



**Statement by Ambassador Vinicio Mati**  
**Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**  
*Geneva, 28 June 2017*

Mr. Facilitator,

At the outset, I would like to join other delegations in congratulating you on your appointment as friend of the Chair, and in thanking you for the non-paper you have circulated, which provides very useful inputs for our discussion.

Let me assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

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

Mr. Facilitator,

As you very well illustrated in your non-paper, the issue of Negative Security Assurances has been at the center of international attention for a long time, and has been the object of many different initiatives, including in the framework of the CD and of its predecessor.

For Italy, the NSA issue is firmly inserted in the broader context of our common goal and shared vision of a world free of nuclear weapons. More specifically, such assurances play an important role in our efforts to further advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as enshrined in the NPT.

We recognize the legitimate interests of non-nuclear weapon states in receiving unequivocal and legally-binding assurances from all nuclear weapon states.

The full implementation of existing security assurances and the possible elaboration of further arrangements in this area are key elements of the progressive approach to nuclear disarmament, focused on effective measures, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT.

In this sense, NSAs constitute an indispensable complement to other initiatives such as the commencement of negotiations of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, entry into force of the CTBT, and the establishment of nuclear weapon free zones.

On this last point, we encourage all nuclear weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant Protocols providing security assurances to States members of nuclear weapon free zones.

We also reiterate our commitment towards the establishment of a Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction in the Middle East.

In this prospect, we continue to strongly support the convening of a Conference on the establishment of such a zone – to be attended by all States of the region on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by them – in accordance with the decisions of the 1995 and 2010 NPT Review Conferences.

Another reason why we attach so much importance to NSAs is that we consider them as some of the instruments necessary to increase global security and to make nuclear arsenals progressively more marginal in the national and collective defence postures of nuclear weapons states.

Indeed the goal of negative security assurances is to reduce the number of potential targets for the warheads, de facto decreasing the relevance of doctrines of nuclear deterrence in national defence strategies.

Mr. Facilitator,

The CD has a significant role to play and could give a decisive contribution to this debate, especially within the context of an agreed, comprehensive and balanced programme of work. Italy supports its continued engagement to discuss all aspects of this issue, as well as its endeavors directed to explore the possibility of arrangements aiming to strengthen NSAs as concrete instruments to advance nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Many of the points you raised in your non-paper will require further discussion and close examination. For our part, we will provide more detailed remarks in the upcoming sessions.

Thank you, Mr. Facilitator