



Permanent Mission of Italy  
UN - New York

**First Committee of the 74<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly  
General Debate**

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

*New York, 14 October 2019*

Mister Chair,

I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your appointment as Chair of this Committee. I am pleased to assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

Mister Chair,

In the current international scenario, it is urgent that we act with determination in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation, in order to preserve the results achieved so far and further advance relevant processes, thus working together to enhance global security.

Special efforts should be made to respond to threats to international peace and security and it is important that we look together at our common interests to address global challenges. Given the heightened tensions, we must be careful not to enter the path of a new arms race. Instead, we need a collective renewed commitment towards preserving international institutions and instruments, and guaranteeing their proper functioning.

In this regard, effective multilateralism and a rules-based international system are the only path to success. For this reason, Italy reiterates its support for the UN disarmament machinery and its three mutually reinforcing fora, which remain central and irreplaceable.

Mister Chair,

Italy reaffirms its firm commitment to disarmament and international security, in particular sharing the goal of a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. Our efforts for effective progress on nuclear disarmament are underpinned by our utmost concern for the catastrophic consequences of nuclear weapons' use.

The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), with its three mutually reinforcing pillars, remains the cornerstone of the international regime. It provides the only realistic legal framework to attain a world without nuclear weapons, in a way that promotes international stability and is based on the principle of undiminished security for all. Such a goal can be attained only through a progressive approach based on effective measures, in accordance with Article VI of the NPT, involving all relevant actors, in a perspective based on the research for consensus. The 2020 Review Conference will provide the opportunity to assess the substantial progress achieved so far in the framework of this historic Treaty, as well as to identify ways to support, uphold and preserve it in the difficult current environment. 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 State Parties to the Treaty to implement all its provisions as well as commitments agreed by subsequent Review Conferences.

Nuclear weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities in the area of arms control and nuclear disarmament. 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.

A main priority for Italy remains the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). It is a crucial component of the global architecture of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. As a staunch supporter of the Treaty, 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 test explosions and to refrain from any action which could undermine the objective and purpose of the Treaty.

The immediate commencement of negotiations within the Conference on Disarmament of a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices is also of crucial importance to achieve the goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. Pending the conclusion of such a treaty, all relevant States should abide by a moratorium on the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons.

Moreover, the CD could also be the framework for the elaboration of recommendations dealing with all aspects of Negative Security Assurances, without excluding the possibility of an internationally legally binding instrument.

Italy also 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. We support the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament and welcome the work conducted within the Group of Governmental Experts to consider the role of verification in advancing nuclear disarmament.

Finally, we would like to reiterate our support for the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction, on the basis of arrangements freely agreed among all the States of the Region.

Mister Chair,

In the context of the international efforts aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation architecture, Italy believes that the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action 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 urge Iran to return to full compliance without delay and to provide the IAEA 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 commended the high-level diplomatic efforts that last year were contributing to ease tensions in the Korean Peninsula, but we are now deeply concerned by the recent ballistic missile launches by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, in violation of multiple UN Security Council Resolutions. We urge the DPRK to take concrete steps towards a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearization, in which the IAEA needs to play a key role. We therefore call on Pyongyang to engage in credible negotiations in this respect and to give tangible proof of its asserted willingness to denuclearize by returning to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), signing and ratifying the CTBT and resuming its collaboration with the IAEA. In the meantime, the international sanctions regime needs to remain in place and be effectively implemented, sustaining the negotiating process towards this goal.

Italy remains strongly committed to supporting the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC) and the work of the OPCW. We strongly condemn any use of chemical weapons anywhere, at any time, by anyone – be it a State or a non-State actor – under any circumstances. It is imperative to identify and hold accountable the perpetrators of chemical attacks in the Syrian Arab Republic. We welcome the beginning of the work of the Investigation and Identification Team established to this end within the OPCW Secretariat, and we stand ready to support the Secretariat and to cooperate with all State Parties of the CWC in this regard.

We also attach great importance to the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BWC) and recognize the need to strengthen the international architecture dealing with biological weapons, in a context characterized by fast-paced scientific and technological developments

Italy is 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. In this respect, we strongly support full and universal implementation of UNSC Resolution 1540 and its follow on Resolutions. We reiterate our support for the universal and full implementation of all other relevant international instruments. In particular, we underline the importance of the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts on Nuclear Terrorism and of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment and we encourage all States to become Party to these Agreements and to comply fully with their provisions.

