



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

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato,
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
to the First Committee of the 73rd UN General Assembly**

Conventional Weapons

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Mr. Chair,

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, and would like to add some remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. Chair,

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

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Protocols are crucial in this regard, and 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 shares 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, within and outside the CCW framework, starting with the establishment of appropriate regulatory frameworks.

The need for such action was recognized in successive UNGA resolutions on “Countering the threat posed by IEDs”, all of which were co-sponsored by Italy. We welcome the report presented by the Secretary-General pursuant to resolution 71/72, which translates this need into concrete recommendations.

We also welcome the informal meetings on the issues of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas (EWIPA Talks 2018) and Mines other than anti-personnel mines (MOTAPM). These initiatives provided us with excellent opportunities to deepen our understanding of these topics with a view to the debate that will take place during the next Conference of the High Contracting Parties of the CCW.

Italy is satisfied at the in-depth work carried out by the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and at its substantive outcome. We share the principles, on which the Group identified strong convergence, that International Humanitarian Law must apply to all weapons systems, including LAWS, and that any existing or future weapon system must be subject to human control, particularly in relation to the ultimate decision to use lethal force. We support the renewal of the GGE mandate for 2019, which 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.

Mr. Chair,

Italy is extremely concerned by the indiscriminate humanitarian and socio-economic impacts of anti-personnel landmines and cluster munitions, especially on civilians. For this reason, universalization as well as continued and full implementation of the Ottawa and Oslo Conventions are among our priorities.

At the national level, we completed the destruction of stockpiles of antipersonnel mines in 2002 and of cluster munitions in 2015. We also destroyed cluster munition stockpiles retained for purposes permitted by art. 3.6 of the Convention.

At the international level, we continue to allocate resources for the implementation of comprehensive mine action programmes relating to all explosive remnants of war and focusing on clearance, stockpile destruction, risk education, and victim assistance, as well as advocacy activities for the universalization of Ottawa and Oslo Conventions. Since 2001, we have devoted close to 55m EUR to Mine Action programmes to recipients that, in 2017, included Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gaza, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, and Sudan. 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. We promote the implementation of an integrated and inclusive approach to this topic both nationally and across all relevant instruments. We have been particularly engaged in promoting gender- and diversity-responsive assistance, aiming to adequately address the different needs of different beneficiaries. In line with this objective, Italy supported the development of an operational guidance by the Gender and Mine Action Programme (GMAP), in collaboration with Humanity and Inclusion, aiming at disseminating good practices for gender and diversity-sensitive victim assistance among stakeholders in the mine action and broader disability sectors.

More generally, we remain strongly committed to the full implementation of the Women, Peace and Security agenda, and to the realization of its transformative potential also in the field of disarmament.

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 past year. We will also continue to engage constructively in the intersessional work programme of the Treaty.

Italy welcomes the consensual outcome of the 2018 Review Conference of the Program of Action on small arms and Light Weapons and looks forward to the implementation of its Outcome Document. We continue to believe that applying the UN PoA provisions also to SALW ammunition would be beneficial. We also continue to stress the fundamental link between sustainable development, peace, and security, as recognized by the 2030 Agenda.

Mr. Chair,

Italy is concerned by the financial issues experienced by several of the Conventions mentioned so far. It is essential for States to abide by their mandatory financial obligations, in order to allow these essential instruments and their related support structures to function continuously and effectively.

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

Thank you, Mr Chair.