



ITALY

2018 NPT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

CLUSTER I

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR GIANFRANCO INCARNATO**

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

(GENEVA, 26 APRIL 2018)

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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 fully support the statement on the “Progressive Approach” delivered yesterday/on Tuesday by Australia on behalf of a Group of 29 Countries.

Also, we remain convinced that any process that can effectively lead us to the elimination of nuclear weapons requires the substantive and constructive involvement of all relevant actors, in a perspective based on the research of consensus.

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, the prompt entry into force of the “Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty” is crucial. Italy has always been and remains a staunch supporter of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and, as the 2018 Chair of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, is focusing its efforts on outreach. 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 on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the signature of the Treaty, which Italy co-sponsored, can encourage further ratifications. In the meantime, we call upon all States to respect the moratorium on nuclear test explosions and to refrain from any action which could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

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 look forward to a constructive outcome of the work of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group established by UNGA Resolution 71/259. Pending the entry into force of

such a Treaty, we call upon all relevant States to abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

The CD could also make another key contribution towards the fulfillment of the shared goal of a nuclear weapon-free world, by resuming its substantive discussions on Negative Security Assurances, with a view to elaborating recommendations dealing with all their aspects, not excluding an internationally legally binding instrument.

We value all initiatives undertaken in the field of nuclear disarmament verification, also as important tools to build trust and confidence among nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States. We support the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and we welcome the establishment of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, pursuant UNGA Resolution n. 71/67, which we co-sponsored.

Mr. Chair,

Nuclear weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of Art. VI of the NPT. While welcoming the reductions made so far by most of them, we encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals.

We express satisfaction at the announcement by the Russian Federation and the United States that they have met the central limits of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) on February 5, 2018. The preservation of the New Start Treaty is essential to international stability. We encourage the Russian Federation and the United States to extend the Treaty, and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, and reporting. We strongly encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals including strategic, non-strategic, deployed and non-deployed weapon.

Italy is concerned for developments about the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty and stresses the need to ensure full and verifiable compliance with the Treaty itself, which remains vital for European and 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.