Mister Chair,

On the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the entry into force of the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention, we look forward to participating in the Oslo Review Conference, in line with our commitment for a world free of mines and actively contributing to the elaboration of a new Action Plan.

Italy is extremely concerned by the indiscriminate humanitarian and socio-economic impacts of anti-personnel landmines, cluster munitions and other explosive remnants of war, as well as improvised explosive devices, especially on civilians and in urban zones. Therefore, we believe international cooperation and victim assistance are key components of a comprehensive approach to mine action. Particularly promoting gender- and diversity-responsive assistance.

We are equally concerned by the extremely serious humanitarian impact of explosive weapons in populated areas (EWIPA). In this respect, we highly appreciated the convening by the Austrian Government of the Vienna Conference on Protecting Civilians in Urban Warfare on 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> October and we support the diplomatic process potentially leading to a political declaration aimed at strengthening the collective commitment in this issue.

Furthermore, looking at the protection of civilians and having in mind the data on armed violence, we believe in the importance of countering illicit arm transfers. For this reason, we call for the universalization of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) and for the full implementation of all its provisions in order to progress towards a more transparent and responsible framework on this important issue.

Italy also strongly and actively supports the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons (CCW) and its Annexed Protocols. We attach great importance to their universalization, to full compliance with their provisions, and to the development of any possible synergy among them.

We welcome the agreement on the eleven guiding principles as a substantive outcome of the Group of Governmental Experts Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems, and we believe it is important to further discuss this issue, bearing in mind the importance that International Humanitarian Law applies to all weapons systems and any existing or future weapon system must be subject to human control, particularly in relation to the ultimate decision to use lethal force.

Mister Chair,

Italy strongly believes that technology development and science progress are crucial for the well-being of humanity and have to be seen as an instrument to promote peace and sustainable growth. Working on disarmament and security, we have the great responsibility for assuring the proper framework to these developments, preventing any dangerous or negative use.

From this perspective, we are firmly committed to the long-term sustainability, safety and security of the space environment and we believe that a comprehensive and effective international regulatory environment should be elaborated and put in place. In this regard, we are satisfied with the adoption by the UN Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (COPUOS) of the preamble and the 21 Guidelines for the long-term sustainability of outer space activities and we are looking forward to continuing the work on long-term sustainability of outer space activities.

Italy remains fully committed to preventing an arms race in outer space and to preventing it from becoming an area of conflict as essential conditions to strengthen strategic stability. We

actively participated in the works of the Group of Governmental Experts on the Prevention of an Arms Race in Outer Space (GGE PAROS). It was unfortunate that the GGE could not reach consensus on a final report; nevertheless, it contributed to widen and deepen the debate with the aim of narrowing different positions.

We believe it is important to develop initiatives that will increase confidence and mutual trust between current and future space actors. In this regard, we would like to highlight the importance of Transparency and Confidence Building Measures that can make a contribution to the security, safety and sustainability of activities in outer space. We encourage further international cooperation to elaborate agreed principles of responsible behaviour in outer space.

On the same line, ICT and the Internet are one of the greatest human achievements of all times: they have already reshaped our lives by offering unprecedented opportunities of societal well-being, economic growth, sustainable development and prosperity that can thrive only in a global, open, free, stable and secure cyberspace. We are therefore committed to supporting the efforts of the international community towards a cyberspace based on the respect of international law and where security, rule of law, fundamental freedoms and human rights fully apply and are all intertwined.

Mister Chair,

Across all these issues, Italy believes that greater interaction with civil society – broadly encompassing academia, NGOs, and the private sector – could make a key contribution to our work.

Moreover, Italy promotes policies and approaches that enable the full empowerment of women and take into due regard the gendered impacts of armed violence and the importance of including women in disarmament negotiations and peacebuilding programs. Italy has so far adopted three National Action Plans to implement UNSC Resolution 1325 that, for the first time, addressed not only the disproportionate impact of war on women, but also their pivotal role in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in the achievement of sustainable peace.

Thank you, Mister Chair.