



ITALY

2017 NPT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

CLUSTER I

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR VINICIO MATI**

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

(VIENNA, 4 MAY 2017)

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Mr. Chair,

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 fully shares the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. Our utmost concern for the catastrophic humanitarian consequences of nuclear weapons' use underpins our efforts for effective progress on nuclear disarmament.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the overarching norm on which all nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation measures are based. Disarmament and non-proliferation are mutually reinforcing processes.

Through its Article VI, the NPT provides the only realistic legal framework to attain a world without nuclear weapons, in a way that promotes international stability and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

Italy is convinced that the goal of "global zero" can be attained only through a progressive approach, based on concrete and effective measures, resulting in an effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament. In this regard, Italy, jointly with other 26 Countries, submitted a working paper entitled "Suggestions for the 2017 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference from the Perspective of the Progressive Approach", which will be issued as document NPT/CONF.2020/PC.I/WP.29.

Also, we remain convinced that any process that can effectively lead us to the elimination of nuclear weapons should be by necessity an inclusive one, based on confidence and trust. It requires substantive and constructive engagement with Nuclear Weapon States.

Mr. Chair,

In our view, most of the practical and effective measures, both legal and non-legal, that are needed to implement Art. VI of the NPT are already embodied in relevant actions of the 2010 Action Plan, whose full implementation we continue to support.

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. We hope that UN Security Council resolution n. 2310, adopted last year on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty, which Italy co-sponsored, can encourage further ratifications. 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 co-sponsored UNGA Resolution n. 71/67 on Nuclear Disarmament Verification and we look forward to the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Chair,

The nuclear-weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of Art. VI of the NPT. We welcome the reductions made by most of the nuclear weapons States from the entry into force of the Treaty and the continued implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) by the United States of America and the Russian Federation. We strongly encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons, and pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, and reporting.

Italy also calls on all Parties to ensure full and verifiable compliance with the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which is vital for Europe's as well as international security and stability.

We encourage all activities and discussions among nuclear-weapon States aimed at building mutual trust, enhancing transparency and reducing risk. Other effective practical measures are the reduction by nuclear-weapon States of the role and significance of nuclear weapons in all military and security concepts, doctrines, and policies, as well as a further reduction of the operational status of nuclear weapons systems in ways that promote international stability and security.

Continued engagement by nuclear-weapon States to respect fully their commitments with regard to security assurances, and to extend them if they have not yet done so, will be fundamental.

Mr. Chair,

Before concluding, allow me to underline that in Italy's view, educational efforts should lie at the root of any strategy aiming at strengthening a global response to WMD threats and preventing non-state actors from gaining access to sensitive material and knowledge. Increasingly over the last few years, we have paid special attention to education and training as essential elements for fostering international peace and security. The International School on Nuclear Security established in Italy (Trieste) as a follow up of the Nuclear Security Summit in 2010 is a good example in this sense.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.