



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - New York

**First Committee of the 74th UN General Assembly
Nuclear Weapons**

**statement by H.E. Ambassador Gianfranco Incarnato,
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

New York, 22 October 2019

Mister Chair,

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union and with the statement of the Netherlands on behalf of a group of countries. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mister Chair,

Italy fully shares the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons and, in this respect, we restate our strong commitment to preserving and strengthening the disarmament and non-proliferation framework.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) remains the cornerstone of the international disarmament regime, with its three mutually reinforcing pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology. The Treaty must be supported, upheld and preserved, especially in today's difficult environment. We therefore invite States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon States, without delay and without conditions. We will actively participate in the 2020 NPT Review Conference, and we invite all countries to do the same.

Mr. Chair,

The NPT provides the only realistic legal framework to achieve a world without nuclear weapons, in a manner that promotes international stability consistent with the principle of undiminished security for all. This goal can only be achieved through a gradual approach, by taking effective measures – pursuant to Article VI of the NPT – that involve all the stakeholders in a consensus-based perspective.

We are striving for true progress on nuclear disarmament because of our deep concern over the potentially catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. One measure we are pursuing is the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). The lack of progress on the CTBT should be of concern to the entire international community. As a staunch supporter of the Treaty, Italy invites 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 continue to respect the voluntary moratorium on nuclear test explosions and to refrain from any action that could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

Another key priority is for the Conference on Disarmament to immediately start negotiations for a Treaty on fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Such a treaty would be a valuable new element of the international security architecture, which is under growing pressure today. Pending the conclusion of such a treaty, all States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

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. In this respect, we strongly support the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification and welcome the work conducted within the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

We also wish to mention the potential of Negative Security Assurances and to reiterate our support for the establishment of Zones Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction, particularly in the Middle East, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived and agreed among the States of the Region.

We stress the relevance of risk reduction, which can contribute to alleviating tensions and building the necessary trust and confidence, such as transparency and dialogue on nuclear doctrines and postures, military-to-military dialogues, hotline, "accident measures agreements" and notification of exercises, missile launch notifications and other data exchange agreements, consistently with the 2010 NPT Review Conference Action Plan.

Mr. Chair,

Nuclear-weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of Art. VI of the NPT. While welcoming the reductions made so far, we encourage them to seek further reductions in their nuclear arsenals and to actively engage in strengthening the entire disarmament architecture. In this respect we particularly encourage the United States and the Russian Federation to seek further reductions to their arsenals and to engage in a constructive dialogue on New START Treaty extension post-2021 and on other arms control arrangements as well as to pursue further discussions on confidence-building, transparency, verification activities, and reporting.

Mr. Chair,

The proliferation of nuclear weapons continues to pose a major threat to international security. The IAEA's system of safeguards is an essential 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.

In this context, we are deeply concerned by the severe difficulties the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) on the Iranian nuclear programme is currently experiencing. The JCPOA is a key element of the global non-proliferation architecture and an achievement of multilateral diplomacy endorsed by UN Security Council Resolution 2231. Its implementation is crucial for regional and international security. We urge Iran to return to full compliance without delay. and We also urge Iran to provide the Agency with a full and timely cooperation with respect to all its safeguard-related commitments. We are ready to support initiatives aimed at de-escalating the present tensions and restoring the JCPOA's integrity.

We fully support further negotiations between the US and the DPRK for the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We strongly hope that such steps will be conducted through an open and constructive dialogue, aimed at fulfilling our common goal of a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula. We believe that international sanctions against the DPRK must remain in force to sustain the current negotiating process. At the present juncture, it is imperative to remain focused on implementing them. A durable collective commitment remains necessary.

Thank you, Mister Chair.