



Permanent Mission of Italy to
the Conference on Disarmament
Geneva

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

11th Review Conference of the Parties

New York, 27 April – 22 May 2026

**Statement in the General Debate delivered by
H.E. Ambassador Leonardo Bencini**

28 April 2026

Mr President,

Congratulations on assuming your duties as President of the Review Conference.

Italy aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. I will add the following remarks in my national capacity.

Nearly four years have passed since the last Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the international security environment has further deteriorated. This has placed additional strain on the rules-based international order and further weakened the multilateral disarmament architecture. The risk of a new arms race, including a nuclear arms race, is now higher than at any point in recent decades. Yet it is precisely in moments such as these that dialogue must not only be preserved but strengthened. We must make every effort to restore mutual trust to the greatest extent possible.

Italy is a staunch supporter of the multilateral system: there is no alternative to it, as there is no alternative to the NPT. Over its fifty-five years of existence, the Treaty has played an essential role as an irreplaceable pillar of the international security architecture. We should not underestimate the success of the Treaty in curbing

nuclear proliferation, enabling a significant reduction in nuclear weapons stockpiles from Cold War highs and facilitating access to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology.

We now have four weeks to reach the consensual outcome that has eluded us in the sessions of the Preparatory Committee. While developments outside this hall inevitably influence our work, what we do here matters. We must focus on what unites all States Parties to the NPT. At a minimum, we should reaffirm, in the clearest possible terms, our shared and steadfast commitment to the Treaty and to its core goals and principles. In Italy's view, this also includes commitments undertaken at previous Review Conferences, including the 2010 Action Plan.

Italy fully supports the principle, reaffirmed just over four years ago by the five Nuclear-Weapon States, that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought. This must serve as the foundation for all further discussions. The logical corollary of this principle is the pursuit of a world entirely free of nuclear weapons and the threat of nuclear annihilation. General and complete nuclear disarmament, in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty, must remain our overarching objective, a goal to be achieved through a progressive, realistic, pragmatic, and responsible approach, based on concrete measures and an effective, verifiable, and irreversible process. In this regard, transparency and strategic risk reduction measures are essential. Such measures can help pave the way for disarmament and should be pursued in parallel, each reinforcing the other.

Italy maintains that, for as long as nuclear weapons exist, they should only serve defensive purposes: to deter aggression and prevent war and coercion. For this reason, we strongly reject and condemn any form of aggressive nuclear rhetoric.

Mr President,

While advancing the full implementation of the NPT, we reiterate our support for the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, which remains one of our highest priorities. We call on all States, that have not yet done so, especially the remaining Annex 2 states, to sign and ratify the Treaty without further delay. In the meantime, it is vital to uphold the moratorium on nuclear test explosions. Another key priority for Italy is the long-overdue commencement of negotiations, within the Conference on Disarmament, on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty.

Italy highly commends the pivotal role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in preventing proliferation, safeguarding global security and promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, together with the Additional Protocol, represent the current verification standard, and their universalization should be pursued without delay.

Italy also firmly supports multilateral export control regimes as valuable tools to strengthen the international non-proliferation architecture and to facilitate the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials, and scientific and technological information for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Thank you, Mr President.