

**Conference on Disarmament
Plenary meeting on Nuclear Disarmament**

**Statement by Ms Fiona Paterson
Deputy Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom
23 June 2005**

Mr President,

1. As this is the first time I am taking the floor, I would like to congratulate you on your appointment as President of the CD. May I assure you of the fullest co-operation of the UK delegation.

Mr President,

2. In your statement before the CD on 16 June you said you were intending to convene a series of formal plenary meetings at which delegations were invited to make statements about issues relevant to security and disarmament. You proposed that we might address matters related to nuclear disarmament on 23 June. In the light of your invitation the UK is ready to contribute to the discussions.
3. The UK has made substantial progress with regard to our nuclear disarmament obligations under Article VI of the NPT. I make no apologies for repeating what will be familiar to a large number of those present. As we have given full accounts of our work on nuclear disarmament at previous informal sessions and at last month's NPT Review Conference, I will simply make the following points.
 - The UK has reduced its reliance on nuclear weapons to one system (Trident)
 - It is the only Nuclear Weapon State to have done so
 - Only a single Trident submarine is on deterrent patrol at any one time, and it is normally retained at a reduced alert status
 - The UK holds fewer than 200 operationally available warheads as a minimum nuclear deterrent
 - We completed the dismantling of our Chevaline warheads in 2002
 - In total we have reduced the explosive power of our nuclear forces by over 70% since the end of the Cold War
 - We have also been pursuing a programme to develop UK expertise in verifying the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons internationally, with the overall aim of having potential methodologies which could be used in a future nuclear disarmament verification regime
4. As delegation will be aware, the UK announced in 1995 that we had stopped production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive nuclear devices. We welcome the fact that several other Nuclear Weapon States have taken

the same step. We call upon others, including those not part to the NPT, to follow this example.

5. In 1998 we were the first Nuclear Weapon State to declare the total size of these stocks. We then voluntarily placed all our fissile material no longer required for defence purposes under international safeguards where they are liable to inspection by the IAEA. We remain committed to transparency of our fissile material stocks.
6. We will have more to say on FMCT in the meeting you have set aside for this purpose on 28 June.
7. As is well known, the UK has both signed and ratified the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty and remains firmly committed to that Treaty. We have not carried out a nuclear explosive test since 1991.
8. In September 2004 the UK signed the Joint Ministerial Statement on the CTBT in New York. This committed us to take measures to facilitate the signature and ratification process of the CTBT, and dedicated the UK to realising the goal of the entry into force of the Treaty. We urge all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify it as soon as possible. We look forward to a productive and successful Conference on Facilitating the entry into force of the CTBT (the Article 14 Conference) in September in New York and encourage the broadest possible high level participation at the Conference.

Mr President,

9. The UK will continue to work towards a safer world free from the dangers of nuclear weapons. We hope our recent work on verification of nuclear disarmament shows our commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons internationally.

Thank you Mr President.