



*Ministero degli Affari Esteri
e della Cooperazione Internazionale*

**STATEMENT BY H.E. SEN. BENEDETTO DELLA VEDOVA,
DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION**

CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT - HIGH LEVEL SEGMENT -

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Mr President, Excellencies, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

*It is a great pleasure to address also this year the Conference on Disarmament, which represents **the world's sole multilateral disarmament negotiating forum**. Let me reiterate Italy's commitment to the work and mission of this Body and congratulate the distinguished Russian Ambassador on assuming the Presidency. I would also like to express our gratitude to the Secretary General, Mr. Michael Moeller, and to his team for their invaluable support to the work of the Conference.*

Mr President,

*Major multilateral arms control and disarmament agreements have been negotiated within this Conference: they still represent impressive accomplishments and a **crucial contribution for a safer world**.*

*Today, after a deadlock of more than two decades, we feel the urgency to **preserve its primary role** as negotiating forum on disarmament and non-proliferation.*

*Italy therefore welcomes the adoption of the decision **establishing a working group on the "Way Ahead"** to identify common ground for a programme of work with a negotiating mandate and is keen to participate in launching substantial debate on key issues during this session.*

Mr President,

Italy shares concerns about the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons' use and we are aware of the continuing nuclear risks for humanity. Our desire for a safer world for future generations underpins our efforts for effective progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

In our view, **the Non-Proliferation Treaty remains the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime**, the essential foundation for the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and an important element in the further development of nuclear energy applications for peaceful purposes. The three NPT pillars continue to be mutually reinforcing and Italy still believes **that the 2010 Review Conference Action Plan** remains a very good basis to progress in all of them. In this prospect, we look forward to actively participate in the new PrepCom cycle, which will start in May in Vienna and will bring us to the 2020 Review Conference.

In the framework outlined by Article VI of the Treaty, we reaffirm our commitment to create the conditions for a safer world without nuclear weapons, in a way that promotes international stability and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all.

Let me reiterate that **an inclusive and progressive approach**, based on concrete and verifiable measures of nuclear disarmament, represents the realistic way of reaching the Global Zero.

We believe that the role of the Conference of Disarmament remains essential and we support initiatives that can facilitate the commencement of negotiations in this august body.

In this vein, **we welcome the upcoming establishment of a high level FMCT expert preparatory group** pursuant to UNGA Resolution 71/259, as an attempt to re-launch negotiations on a Treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

We also welcome the UNGA Resolution n. 71/67 on the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament. We stress the importance of developing and strengthening practical and effective nuclear disarmament verification measures in achieving and maintaining a world without nuclear weapons.

In addition, **the entry into force of the "Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty" would be a crucial step** for the elimination of nuclear weapons and, as such, a way to reach a stronger security for all. In this regard, **Italy calls upon all States that have not yet done so** and, in particular, **the remaining eight Annex-2 States**, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay.

In view of the 2020 NPT Review Conference, we would also like to reiterate our support to 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.

Mr President,

*Italy **condemns in the strongest terms the DPRK's recent intermediate range ballistic missile**, as well as the two 2016 nuclear tests. These are destabilizing actions, which threaten international peace and security by violating several UNSC resolutions, as well as the de facto moratorium on nuclear tests. In our current capacity as Chair of the Security Council Resolution 1718 Committee, Italy will support efforts worldwide to properly enforce the set of restrictive measures adopted by the Security Council. **We urgently call on the DPRK to abandon all its existing nuclear and ballistic missile programmes** in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner, and to return to the NPT and IAEA Safeguards.*

Mr President,

*Italy remains **a staunch supporter of multilateralism** as a tool to improve the mutual understanding among countries and people's lives. This year, **we feel a special responsibility as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.***

*In our role within the Security Council as facilitator of the implementation of the UN Resolution 2231, we will continue to uphold the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action** between the E3/EU+3 and Iran as an essential tenet for regional and international security. We acknowledge the clear progress achieved so far after more than one year since the implementation day and we believe that all Parties should deploy efforts to ensure that the JCPoA continues to provide benefits for all and remains a success story in the field of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.*

*Last year we witnessed the positive outcome of the Review of the UN Resolution 1540 regime. Italy remains deeply concerned by the increasing **risk of weapons of mass destruction falling into the hands of non-state actors**, particularly in relation to terrorist acts. We therefore strongly support the strengthening of the 1540 Committee mechanism to increase national capacities in the implementation of non-proliferation measures.*

*Italy also remains deeply committed to the full implementation of **international instruments on conventional weapons**, also by providing technical, material, and financial assistance to States in need, including those affected by mines, cluster munitions, and any kind of unexploded remnants of war. Our efforts also aim at improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the intervention by all the stakeholders involved in this domain. With this in mind, Italy, one of the major donors for humanitarian demining, is chairing the Mine Action Support Group for the 2016-17 period.*

Mr President,

Let me finally express again that we are ready to engage in productive work on all the CD's agenda items on the basis of the decision adopted by the CD and that we are convinced that the resumption of the works of the Conference may lead to a substantial way forward in the field of disarmament.

Also, we warmly welcome the efforts to actively involve Civil Society in the discussions of this Assembly and we attach the utmost importance to their concrete and constructive contribution to the activities of the CD.

Thank you Mr President.