



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)

Main Committee I statement

**10th Review Conference of the Parties
New York, 1-26 August 2022**

**Delivered by
H.E. Mr. Leonardo Bencini,
Ambassador, Permanent Representative
to the Conference on Disarmament**

Mr. Chair,

Let me first of all congratulate you on your election as Chair of Main Committee I. I would also like to assure you of my Delegation's full support and cooperation.

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

Mr. Chair,

Italy would once again like to reaffirm its strong and unwavering belief in the Treaty as the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime, as the essential component of nuclear disarmament efforts and as a key component of the multilateral architecture.

We are convinced that it is necessary to support, uphold and preserve the NPT in the current difficult environment. Through its Article VI, the NPT 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.

Our utmost concern for the catastrophic consequences of the use of nuclear weapons underpins our efforts for effective progress in nuclear disarmament, towards the goal of achieving a peaceful and secure world free of nuclear weapons. A goal we firmly

believe can be achieved through a progressive approach, based on concrete measures, resulting in an effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament.

In this regard, we recall that Nuclear-weapon States bear fundamental responsibilities for the implementation of disarmament efforts in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty. While Italy welcomed the agreement between the United States and Russia to extend the New START Treaty and to establish a bilateral Security Dialogue, and P5 efforts, we continue to call upon the nuclear states with the largest arsenals to take concrete steps towards effective nuclear disarmament through further reductions.

Mr. Chair,

We cannot overlook the significant deterioration of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture that the unprovoked and unjustifiable aggression by the Russian Federation against Ukraine has entailed. Therefore, we strongly condemn the intimidating use of nuclear rhetoric by a nuclear-weapon state associated with the invasion of a non-nuclear weapon state, as well as the betrayal of the security assurances given at the time of Ukraine's accession to the NPT.

Even in the most trying time for the Treaty, we firmly believe that the solution lies not outside but within the Treaty, in the full implementation of its provisions and the commitments taken during previous Review Conferences.

In our view, most of the practical and effective measures needed to implement disarmament efforts are already embodied in the relevant actions of the 2010 Action Plan, whose full implementation we continue to strongly support.

Among these, the prompt entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty remains one of our key priorities. The CTBT is a cornerstone of the disarmament and non-proliferation agenda, as well as of the wider multilateral architecture. As a staunch supporter of the CTBT and in its current capacity of Co-Coordinator of the Article XIV Conference, Italy strongly supports its universalisation and calls upon States that have not yet done so – in particular the remaining eight annex II States – to sign and ratify the Treaty without any further delay. In the meantime, we call upon all States to respect the moratorium on nuclear test explosions and to refrain from any action that could undermine the objectives and purpose of the Treaty.

Another key priority for Italy remains 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.

We also support the resumption of substantive discussions on Negative Security Assurances, within the context of a comprehensive and balanced program of work,

with a view to elaborating recommendations dealing with all their aspects, not excluding 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. In this regard, we support the International Partnership for Nuclear Disarmament Verification.

Mr. Chair,

Sustained efforts are necessary in order to achieve the NPT shared common objectives and its full and balanced implementation. The work ahead of us provides a unique opportunity to maintain an open and transparent dialogue and to identify areas of convergence on which progress is possible.

In this regard, Italy would like to express its strong support to risk reduction initiatives. While not a substitute for disarmament, risk reductions measures – such as negative security assurances, transparency, awareness raising and dialogue – have a concrete potential to increase security and prepare the ground for concrete progress towards Article VI implementation.

Thank you.