



**I T A L Y**

**2019 NPT PREPARATORY COMMITTEE**

**GENERAL DEBATE**

**STATEMENT BY**

**H.E. AMBASSADOR GIANFRANCO INCARNATO**

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

**(NEW YORK, 29 APRIL - 10 MAY 2019)**

**Check against delivery**

Mr. Chair,

Let me first of all express my congratulations for your appointment as Chair of this Third Meeting of the Preparatory Committee of the 2020 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference.

I would like to assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and by Belgium on behalf of 30 countries. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

A rules-based international system and effective multilateralism are of the utmost importance to address global challenges and threats to international peace and security. We believe it is today fundamental to renew our collective commitment towards preserving international institutions and instruments, and guaranteeing their proper functioning.

Consistently, Italy fully shares the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons and is committed to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as essential components of its foreign policy. Also in these fields, we need to work together in order to preserve the results achieved so far and further advance relevant processes.

To achieve these goals, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the key multilateral instrument and the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. With its three mutually-reinforcing pillars of non-proliferation, disarmament, and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, the NPT is of the utmost importance in order to maintain and reinforce international peace, security and stability. Through its promotion of peaceful uses, under safeguards as well as appropriate and effective safety and security standards, the NPT pays also a significant contribution to the attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals set by the UN 2030 Agenda.

Italy continues to believe that the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan remains a very good basis to progress in all three Treaty pillars.

We are convinced that it is necessary to support, uphold and preserve the NPT in the current difficult environment. We call upon States that have not yet done so to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States, without delay and without conditions, and we call on all State Parties to the Treaty to implement all its provisions as well as commitments agreed by subsequent Review Conferences.

Mr. Chair,

Italy continues to support the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. Through its Article VI, the NPT provides the only realistic legal framework to pursue this objective, in a way that promotes international stability and undiminished security for all.

Italy is convinced that the goal of a nuclear weapon free world and an effective, verifiable, and irreversible nuclear disarmament can be attained only through an inclusive and progressive approach, based on concrete and effective measures.

Among these, 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 CTBT. We call 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. 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 of negotiations, within the Conference on Disarmament, of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices: this should be our next step towards the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. We encourage the discussion of the findings of the High Level FMCT Expert Preparatory Group during the 2019 session to this purpose. Pending the conclusion of such a Treaty, all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

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 greatly welcomed the announcement by the Russian Federation and the United States that they met the central limits of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in February 2018. We call on them to extend the Treaty and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities and reporting.

We would also like to reiterate our support for the convening - on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned - of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction.

Mr. Chair,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons continues to represent a major threat to international security. The IAEA's system of safeguards is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. Italy supports the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, including universal adherence to comprehensive agreements and additional protocols.

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. Italy looks forward to an open and constructive dialogue and to further negotiating progress, aimed at fulfilling our common goal of a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the 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.

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.

Mr. Chair,

Before closing, allow me to mention that, even though Italy decided at the end of the 1980s to phase out of nuclear energy for power production, we can count on a record of successful examples of peaceful applications of nuclear technology and on several centers of excellence for research purposes.

This has allowed us to actively cooperate at the international level for the further development of nuclear applications for peaceful uses. Increasingly over the last few years, we have paid special attention to education and training in this field. Italy, for instance, hosts the International Center for Theoretical Physics in Trieste, and is among its main contributors. Moreover, we strongly support the IAEA technical cooperation program, in increasing the capacities of State parties wishing to develop peaceful nuclear technologies.

At the same time, we believe that the peaceful development of nuclear energy requires the implementation of safeguards as well as appropriate and effective levels of safety and security. We are supportive of all international initiatives, both at a global and regional level, aiming at enhancing the safety and security of nuclear materials, facilities, and installations.

Mr. Chair,

Also with a view to the fiftieth anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force in 2020, we have to work together in order to achieve the NPT shared common objectives and its full and balanced implementation. Over the last fifty years, the NPT has been successful in all of its three pillars. Sustained efforts are necessary for it to continue to perform its vital role and maintain its effectiveness and integrity.

In this vein, the Review Cycle provides a unique opportunity to maintain an open a transparent dialogue and to identify areas of convergence on which progress is possible. It is our collective responsibility to prevent divisive topics from interfering with potential progress on other issues.

In this context, the substantive recommendations of the Inter-Chair working paper submitted by the Netherlands and Poland merit careful consideration. We share the view, expressed in the working paper, that the review cycle should become more output-oriented in order to really contribute to the process of cumulative consensus building. To this aim, it would be useful to find ways to maximize effectiveness, coordination and continuity throughout the review process, improving the links between the Preparatory Committee sessions and the Review Conference and further engaging with civil society, academia and industry.

Thank you.