



ITALY

**Statement by Ms. Palma D'Ambrosio
Deputy Permanent Representative of Italy
to the Conference on Disarmament
to the First Committee of the 71st UN General Assembly
18th Meeting - Other Disarmament Measures
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Mr. Chair,

In order to be effective and sustainable, our efforts towards peace and security must take gender perspectives into account. In this regard, Italy has been at the forefront of related international efforts, particularly in conflict prevention and post-conflict recovery.

Mr. Chair,

Italy has supported Resolution 1325 from its very beginning. With this historic document, the Security Council, for the first time, addressed not only the disproportionate impact of war on women, but also their pivotal role in conflict prevention and resolution, as well as in the achievement of sustainable peace.

Two aims underpin our current National Action Plan for the implementation of Resolution 1325: reducing the negative impact of conflict and post-conflict situations on women and children, and promoting the participation of women as "agents of change" in the prevention and resolution of conflicts. Women are affected by armed violence in different ways than men. Their active role in conflict prevention, reconciliation, and reconstruction, however, is crucial, and must be acknowledged.

More specific objectives of Italy's Action Plan include encouraging women's presence in National Armed Forces and State Police, as well as in peace-support operations in conflict areas; protecting the rights of women, children, and the most vulnerable groups fleeing from conflict or living in post-conflict zones; and strengthening the role of women in decision-making and peace processes.

Mr. Chair,

As recognized by UN General Assembly Resolution 65/69, gender approaches are also critical in disarmament and arms control.

The relationship between gender and disarmament is complex. On the one hand, conflicts have different impacts on different segments of the population. Men typically constitute the primary victims of direct armed violence, whereas women and children usually make up the majority of the so-called "collateral damage", of refugees and internally-displaced people.

In addition, together with children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, women suffer more greatly from the indirect impacts of conflict, for instance, in terms of denied access to key infrastructures and services.

Adding a gender dimension to the disarmament debate means identifying these different categories' needs and formulate adequate responses to them. For Italy, such an inclusion is key in mine action assistance programmes, in order to ensure that support takes fully into account the specific needs of women, girls, boys, and men, and contributes to the long-term stability of mine-affected communities.

Mr. Chair,

The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), as a result of comprehensive and inclusive negotiations, has the potential to significantly contribute to international peace and security. It makes the international trade in conventional arms more responsible and transparent, and contributes to eradicating illicit trafficking in Small Arms and Light Weapons.

To this end, Italy spared no efforts in facilitating the inclusion of the prevention of gender-based violence in the Treaty. A specific reference to gender-based violence as a violation of international humanitarian law can make a dramatic difference for all vulnerable groups that are victims of armed violence.

Mr. Chair,

In Italy's view, equal access and full participation of women in decision-making processes and in efforts aimed at conflict prevention and resolution are essential not only to promote peace and security, but also to ensure sustainable development. In this sense, the economic empowerment of women is both a goal in itself, and a tool towards long-term stability and security, as set out in the 2030 Sustainable Development Goals.

In line with this perspective, Italy's contribution to capacity-building and economic development have always followed a two-track approach that includes parallel actions concerning gender-based violence, access to justice and economic empowerment.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.