



ITALY

2018 NPT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

CLUSTER III ISSUES

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

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Mr. Chairman,

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I wish to add some considerations in my national capacity.

Peaceful Uses and Technical Cooperation

Article IV of the NPT acknowledges the right of all Parties “to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes” and to benefit from international cooperation in this area, in conformity with their nonproliferation obligations. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) plays a key role in furthering such cooperation, thus also contributing to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN 2030 Agenda.

Italy greatly appreciates the technical assistance and cooperation programs carried out by the Agency and has provided its full contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund in 2017, with a share of over 3 million Euros. Additional voluntary contributions have been granted to projects centered on specific needs of Least Developed Countries, jointly carried out by the IAEA and the FAO. A further specific support in this respect has been recently provided by making available to the joint IAEA/FAO division an Associate Expert for a period of two years starting next autumn.

Our commitment towards technical assistance and peaceful uses is also confirmed by the large number of scholarships and training programs for citizens of developing countries organized by the ICTP of Trieste and by numerous Universities and Research Centres throughout Italy. Among the courses that ICTP offers, I wish to recall the “Master of Advanced Studies in Medical Physics”, a two-year post-graduate course organized by the IAEA and the University of Trieste, which trains “clinical medical physicists” ready to work in their countries of origin.

Indeed, Italy is working to develop peaceful uses of nuclear technologies and applications in several fields. We are particularly proud of promoting the advancement of nuclear medicine through various initiatives, such as, recently, the project for the production of technetium isotopes at the ENEA TRIGA reactor and the program of studies on Boron Neutron Capture Therapy (BNCT) and on copper isotope production for theranostics application at the LENA TRIGA Reactor of Pavia University.

Also in the field of agricultural and animal-health nuclear applications Italy has been giving a significant contribution to international research and development activities. For instance, the Centro Agricoltura Ambiente “G. Nicoli” in Bologna has been for

years an IAEA Collaborating Centre in the development and implementation of a Sterile Insect Technique package for Aedes Mosquitoes suppression.

Finally, my country is actively engaged in furthering research advancements on fusion and innovative nuclear systems and on methods and technologies to strengthen safety and security with the aim of protecting both the people and the environment.

Italy indeed believes that any project using nuclear energy, as well as any technology and application making use of radioactive materials should integrate elements of safeguards, safety, security, emergency preparedness and response. These are, in fact, crucial components for a long-lasting development and for the well-being and protection of the population.

The IAEA can offer a substantial contribution in this respect.

Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and IAEA Safeguards

By “preventing diversion of nuclear energy from peaceful uses to nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices” as Article III.1 of the NPT states, the IAEA’s system of safeguards – multilateral, impartial, qualified and effective as it is – is one of the core components of the NPT and a fundamental insurance for our security.

Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements together with Additional Protocols represent the current verification standard. Their universalization must be pursued without delay, as a means conducive to mutual trust and as a necessary step forward towards a purely peaceful use of nuclear energy and applications. The effectiveness of the safeguards system can be further strengthened through a consistent and universal application of the State Level Concept, whose development Italy continues to support.

Against this backdrop, we wish to recall the crucial role that the JCPOA is playing to ensure the exclusively peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program. The comprehensive verification and monitoring activities carried out by the IAEA, including through the complementary accesses conducted under the Additional Protocol, have provided constant evidence of Teheran’s compliance with its nuclear-related commitments. We invite Iran to ratify without delay the Additional Protocol that it is provisionally applying.

Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Safety

Following two referenda, Italy decided to abandon its nuclear energy program and is consequently engaged in the decommissioning of its nuclear facilities. The Italian State company SO.G.I.N. is carrying out the decommissioning in compliance with the highest international safety and security standards.

The decommissioning of nuclear facilities is a complex process, consisting of many interrelated activities (such as radiological characterization, decontamination, dismantling of equipment, facilities and buildings, disposal of radioactive waste and materials etc.) which require highly developed skills, know-how and technological specializations so as to guarantee its conformity to the most stringent safety and security standards.

In order to verify and test the robustness and the technical, economic and time consistency of the decommissioning program of Italy's nuclear facilities, last year SO.G.I.N. decided to place its General Program for the decommissioning of the Italian facilities under an international independent Peer Review by adhering to the ARTEMIS program of the IAEA. The Peer Review concluded its activities in September 2017 and positively stated that "the cost estimate process was robust and aligns with recognized methodologies; the sequencing and approach to decommissioning activities were appropriate,and techniques and technologies utilized are proven and well tested".

Italy is a party to the main international conventions in the field of nuclear safety and presented its National Report at the 7th Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) in 2017. We participated actively in the review process that was carried out during the Meeting and strongly supported the implementation of the principles of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety (VDNS).

Italy is also looking forward to the upcoming 6th review meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

We call on all countries that have or intend to have a nuclear power program to adhere to the relevant international conventions in the field of nuclear safety.

Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy and Nuclear Security

Ensuring the highest levels of nuclear security is a shared interest of the international community to be pursued both by each State at national level and through international cooperation. The application of the highest standards of nuclear security should not be seen as an obstacle but rather as a further contribution to the

development of nuclear technologies and applications with the aim of guaranteeing and promoting their legitimate use for exclusively peaceful purposes.

Having actively participated in the high-level political dialogue of the Nuclear Security Summits, Italy has shown its commitment towards promoting nuclear security culture, by financing, through voluntary extra-budgetary contributions to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund, the Joint ICTP-IAEA International School on Nuclear Security, which takes place once a year at the International Center for Theoretical Physics in Trieste. The School completed 8 years of activity, has trained so far more than 500 young professionals from developing countries and serves as a model for IAEA regional schools.

After the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, Italy has joined the Nuclear Security Contact Group (NSCG) and actively participates in its work. We encourage those States that have not already done so to join the Nuclear Security Contact Group as it can contribute to focus engagement within the IAEA. We strongly support the central role of the IAEA in the global nuclear security framework and we encourage all States to fulfill their nuclear security responsibilities.

Italy takes also part in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and in other relevant international and European initiatives, also within the broader scope of CBRNE.

Italy has ratified the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) and urges those States that have not yet done so to ratify both Conventions. The implementation of these instruments is as important as their universalization. The IAEA should play a leadership role in both regards, contributing to building capacity in the States that need it the most.

Mr. Chairman, I thank you for your attention.