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Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Kurka (Czechoslovakia), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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) (continued)

Report of the Disarmament Commission (A/4463, A/4500, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251) (continued)

Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/4414) (continued)

Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (A/4434) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. MARTINO (Italy) said that in its participation in the Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, the Italian delegation had been guided by its firm belief in the absolute necessity for disarmament and in the possibility of achieving it.

2. Recalling the circumstances in which the Geneva negotiations had been broken off, he pointed out that the delegations from the socialist countries had walked out of the Committee four days after the United States announcement that the head of its delegation was returning from Washington with proposals which would enable the parties to go forward in the negotiations. In the light of that announcement, irrespective of any other considerations, the break-off of the talks had been unjustified. Moreover, the Soviet representative's final statement on 27 June 1960 had shown that it had been the deliberate intention of the socialist participants to bring about the failure of the negotiations. The Eastern countries were convinced, he had asserted, that the Western Powers did not desire real and effective dis-

armament, that their proposals were aimed not at "control over disarmament" but at "controlling armaments", and that they were concentrating purely on details, while shying away from matters of substance.

3. While it was true that the Western delegations had not supported controlled disarmament in the specific terms in which it had been advocated by the socialist countries, they had pressed for controlled disarmament in the proper and accepted sense of the term: for gradual, but general and complete disarmament, with safeguards much sounder than any of those embodied in the Soviet plans. The Western plans, it was true, included provision for control; but the object of that control was to ensure that all parties would carry out the commitments undertaken. Surely, no programme for general and complete disarmament would be acceptable unless the guarantees provided for were deemed adequate by the parties.

4. The distrust which evened international relations rendered such adequate safeguards imperative. Only if they were certain that no country had or would have anything to fear from any other, that there was no danger and would never again be any danger to the national independence and freedom of any country, would nations be persuaded to give up their weapons of defence. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that resolution 1378 (XIV) unanimously adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1959 unequivocally recognized that disarmament must be achieved "under effective international control". Indeed, the main differences between the parties related to the effectiveness and comprehensiveness of the control machinery. The only sensible and justified slogan applicable to disarmament was: "No control without disarmament and no disarmament without control."

5. Unfortunately, the position of the Eastern delegations had been that control should apply only to the destruction of armaments and the disbandment of armed forces, but that no inspection or control should be allowed of the armaments and armed forces remaining after those operations had been carried out. Surely, however, it was clear that control must also be applied to what was the real object of any disarmament agreement—the levels to be reached after the reductions in arms and armed forces. Without any inspection of existing armaments, how could there be any guarantee of the full execution of the agreement? And unless the inspectors were allowed free access to every part of the Soviet territory, what assurance would there be that the first phase of the Soviet plan had been fully carried out? Those were not mere matters of detail.

6. The Western delegations at Geneva had very properly insisted on the need to maintain a balance of armed forces such that no one country would derive military advantages from the implementation of the disarmament agreements. The Soviet plan (A/4374/Rev.1), however, had failed to recognize that need; it provided, at the initial stage, for both the elimination

of the means of delivery of atomic weapons and the liquidation of military bases on foreign territory. That would mean that Western Europe would relinquish all means of defence from the outset, while the Soviet Union would maintain—even after the proposed reductions—a powerful reserve of conventional forces. It was quite clear that the defence of the West depended on the military integration of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and, accordingly, on the presence of United States and United Kingdom troops on the continent of Europe. Clearly, the maintenance of a balance of forces was a very precarious means of maintaining peace, particularly as it necessarily implied the armaments race. But the armaments race would be ended only when the balance of forces now ensuring security had been replaced by balanced disarmament. Since NATO had so far proved effective in the defence of the free peoples of Europe, it was inevitable that the Soviet proposal to destroy it and to eliminate "foreign bases" at the initial stage of disarmament should be viewed with great distrust.

7. In order to expedite the solution of certain very difficult problems at Geneva—for example, the cut-off of the production of fissionable materials and their reconversion to peaceful uses—the Western Powers had suggested the setting up of working groups of experts. That suggestion had been simply ignored by the Soviet delegation. A similar suggestion had now been made in the United Kingdom draft resolution (A/C.1/L.251), and it was to be regretted that the USSR delegation's first reaction to it had not been of a constructive nature.

