Statement by H.E. Amb. Vinicio Mati
Permanent Representative of Italy to the Conference on Disarmament
First Committee of the 72nd UN General Assembly
Thematic Discussion - Disarmament Machinery

New York, 25 October 2017

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Mr. Chair,

Italy aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to add some remarks in my national capacity.

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Mr. Chair,

We firmly believe that multilateralism and international cooperation are crucial to effective and long-term results in the fields of disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation.

The current security situation adds a new sense of urgency to our efforts to take forward our joint disarmament goals.

In particular, we are aware that we should act to protect and strengthen the UN Disarmament Machinery and its three mutually reinforcing fora – the UN
General Assembly First Committee, the Conference on Disarmament and the UN Disarmament Commission.

We are deeply satisfied with the adoption of recommendations on “Practical confidence-building measures in the field of conventional disarmament” by the UN Disarmament Commission, earlier this year. With this substantive outcome, the UNDC was able to overcome its long-standing stalemate.

We hope that this positive result can serve as a source of inspiration for our efforts, aimed at relaunching the crucial role of the Conference on Disarmament, as the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. My Country is strongly committed to the goal of allowing the CD to resume its substantive work, after a deadlock of more than two decades, which we consider unacceptable. We call on all the members of the Conference to redouble their efforts to this aim.

The immediate commencement of negotiations within the CD on a Treaty dealing with fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices remains our key priority.

We also support further efforts by the Conference on Negative Security Assurances, with a view to elaborating recommendations dealing with all their aspects, not excluding an internationally legally binding instrument.

Both these initiatives would represent concrete steps towards the attainment of our shared goal of a nuclear weapon-free world, in accordance with art. VI of the NPT. Therefore, they stand high in our agenda

However, Mr. Chair, Italy has always supported any constructive proposal aiming at putting the CD back on track. Throughout the years we have consistently expressed our willingness to join consensus – or not to stand in the way of an emerging consensus - on any concrete and realistic attempt to find a way forward for the Conference.

During the 2017 session, we greatly appreciated the rich and productive discussions which we had in the framework of the “Way Ahead Working Group” and we were ready to support the recommendations elaborated by the Chair. We are disappointed by the fact that these recommendations were not adopted, and we hope that they will represent a good basis for future deliberations during the next CD session.
Mr. Chair,

Before concluding let me mention the current difficult situation of several Geneva-based disarmament Conventions, due to the fact that a number of States parties have not met their financial obligations. This situation is negatively affecting their proper functioning. In this regard, we remain constructively engaged in the ongoing discussions on ways to ensure the financial sustainability of all these Conventions.

Thank you.