



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

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COOPERATION**

**CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT – HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT
GENEVA, 1 MARCH 2022**

Madame President,

Excellences, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure for me to address the Conference on Disarmament. Let me start by reaffirming Italy's full commitment to the work and mission of this Body and expressing my delegation's full support to the President and our gratitude to the Secretary General and the Secretariat.

Madame President,

The Conference on Disarmament does not operate in a vacuum; its work cannot be detached from international political and security realities. In this perspective, please allow me firstly to touch upon three issues that I believe are very relevant today also for the work of the Conference.

Last week, a major nuclear power has attacked a neighbouring country and is threatening reprisals on any other state that may come to its rescue. The Russian military operation is a very serious, unjustified and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine, which Italy strongly condemns. It represents a violation of international law, of the basic principles of human co-existence. Italy stands alongside the Ukrainian people, together with EU and Atlantic partners.

We urge Russia to immediately cease military actions, unconditionally withdraws all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

Moreover, it is of vital importance that the safe and secure operations of Ukraine's nuclear facilities should not be affected or disrupted in any way, and in this regard, we are extremely concerned about the situation at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant.

In the context of the international efforts aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, Italy believes that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPoA) remains a key element. The full implementation of the deal and of all provisions of UN Security Council Resolution 2231 is crucial for regional and international security. We call on all participants in the Vienna talks to spare no efforts in addressing and resolving the current issues through dialogue as soon as possible. At the same time, we urge Iran to provide the IAEA with a full and timely cooperation with respect to all its safeguard-related commitments in order to clarify and resolve any pending issue.

Italy also firmly condemns the repeated ballistic missile launches by the DPRK. We urge the DPRK to refrain from further provocations, which undermine regional as well as international peace and security, and to take concrete steps towards a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization.

Madame President,

The current international security landscape is deeply worrying. While we are gathered here, tensions and geopolitical rivalry are increasing all around the world. In many areas of the world, the pandemic has even exacerbated conflicts, with dramatic consequences for civilian populations.

A rules-based international system and effective multilateralism are of utmost importance in addressing global challenges and threats to international peace and security. We stress the fundamental need for a renewed collective commitment to preserve international institutions and to ensure their proper functioning.

We need the same determination in the field of disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control, in order to preserve what has been achieved so far and to further advance the relevant processes, thus working together to improve global security.

Madame President,

Italy fully shares the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. A goal that can only be attained through a progressive approach, based on concrete measures, resulting in an effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament. Our efforts for effective progress on nuclear disarmament are underpinned by our utmost concern for the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons' use.

In this regard, the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, with its three mutually reinforcing pillars, remains the cornerstone of the international regime. It is the only realistic legal framework to pursue a nuclear weapon free world, in a way that promotes international stability and undiminished security for all. We call upon States that have not yet done so to join the NPT as non-nuclear weapon States, without delay and without conditions, and we call on all States Parties to implement the provisions of the Treaty as well as all commitment agreed by subsequent Review Conferences.

We look forward to participating actively in the tenth Review Conference, as soon as the health situation allows. In the meantime, Italy supports the efforts to use the remaining time as an opportunity to build bridges among States Parties. In this regard, Italy welcomes the Joint statement of the five nuclear-weapon states on preventing nuclear war and avoiding arms races. In particular, we welcome the intention of the P5 to continue working to prevent a new nuclear arms race, as well as to avoid military confrontations, strengthen stability and predictability, and increase mutual understanding and confidence. We encourage the P5 to further pursue constructive dialogue.

An important step in this direction should be the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty. I wish to thank the Executive Secretary of the CTBTO for his intervention, earlier today. As a staunch supporter of the CTBT and in line with its current role as Article XIV co-Coordinator, Italy urges all States that have not yet done so, in particular 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 tests and to refrain from any action that could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

We also continue to support the immediate commencement of negotiations within the Conference on a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Pending its conclusion, all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Italy supports the work of the Conference on the prevention of an arms race in the outer space and we encourage further international cooperation to elaborate agreed norms, rules and principles of responsible behavior. Technology development and science progress are fundamental for the well-being of humanity and must be seen as a means to promote peace and sustainable growth. Working on disarmament, we have a great responsibility to ensure the right framework for these developments, preventing any dangerous or negative use.

Madame President,

In conclusion, Italy remains convinced that the Conference on Disarmament is an indispensable and unique body in the toolbox of the disarmament community, even if its potential remains unfulfilled nowadays. A greater interaction with society could make a key contribution, together with the promotion of an approach that ensures a full representation of women in disarmament negotiations.

We must recognize that it will be difficult to make any progress by simply going back to old approaches. Instead, we should use this platform to improve dialogue and transparency. It is our common responsibility to preserve and relaunch the role of the Conference, to ensure that the Conference serves the purpose for which it was established. The recent approval of a Decision on the work of the Conference is a small but positive sign in the right direction. But we need to be more ambitious, we need a renewed collective commitment to strengthen peace and security, to avoid entering the path of a new arms race in any domain.

Thank you, Madame President.