



Permanent Mission of Italy to the  
Conference on Disarmament

## **UNIDIR Conference on AI, Security and Ethics (#AISE25)**

### **Statement by Ambassador Leonardo Bencini Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament**

*Geneva, 28 March 2025*

Since I am a disarmament diplomat, I would like to reply to the issue of trust building between States.

Trust is key in the work that we carry out and it is not by chance that we are underperforming now, as there is clearly a lack of trust. I would say there is even mistrust among relevant actors. So how do we build trust or rather *re-build* trust? For us the answer is quite simple: it is through the multilateral system. As a middle-sized country anchored in Europe and in NATO, but also as one of the seven major democracies in the world and member of the G7, Italy can only thrive in a rules-based international order built around effective multilateralism.

We have to strengthen the institutional framework internationally to build trust. Let me give you a concrete example: AI debate is so pervasive now, yet disarmament fora are one step behind. Diplomacy is too slow to keep up the pace of technology. We do have the GGE on LAWS and that's good, but that covers only a fraction of all possible military applications of AI. We have new processes, such as ReAim or the Declaration on responsible military use of AI, but these are still too fragmented and do not have a clear institutional framework.

We appreciate Pakistan's attempt to bring AI within the CD. That would be a start. There is no consensus on that yet but we think it could be a possible way forward. Other than that, we could establish an open-ended process, for instance through a UN resolution, with a clear focus on disarmament but not just conventional disarmament, that is covered by the GGE LAWS. I think we have to bring all the different strands

together. We must create a coherent framework and that in itself will introduce an element of predictability and transparency in the debate and will therefore enhance trust.

I would like to say that, in the international context, Italy promotes in every relevant multilateral forum its vision of a safe, secure, protected and trustworthy AI.

We do this within the EU, where we have contributed to the negotiations that have led to the AI Act, the first set of international legally binding norms on AI. This is a concrete example of the EU's and its Member States capacity to govern these processes and set the examples – set the bar high- for the rest of the international community.

Secondly, we engage within the United Nations and other regional organizations such as the Council of Europe, the OECD, UNESCO. Within the UN, we have worked with other partners to adopt the Global Digital Compact that points the way for the global governance of AI based on science, political dialogue and – most crucially – an acceleration of the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. One of the key priorities for us is overcoming the digital divide between developed and developing countries. AI is part of this whole process and this process must be inclusive, so every country must be involved but also international organizations, civil society, academia, the private sector.

Finally, we have promoted AI governance as a top priority of Italy's presidency of the G7 in 2024. We viewed our presidency as an opportunity to reaffirm the rules-based international order rooted in a set of shared values and principles, that of course must also apply to AI. So AI was not only on the agenda of the G7 leaders but it featured in almost all of the ministerial meetings that we organized, on account of its cross-cutting nature.

Among the results of Italy's G7 Presidency, we would like to mention the reports on the impact of AI on small and medium sized companies, the guidelines for the public sector; a mapping of the different approaches to digital identity and finally the creation of a monitoring mechanism for the Hiroshima process. And in conclusion let me add a few words about that:

We wish to recall two major achievements under the two previous G7 Presidencies. Under the Japanese G7 Presidency, the Hiroshima AI Process (HAIP) Code of Conduct was adopted to promote safe, secure, and trustworthy AI development. Emphasizing transparency and accountability, the Code set voluntary guidelines for companies to align with responsible AI practices across the G7. Building on this, the Italian G7 Presidency launched the Monitoring Framework for the HAIP Code of Conduct creating a concrete tool to track how companies implement the Code. To enhance visibility and public recognition, Italy also introduced the HAIP Logo, designed to signal a company's adherence to the Code's principles. The logo serves both as a mark

of transparency and as a visible link between the Japanese and Italian Presidencies, reinforcing continuity in G7 efforts to promote responsible AI. The monitoring Framework is published on the OECD.AI website.

The HAIP has been a major achievement in the G7's efforts to promote responsible AI governance. Italy is committed to embedding HAIP principles into AI innovation programs – particularly for SMEs – as well as to expand HAIP engagement beyond the G7 – cooperating with emerging economies – so that we may build a shared AI ecosystem where responsible development drives both economic growth and societal trust.

Let me just mention one of points of the Hiroshima Process Code of Conduct that is particularly relevant for our work in disarmament and arms control, and it is not the only one. Organization should take appropriate measures throughout the development of advanced AI systems, including prior to and throughout their deployment and placement on the market. To identify, evaluate and mitigate risks across the entire AI lifecycle. This explicitly concerns chemical, biological and nuclear risks, such as the way AI systems can lower barriers to entry for weapons development and use.