



Statement by H. E. Ambassador Vinicio Mati
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, June 3, 2014

Mr. President,

as this is the first time I take the floor during your Presidency allow me to congratulate you on your assumption of this important responsibility.

I would also like to wish you a successful outcome of your Presidency and, as a member of the P6, I can ensure you the full support of my delegation in your endeavour to bring forward the work of the CD.

In that respect, we appreciate your constructive approach to move forward in line with the previous presidencies, and your invitation to Member States to exchange their views and comments on the proposals made two weeks ago by the Acting Secretary-General, Mr. Michael Møller.

On that point, let me express our gratitude to the Acting Secretary-General for his initiative aiming at encouraging a shared reflection on how we can further promote disarmament and revitalize the works of the CD and its negotiating mandate.

We highly appreciated his statement addressed to the Conference and we consider the series of constructive proposals put forward in that context worthy of careful consideration.

We deem it useful a debate on these proposals, as it would help our reflection on which concrete and practicable steps could be taken to improve the efficiency and the effectiveness of the work of the Conference.

In particular, on the working methods of this body, we share the view of those who consider that the deadlock of the CD was primarily due to a lack of political will, but also in light of my previous experience as President of this Conference, I am convinced that this body should rely on processes and procedures that could facilitate its works and consensus building, rather than making it more complicated.

Therefore we welcome the proposal to have a review of the working methods of the CD, and to establish a subsidiary body for this purpose. A similar exercise, as you know, has been conducted in the past. Member States could usefully build upon the outcome of such work in identifying possible best practices that would improve the functioning of the Conference.

We also favour the idea of having an informal CD-Civil Society Forum, hosted by the Secretary-General, before the end of 2014. Italy strongly believes that the Conference would benefit from a greater interaction with Civil Society, under appropriate modalities, that would enable the CD to receive valuable external inputs and expertise, and thereby to advance on its work.

The Forum proposed by Mr. Møller seems to us a very reasonable solution. It would provide an opportunity for the Conference to have a dialogue with Civil Society, to assess its expectations, and to identify ideas that could prove helpful to the work of the CD.

We share the view that the Forum can take place after the completion of the Schedule of Activities agreed for this year.

We also welcome the other two proposals mentioned in the statement of the Secretary-General, on how to re-energize our negotiating activities.

On that point, we are ready to further explore the suggestions put forward by the Acting Secretary-General in light of the development of the substantive discussions underway within the framework of the Schedule of Activities and the IWG.

I thank you Mr. President.