

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-THIRD SESSION

Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1606th
MEETING**

Tuesday, 12 November 1968,
at 10.30 a.m.

NEW YORK

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1. The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the first speaker on my list for this morning's meeting, I wish to inform the Committee that we have only two speakers for today. Therefore, it will be necessary to cancel the meeting scheduled for this afternoon. At the moment there are two speakers on the list to speak tomorrow. I would therefore suggest that we meet tomorrow afternoon, and cancel the meeting scheduled for tomorrow morning.

2. I would respectfully request members to inscribe their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible in order that we can proceed with some haste in our general debate.

We do have a great deal to consider before we can conclude our agenda.

3. Mr. MALIK (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (*translated from Russian*): The First Committee is beginning its consideration of one of the greatest problems facing the world—disarmament.

4. The various States and the United Nations are faced with quite a variety of problems. Some are local problems, of interest to individual States; some are regional problems, affecting States in certain geographical areas; lastly, there are international problems, which are of great importance. The problem of disarmament, however, is an international problem which vitally affects the fundamental interests of all peoples, all States, all mankind. In this nuclear century, the shape of the world to come and the fate of entire nations may depend on its solution.

5. The great discoveries of our times in the fields of nuclear physics, and science and technology in general, have opened up broad prospects for a further rise in national levels of living. At the same time, they have led to the invention of new means of mass destruction, devices unprecedented in their destructive power. If these weapons should ever be used, they would annihilate hundreds of millions of human beings, reduce whole States and even continents to ruins and ashes, and poison the atmosphere of our planet.

6. Not only would nuclear war be an unthinkable calamity for mankind, but even nuclear peace is having a most negative effect on every aspect of the life of contemporary society. The continuing arms race is weighing more and more heavily on the peoples, diverting many millions of men from creative labour, absorbing enormous quantities of money and materials, creating new areas of tension, breeding suspicion in relations among States, and giving rise to the most dangerous possibilities of mistakes and accidents that could have unforeseeable consequences.

7. A few years ago, in 1962, the experts of a number of countries, in preparing at the behest of the General Assembly a report on the economic and social consequences of disarmament,¹ found that at that time some \$120 thousand million a year was being spent for military purposes in the world as a whole. Since then the accumulation of armaments has further increased. According to some estimates, the sum total of world military expenditure in 1967 was over \$160 thousand million, while others place it as at close to \$200 thousand million. These enormous resources are being wasted at a time when in many parts of the world people are suffering from hunger, poverty and disease.

¹ United Nations Publication, Sales No. 62.IX.1.

8. If the resources now being swallowed up by the arms race were to be spent for peaceful purposes, countries would reap tremendous benefits, and this is particularly true of the developing countries, which could enjoy much greater economic and other aid than they are now receiving. Disarmament would also open up totally new and truly limitless prospects of peaceful uses of the mighty energy of the atom for the good of mankind.

9. Obviously, the disarmament is not a cure-all. It cannot solve all the problems of contemporary society, whether social, economic or other. Nevertheless, the realization of disarmament would be of historic significance for the human race, because general and complete disarmament is a basic means of ensuring a durable peace and delivering mankind from the senseless waste of national resources that is going on today.

10. That is why the States and Governments conscious of their great responsibility to their peoples now have only one path open to them: to fight ever more resolutely and persistently for a cessation of the arms race. The Soviet Union, for its part, following the course set for it by V. I. Lenin, the great founder of the Soviet State, has been persistently and consistently advocating such a cessation, the elimination of means of mass destruction and the putting into effect of a plan for general and complete disarmament. Today I can say with satisfaction in the First Committee of the General Assembly that, owing to the efforts of all those who defend the interests of the peoples, the first gains have been made in a number of specific areas in the struggle to end the arms race.

11. The Moscow Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water² has limited to some extent the possibilities of further perfecting nuclear weapons and averted the danger of atmospheric contamination by radioactive fallout.

12. The Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in Outer Space [*resolution 2222 (XXI), annex*] has forbidden the launching of nuclear weapons into orbit or placing them on the moon and other celestial bodies.

13. Lastly, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, a recent and important step towards limiting the nuclear arms race, prevents the spread of these weapons of mass destruction among States.

14. Here we have manifest proof that agreement on specific subjects relating to halting the arms race is no idle dream or happy accident, but something that can really be achieved, although not without a struggle.

