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Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

AGENDA ITEMS 67, 86, 69 AND 73 *

Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament (A/4463, A/4503, A/4505, A/4509, A/C.1/L.249, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3, A/C.1/L.255, A/C.1/L.257, A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2) (continued)

Report of the Disarmament Commission (A/4463, A/4500, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.255, A/C.1/L.257, A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2) (continued)

Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/4414, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3, A/C.1/L.256, A/C.1/L.258 and Add.1-2) (continued)

Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (A/4434, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.253/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-3, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3) (continued)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS
 (continued)

1. Mr. MATSCH (Austria) paid a tribute to the Indian delegation for having once again placed the question of the suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests before the Assembly (A/4414). Although cessation of tests was not a disarmament measure in itself, it would in practice have the effect of stopping the nuclear armaments race among the three major Powers. It would help to ease international tension and promote negotiations on general and complete disarmament; furthermore, the setting up of effective control machinery for the cessation of tests would

set a valuable precedent for carrying out real disarmament. Despite the further progress achieved at the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests and the substantial concessions made on both sides, the agreement so impatiently awaited had not yet been reached. The Assembly could not remain indifferent to the outcome of the Conference and it should again appeal to the three nuclear Powers to reach agreement on the few remaining issues.

2. For those reasons, Austria, India and Sweden had submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.256), which he presented to the Committee. Its text, which did not conflict with draft resolution A/C.1/L.258 and Add.1-2, did not deal with all the aspects of the prohibition of tests. In view of the importance and urgency of the problems discussed at the Geneva Conference, a separate resolution on that subject seemed justified.

3. The Austrian delegation would also vote for draft resolution A/C.1/L.258 and Add.1-2. It intended to state its position on the other draft resolutions before the Committee at a later stage.

4. Mr. SHAHA (Nepal) explained that his delegation had joined in sponsoring draft resolution A/C.1/L.258 and Add.1-2 because it considered that a resumption of tests would be harmful to the conclusion of the agreement being negotiated at Geneva and might even prejudice the progress which had already been made. It was of the greatest urgency to stress the need for an agreement on the discontinuance of nuclear tests under appropriate international control.

5. Nepal was also a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2, a text which reflected the view of an overwhelming majority of speakers that the least the First Committee should do was to formulate broad directives acceptable to the two parties principally concerned as guiding principles for future negotiations on disarmament. The draft resolution, whose purpose was simple, represented the common denominator of the different points of view expressed. Moreover, the sponsors had made it clear that they would not press it to the vote unless it was acceptable to both sides.

6. The USSR representative, while he had stated at the 1110th meeting that the draft resolution lacked clarity and did not contain some provisions which, in his opinion, were fundamental, had nevertheless found it acceptable on the whole. The United States representative, for his part, had expressed the hope that his delegation would be able to accept the draft in an amended form. The USSR representative had said that he was prepared to consider amendments to the text provided they did not affect the substance, while the representative of the United States had declared at the same meeting that his Government was not opposed to the provisions of the draft resolution pro-

* Resumed from the 1110th meeting.

vided they left full scope for the adoption of individual measures of disarmament. He had conceded that operative paragraph 3 partially met that objective. The sponsors of the draft resolution would do everything possible to reconcile the views of the two parties and to help them reach agreement on a definitive text.

7. Mr. SOSA RODRIGUEZ (Venezuela) emphasized that draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2, of which Venezuela was a sponsor, was the result of the efforts of a group of countries possessing neither nuclear weapons nor sizable armed forces. Those countries had endeavoured to reconcile the different views on disarmament in an attempt to achieve unanimous agreement and facilitate the resumption and success of negotiations between the great Powers. Contrary to the assertion of the USSR representative, the sponsors were not composed exclusively of neutral countries: Venezuela was bound to the Western bloc by its culture, its ideology and its treaties with the United States.

8. From the outset, the sponsors had decided that they would not press their draft resolution to the vote unless it could obtain unanimous support. In particular, if the draft resolution failed to obtain the approval of the principal negotiators, it would be entirely useless. It was to be hoped, however, that before the close of the debate a formula would be found to bring about an early resumption of the negotiations which had been broken off.

9. Mr. WINIEWICZ (Poland) introduced the Polish draft resolution (A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1), which was essentially aimed at preventing a wider dissemination of nuclear weapons and rockets, by imposing a territorial limitation on the most dangerous types of weapons. The measures proposed were simple and could be implemented immediately. They were not, strictly speaking, measures of disarmament, which should be dealt with separately; their purpose was merely to halt the arms race in order to facilitate negotiations and to create conditions favourable to the conclusion of a disarmament agreement, just as military operations had to be stopped prior to the conclusion of a peace treaty.

