



ITALY

2019 NPT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE

**CLUSTER II
REGIONAL ISSUES**

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

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

(NEW YORK, 29 APRIL - 10 MAY 2019)

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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 recognizes the important joint efforts made so far in addressing proliferation risks. At the same time, we remain seriously concerned by the existence of proliferation programs and networks. The difficulty of securing sensitive materials and the risk that terrorists might get access to them remain major challenges to deal with.

Also in this complex field, the international community has demonstrated that peaceful and effective solutions can be pursued – and have to be pursued.

In this vein, we commend the high-level diplomatic efforts that, starting from the first half of 2018, contributed to ease tensions and brought about positive developments in the Korean Peninsula. We urge the DPRK to seize this historic opportunity and engage seriously in negotiations with a view to achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, as well as lasting peace and security on the Korean Peninsula. We strongly believe that international sanctions against the DPRK must remain in force and be implemented to sustain the current negotiating process. A durable collective commitment remains necessary. Pyongyang should be forthcoming and proactive in all relevant fora. Returning to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and signing the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) and other Weapons of mass destruction (WMD) related treaties would be a significant step forward, as well as a sign of Pyongyang's good faith.

Also, in the context of international efforts aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action remains a key element and an important achievement of multilateral diplomacy. Italy values and welcomes the successive confirmation by IAEA of Iran's continued compliance with its provisions. We firmly believe that the international community needs to remain committed to a full and effective implementation of the Plan of Action, as long as Iran continues to strictly abide by its nuclear-related commitments. We also reiterate the importance of a full and effective implementation of Resolution 2231.

We call upon the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate without delay with the IAEA to remedy its non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement under the NPT, to resolve all outstanding issues with regard to its nuclear programme, in full cooperation and transparency with the IAEA, and to conclude and bring into force the Additional Protocol.

Mr. Chair,

Italy highly values the importance of nuclear-weapon-free zones for peace and security, in accordance with the 1999 UN Disarmament Commission guidelines. We therefore commend the contribution of existing nuclear-weapon-free zones to attaining these goals, and call on nuclear-weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant protocols of the Treaties establishing such zones.

Because of its geopolitical position and of its history, Italy is part of the wider Mediterranean area and is intimately connected to the Middle East. We are therefore very sensitive to developments in this Region also from the point of view of disarmament and non-proliferation, and we follow them very closely.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to a successful outcome of the process leading to the full implementation of the 1995 NPT Review Conference Resolution on the Middle East, and the related practical steps endorsed by the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

We deeply regret that it has not yet been possible to convene a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region. We stand ready to support efforts aimed at creating a conducive atmosphere and an inclusive process leading to the establishment of such a zone.

In this perspective, we continue to call on all States in the region, which have not yet done so, to accede to the NPT, the Chemical Weapons Convention and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention, to sign and ratify the CTBT, and to conclude a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, the Additional Protocol and, as applicable, a modified Small Quantities Protocol with the IAEA.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.