15. These three milestones—three international treaties on nuclear weapons—mark off only the first stages on the difficult path leading to a cessation of the arms race, disarmament, and prohibition of nuclear weapons, a path which States will have to travel in the interests of all mankind, of future as well as present generations. No matter how arduous this path may be, the United Nations and the world's States must pursue it in order to achieve their principal goal—"to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war"—as it says in the Charter. It is our deep

conviction on that the most urgent matter in this regard, one that brooks no delay, is for all States which have not yet done so to sign the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, so that the Treaty can be fully ratified and come into effect at an early date.

16. The mere fact that eighty States have already signed this Treaty proves that it is widely understood that the spread of nuclear weapons would have extremely dangerous consequences, that it would serve only the aggressive and reckless elements in Europe, Africa and elsewhere, that it would inevitably draw the developing countries into a ruinous arms race, and that it would increase the danger of war. It is also logical that the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons should have met with a very broad and favourable response throughout the world when, in the summer of this year, the resumed twenty-second session of the General Assembly approved it by an overwhelming majority, called on the depositary States to open it an early date for signature and ratification and expressed a hope for the widest possible adherence to the Treaty.

17. The Soviet Government takes the view that the signature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons creates more favourable conditions for further endeavours to stop the arms race. The Treaty is a first step leading to further agreements concerning disarmament.

18. The USSR Government believes that the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must be promptly followed by further effective measures enabling real progress to be made in the sphere of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament.

19. Both the Treaty in question and the resolution of the resumed twenty-second session of the General Assembly call for such measures. In this resolution, the General Assembly has included a request

"...urgently to pursue negotiations on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control".

That is also the obligation imposed by article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. It is a serious obligation, and the Soviet Union, for its part, accepts it in all seriousness.

20. The USSR Government has submitted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament an expanded programme of disarmament measures. We feel that this would be an appropriate time for the General Assembly to examine the programme. Accordingly, the USSR Government has submitted to the General Assembly, to be considered at the twenty-third session as an important and urgent item, a document entitled "Memorandum of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning urgent measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament" [A/7134].

21. The proposals contained in the Memorandum cover the principal areas in which, because of international developments and the particular types of progress made in science and technology, further measures for the cessation

² United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 480 (1963), No. 6964.

of the arms race should be taken. As previously, we deem it essential to halt first those aspects of the arms race which most endanger peace. Foremost among the proposals are measures for the further limitation and cessation of the nuclear arms race. The USSR Government proposes a new series of important measures to follow what has already been achieved.

22. The primary task under this programme is to achieve a prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. My Government proposes that every State should undertake not to use nuclear weapons, not to threaten to use them, and not to incite other States to use them. Such a prohibition would be of enormous international significance. It would act as a restraint on any State which had any intention of using nuclear weapons against other States, it would help to strengthen the peace, and it would provide a firm foundation for further disarmament measures.

23. Prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would be a strong guarantee of the security of both nuclear and non-nuclear States.

24. At this time, when tremendous stockpiles of nuclear weapons have been accumulated and the international situation continues to be tense, prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons is more urgently needed than ever. The eminent scientists from different countries who took part in preparing the Secretary-General's Report on the Effects of the Possible Use of Nuclear Weapons³ have warned the world of the disasters and calamities that would be caused by the use of nuclear weapons. That report paints a telling picture of the colossal scale of the catastrophe that would befall mankind if nuclear war should break out.

25. In its Memorandum, my Government proposes that the draft convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons should be discussed as an urgent item and that there should be an exchange of views on the holding of an international conference to sign such a convention. The conclusion of such an instrument would be of outstanding importance—quite literally of historic importance—for ensuring international security, it would provide an excellent basis for measures to achieve nuclear disarmament, and it would open up broad possibilities of using the atom for the benefit of mankind.

26. In this connexion, I would remind the Committee that as early as 1961, at its sixteenth session, on the initiative of Ethiopia and other African and Asian States, the General Assembly adopted the Declaration of the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear Weapons, which states, *inter alia*, that:

“...the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons is contrary to the spirit, letter and aims of the United Nations and, as such a direct violation of the Charter of the United Nations”,

and that

“...any State using nuclear and thermonuclear weapons is to be considered as violating the Charter of the United Nations, as acting contrary to the laws of humanity and as committing a crime against mankind and civilization” [resolution 1653 (XVI)].

