



Statement by H. E. Ambassador Vinicio Mati
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva, 29 March 2016

Thank you Madam President.

First of all, I would like to express my sincere condolences and solidarity for the horrible terrorist attacks in Lahore, yet another instance in which so many innocent lives have been unjustly taken.

I would also like to reiterate our appreciation for your efforts in trying to find a common ground with a view to ensuring a shared way forward in the current session of the CD. We all are engaged in this common effort.

After many years of stalemate we now have four Programme of Work proposals on the table. We have expressed support for the proposal presented by the US because, as I had the occasion to state from the start, it contains a negotiating mandate on an issue that we continue to consider a priority for the CD in the field of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. The adoption of this Programme of Work with a simplified mandate on an FMT would mean overcoming the historical stalemate of the CD and moving forward non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament.

I am not among those who consider that substantive work in the CD entails exclusively negotiating, but I do not believe either that all our business can be resolved in an endless discussion – and we have been engaged in a discussion on the Programme of Work for the past twenty years. Therefore, we regret that it was not possible to achieve consensus on the US proposal.

Furthermore, I am aware that there is no full consensus on any of the proposals on the table if we consider them individually.

If our aim is finding a common ground among the different draft PoWs, we should focus on the more concrete elements that are likely to advance the CD's work. In this vein, we appreciate the UK proposal, as it focuses primarily on nuclear disarmament and on non-proliferation issues, which is in line with our priorities.

As for the Russian draft PoW, we recognize it has the merit of addressing a very important issue. Also in our perspective, the problem of chemical terrorism, as well as that of biological terrorism, deserve our utmost attention. Therefore, we will carefully study the further elements introduced by the Russian Delegation.

In any case, we stand ready to continue to support any constructive effort aiming at any reasonable and forward-looking agreement on a Programme of Work that could be acceptable to all.

Thank you, Madam President