



Statement by Ambassador Vinicio Mati
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 10th August 2017

Mr. Chair,

At the outset, I would like to commend you for the very balanced and constructive manner in which you have guided our discussions.

From our perspective, our debate was both useful and constructive, and it has shown that nuclear disarmament remains a common and shared objective.

Notwithstanding the fact that sometimes we can have diverging views on how to pursue this goal in the most effective way, it is essential not to lose sight of this fundamental point.

Mr. Chair,

Today you have asked us to consider possible steps for the way ahead. We are aware that progress towards the shared goal of global zero will require States to focus on common ground and work together. The challenge we have to face is how to translate this in operational terms.

In this regard, I believe that our debate has also confirmed that the CD has a fundamental role to play in order to advance the goals of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. From our perspective, this makes it even more urgent that the Conference resume its substantive work on all items in its agenda, especially the nuclear-related ones, and adopt a comprehensive and balanced programme of work.

In this prospect, in reply to your invitation from yesterday to formulate specific indications on the way ahead for next year, we believe that the PoW should include the immediate commencement of negotiations without preconditions of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, which remains our priority.

We also agree that the PoW should include other topics that can better respond to other delegations' preferences, such as Negative Security Assurances, in order to explore the possibility of arrangements aiming to strengthen such assurances, not excluding through an international legally binding instrument

Before concluding, Mr. Chair,

Let me underline once again that in our view it is essential to concentrate on the search for common ground, and to avoid any further polarization of the debate on nuclear disarmament.

We should all adopt a responsible and constructive approach when addressing this topic in the next session of the CD as well as in all other relevant fora, including the upcoming session of the UN General Assembly First Committee and the 2018 II Preparatory Committee of the NPT Review Conference.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.