27. Thus the United Nations has clearly and unequivocally condemned and censured the use of nuclear weapons. What has to be done now, therefore, is to incorporate the provisions of the Declaration in an international convention. The General Assembly has already approved such a course at its twenty-second session, when, it will be remembered, it adopted a resolution introduced by the Soviet Union [2289 (XXII)], in which, in particular, it notes

“...that it is necessary, in view of the present international situation, to make new efforts aimed at expediting the solution of the question of prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons ... and of the conclusion of an appropriate international convention”.

28. The resolution also appeals to all States, in the light of the Declaration adopted by the General Assembly in 1961, to examine the question of the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the draft convention proposed by the Soviet Union, and

“...to undertake negotiations concerning the conclusion of an appropriate convention through the convening of an international conference, by the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, or directly between States”.

29. This important General Assembly resolution reflects the conviction of the vast majority of States that nuclear weapons must be outlawed through the conclusion of an appropriate international convention.

30. The Soviet Union is also strongly in favour of prohibiting all nuclear weapon tests.

31. Substantial progress has already been made in this direction; it may be said that we are close to the goal. The Moscow Treaty bans nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, i.e., in those media in which an increase in radioactive fallout would most endanger human life and health. According to scientific findings, after the conclusion of the Moscow Treaty the total world fallout decreased by hundreds of times. In other words, if the Treaty were not in effect, tens and hundreds of thousands not only of the persons alive today but of those still to be born would have fallen victim to nuclear testing. This is all the more important as even without such testing, air pollution—as many representatives have mentioned at the current session—is becoming an increasingly acute problem, especially for large cities, such as New York. We are experiencing it daily.

32. The attempts we have witnessed to hinder the successful prohibition of nuclear tests underground on the pretext that international control and inspection would be necessary merely indicate that some States are still opposed in principle to reaching agreement on this important question. Actually, with the modern seismic devices nationally available today, no country—as the experience of recent years has graphically and convincingly shown—can make clandestine nuclear tests underground without risking discovery and being shown to have violated an international agreement.

33. Only one thing is needed for an agreement to be reached on ceasing underground nuclear weapon tests—a

³ United Nations Publication, Sales No. 68.IX.1.

political decision to put a stop to such testing once and for all.

34. The conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has opened up new prospects for stopping all tests of such weapons. The Soviet Union, for its part, will do all it can so that this goal may be attained at an early date. As it states in its Memorandum, the USSR Government

“... is ready to begin immediate negotiations for the prohibition of underground nuclear weapon tests on the basis of the use of national means of detection to ensure that the prohibition is enforced”.

35. Among the urgent disarmament measures which, in view of the USSR Government, should be carried out in the nearest future, is prohibiting flights of bomber aircraft carrying nuclear weapons beyond national frontiers. Such flights are a constant source of danger of the outbreak of a nuclear war as a result of technical failures, crashes and other unforeseen circumstances. This has been made obvious to all by the recent series of crashes of United States military aircraft flying over the territory of other countries with a load of lethal nuclear weapons.

36. My Government also proposes in its Memorandum that, in order to reduce the likelihood of a nuclear war, agreement be reached for the cessation of patrols by missile-carrying submarines with nuclear missiles on board in areas where the borders of parties to such an agreement are within range of such missiles.

37. In advocating such important measures as the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons and the cessation of underground nuclear testing, the Soviet Union also proposes the examination, here and now, of a still broader aspect of nuclear disarmament. It favours putting an end to nuclear weapons as such and freeing mankind forever from the threat of nuclear war.

38. Complex as the questions relating to nuclear disarmament may be, ways must be sought to solve them. Now that, after lengthy negotiations, a number of agreements to contain the arms race have been concluded, States have accumulated some useful experience, so that there is hope that other and more complex problems can also be solved.

39. In its Memorandum, the USSR Government invites all nuclear Powers immediately to begin negotiations on the cessation of production of nuclear weapons, the reduction of stockpiles and the eventual complete prohibition and elimination of nuclear weapons under appropriate international control. The USSR Government is ready to begin such negotiations at any time. It considers that an attempt could be made to reach agreement both on the entire complex of measures leading to the destruction of nuclear weapons and on some of these measures.

40. The USSR Government also proposes reaching agreement on practical steps for the restriction and subsequent reduction of the strategic vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons.

41. The importance of this measure is obvious. As Mr. Gromyko, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the

USSR, stated at this session of the General Assembly [1679th plenary meeting], the USSR and United States Governments have agreed to hold an exchange of views on the reciprocal restriction and subsequent reduction of strategic means of delivery of nuclear weapons—both offensive and defensive, including anti-missile missiles. The USSR Government is ready to begin at once a serious exchange of views on this subject.

