



Permanent Mission of Italy  
UN - New York

**First Committee of the 74<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly  
Conventional Weapons**

**statement by H.E. Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato,  
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

*New York, 24 October 2019*

Mister Chair,

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and with the statement of Ireland on behalf of a group of countries. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mister Chair,

Italy strongly supports all international instruments restricting or prohibiting the use of weapons contrary to International Humanitarian Law.

In this context, universalization and effective implementation of the Ottawa and Oslo Conventions are among our priorities. Particularly this year, on the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, we look forward to participating in the Oslo Review Conference, renewing our commitment for a world free of mines and contributing to the elaboration of a new Action Plan.

Italy is extremely concerned by the indiscriminate humanitarian and socio-economic impacts of anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war, especially on civilians. Having complied with all the obligations at the national level, we strongly believe in the importance of international cooperation in this particular field. As part of our long-standing commitment, a dedicated Trust Fund for Humanitarian Demining was set up by law in 2001 and since then Italy has devoted more than 58 million Euros to Mine Action programmes, with a particular focus on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education and assistance to victims.

Besides providing financial assistance, we engage in capacity-building, training programmes and sharing of technical demining expertise. Our assistance programmes rely on partnerships with relevant stakeholders, including the UN, other

international and regional organizations, civil society, and survivor representatives. In particular, we have established a long-term and fruitful cooperation with the ICRC and the United Nations Mine Action Service.

Italy attaches particular importance to assisting survivors and their families as a fundamental component of humanitarian aid and as a key element in long-term development strategies. In order to be effective, the efforts have to be designed and implemented in a way to be consistent and integrate with humanitarian action as a whole. Assisting victims, their families and communities is an essential component of their path towards a better future, so should be conceived with a holistic perspective and in line with the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

It is essential that victims benefitting from assistance are included in broader development, human rights, and humanitarian programs. These, in addition, need to be implemented according to the principle of non-discrimination, as well as take into account gender and diversity considerations, aiming to adequately address the different needs of different beneficiaries.

We are equally concerned by the extremely serious humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA). In this respect, we highly appreciated the convening by the Austrian Government of the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare on 1st and 2nd October and we support the diplomatic process potentially leading to a political declaration aimed at strengthening the collective commitment in this issue.

Mr. Chair,

Under this item of our agenda, we want to underline the importance of the CCW Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and of its Protocols. Their universalization and full implementation remain fundamental goals. We welcome the intersessional work conducted so far in the framework of the CCW, which allowed in-depth exchanges on several issues of concern.

Italy especially welcomes the in-depth work carried out by the GGE on LAWS Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems. We are of the view that human control is fundamental to ensure that all weapons systems are developed, deployed, and used in compliance with International Humanitarian Law. In particular, we deem it necessary for the decisions to use lethal force and to produce lethal effects to remain in the hands of human beings. We believe that the continuation of the work of the GGE in the next two years will provide the opportunity to further discuss aspects relating to the characteristics and implications of LAWS with a view to paving the way towards a consensual political declaration.

We share the deep concern of the international community at the growing use and impacts of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs), which pose serious threats to civilians, humanitarian workers and peacekeeping personnel in conflict afflicted and post-conflict areas.

Both preventative and remedial strategies must be pursued to counter such a threat, at national and international levels, starting with the strengthening of appropriate regulatory frameworks.

Mr. Chair,

Illicit, unregulated, or irresponsible transfers of conventional arms have pernicious humanitarian, social and economic effects. Italy is committed to the effective implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), the UN Programme of Action on Small Arms, the International Tracing Instrument, and the Palermo Protocol, which are fundamental to countering such negative impacts.

The ATT unique contribution towards a more transparent and responsible arms trade, and to countering illicit arms transfers, relies on universalization and effective implementation as two sides of the same coin. We continue to call on all States that have not ratified the Treaty to do so as early as possible and we commend the States that have joined the Treaty during the present year. At the same time, we will also continue to engage constructively in the intersessional work program of the Treaty.

Italy is also concerned by the growing illicit flows of small arms and light weapons, including in the so-called deep web, because they represent the main casualty of victims. We welcome the consensual outcomes achieved so far in this domain and we believe that applying the UN Program of Action provisions also to SALW ammunition would be beneficial. In this context, we wish to reaffirm the fundamental link between sustainable development, peace, and security, as recognized by the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Chair,

Finally, we reiterate our support for increased partnerships at all levels with civil society and industry, which play a key role in all our common efforts in disarmament and arms control.

Thank you, Mister Chair.