



Ministry of Foreign Affairs  
and International Cooperation

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

### **Main Committee III statement**

**10<sup>th</sup> 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**

Madam Chair,

At the outset, please allow me to congratulate you on your election as Chair of Main Committee III. 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.

Madam Chair,

Italy supports the inalienable right of all States Parties to the NPT to develop research, production and use of nuclear resources for peaceful purposes in conformity with the Treaty, and strongly sustains the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) efforts in this field.

The right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, science and technology should be exercised according to the highest standards of safeguards, safety and security, to which Italy attaches the utmost importance, as systematically recalled in its capacity as member of the IAEA Board of Governors from 2018 to 2020.

Italy highly values the technical assistance and cooperation programs implemented by the IAEA in order to increase the capacities of States Parties wishing to develop peaceful nuclear technologies. Italy has provided its full contribution to the Technical Cooperation Program in 2021 and also for the current year, with a yearly share of almost 3 million Euros. Under this program, Italy has hosted every year several foreign researchers in its laboratories, universities and medical centres in the framework of fellowships and scientific visits.

In this respect, I would like to recall, in particular, that Italy hosts the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP) in Trieste, which has been a driving force behind global efforts to advance scientific expertise in the developing world since its foundation in 1964. For more than 50 years, the Centre has accomplished its mandate by providing scientists from developing countries with the continuing education and skills that they need in order to serve in their home countries in a number of sectors, notably those related to nuclear science and technology.

Italy recognises the role of nuclear science and technology in fields such as agriculture and food security, disease prevention, countering and preventing disruptions caused by climate change. Italy has therefore been working to develop peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear technologies and applications in several fields, relying on three IAEA Collaborating Centers, notably: i) the Agriculture Environment Centre “Giorgio Nicoli” in Bologna; ii) the Elettra-Sincrotrone research Centre in Trieste; and iii) the State-owned company responsible for decommissioning (SOGIN).

Italy has also been promoting the sustainable production of radioisotopes in the field of nuclear medicine and is actively working to advance research on fusion and innovative nuclear fission systems, both through various initiatives and projects carried out by the Italian National Agency for New Technologies, Energy and Sustainable Economic Development (ENEA).

This year, our National Authority for Nuclear Safety launched the STRIMS integrated database that tracks all radioactive substances on Italian territory. STRIMS, which tracks transfers of all nuclear materials, is a valuable tool for the application of national and international safeguards measures and thus contributes to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Italy firmly believes that any project involving nuclear energy, as well as any technology or application that makes use of radioactive materials, must include and integrate elements of safeguards, safety, security, emergency preparedness and response. Only these synergies can guarantee a long-term sustainable approach, and the effective welfare and protection of the population and the environment.

Madam Chair,

Ensuring the highest levels of nuclear safety and security is a shared interest of the international community to be pursued both by each State at national level and through international cooperation.

We cannot but reiterate our grave concern over the threats to nuclear safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear infrastructures posed by the Russian Federation's unprovoked and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine. Far from ceasing its gross violations of fundamental international norms and principles caused by its act of aggression, the Russian Federation has not only ignored the IAEA's appeal, but has also substantially undermined the seven pillars highlighted from the outset by Director General Grossi as the foundations for maintaining the basic, indispensable framework for safety, security and prevention of accidents and incidents with potentially devastating consequences.

Russia's five-week military occupation of the Chernobyl site has caused considerable damage and posed unnecessary risks to the facility and the material there located, with potentially serious consequences for human health and the environment. We are even more concerned about the severe and challenging conditions for the staff at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear power Plant and the impact of these conditions on the safety and security of the plant.

In such a dire situation, we would once again like to commend the IAEA and its Director General for dealing with this emergency in the most proactive, professional and effective way and express our full solidarity to the nuclear operator and regulatory authority of Ukraine, as well as to the management and staff working under exceptionally critical conditions to keep installations under their responsibility functioning in a safe and secure manner.

Madam Chair,

Following two referenda, Italy decided to abandon its nuclear energy program and is consequently engaged in the decommissioning of its nuclear facilities in compliance with the highest international safety and security standards.

Let me therefore recall that Italy is a party to the main international conventions in the field of nuclear safety and security. We would then like to take this opportunity to call on all countries that have not yet done so to adhere to the relevant international nuclear safety and security conventions.

Mradam Chair, I thank you for your attention.