10. The ultimate aim should of course be general and complete disarmament, for no half-measures such as the qualitative or quantitative reduction of armaments could create a lasting feeling of security or prevent war. Consequently, under effective international control, the whole military machinery of States should be dismantled and its reconstruction made impossible. That was why the Polish delegation had been gratified by the laudable efforts of the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2 to find a compromise formula setting forth directives which were to guide negotiations on the conclusion of an agreement on general and complete disarmament. In the circumstances, it was disappointing to find that the United States was preventing that draft resolution from being adopted unanimously, although the representative of the United States had found elements in it which were acceptable to his delegation.

11. Adoption of the Polish proposals would help to strengthen mutual confidence and to ease international tension. The Polish delegation had concentrated, however, only on the most pressing problems. That was why its first proposal, in sub-paragraph (a) of the

operative part of its draft resolution (A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1), concerned the cessation of nuclear tests and the conclusion of an agreement on that subject. Such an agreement would be in line with the broader aims of draft resolution A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3, which deserved unanimous support. The participants in the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests had agreed on a number of important provisions, and the area of disagreement had been substantially reduced. Nevertheless, a final agreement could not be signed until the Western Powers had decided permanently to renounce nuclear tests, as the Soviet Union had done long before. The General Assembly should not, however, confine itself to appealing to the Powers taking part in the Geneva negotiations, nor should so important a problem be postponed until the sixteenth session. The Polish delegation therefore proposed that, in the event that the agreement was not concluded by 1 April 1961, the General Assembly should consider the question at a special session. It was of course understood that the nuclear Powers should refrain from conducting tests pending the conclusion of an agreement, as provided in sub-paragraph (b) of the operative part of the draft resolution, for any resumption of tests could destroy the results achieved at Geneva and would impede the solution of the whole disarmament problem.

12. Sub-paragraphs (c) and (d) of the operative part of the Polish draft resolution were based on another set of considerations. The progress of science and technology enabled a growing number of countries to undertake the production of nuclear weapons. Moreover, the United States was planning to provide its European allies with nuclear weapons, of which the Command of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would be the custodian. In particular, the equipping of the armed forces of the Federal Republic of Germany with modern nuclear weapons might kindle a new conflict and was a direct threat to Poland. For similar reasons, the African States wanted their continent to be completely neutral. In the circumstances, the dissemination of nuclear weapons should be halted. In that connexion, the representative of Ireland, who had made efforts towards that end, had said (1096th meeting) that the nuclear Powers would not surrender their nuclear capacity under any system of security. Poland was convinced, on the contrary, that it was possible to bring about the destruction of all nuclear weapons, just as it was possible to achieve general and complete disarmament.

13. Lastly, one of the elements which most contributed to a deterioration of the international situation and increased the danger of a war by miscalculation was the existence of military bases in foreign territory. Such bases should therefore be liquidated during the first stage of general and complete disarmament, especially since they could be used without the consent of the country in which they were situated, as the United Kingdom had recently found in connexion with the decision to establish a United States base in Scotland for submarines equipped with Polaris missiles. That concern underlay the proposals embodied in sub-paragraphs (e), (f) and (g) of the operative part of the Polish draft resolution. The implementation of the Polish proposals would also make it possible to remove the African continent from the rocket and nuclear arms race, as the representative of Ghana had hoped.

14. At the twelfth session of the General Assembly Poland had also proposed the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe,^{1/} but that idea had been opposed at the following session by the Western Powers on the pretext that it was not comprehensive enough, although it was the United States representative who was now chiding the socialist countries for wanting all or nothing. It would be well to re-examine the idea of establishing nuclear-free zones which had since won the support of many representatives.

15. A number of speakers, including the representative of Iraq, had stressed that one of the main difficulties in reaching a disarmament agreement was the lack of confidence among States. But it was not by establishing control over armaments that confidence could be restored; quite the contrary. The Polish delegation was strongly in favour of control and inspection, but control and inspection of disarmament. The most effective way of creating an atmosphere favourable to disarmament negotiations would be to adopt measures which would speedily arrest the arms race. That was the purpose of the Polish draft resolution which was in conformity with the spirit of resolution 1495 (XV) of 17 October 1960 and would enable immediate steps to be taken to ensure the success of the disarmament negotiations, as the United States representative had advocated at the 1110th meeting.

