

I T A L Y

Statement
by
the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs
of Italy
H.E. Giuseppe Drago
to
the 2005 Review Conference of the Parties to the
Treaty on the Non-Proliferation
of Nuclear Weapons

Mr. President,

I wish first of all to express my congratulations for your appointment as President of this Conference and assure you that you will receive full cooperation and support from the Italian Delegation.

Let me also add that Italy fully identifies its position with the statement made by the delegation of Luxembourg on behalf of the EU and supports the EU Common Position, recently adopted by the European Foreign Ministers. We believe that the Common Position could be a useful term of reference for the final documents of this Conference.

Since Italy's position is reflected in the EU statement, I shall limit my remarks to the main objectives to be pursued by this Conference which - as we all agree - should review the operation of the NPT with a view to assuring that the purposes of the Preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being realized. The review should focus mainly on implementation during the period from the year 2000 to 2005 and on previous events which have an impact on that period. In addition to the Treaty itself, our main references should be the decisions and resolution adopted by the Review and Extension Conference of 1995 and the final document of 2000.

Mr. President,

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is the "core business" and one of the pillars of the NPT. The carrying out of major clandestine programmes and networks represents an unprecedented challenge to the Treaty's operation.

The most alarming is the case of clandestine nuclear activities coupled with withdrawal from the Treaty and the announcement of the actual possession of nuclear weapons.

The development of nuclear military activities by the countries which still have not joined the NPT is a risk which continues to weaken the Treaty. The possible use of nuclear weapons or materials by the terrorist groups is a grave additional threat.

Mr. President,

Nuclear disarmament is another pillar of the non-proliferation equation and further progress in this field would be beneficial to non-proliferation. Vice versa, an aggravated proliferation situation is detrimental to nuclear disarmament. We deeply regret that negotiations on an FMCT

have not started yet and that the CTBT treaty has not entered into force almost ten years after its conclusion. More could have been done.

We should, however, not dismiss the important reductions of nuclear weapons which have taken place since the end of the cold war: their overall number was reduced by half; some categories of weapons have totally disappeared and some are being maintained in symbolic quantities. The entry into force of the Treaty of Moscow and the enhancement of the international co-operation to reduce nuclear weapons, fissile materials and their delivery means under the so called CTR programs, are positive developments. Italy will further elaborate this concept in Main Committee one.

Nuclear proliferation is not only an impediment to nuclear disarmament but is also an obstacle to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, another pillar of the non-proliferation regime. The challenges to the non-proliferation regime and the increasing use of nuclear energy, have brought to the international attention the need for possible new regulations on the nuclear fuel cycle.

The withdrawal of the country from the Treaty and the inconclusive results of the past preparatory process have shown the existence of an institutional deficit which could weaken the Treaty.

Mr. President,

positive accomplishments have taken place during the period under review. Two more countries have joined the NPT. One country, although acknowledging having pursued clandestine nuclear activities, has dismantled its equipment. There is a growing consciousness that safeguards agreements and the Additional Protocol are an indispensable component of the non proliferation regime. The concept of nuclear weapons free zones is gaining wider implementation.

Mr. President,

we believe that a consensual analysis of the operation of the Treaty during the past five years would be an encouraging result for this Conference. But we should dare to be more ambitious and try to outline consensual guidelines for the period to come with the aim of strengthening the Treaty. Italy would give the priority to the following objectives:

- promoting the universalisation of the NPT and the universal adoption of the Additional Protocols.
- Strengthening nuclear non-proliferation through negotiated solutions to all the specific nuclear proliferation problems that have emerged or

persisted in particular in East Asia, Middle East, South Asia. We are ready to support those negotiations on a national basis.

- Preventing terrorist groups from obtaining access to nuclear weapons or materials.
 - Enhancing nuclear disarmament by initiating at the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, a negotiation on a Treaty banning the productions of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices. Verification of compliance with the provisions of this Treaty should be an integral part of the negotiation. Non nuclear weapon States should take the lead in promoting this initiative.
 - Strengthening the peaceful uses of nuclear energy by reaffirming the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination; this can only take place in: conformity with articles 1 and 2 of the Treaty. Respect of Art. III is also indispensable.
- Recognising the importance, from the point of view of nuclear disarmament, of the programs for the destruction and elimination of nuclear weapons and the elimination of fissile material, under the Co-operative Threat Reduction process.
- Considering possible procedural improvements which would enhance the treaty and address the problem of the institutional deficit in the NPT.

I thank you Mr. President