8. In point of fact, technical studies by groups of experts would greatly assist the progress of political negotiations. By demonstrating the technical feasibility of specific disarmament or control measures, such studies could improve the prospects of effective results at the political level. Indeed, if an expert group were to begin work immediately, it might remove many practical obstacles even before the first meeting of the political negotiators. For those reasons, Italy supported the United Kingdom draft resolution.

9. Despite the decision of the socialist delegations on 27 June to walk out of the Ten-Nation Committee—and they had regrettably threatened to adopt similar tactics in the First Committee—the Geneva negotiations had demonstrated that there were a number of areas of agreement between the parties. If those areas of agreement were more closely examined, possibilities of reaching agreement more rapidly on specific points might emerge. Even partial agreements would ease existing tensions and facilitate subsequent agreements. For example, both sides might agree forthwith to destroy specified amounts of certain existing nuclear weapons; any verifiable reduction in existing stocks would encourage public opinion and pave the way to future negotiations. Similarly, both sides might agree on certain technical studies which would expedite the conclusion of political agreements.

10. While it was sensible to recognize that nothing positive had been achieved in the field of disarmament either at Geneva or, so far, in the Assembly, efforts towards that end should not be allowed to flag. Accordingly, Italy strongly advocated the resumption of the disarmament negotiations in the Ten-Nation Committee. However, it would be amenable to any proposal of a positive nature which would lead to the reactivation

of negotiations. Any negotiating body should remain closely linked with the United Nations, and should submit its reports to the Disarmament Commission. Italy was also prepared to consider the modification of the Ten-Nation Committee either by the appointment of a neutral chairman or by the addition of representatives of the uncommitted countries, to be selected by the different geographical groups represented in the United Nations, on the basis of two representatives for each group.

11. Together with the United States and the United Kingdom, Italy had sponsored a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.250) aimed at reaffirming the principles of general and complete disarmament and at promoting the resumption of more constructive negotiations between the parties. Italy maintained that disarmament should be based on the reduction of armed forces to the minimum level required for internal security and for participation in the joint organization of collective security. It believed that all weapons of mass destruction and means of their delivery should be eliminated as part of the process of general and complete disarmament. It felt that due weight must be given to the need for proceeding gradually and according to a time-table. At Geneva, the socialist countries had charged that the West was refusing to set a time-limit for the process of disarmament, and thus robbing any future agreement of legal force; but the Western Powers had consistently held that there should be a time-limit for any specific disarmament measure. On the other hand, it was unrealistic to believe that the whole process of general and complete disarmament could be completed in four years; indeed, only when disarmament had begun and was sufficiently advanced could a date be fixed for its completion.

12. The three-Power draft resolution stated the principle that disarmament should be balanced in the conventional and the nuclear fields and that its implementation should give no significant advantage to either side. He stressed the word "significant", because if the parties insisted on an absolute balance, on the elimination of all risk to either side, no start could be made towards disarmament. On the other hand, nothing must be done to undermine mutual security or encourage aggression. The principles of control set forth in the draft resolution should be acceptable to all parties concerned and he hoped that they would elicit a favourable response from the USSR delegation. Finally, the draft resolution reaffirmed the desire of the Western Powers to make a start on disarmament without delay.

13. The draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union (A/C.1/L.249) made no positive contribution to the common effort to solve the disarmament problem. It appeared to be based on the principle of "all or nothing", for while it demanded the immediate conclusion of a comprehensive treaty to be implemented within a predetermined time-limit, it passed over what was most essential—immediate agreement on initial measures of disarmament. Moreover, it made a new demand: the disruption of the structure of the United Nations. Obviously, complete disarmament would necessitate revisions in the Charter, but in quite the opposite direction from that indicated by the USSR. The Soviet proposal would merely exacerbate existing differences and paralyse the world organization.

The meeting rose at 4 p.m.