16. The world should be enlightened about the terrible consequences of a nuclear war. Accordingly, his delegation intended to submit a draft resolution^{2/} proposing the establishment of a United Nations committee to prepare a report on the consequences of the use of nuclear weapons. That would not mean that new scientific research should be undertaken, but simply that the research so far conducted should be collated and summed up. The committee's report would be transmitted to the Governments of all Member States and to the organ responsible for the disarmament negotiations. The Governments would, in turn, undertake to give it wide dissemination in their own languages. The proposed committee might be composed of twelve or fifteen members broadly representative of the three main groups of countries in the United Nations. His delegation hoped that the idea would find support, because the work of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had shown how valuable a study on the consequences of a nuclear war could be.

17. Mr. ORMSBY-GORE (United Kingdom) thanked the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2 for their sincere and tireless efforts to find a compromise between the positions taken by the Eastern and the Western Powers.

18. The reservations which the United Kingdom would make with regard to that draft sprang from a single basic difficulty: the text was open to varied interpretations and the misunderstandings which were likely to result were exceedingly dangerous where the security of States was involved. His delegation's fears that the Soviet Union would imbue the words used with a meaning quite contrary to the views of many of the sponsors of the draft resolution had been confirmed when Mr. Zorin at the 1010th meeting had attempted to prove that the draft resolution was a

point-by-point endorsement of his Government's position. That was what the Soviet Union had done in a memorandum^{3/} circulated to the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) on the eve of its fifteenth session at Geneva. A section of that document, in which it was proposed that a study should be carried out within the framework of ECE of the economic aspects of disarmament, began with the words "Given the United Nations approval in principle of the Soviet Union proposal for general and complete disarmament . . .", whereas no delegation—except, it seemed, the Soviet Union and its allies—had thought it was voting for such an interpretation of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV), which dealt as much with "the declaration of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland of 17 September 1959" and with "the other proposals or suggestions made" as with "the declaration of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics of 18 September 1959".

19. And now the USSR representative claimed that operative paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2 referred exclusively to the three points mentioned by him in his statement at the 1090th meeting, which had no connexion whatever with the reduction of armaments and armed forces. Whereas the Western Powers considered that negotiations and execution should go hand in hand, the Soviet Union believed that no step should be taken until agreement had been reached on the last detail of the programme, and that was how it interpreted that draft resolution. It was clear from the statements made by a number of delegations, including several sponsors of the draft resolution, that they did not agree with such a restrictive interpretation of operative paragraph 3. The Indian representative had said at the 1110th meeting that the measures referred to in that paragraph would include any agreement on balanced reduction; in addition, the President of Yugoslavia, Marshal Tito, had said (868th plenary meeting) that, among the measures he would be prepared to accept "as part of the process leading to general and complete disarmament", was the transfer of fissionable materials for peaceful uses. The members of the Committee were all aware of the scornful reception accorded by the USSR representative to proposals in precisely the same sense made by the United States.

20. Moreover, Mr. Zorin interpreted draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2 as giving approval to the changes which the Soviet Union had proposed in the organs of the United Nations. But surely the changes the sponsors had had in mind were solely those that would occur in a disarmed world, which was quite a different thing.

21. Such examples could be multiplied. The sponsors of the draft resolution would undoubtedly be as disappointed as the United Kingdom delegation was at the USSR representative's attempt to exploit for his own ends their sincere effort to find a compromise.

22. There was still a clear difference between the ideas of the Western and the communist delegations on how the process of disarmament could best be started. In his opinion, the easiest things should come

^{1/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Session, Plenary Meetings, 697th meeting, para. 136.

^{2/} Subsequently circulated as document A/C.1/L.260/Rev.1.

^{3/} Document E/ECE/385, dated 4 April 1960, entitled "Memorandum by the Government of the Soviet Union on measures for the further development of the economy of all European States and the strengthening of co-operation between European countries and other countries of the world".

first, even before the conclusion of a general treaty. That, incidentally, had been the opinion expressed by the chairman of the Polish delegation in the General Assembly (874th plenary meeting), and on his return to Belgrade, President Tito had stated a similar view. On various occasions the Soviet Union argued that the implementation of first-stage measures would delay the achievement of a disarmed world. But that argument overlooked the fact that such steps would be part of the general plan or treaty. The United Kingdom held that implementation should be carried on simultaneously with efforts to reach detailed agreement on the more complicated points.

