



**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**

Nuclear Weapons

New York, 19 October 2018

Check against delivery

Mr. Chair,

Italy aligns itself with the statements delivered by the European Union and by Australia on behalf of a group of like-minded Countries. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Italy fully shares the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons and is firmly committed to disarmament, arms control, and non-proliferation as essential components of its foreign policy.

To achieve these goals, the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the key instrument, as the cornerstone of the international regime, with its three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We call upon States that have not yet done so to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States, without delay and without conditions. We also believe it is necessary to support, uphold and preserve the NPT in the difficult current environment. In this spirit, we have been actively participating in the preparatory process of the 2020 NPT Review Conference.

Mr. Chair,

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 can be attained only through a progressive approach based on effective measures, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, involving all relevant actors, in a perspective based on the research for consensus.

Our efforts for effective progress on nuclear disarmament are underpinned by our utmost concern for the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons' use.

The prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty is crucial among the effective measures we are pursuing. As a staunch supporter of the Treaty, and as 2018 Chair of the CTBTO Preparatory Commission, Italy has focused its efforts on outreach. We call on all States that have not yet done so, particularly the remaining eight Annex-2 States, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay. In the meantime, we call upon all States to respect the moratorium on nuclear test explosions and to refrain from any action that could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

The immediate commencement of negotiations within the CD of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is another key priority. Such a Treaty would constitute a valuable new element of the international security architecture. We welcome the successful conclusion of the work of the High Level Expert Preparatory Group established by UNGA Resolution 71/259, and the release of its report. We are confident that the Group's work provides fruitful input for negotiations of a fissile material treaty within the CD. Pending the conclusion of such a Treaty, we believe that all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

We would also like to recall the potential of Negative Security Assurances. We continue to support the possible elaboration of recommendations dealing with all aspects of NSAs, not excluding an internationally legally binding instrument.

Italy values all initiatives undertaken in the field of nuclear disarmament verification, as important tools to build trust and confidence among nuclear and non-nuclear weapon States. We support the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and welcome the beginning of the work of the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament, as per UNGA Resolution 71/67, that Italy co-sponsored.

We also reiterate our support for the convening of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction, in line with the practical steps endorsed by the 2010 Review Conference. We call on all States in the region to urgently and proactively engage with the Co-Conveners and each other to enable such Conference to be convened as soon as possible, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at between all States of the region.

Mr. Chair,

Nuclear weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of Art. VI of the NPT. While welcoming the reductions made so far by most of them, we encourage them to seek

further reductions in their nuclear arsenals. We express satisfaction at the announcement by the Russian Federation and the United States that they have met the central limits of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in February 2018. We encourage them to extend the Treaty and to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, and reporting. We underline the importance of preserving the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty as a landmark agreement that remains key to European and international security and stability.

Mr. Chair,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons continues to represent a major threat to international security. The IAEA's system of safeguards is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the NPT. Italy supports the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system, including universal adherence to comprehensive agreements and additional protocols.

After a deeply troubling 2017, when DPRK's nuclear and missile tests ruthlessly threatened international peace and security, as well as the non-proliferation regime, in the first half of 2018 the high-level talks between the Republic of Korea and the DPRK, together with the Singapore Summit between the US and the DPRK have brought about positive developments. We strongly hope that such steps may be conducive to an open and constructive dialogue, aimed at fulfilling our common goal of a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We strongly believe that international sanctions against the DPRK must remain in force to sustain the current negotiating process. In the present juncture it is imperative to remain focused on their implementation. A durable collective commitment remains necessary.

In the context of international efforts aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, the JCPoA remains a key element. Unanimously endorsed by the Security Council with Resolution 2231, the nuclear deal plays a crucial role in promoting regional and international security. We firmly believe that the international community needs to remain committed to a full and effective implementation of the Plan of Action as long as Iran continues to strictly abide by its nuclear-related commitments. We welcome the IAEA's confirmation of Iran's compliance with such commitments in 12 successive reports. We also reiterate the importance of a full and effective implementation of Resolution 2231. We are determined to cooperate with all interested stakeholders to preserve the JCPoA, safeguarding the benefits deriving to all parties. We fully support the efforts undertaken by the European Union in this respect.

Thank you.