



ITALY

2017 NPT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

GENERAL DEBATE

STATEMENT BY

H.E. AMBASSADOR VINICIO MATI

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

(VIENNA, 3 MAY 2017)

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Mr. Chair,

Let me first of all congratulate you on your appointment as Chair of this First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

Let me also express our utmost appreciation for the inclusive and transparent manner in which you have conducted the preparatory process for this meeting.

I would like to assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

Italy attaches great importance to disarmament in its broadest sense and it is fully committed to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as essential components of its foreign policy.

Within this general framework, Italy reiterates the centrality of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as a multilateral instrument of the utmost importance for maintaining and reinforcing international peace, security and stability.

We are convinced that the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes.

The three NPT pillars continue to be mutually reinforcing and Italy still believes that the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan remains a very good basis to progress in all of them.

We call upon States that have not yet done so to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States, without delay and without conditions. We also call on all State Parties to the Treaty to implement all its provisions as well as commitments agreed by subsequent Review Conferences, without delay and in a balanced manner.

Mr. Chair,

Italy continues to support the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. Through its Article VI, the NPT provides the only realistic legal framework to pursue this objective, in a way that promotes international stability and undiminished security for all.

Italy is convinced that the goal of "global zero" and an effective, verifiable, and irreversible nuclear disarmament can be attained only through an inclusive and progressive approach, based on concrete and effective measures.

Among those measures, we would like to highlight that the prompt entry into force of the "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty" is crucial. Italy calls upon all States that have not yet done so and, in particular, the remaining eight Annex-2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without

further delay. In the meantime, the resolve of all relevant States to abide by their respective moratoriums on nuclear tests continues to be essential.

Another key priority for Italy remains the immediate commencement within the CD of negotiations of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. In this regard, we welcome the establishment of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group pursuant to UNGA Resolution 71/259. Pending the entry into force of such a Treaty, we believe that all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons. We also welcome UNGA Resolution n. 71/67 on the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

The nuclear weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of Art. VI of the NPT. We welcome the reductions made from the entry into force of the Treaty by most of the nuclear weapons States and the continued implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) by the U.S. and Russia. We strongly encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons. In this context, we underline the importance of preserving the viability of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF), a landmark arms-control agreement that remains key to European and international security and stability.

Mr. Chair,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons continues to represent a major threat to international security.

Italy condemns in the strongest terms the DPRK's ballistic missile and nuclear tests, which clearly violate its international obligations and represent an increasing threat to regional and international security, peace and the global non-proliferation regime. In our current capacity as Chair of the Security Council Resolution 1718 Committee, Italy is supporting efforts worldwide to properly implement the set of restrictive measures adopted by the Security Council. We urgently call on the DPRK to abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, and to return to the NPT and IAEA Safeguards.

The IAEA's system of safeguards is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. Italy supports the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, including universal adherence to comprehensive agreements and additional protocols.

We welcome the work done by the Agency to monitor the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between the E3/EU+3 and Iran. We believe that the full implementation of the JCPoA and of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 can foster international and regional security and encourage mutual trust between the parties involved. Full implementation of the JCPoA strongly underpins the overall non-proliferation architecture. With this in mind, we have undertaken the role of Facilitator for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 2231, being committed to helping smooth and productive communication among the major stakeholders. We support efforts by all Parties to ensure that the JCPoA continues to provide benefits for all and remains a success story in line with the clear progress achieved so far more than one year since the implementation day.

Italy highly values the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones for peace and security, in accordance with the 1999 UN Disarmament Commission guidelines, and calls on nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant protocols of the Treaties establishing such zones.

We reiterate our support to the convening of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction - to be attended by all States of the region on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by them - as decided by the 2010 Review Conference.

Mr. Chair,

Before closing, allow me to mention that, even though Italy decided at the end of the 80s to phase out of nuclear energy for power production, we can count on a record of successful examples of peaceful applications of nuclear technology in several fields and on several centers of excellency for research purposes.

This has allowed us to actively cooperate on the international stage for the further development of nuclear applications for peaceful uses. Increasingly over the last few years, we have paid special attention to education and training in this field (Italy hosts in Trieste the International Center for Theoretical Physics and is among its main contributors). Moreover, we strongly support the IAEA technical cooperation program, in increasing the capacities of State parties wishing to develop peaceful nuclear technologies .

At the same time, we believe that the peaceful development of nuclear energy requires the implementation of safeguards as well as appropriate and effective levels of safety and security. We are supportive of all international initiatives, both at a global and regional level, aiming at enhancing the safety and security of nuclear materials, facilities, and installations.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.