23. To sum up: his delegation believed that the USSR approach to the problem of general disarmament did not enjoy overwhelming support in the Committee; in its view, the interpretation placed on draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2 by the USSR delegation did not reflect, and was indeed contrary to, the purpose of its sponsors; the United Kingdom wanted general and complete disarmament just as much as Mr. Zorin said he did; lastly, a start should be made on first-stage disarmament measures without waiting for all States to sign and ratify a treaty on the whole process.

24. Mr. ALEMAYEHOU (Ethiopia) introduced the draft resolution submitted by Ethiopia and nine other countries (A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3). He recalled that in the declarations, conventions and protocols enumerated in the third paragraph of the preamble, to which the majority of States were still parties, the use of weapons of mass destruction was considered a crime under international law. Operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution therefore merely reaffirmed principles already accepted by those States, and specified that the use of nuclear weapons would be a violation of the United Nations Charter.

25. Operative paragraph 2 proposed a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons for war purposes. His delegation believed that operative paragraphs 1 and 2 should be considered separately. Whether the convention provided for in paragraph 2 was concluded or not, the declaration mentioned in paragraph 1 would remain unaffected. Because of its importance, the question should be kept alive on the General Assembly's agenda until a convention had been signed; that was why the draft requested the Secretary-General to report on the results of his consultations with Member States to the Assembly at its sixteenth session.

26. The draft resolution was quite different from the many other draft resolutions before the Committee. It made no attempt to formulate guiding principles for disarmament negotiations and contained no recommendations for the cessation of nuclear tests or for the prohibition of the wider dissemination of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons. It did, however, contain positive statements which, if adopted unanimously by the Assembly, would create a more propitious political and psychological climate for the conclusion of agreements on the various aspects of disarmament and would exert a moral force as effective as the binding force of a convention.

27. Mr. AIKEN (Ireland), exercising his right of reply, stated for the benefit of the Polish representative that at the 1096th meeting the delegation of Ireland had said that it did not believe that any nuclear Power would surrender its nuclear weapons under any

system of security which could possibly be created for years to come. That last clause was essential, for the Irish delegation believed that it would be many years before a world system of security could be established which would provide for the various States the same feeling of security that they now derived from the possession of nuclear weapons. Consequently, a beginning should be made by establishing disarmed areas of law. They would not be merely denuclearized zones, but zones in which all weapons of mass destruction, nuclear or non-nuclear, would be banned as well as all foreign bases. The United Nations would be responsible for supervising an agreement to that effect. It would be difficult, at one time, to resolve all the problems of balanced disarmament throughout the world, but a start could be made by establishing small zones which would serve as prototypes for the rest of the globe.

28. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), exercising his right of reply, remarked that although the United Kingdom representative had criticized the USSR, which supported draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2, he had not explained why his Government rejected that draft. Actually, it was because the United Kingdom was opposed to the fundamental principles stated in it, irrespective of how they were construed. The United Kingdom representative had not said whether he was prepared to take part in working out a treaty on general and complete disarmament, as proposed in the draft resolution. Nor had he said whether he accepted the initial measures provided in operative paragraph 3 of that draft resolution, or the measures proposed by the representative of Poland. Only a reply to those questions would indicate the position of the United Kingdom Government and reveal whether it was for or against the arms race.

29. The interpretation of the text was a matter for its sponsors and they had explained their views. The USSR delegation had merely indicated the reasons why it supported the draft resolution. He wondered why the United Kingdom delegation did not explain its refusal to do so instead of feigning hesitation.

30. Mr. ORMSBY-GORE (United Kingdom) replied that he did not support the draft resolution in its present form because the wording was open to misinterpretations such as that given to it by the USSR representative. The latter had asked whether the United Kingdom would agree to participate in working out a treaty on general and complete disarmament. The reply was in the affirmative. Moreover, the United Kingdom was prepared to consider any proposal for initial measures which might help to further the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament, including those put forward by Poland, those proposed by President Tito on the use of fissionable materials exclusively for peaceful purposes and those proposed by the representative of India on balanced reductions. Those replies were clear. It was to be regretted that the USSR representative had not replied to certain points raised by the United Kingdom delegation, for example with regard to the memorandum submitted by the USSR to the Economic Commission for Europe, the scope of paragraph 3 of draft resolution A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2, and the changes in the structure of the United Nations.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.