



**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**

Other Weapons of Mass Destruction

New York, 24 October 2018

Check against delivery

Mr. Chair,

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

Mr. Chair,

Italy remains fully committed to effective multilateral action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, which poses a growing threat to international peace and security. The existence of proliferation programs and networks, the difficulty of securing sensitive materials, the risk posed by terrorists' gaining access to them, and the establishment of effective export controls remain major challenges.

These challenges remind us of the importance of achieving universalisation and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). We call upon all States not yet Party to ratify or accede to them without delay and without conditions.

Mr. Chair,

Italy remains strongly committed to supporting the Chemical Weapons Convention and the work of the OPCW and reaffirms the importance of full compliance with the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The international community as a whole shares the responsibility to enforce the prohibition of chemical weapons and uphold the chemical international non-proliferation regime, which is vital for international peace and security.

Mr. Chair,

We are deeply disturbed and concerned that chemical weapons have been repeatedly used in recent months. We wish to renew our solidarity to the victims and reiterate our condemnation in the strongest possible terms of the use of chemical weapons by anyone, anywhere, anytime and under

any circumstances. We also stress the need to react in order not to give acquiescence to what unfortunately seems to be an alarming emerging trend, which we entirely reject.

But condemnation is not enough. As emphasized by the UN Secretary-General in his Agenda for Disarmament, the international community must ensure accountability and continue to take a clear stance against impunity for such heinous crimes. It is with this spirit that Italy joined and actively participates in the Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, launched in January 2018.

While deeply regretting that no agreement could be reached on the renewal of the mandate of the OPCW-UN Joint Investigative Mechanism (JIM) on Syria before its expiration in November 2017, we welcome the June 2018 Decision of the Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the CWC, which enhances the capacity of the OPCW Technical Secretariat to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons. We stand ready to support the Secretariat and to cooperate with all States Parties in the implementation of this Decision.

We also reaffirm our support for the work of the OPCW's Fact Finding Mission to continue investigating allegations of use of chemical weapons and urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to honour its obligations as a State Party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and to extend full cooperation to the OPCW, including its Declaration Assessment Team, in order to resolve all the outstanding issues relating to implementation of the Convention.

Mr. Chair,

We also attach great importance to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention and recognize the need to strengthen the international architecture dealing with biological weapons. The BTWC operates in a highly dynamic environment, characterized by fast-paced scientific and technological developments. In such a context, it is essential to endow the Convention with the tools and procedures necessary to respond more rapidly to emerging needs and challenges. With this aim, a strong intersessional work programme is fundamental. We appreciate the substantive work and discussions carried out by the Meetings of Experts in August, which usefully allowed for technical input by relevant international, regional and non-governmental organizations.

We regret that the delayed or missed payment of mandatory contributions by some States Parties is putting the operation of the Convention, of the ISU, and possibly also the convening of the 2018 Meeting of the States Parties at risk. We look forward to discussing possible solutions to this long-standing problem in the next few weeks, and call on all States Parties to abide by their financial obligations on time and in full.

Mr. Chair,

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.

Mr. Chair,

In the context of international efforts aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, the JCPoA remains a key element. 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 UN Security Council Resolution 2231. We are determined to cooperate with all interested stakeholders to preserve the JCPoA, safeguarding the benefits deriving to all parties.

Finally, Italy remains deeply concerned by the increasing risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-state actors, particularly in relation to terrorist acts. In this respect, we support the strengthening of the 1540 Committee mechanism to increase national capacities in the implementation of non-proliferation measures, and we welcome the positive outcome of the Review of the UN Resolution 1540 regime, as embodied in UN Security Council resolution n. 2325.

We also reiterate our support for the universal and full implementation of all relevant international instruments. In particular, we underline the importance of the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts on Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Amendment thereto. We encourage all States to become Party to this Agreements and to comply fully with their provisions.

Thank you.