



**Statement by H. E. Ambassador Vinicio Mati**  
**Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**  
*Geneva, 31 January 2017*

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me congratulate you on your assumption of the responsibility as the first President of the 2017 session of the Conference on Disarmament. I would like to assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation for a productive involvement in this year's work.

I would also like to thank the UN Secretary-General and the High Representative for Disarmament Affairs, as well as the Secretary-General of the Conference, Mr. Michael Moeller, for their messages last week, which we strongly welcome.

Let me join the other delegations in welcoming our new colleagues, the new Permanent Representatives to the CD of India, Senegal, Turkey, Belgium and Japan.

Italy aligns itself to the statement delivered by the European Union.

Mr. President,

This year is very challenging for my Country in multilateral affairs. Italy has taken over earlier this month its mandates as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council - a mandate we are sharing with our Dutch partners in the best spirit of European unity and solidarity - and as the Chair of the G7. Also, in view of its OSCE Chairmanship for next year, as of the 1<sup>st</sup> of January Italy is part of the Troika leading the Organization.

In fulfilling these mandates, we will reaffirm our engagement to promote effective multilateralism also in the disarmament field in all the relevant fora. We firmly believe that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial to effective and long-term results also in this field.

In this perspective, the relaunch of the Conference on Disarmament, which in our view remains a cornerstone of the multilateral disarmament machinery, is crucial.

Nowadays, effective multilateralism and international cooperation have an even more crucial role to play in disarmament and non-proliferation in light of the multiple challenges we have to face.

16<sup>th</sup> January 2017 marked the first anniversary of the implementation day of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between the E3/EU+3 and Iran, which we fully uphold as an essential tenet for regional and international security. We acknowledge the clear progress achieved so far. We believe that the international community should continue deploying its utmost efforts to ensure that the JCPoA continues to provide benefits for all and remains a success story in the global efforts against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

On the other hand, we remain extremely concerned by the DPRK's nuclear tests and launches using ballistic missiles technology, which we strongly condemn as clear violations of relevant UN Security Council resolutions and a serious threat to peace and regional and international security. We reiterate our call on the DPRK to abandon the development of all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner and to return at an early date to the NPT and IAEA Safeguards, as well as to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Moreover, we continue to strongly condemn the use of chemical weapons in Syria, as confirmed by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons.

We stress that those responsible have to be held accountable.

Finally, Italy remains deeply concerned by the increasing risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-state actors, particularly in relation to terrorist acts. In this regard, we reiterate our support for the full implementation of all relevant international instruments, starting from the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1540. We acknowledge with satisfaction the positive outcome of the Review of the 1540 regime, as well as the adoption of the Resolution 2325.

We remain open to discussing any initiatives aiming to strengthen the ability of the international community to prevent the use of weapons of mass destruction in terrorist acts and to combat all related activities.

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Mr. President,

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation stand high in the CD agenda and is one of the priorities of our foreign policy. Italy is committed to creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons in accordance with the goals of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in a way that promotes international stability and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. We look forward to the first Preparatory Committee of the 2020 Review Conference to be held in May this year. We will strive for its successful outcome and we fully support the ongoing efforts of the Chair of the PrepCom.

We firmly believe in a concrete and progressive approach to nuclear disarmament, focused on practical and effective measures, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT. In this spirit, we welcome UNGA resolution n. 71/259, establishing a High Level FMCT Expert preparatory group as an attempt to relaunch negotiations on a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. We stand ready to give our effective contribution to its future works. We also welcome resolution n. 71/67 on nuclear disarmament verification, which we cosponsored.

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Mr President,

The CD was established as the sole multilateral body to negotiate disarmament treaties, and in the past it has fulfilled this role very successfully, leading to the adoption of legally binding instruments that are central for the preservation of international peace and security.

Last year the Conference did not agree on a negotiating mandate. Nonetheless, our activities were intense. Let me note that the four Programme of Work proposals put forward in the 2016 session are a sign that delegations continue to invest in the CD and are determined to bring this forum back to work. As far as Italy is concerned, we looked with an open mind and a constructive approach to all these proposals.

We agree that a discussion on procedures and methods of work can also provide a useful contribution to the activity of the Conference.

We look forward to actively contributing to the search for substantial common ground during the current session.

In this vein, Mr. President, we commend the efforts deployed by your delegation and we welcome the proposal embodied in the non-paper circulated last week. We look forward to discussing it, with a view to allowing for its endorsement by the CD.

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Mr. President,

let me reiterate our belief that the CD would also benefit from a structured interaction with civil society and academia. We greatly appreciated the 2015 and 2016 editions of the CD-civil society forum, and look forward to further similar opportunities.

Before closing, I would also like to mention our support for continuing the discussions on women and disarmament, along the lines of the debate we had on this topic in the last two sessions.

Thank you, Mr President.