



Permanent Mission of Italy
UN - New York

First Committee of the 74th UN General Assembly
Other Weapons of Mass Destruction
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. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mister Chair,

Italy remains fully committed to effective multilateral action against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, which are a growing threat to international peace and security. Securing sensitive materials, especially from access by terrorist networks, and implementing effective export controls continue to be major challenges.

These challenges point to the need for the universal and effective implementation of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC). We call upon all States that are not yet parties to ratify or accede to these Conventions without delay and without conditions.

Mr. Chair,

Italy remains firmly committed to supporting the CWC and the work of the OPCW, and reaffirms the need to ensure full compliance with the CWC and the 1925 Geneva Protocol. The international community has a shared responsibility to enforce the prohibition of chemical weapons and support the international chemical non-proliferation regime, which is essential for international peace and security.

Mr. Chair,

We are deeply concerned by the repeated use of chemical weapons in recent years. In the strongest possible terms we condemn their use by anyone, anywhere, anytime and under any circumstances. We must respond to this alarming trend, as emphasized by the UN Secretary-General in his 2018 Agenda for Disarmament, by ensuring accountability and continuing to take a clear stance against impunity for such heinous crimes. Therefore, Italy joined and actively participates in the Partnership Against Impunity for the Use of Chemical Weapons, launched in January 2018.

We welcomed the June 2018 decision of the Special Session of the Conference of the States Parties to the CWC, and the beginning of the work of the Investigation and Identification Team established within the OPCW Secretariat to identify the perpetrators of the use of chemical weapons in Syria. We are ready to support the Secretariat and to cooperate with all States Parties of the CWC in this regard.

We also reaffirm our support for the OPCW's Fact-Finding Mission to continue investigating allegations of use of chemical weapons. We urge the Government of the Syrian Arab Republic to honor 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. It is also necessary that the Syrian Arab Republic fully co-operates with the Investigation and Identification Team of the OPCW.

Mr. Chair,

The Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention is of the utmost importance, as is the need to strengthen the international architecture to regulate biological weapons. The BTWC operates in a highly dynamic environment, characterized by rapid scientific and technological developments. It is therefore essential to give the Convention the tools and procedures it requires to respond more rapidly to emerging needs and challenges. This is why a strong intersessional work program is fundamental. We appreciate the substantive work and discussions carried out by the Meetings of Experts in Geneva in August 2019, which allowed for technical input from the relevant international, regional and non-governmental organizations.

Finally, Italy remains deeply concerned by the increasing risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-state actors, particularly terrorist networks. This is why we support the full implementation of the 1540 UNSCR, including by increasing national capacities in the implementation of non-proliferation measures.

Thank you, Mister Chair.