42. Bearing in mind the danger of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons in our times, the USSR Government further proposes an examination of ways and means of ensuring that all States comply with the Geneva Protocol prohibiting the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

43. In this connexion, I must draw attention to General Assembly resolution 2162 (XXI) calling for strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol, condemning all actions contrary to those objectives, and inviting all States to accede to the Protocol.

44. A number of States not previously parties to the Geneva Protocol heeded this appeal and have now acceded to the Protocol. These include Tunisia, Sierra Leone, Madagascar, Ghana, Niger, and others. Some States, however, have failed thus far to respond to the General Assembly's appeal; this is a group headed by the United States.

45. The Geneva Protocol was drawn up immediately after the First World War, in the course of which the use of poison gases and other toxic substances by the German imperialists killed many thousands. This international agreement was a new development in that important part of international law which is concerned with prohibiting the more barbarous methods of warfare.

46. The Geneva Protocol constituted a legal obstacle to the use of such means of mass destruction, and was thus a positive factor during the Second World War. The warning issued by the anti-Hitler coalition Powers that poison gases and bacteriological weapons must not be used and that anyone violating that prohibition would not go unpunished had its effect on Nazi Germany and on that madman, Hitler. In issuing that warning, these Powers invoked this important international instrument.

47. No one will deny that since the conclusion of the Geneva Protocol new and infinitely more deadly types of chemical and bacteriological weapons have been developed. But that in no way means that the Geneva Protocol is now out of date, as some have said. Its authors included a special provision to the effect that the Protocol's prohibition would extend to the use of asphyxiating, poisonous and similar gases and also of analogous liquids, substances and processes, as well as of bacteriological methods of warfare. Although new gases and bacteriological weapons have appeared in recent years, they are still gases and bacteriological weapons, and not a totally new kind of weapon which does not come under the Geneva Protocol.

48. Another important measure to limit the arms race and achieve disarmament would be the elimination of foreign military bases. In this matter the USSR is guided not only

by the principles of its peaceful policy but also by United Nations decisions. It will be remembered that at its twenty-first session the General Assembly adopted a resolution [2165 (XXI)] on the elimination of foreign military bases. It stressed in that resolution that the question of foreign military bases is of paramount importance and therefore necessitates serious discussion because of its implications for international peace and security. It then requested the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to consider this important question and to report on it.

49. The military bases of the Western Powers and of their military alliances, scattered all over the world in foreign territory, create a threat to the peace and greatly increase the danger of an outbreak of hostilities. They are used as a tool in the policy of aggression and interference in the domestic affairs of States and as a means of suppressing the national liberation movements.

50. We trust that consideration by the General Assembly of the elimination of foreign military bases will eventually lead to a solution which is in the interests of international security and of progress in disarmament.

51. I should now like to expound the position and proposals of the Soviet Union with regard to measures for regional disarmament. Foremost among these is the question of establishing nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. The Soviet Union believes that the establishment of such zones should limit the area of distribution of nuclear weapons and be in full accord with the aim of preventing their direct or indirect proliferation. In its view, not only groups of States within an entire continent or in large geographical areas, but also more limited groups of States and even individual States can assume the obligation to establish nuclear-free zones.

52. The question of zones free from nuclear weapons has been repeatedly considered by the General Assembly and the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. During such consideration the representatives of many States emphasized how important it is to establish nuclear-free zones. The exclusion of nuclear weapons from given areas would be an important way to prevent nuclear war and maintain international security.

53. A new question raised in the USSR Memorandum to which my delegation would draw the General Assembly's attention is that of the peaceful use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, a question which is steadily gaining in importance.

54. Unless appropriate measures are taken in good time, the vast reaches of the sea-bed and the ocean floor, which constitute five-sevenths of our planet's surface, may become a new arena for the military rivalries of States, with the dangerous consequence that the arms race might spread to them also. If events should follow this course, the ocean floor, which is a promising source of mineral and other wealth for mankind in the future, will become instead one more potential source of war.

55. It is quite obvious that any military activities by States on the sea-bed or the ocean floor would increase the threat of war, hinder the peaceful exploitation of the ocean's

wealth and impair freedom of navigation. It must be our purpose to prevent any use of the sea-bed and ocean floor for military purposes; no other action can truly serve the interests of international security and preserve these vast areas for man's peaceful activity.

56. In the present circumstances, when this new area has not yet been put to military use and when we are in fact considering preventive measures, it is a comparatively easy matter to prohibit any use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes. The reaching of an agreement that they should not be so used would be an important practical step in that direction.

