



Permanent Mission of Italy to
the United Nations - New York

**First Committee of the 81st UN General Assembly
Cluster II – Other weapons of mass destruction**

**Statement by Counsellor Eugenio Poti
Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
in Geneva
Monday, 18th October 2026**

Chair,

Italy fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union.
I will make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

The rapid development of emerging technologies, and artificial intelligence in particular, is profoundly transforming the landscape of weapons of mass destruction. While offering enormous opportunities for peaceful development, these technologies can also lower barriers to sensitive knowledge and materials and create new pathways for the development, proliferation and potential use of weapons of mass destruction, including by non-State actors and terrorist networks.

Against this evolving background, the Biological Weapons Convention and the Chemical Weapons Convention remain indispensable pillars of the international disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Their

universalization and full and effective implementation are more important than ever.

Chair,

Unlike the CWC, the BWC is not supported by a fully-fledged international organization. This makes the process launched by the Ninth Review Conference in 2022 to strengthen the Convention particularly important.

After four years of substantive discussions, we now have a real opportunity to translate this work into concrete results, including through the establishment of an International Cooperation and Assistance Mechanism and a Science and Technology Review Mechanism. These would strengthen the Convention's institutional framework and its capacity to respond to a rapidly changing scientific and technological environment.

Italy will continue to fully support the Chair and all States Parties in the final phase of this process. We hope that, when the Working Group meets again in December, political will and flexibility will allow us to reach consensus and deliver tangible results.

Italy remains equally committed to the Chemical Weapons Convention and the OPCW. We condemn any use of chemical weapons, anywhere, at any time, by anyone and under any circumstances.

Italy welcomes the constructive cooperation between the OPCW Technical Secretariat and the new Syrian authorities in addressing the chemical weapons dossier inherited from the Assad regime. The consensus decision by the OPCW Executive Council last July to reinstate Syria's rights and privileges reflects the progress achieved through this renewed cooperation.

At the same time, we remain deeply concerned about violations of the Chemical Weapons Convention in connection with Russia's war of aggression

against Ukraine. The OPCW Technical Secretariat has confirmed the presence of the riot control agent CS in samples collected on the battlefield in Ukraine. The use of riot control agents as a method of warfare is expressly prohibited under the Convention. We call on Russia to fully comply with its obligations and provide credible and transparent answers.

Chair,

Preventing weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery from falling into the hands of non-State actors remains a collective responsibility. Italy therefore reaffirms the central role of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and the importance of its full and effective implementation, as well as the UN Secretary-General's Mechanism (UNSGM), the only existing independent international mechanism for investigating allegations of biological weapons use.

We also reiterate our support for the Hague Code of Conduct against Ballistic Missile Proliferation as an important instrument of transparency, confidence-building and restraint, and encourage all States that have not yet subscribed to do so.

As technology evolves, our instruments and institutions must evolve with it. Strengthening the norms against chemical and biological weapons is not only about protecting past achievements. It is an investment in our collective security against the threats of the future.

I thank you, Chair.