



Statement by Ambassador Vinicio Mati
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 8th August 2017

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to join other delegations in commending you for your leadership of the Way Ahead Working Group. I am pleased to see you facilitating our discussions on nuclear disarmament. Let me thank you for the document you circulated in order to structure our debate in a constructive way, and assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

I would also like to thank Amb. Caughley for the interesting presentation he has just delivered.

Mr. Chair,

Nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation are among the main priorities of Italy's foreign policy.

We remain fully committed to 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.

At the same time, we believe that this goal should be pursued in a way that promotes international stability and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

Nuclear disarmament cannot be detached by non-proliferation.

In this prospect, we stress the centrality of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and of its three mutually reinforcing pillars. 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.

Our approach to nuclear disarmament entails a process allowing for sequential and/or simultaneous steps on a multilateral, plurilateral, bilateral and unilateral basis.

Mr. Chair,

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 and by Nuclear Weapon States.

Nuclear Weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities in this process.

While we welcome the reductions made so far by most of the Nuclear Weapon States, we strongly encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals including of strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapons, and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, and reporting.

We also appreciate the continued implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) by the United States of America and the Russian Federation.

Mr. Chair,

It is our firm belief that the CD has a fundamental role to play to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation goals. It is also our conviction that the Conference must continue its substantive discussions also on these topics, especially in a moment in which we are witnessing that many key issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation risk to move away from consensual processes.

From our perspective, and building also on the fruitful discussions we have had within this Working Group, the CD could make a key contribution towards the fulfilment of our shared goal of a nuclear weapon-free world, by immediately starting negotiations of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, as well as by continuing its endeavours towards exploring the possibility of arrangements aiming to strengthen Negative Security Assurances.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.