

Speaking points for Italy's intervention at the Observers Special Session
Arctic Council SAO Plenary Meeting (Oulu, 26 October 2017)

- First of all, let me express my pleasure to be here for the first time as Italian Coordinator for Arctic Affairs and reiterate Italy's compromise to continue and strengthen its contribution to the works of Arctic Council Committees and expert groups.
- Italy is a minor contributor to Arctic pollution, as a consequence not only of its geographical location, but also of emissions level. Therefore, Italian activities of most Arctic relevance are connected to monitoring and investigating processes, contributing to determine distribution and concentration of pollutants, and their impact on Arctic environment and ecosystem. Our research activities have as main point of reference the Observing Platforms at the Italian station "Dirigibile Italia" in Ny Alesund.
- In this context, initiatives are aimed, inter alia, to monitor and investigate physical and chemical characterization of Arctic aerosol, identifying and quantifying natural and anthropic contribution from local sources and long-range transport, better understand Atmospheric Boundary Layer (ABL) dynamics and aerosol stratification, to improve the knowledge of Svalbard snow cover, interchanges at the air-snow interface, optical properties and impact of pollution, and record the evolution on climatic time scales of snowpack in the glacial and periglacial area, to contribute to monitor spectral UV radiation and investigate effects at high and middle latitudes of spring ozone depletion episodes. Some of these activities are also carried out in Greenland at Thule station. (1)
- In the next 3 years, planned activities in the research project Integrative and Comprehensive Understanding on Polar Environments, funded in the frame of the ERA-PLANET (the European Network to observing our changing planet) H2020 initiative, will contribute to largely increase our engagement (in particular on POPs and SLCFs) and also enlarge perspective up to a pan-Arctic scale. (1)
- Also Italian companies operating in Arctic are engaged in respecting environment, for instance through the "Arctic Oil Spill Response Technology Joint Industry Program" under the auspices of the International Association of Oil and Sea Producers.

- Let me now also briefly inform on a recent Italian initiative, High North '17 Campaign. It has been conducted on the Italian Navy ship "Alliance" from 9 to 29 of last July, with the participation of 25 researchers of the main Italian research bodies, who worked in 6 laboratories onboard, with the objective of investigating the marine geophysical and geological conditions in 5 points south of Spitzbergen Archipelago. They surveyed solar irradiance, water column, the sea-bottom and sub-bottom.
- The scientific results, anticipated at the end of the Campaign in a press conference in Tromsø, with the participation of the Director of the Arctic Council Secretariat, can be exposed, in details, in the relevant working groups. A presentation was recently made at the Arctic Circle Conference in Reykjavik. The important point to underline here is that we will repeat the Campaign at least for the next two years and we are ready to cooperate and share this experience.
- Finally, an initiative in the crucial sector of education. Italian Society for International Organization (SIOI) which organizes annually a Master Degree in Sustainable Development, Geopolitics of Resources and Arctic Studies, has launched this year ONE ARCTIC, the first youth simulation of Arctic Council in Italy, that took place in Rome, at the Italian Ministry for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and SIOI premises, from May 2nd to 5th. ONE ARCTIC hosted more than 200 participants from all around the world, 4 continents and 18 nations. The outcome was the adoption of the "Youth Arctic Road Map – Declaration of Rome", a document that declares young people's proposals and commitment for a well-managed Arctic marked by international cooperation. (1)

(1) Not spoken for lack of time.