



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - Geneva

Conference on Disarmament
Statement delivered by Mr. Tancredi Francese,
Acting Permanent Representative of Italy
to the Conference on Disarmament

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Madame President,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on the initiative of convening us on the International Women's Day, an opportunity to devote further attention to the commitment, courage and inspirational role of women across the world and current gaps in gender equality. We appreciate your suggestion to reflect on how "to highlight the importance of including women's perspectives on the substantive discussions of the topics on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament". I wish to thank Vice-President Ramirez and USG Nakamitsu for their powerful messages, together with the other panelists for inspiring our debate today.

Italy aligns itself with the statements delivered by France on behalf of the European Union and of a group of countries. Please allow me to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Reporting and statistics overwhelmingly point out the gender-based dimension of armed conflicts with women not only victims of sexual and gender-based violence but also victims of psychological traumas and economic burdens, which increase their impoverishment, exploitation and social discrimination and represent a major obstacle to the effective enjoyment of the entire spectrum of their human rights and to their meaningful empowerment.

Since 2010, various General Assembly resolutions on "Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control" have been encouraging to better understand the gender-based dimension of armed violence and have been recognizing the need to empower women's participation in disarmament, promoting equal opportunities in decision-making processes. It is encouraging to have witnessed over the last years an increasing number of UNGA Resolutions that have included language on women and gender mainstreaming in many areas relevant for the work of the Conference on Disarmament, such as nuclear disarmament, biological weapons, cluster munitions and small arms and light weapons (SALW) as well as the inclusion of a gender perspective in the work of the Arms Trade Treaty, the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions.

As the UN Secretary General Guterres pointed out, “the meaningful inclusion of women in decision making increases effectiveness and productivity, brings new perspectives and solutions to the table, unlocks greater resources and strengthens efforts across our work”. The effective and meaningful involvement of more women is therefore crucial to revitalize our discussions at the Conference on Disarmament and try to negotiate legally binding instruments aiming at guaranteeing a safer, more secure and sustainable world to future generations.

Unfortunately, Madame President, as the UNIDIR report “Still Behind the Curve” highlights, we are far behind the goals set in the UNSG Agenda for Disarmament and the UN Sustainable Development Goals. As Italy, we are committed to enhancing our efforts in policy, education, capacity-building and training opportunities to enhance the role of women in disarmament and in this forum in particular.

In this regard and as an example of our commitment, let me conclude by saying that Italy is extremely pleased to have been appointed as gender focal point for the Committee on Victims Assistance in the framework of the Anti-personnel Mine Ban Convention (APBMC). We look forward to engaging with all the relevant stakeholders to tackle challenges and develop appropriate and timely solutions.

We are ready to assist you in all efforts necessary to empower the gender dimension on all items of the Agenda of the Conference on Disarmament and, more broadly, on its work. As underlined by the UN Secretary General, “the 21st century must be the century of women’s equality”. Let us bring also the CD into the 21st century.

Thank you, Madame President.