ITALY

2010 REVIEW CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON
THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Main Committee I

May 7, 2010

Statement by Ambassador Giovanni Manfredi

Permanent Representative of Italy to the

Conference on Disarmament
• Allow me to congratulate you, Mr. President, for your election to the Chair of this Committee, charged with the discussion of the topic of disarmament, one of the essential questions before us in this Review Conference.
• The Italian Delegation will extend to you all possible assistance to ensure success to you in your difficult assignment.
• Italy aligns itself with the statement by the distinguished delegate of Spain, in his capacity as term President of the EU Council. However, I would like to add a few remarks from Italy’s national perspective.
• In general, we believe that the task before this Main Committee is two-fold: one part looking back and another to the future. The first part is to assess progress achieved so far in nuclear disarmament; the second to agree on an action plan to carry this forward, with the ultimate goal of a world free of nuclear weapons. A goal no one disputes and is in the interest of the well-being and security of our populations.
• The assessment of progress achieved should be done in an as impartial and as uncontroversial manner possible. We should avoid all value judgements and political posturing. Instead we must concentrate on actual goals met: facts and figures.
• In these last days, two of our members, the Russian Federation and the United States, have hosted events doing just that. So, I don’t believe the task is beyond us.
• The second part of our task is to draft of plan of action for the future. It should be based on the 13 points adopted in the 2000 RevCon, that unfortunately have so far seen no follow-up. The plan of action should be ambitious, but not to the point of being unachievable, to avoid repeating the failure to bring to real fruition the 13 points of the year 2000.
• The irreversible nature of nuclear disarmament and its verifiability must be further confirmed and enshrined in the action plan as the fundamental constants of all our efforts as NPT signatories.
• In general, Mr. President, nuclear disarmament is a complicated business. It is not something that can be obtained by waving a magic wand. We must build it piece by piece.
• Therefore, we need the formal entry into force of the CTBT to have nuclear weapons testing legally stopped, a verifiable FMCT to remove the source of the prime raw material from which atomic warheads are manufactured, NSAs and nuclear weapon-free zones to gradually shrink to the point of
non-existence the number of potential targets of nuclear weapons, a PAROS understanding to prevent their stationing in outer space.

- The statement by the EU presidency is much more explicit in this respect, as is the EU Council Decision of last March that I need not go into further detail.
- WP 5, submitted by Japan, and WP 9, submitted by Australia and Japan, also contain a number of excellent points in this respect, and Italy is, therefore, very happy to co-sponsor them.
- The drafting of the action plan ought to take place – all of us have agreed – within Subsidiary Body I. And I take this opportunity to warmly congratulate Ambassador Marschik on his appointment to chair this Body. We will support his efforts fully and wish him every success.
- Our task is facilitated by the remarkable success of Russia and the US, that between them hold more than 90% of the world’s nuclear arsenals. With the new START agreement signed last month in the next seven years more than 80% of their warheads, from the cold war levels, will have been discarded.
- We should not minimize this achievement, but rather build on it for further multilateral progress.
- One final remark, Mr. Chairman. We find ourselves today in a critical juncture of time when the 5 major nuclear weapons states are arriving at the conclusion that the atomic deterrent is progressively becoming irrelevant to national defense. Their nuclear doctrines, as recently made public, are unequivocal in this respect. Hence their commitment to the NPT and to the success of this RevCon.
- But there are also countries that are still convinced of the indispensable nature of atomic weapons and nuclear deterrence. They are spending enormous sums, perhaps better used in other more peaceful purposes, to further expand their already ample arsenals on the illusion that otherwise their national existence is threatened or their voice not adequately heard in the international arena.
- Our ultimate task is to ensure that, instead, our view will prevail. Upstairs in this ugly new and hopefully temporary building there is the statue of a dodo bird. Nuclear arsenals and deterrence are just that.