



ITALY

70TH UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

GENERAL DEBATE OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

**STATEMENT BY
H.E. AMBASSADOR VINICIO MATI**

**PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ITALY
TO THE CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT**

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Mr. Chair,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your appointment as Chair of the 1st Committee of the 70th UN General Assembly, and to assure you of the Italian Delegation's full support.

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

Mr. Chair,

Italy attaches great importance to disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation as essential components of our foreign policy. We firmly believe that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial to effective and long-term results in the field of disarmament. Therefore, Italy will continue to be actively engaged in all the relevant fora, particularly the United Nations and the Conference on Disarmament.

The disarmament community witnessed a landmark success last July, with the conclusion of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between the E3/EU+3 and Iran. Proving that diplomacy works, this agreement constitutes an important milestone in the long-running efforts to reach a comprehensive, long-lasting, and peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We welcome the unanimous endorsement of the JCPOA by the UN Security Council, and call on the international community to strongly support its implementation.

Italy welcomes the successful First Conference of the States Parties to the Arms Trade Treaty of Cancun. We highly value the universalization and effective implementation of the ATT, which provides a robust international framework for the trade in conventional arms, and will foster respect for human rights. Through its provisions on the prevention of gender-based violence, the Treaty has, for the first time, included a gender perspective and the concept of human security in the broader context of global security.

In the nuclear field, the NPT remains the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation regime and the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament. We call for its universalization and for the full implementation of its three mutually reinforcing pillars. We also underscore the indispensable role of the IAEA and support its strengthening, including through universal adherence to Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols.

We deeply regret that consensus could not be reached at the 9th Review Conference of the NPT, but we trust that the efforts made to bridge different positions will not be in vain. We must continue to work to achieve the objectives of the Treaty, including through the full implementation of the 2010 Action Plan.

Mr. Chair,

Further major reductions in nuclear arsenals and their eventual elimination require our cooperation in addressing the security and humanitarian dimensions of nuclear weapons. Concern over the devastating impact of nuclear weapon explosions on human beings and on the environment underpins our actions on disarmament and non-proliferation. The hard practical work necessary to bring us closer to a world free of nuclear weapons must be further carried on and be centered not only on humanitarian but also on security considerations. We are convinced that such action should focus on practical and effective measures.

We must simultaneously advance non-proliferation and disarmament as mutually reinforcing processes and create a more peaceful world. In this prospect, the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT) remains a top priority. We urge all States whose ratification is essential for its entry into force to sign and/or ratify it. Pending this, we support a comprehensive moratorium on nuclear weapons tests.

We reaffirm that it is of utmost importance to preserve the primary role of the CD on multilateral disarmament negotiations. Its deadlock remains a matter of serious concern. We reiterate our call for the early commencement within the CD of negotiations on a Treaty Banning the production of fissile material, which represents the next logical step for effective progress on nuclear disarmament. Italy welcomes the report of the FMCT Group of Governmental Experts, along with the other meaningful contributions derived from the substantive discussions on the topic held in the CD during the 2015 session.

Italy strongly supports the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification as an innovative initiative involving both Nuclear and Non-Nuclear Weapon States, and is fully engaged in it.

Mr. Chair,

We reaffirm our support to the 1995 NPT Review Conference Resolution on the Middle East, and the relevant practical steps endorsed by the 2010 NPT Review Conference towards the convening of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction to be attended by all States of the region on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by them as decided by the 2010 Review Conference. Such a zone is essential for global peace and security and for the stability of the region, and we continue to call on all concerned States to urgently and proactively engage in this process.

Mr. Chair,

The preservation of a safe and secure space environment and the peaceful use of outer space on an equitable and mutually acceptable basis are top priorities. In line with the recommendations of the GGE on Transparency and Confidence-Building Measures in Outer Space Activities, we see value in pursuing political commitments, and support the EU-led initiative for an international Code of Conduct. We regret that delegations gathered in New

York last July were not able to start negotiations on the draft Code, but we are confident that the elements that emerged from the debate will foster further constructive developments.

Mr Chair,

Italy is currently chairing the Executive Council of the OPCW and reiterates its commitment to a world without chemical weapons. One year after the Gioia Tauro operation, the removal and destruction of the declared Syrian stockpile of chemical weapons has been accomplished. Many uncertainties, however, remain regarding the complete dismantling of the Syrian Chemical Weapons Programme and the continuous use of chlorine as a weapon against the civilian population, which we firmly condemn. Therefore, we welcome UN Security Council Resolution 2235, setting up a Joint Investigative Mechanism to identify perpetrators of chemical attacks in Syria.

Mr. Chair,

Italy strongly supports the goals of the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention. Italian health and academic institutions actively participate in international training and capacity-building initiatives on matters related to its implementation. With the 8th Review Conference of the BTWC fast approaching, we strongly favour a transparent and inclusive preparatory process, aimed at consolidating common understandings on how to strengthen the Convention.

We are also fully committed to international efforts to address the humanitarian, socio-economic, and security impacts of conventional weapons. We highly value the Dubrovnik Political Declaration and Action Plan, which are the outcomes of the First Review Conference of the Convention on Cluster Munitions. They will guide us towards the full implementation of the Convention.

We actively promote the full implementation of the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention and of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons and its Annexed Protocols. We attach great importance to their universalization and national implementation, to full compliance with their provisions, and to the development of any possible synergy among them. As firm believers in the role of international cooperation and assistance, we continue to support mine action programmes.

Mr. Chair,

This year marks the 15th anniversary of UNSC resolution 1325 on Women, Peace and Security. Italy has supported from the very start its adoption and has developed a National Action Plan for its implementation. We are keenly aware of the importance of including gender-based approaches in disarmament processes, as well as of ensuring equal participation of women and men in peace and security decision-making and action.

Before closing, let me reaffirm the importance that we attach to strengthening dialogue on disarmament topics with all relevant actors from civil society. We note the fundamental

contribution they provide and look forward to their increased involvement in the disarmament machinery's activities.

Thank you.