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MINISTER OF STATE FOR  
THE ARMED FORCES

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17 May 2007

Dear Caroline

Thank you for your letter of 20 April to Derek Twigg in which you ask for the UK's position on a Nuclear Weapons Convention. I am responding in view of my responsibilities as Minister of State for the Armed Forces.

I can re-affirm our unequivocal undertaking to accomplish the total elimination of nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament. Logically, a Nuclear Weapons Convention could be the ultimate legal underpinning of a nuclear weapons-free world. However, given present political realities, we do not believe that negotiations on such a convention can be expected to make headway. Furthermore, a new conference or body to discuss such a convention at this stage would run the risk of undermining the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty.

However, the UK is committed to progress in multilateral disarmament and plays a strong role in all the relevant international fora. In this regard, we continue to press for multilateral negotiations towards mutual, balanced and verifiable reductions in nuclear weapons. Our priority remains the commencement of negotiations, without preconditions on a Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT) at the UN Conference on Disarmament in Geneva.

I hope this helps to clarify the situation.

Yours faithfully  
Adam

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