57. In view of the above, the USSR Government proposes immediate consideration of the question of establishing, in due form and without delay, a régime which would ensure the use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor beyond the limits of existing territorial waters solely for peaceful purposes.

58. A logical step in this direction was the inclusion of the question of the prohibition of the use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes in the agenda of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, to be considered as a partial disarmament measure. We believe that this is the most appropriate way to deal with the problem of preventing the arms race from spreading to the sea-bed and the ocean floor.

59. The USSR delegation expresses the hope that the Eighteen-Nation Committee will be able within a short time to draft an appropriate international agreement on the prohibition of the use of the sea-bed and the ocean floor for military purposes.

60. The Soviet Union is proposing this broad programme of specific measures relating to both nuclear and conventional weapons in the belief that, in the last analysis, these measures must facilitate the solution of the principal problem—the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control. International agreement on this problem, which is of vital importance for mankind, remains our primary goal in the sphere of disarmament.

61. We are, of course, fully aware that solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament is fraught with great difficulty and calls for strenuous efforts. The maintenance of international security demands, however, that search for agreement on this problem should be continued and intensified, so that the threat of war may be removed and the enormous funds now being devoured by the arms race may be used for the greater well-being of peoples.

62. Now that, owing to the collective effort of many States, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons has been formulated and concluded, the world has gained further impetus in moving towards a solution of disarmament problems and towards its main goal—general and complete disarmament.

63. In submitting for consideration by the General Assembly my Government's Memorandum concerning urgent measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament,

my delegation expresses the hope that the specific and practical proposals it contains will be subjected by delegations to a comprehensive and constructive discussion. These proposals constitute a broad base for further negotiations on disarmament and for consolidating and building on the success already achieved as a result of the formulation and signature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. The adoption and realization of any one of the disarmament measures proposed in the USSR Memorandum would be a further contribution to ensuring the security of all States, nuclear and non-nuclear alike.

64. In conclusion, the USSR delegation submits to the First Committee a draft resolution reading as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 1653 (XVI) of 24 November 1961, 2162 (XXI) of 5 December 1966, 2165 (XXI) of 5 December 1966, 2289 (XXII) of 8 December 1967, 2343 (XXII) of 19 December 1967 and 2373 (XXII) of 12 June 1968,

"Convinced that the arms race, particularly the nuclear arms race, is a threat to the peace and security of peoples,

"Recognizing the urgency and tremendous importance of taking measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament,

"Considering that it is essential to make every effort to avert the danger of nuclear war and to take measures to safeguard the security of peoples,

"Desiring to contribute to the easing of international tension and the strengthening of trust between States in order to promote the cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, the destruction of all stockpiles of such weapons and the elimination from national arsenals of nuclear weapons and means of delivery of such weapons in accordance with a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control,

"Recalling the undertaking contained in the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons to pursue negotiations in good faith on the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and on nuclear disarmament,

"Believing that the conclusion of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons must be followed by the simultaneous or phased implementation of measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament,

"Having considered the memorandum of 1 July 1968 of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning urgent measures to stop the arms race and achieve disarmament,

"Bearing in mind the fact that the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has reached agreement on the provisional agenda for its future work,

"1. Attaches great importance to the measures for stopping the nuclear arms race and achieving disarmament which are contained in the memorandum of 1 July 1968 of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics;

"2. Requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to transmit the Memorandum of 1 July 1968 of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics concerning urgent measures to stop the arms race and

achieve disarmament and the records of the meetings of the First Committee of the General Assembly relating to the discussion of the relevant agenda item to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament;

"3. Requests the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to undertake negotiations, as a matter of urgency and taking account of the agreement reached on the provisional agenda for its future work, concerning the urgent measures for stopping the arms race and achieving disarmament which are contained in the memorandum of 1 July 1968 of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-fourth session."

65. The USSR delegation hopes that this text will be carefully studied by the other delegations and will elicit a favourable response on their part.

66. The USSR delegation intends to make another statement on the remaining disarmament questions which the First Committee will discuss, including the reports of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the results of the Conference of Non-Nuclear Weapon States.

67. The CHAIRMAN: I should like to inform representatives that the draft resolution just read out by the representative of the Soviet Union will be contained in document A/C.1/L.443, which might be circulated before we adjourn this meeting.

