



Ministry of Foreign Affairs
and International Cooperation

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

**First Preparatory Committee for the 11th Review Conference of the Parties
Vienna, 31 July – 11 August 2023**

Cluster III

**Statement delivered by
Ambassador Leonardo Bencini
Head of the Delegation of Italy
8 August 2023**

Mr. Chair,

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 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.

Italy has provided its full contribution to the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme in 2022 and also for the current year, with a yearly share of almost 3 million Euros. Under this programme, Italy has hosted every year several foreign researchers in its laboratories, universities and medical centres in the framework of fellowships and scientific visits. A Master of Advanced Studies in Medical Physics jointly run by the Abdus Salam International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), that Italy hosts in Trieste, and the University of Trieste enables young graduates to become clinical medical physicists in their home Countries.

The ICTP has been a driving force behind global efforts to advance scientific expertise in the developing world since its foundation in 1964. The Centre has accomplished its mandate by providing scientists from developing countries with the continuing education and skills they need to serve in their home countries in the sectors 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 been providing relevant inputs in the field of environmental, agricultural and animal-health nuclear applications, in particular thanks to the cooperation between the “G. Nicoli” in Bologna and the IAEA.

Italy is actively conducting research, also in cooperation with the IAEA, to develop techniques that can be used to improve verification activities for nuclear safeguards.

We are also engaged in advancing research on fusion and innovative fission systems, with several leading Italian institutions and companies at the forefront in this endeavor. The Divertor Tokamak Test facility (DTT), currently under construction at ENEA’s research center in Frascati (Rome), represents one of the main projects in the Controlled Thermonuclear Fusion Activity of this decade. Moreover, Italy is involved in several international research projects related to small modular reactors, for which our industry is ready to supply components.

Our national regulatory Authority (ISIN) has developed and is operating an integrated system (STRIMS) for tracing all the nuclear and radioactive materials used, stored or transferred in Italy. The platform represents a useful tool allowing for a more effective national inventory of the radioactive sources and waste, as well as of the nuclear material subject to the safeguards regime.

In the field of the emergency preparedness and response, Italy has a new National Plan for the management of nuclear and radiological emergencies initiated by nuclear accidents outside national borders, considering a large spectrum of reference accident scenarios. The Plan received a good performance during the Joint 8th and 9th CNS Review Meeting. ISIN is also engaged in the upgrading of the National Early-Warning Networks by replacing the existing instrumentation with a new monitoring system with also a detection capabilities similar to the CTBTO radiological monitoring network.

Italy firmly believes that any project involving nuclear energy, as well as any technology or application that makes use of radioactive materials, must include elements of safeguards, safety, security, emergency preparedness and response.

We highly appreciate the contribution made by multilateral export control regimes to the goal of preventing proliferation. Italy is an active member in all export control regimes in order to help ensure that nuclear-related exports do not lead to proliferation.

Mr. Chair,

We 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. We express our gravest concern over the serious threat posed by Russia's continued control over Ukraine's Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). We fully support the IAEA's efforts to ensure the safety and security of all Ukrainian nuclear sites, as well as DG Grossi's efforts for a solution that ensures the safety and security of the ZNPP, while fully respecting Ukrainian sovereignty over the plant and the region.

Mr. Chair,

Italy is engaged in the ongoing decommissioning of its past nuclear facilities in compliance with the highest international safety and security standards.

Italy welcomes the IAEA's comprehensive report of 4 July 2023 and its ongoing monitoring of Japan's plan to discharge Advanced Liquid Processing System (ALPS) treated water from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant into the ocean in order to ensure that the procedure is in line with international safety standards. In this respect, we also welcome Japan's transparent efforts with the IAEA, based on scientific evidence.

Let me finally 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.

I thank you for your attention.