also come across attempts to dilute the integrity of multilateral agreements and undermine their viability. Despite the recent radical changes in the world, prejudices and bloc-based stereotypes persist in many minds, seriously hampering efforts to find appropriate and agreed solutions to common problems. Russia is determined to overcome these trends.

It is encouraging that the Conference shows no complacency, and in this complicated situation is searching for new approaches to the task of achieving consensus on its programme of work.

Each member State of the Conference has its own priorities among the items of the agenda. We believe that they can be harmonized if we agree on a balanced programme of work. Constructive proposals in this regard do exist. A number of States, including Russia, have already taken practical steps to accommodate their partners with a view to reaching compromise. We urge other countries to do likewise.

As it takes on the important responsibilities of the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament, Russia is committed to contributing in every way to progress in its activities aimed at strengthening peace and security.

I wish you successful and fruitful work.

S. LAVROV

Moscow, 29 May 2006
