



**PERMANENT MISSION OF ITALY  
TO THE UNITED NATIONS**



**STATEMENT BY**

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CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

**TO THE FIRST COMMITTEE OF THE  
72ND UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**GENERAL DEBATE**

**NEW YORK, 4 OCTOBER 2017**

Mr. Chair,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your appointment as Chair of the 1st Committee of the 72<sup>nd</sup> UN General Assembly, and to assure you of my Delegation's full support.

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

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Mr. Chair,

The opening of the annual session of this Committee is occurring at a particularly troubling time for the cause of disarmament.

In particular, we are extremely concerned by the situation in the Korean peninsula. We strongly condemn the DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile programs and recurrent tests, as serious breaches of multiple UNSC Resolutions and as a growing challenge to the global non-proliferation regime, and a clear threat to international peace and security.

We reiterate our call on the DPRK to immediately abandon the development of all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner. We urge the DPRK to return at an early date to the NPT and IAEA Safeguards as well as to sign and ratify the CTBT.

Italy will continue to do its part in pursuing a firm and cohesive response of the international community to this challenge.

The current crisis in the Korean Peninsula adds a sense of urgency to our efforts to take forward our joint disarmament and non-proliferation goals. We remain convinced that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial to effective and long-term results in these fields.

Among our recent achievements, Italy highly values the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) and welcomes the confirmation by the IAEA of Iran's continued compliance with its provisions. We believe that the international community should continue to take every action to ensure that JCPoA remains a success story.

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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 cornerstone of the international regime for nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We call upon States that have not yet done so to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States, without delay and without conditions.

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.

We believe that this goal must be pursued in a step-by-step and verifiable way, based on effective measures, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, and implying the involvement of all relevant actors, in a perspective based on the research of consensus.

Among those measures, the prompt entry into force of the "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty" is crucial. 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. Pending the CTBT entry into force, Italy calls upon all States, including the DPRK, to respect the moratorium on nuclear test explosions, and to refrain from any action that would 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. To this aim, we look forward to a constructive outcome of the works of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group established by UNGA Resolution 71/259. Pending the entry into force of such a Treaty, we believe that all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

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

We reiterate our support to the convening of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction - to be attended by all States of the region on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by them - as decided by the 2010 Review Conference.

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Mr. Chair,

Italy remains strongly committed to supporting the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW. On the other hand, we are gravely concerned by the fact that chemical weapons are still intentionally used to kill and harm people, as events in Syria are dramatically reminding us.

We reiterate our condemnation of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, anytime and under any circumstances. But condemnation is not enough if it is not backed up by credible deterrence. Accountability is essential. We therefore fully support the activities of the UN-OPCW Joint Investigative Mechanism and of the OPCW Fact Finding Mission.

More generally, we believe that it is our common responsibility to hinder any erosion of the chemical non-proliferation architecture.

We also attach great importance to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and to strengthening the international architecture dealing with biological weapons. After the unsatisfactory outcome of the last Review Conference, we look forward to the upcoming Meeting of States Parties as an opportunity to provide the BTWC with a strong intersessional work program.

Italy remains deeply concerned by the increasing risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-state actors, particularly in relation to terrorist acts. In this regard, we reiterate our support for the full implementation of all relevant international instruments, starting from the provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 1540.

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Mr. Chair,

We are also fully committed to international efforts to address the humanitarian, socio-economic, and security impacts of conventional weapons. We look forward to the Third Review Conference of the UN Program of Action to prevent, combat and eradicate the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons in all its aspects, as an important opportunity to achieve concrete progress in this field.

In the same vein, we call for the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty, and for the full implementation of all its provisions.

Furthermore, we strongly and actively support the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Annexed Protocols, the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munition. We attach great importance to their universalization, to full compliance with their provisions, and to the development of any possible synergy among them.

As firm believers in the role of international cooperation and assistance, we continue to devote material, technical and financial resources to the implementation of comprehensive mine action programs.

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Mr. Chair,

We are firmly committed to the long-term sustainability, safety and security of the space environment.

In this prospect, we believe that a set of globally shared principles of responsible behavior in outer space would be the most appropriate response to the sense of urgency expressed by the International Community.

We strongly support the work that has been carried out by the COPUOS Working Group on Long Term Sustainability of Outer Space Activities, and we welcome the joint meeting of the First and Fourth Committees, organized on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Outer Space Treaty.

Italy supports developing norms and principles of responsible State behavior in cyberspace, as well as the promotion of confidence-building measures, international cooperation, and capacity-building to improve cyber security and decrease the risk of disputes among States in this field.

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Mr. Chair,

Before concluding, allow me to mention our satisfaction at the adoption of recommendations on “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional disarmament” by the UN Disarmament Commission, earlier this year. With this substantive outcome of its work, as well as with the substantive informal discussions it held on TCBMs in Outer Space, the UNDC was able to overcome its long-standing stalemate.

We hope that this positive result can serve as a source of inspiration for all of us, in the efforts we all should make in order to protect and strengthen the UN Disarmament Machinery.

In this framework, the Conference on Disarmament remains crucial and we should preserve and relaunch its role, allowing it to resume its substantive work.

Thank you.