68. Mr. CARACCILO (Italy) (*translated from French*): Following the conclusion of the work of the twenty-second session of the General Assembly, two other international conferences dealt with the disarmament problems which are before our Committee today: the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament held its fourteenth session at Geneva, after which the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States also met at Geneva throughout the month of September. The results of these two series of negotiations deserve close attention, since they will no doubt have an influence on this Committee's decisions.

69. Nevertheless, in my statement today I should like to confine myself to the report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee,⁴ taking into account, of course, its aspects which appear on our Committee's agenda. As for the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States, the Italian delegation would like to state its views on it at a later date.

70. Despite the limited duration of its last session—six weeks, falling between the conclusion of the General Assembly's work and the opening of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States—the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee accomplished a task which was of greater importance than a cursory glance at its necessarily strict and sober report might seem to indicate. Aware of the limited time at their disposal and their responsibilities under the precise terms of reference entrusted to them by the United Nations, the countries members of the Committee found themselves faced with a choice: either they must concentrate all the Committee's efforts on a disarmament

⁴ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1967 and 1968*, document DC/231

measure and attempt to reach agreement thereon, or they must organize the Committee's future work by laying the bases for long-term negotiations which would be as well thought out as possible.

71. After long and difficult consultations during which the two delegations which act as co-Chairmen of the Eighteen-Nation Committee once again played a highly appreciated role, the latter alternative was finally decided upon. If it had had a little more time, it is conceivable that the Committee might have been able to come closer to a specific agreement on a concrete disarmament measure such as the cessation of nuclear testing for military purposes, or the adoption of measures dealing with chemical and bacteriological warfare. However, and this is my personal opinion, the Committee's decision was also guided by the thought that it would be better for it to bide its time until the ideas put forward had gained ground and had been clarified before making them the subject of concrete negotiations.

72. Without forgoing a thorough discussion of the principal measures of disarmament, the Committee has succeeded in the course of its work in drawing up a genuine programme of long- and medium-term work. The very fact that a preliminary regrouping of the problems of disarmament was achieved reveals, I think, a political determination which justifies the irreplaceable role this body plays in seeking measures of disarmament and for the easing of tension and, furthermore, it holds out hope that the path which has thus been opened up will be further widened at future sessions of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

73. The programme of work approved by this Conference takes all the basic problems into account, though its chapter headings are worded in general terms.

74. In the first chapter, which deals with the cessation of the arms race in nuclear weapons, we find a whole series of measures designed gradually to pave the way for the nuclear disarmament called for in article VI of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons [*resolution 2373 (XXII), annex*]. The breakdown given in this chapter must not, however, be considered a complete one. At Geneva, we for our part, laid great stress on the idea that this breakdown must remain as flexible as possible in order not to prejudice the concrete progress of future negotiations, and at the same time to take into account the suggestions made by other international bodies, and first and foremost, of course, by the twenty-third session of the United Nations General Assembly.

75. The second chapter of the Committee's programme of work, entitled "Non-nuclear measures," contains a confirmation of the fact that all disarmament measures should be balanced. However, if in the case of halting the arms race, it is conceivable that measures confined to the nuclear sector might be adopted, it would be difficult in any genuine disarmament process to neglect the conventional weapons sector.

76. The third chapter covers a wider range of collateral measures the nature of which—nuclear or non-nuclear—is not yet clearly defined.

77. Finally, the last chapter, while recalling that our ultimate goal is general and complete disarmament, set forth an order of priority, of the problems that remain to be solved.

78. The fact that priorities for the consideration of the various measures are not precisely indicated in the report does not mean that the Conference avoided discussing this problem, but that it preferred not to restrict to too great an extent freedom of discussion on the various types of disarmament measures. However, many delegation feel that the fact that nuclear disarmament measures are given priority in the heading of this chapter clearly endows them with an undeniable urgency.

79. I should now like to try to explain to this Committee the views of the Italian delegation on the problems before us: we consider that nuclear disarmament, with its complex political, technological and military implications, calls mainly for pragmatic consideration. Thus, we must guard against bringing up in our discussion any proposal which, far from reflecting the true facts of the disarmament problem and the final goals of negotiation, might be designed solely for its psychological and contingent effect, to the detriment of any real progress towards halting the arms race.

80. We must, on the contrary, be guided by the desire to work out gradual measures in areas where differences in the various points of view have been narrowed down the most and which are therefore most likely to yield concrete results. Thus, at Geneva the Italian delegation suggested effective measures for halting the nuclear arms race and avoided mere statements of opinion.

81. In this spirit, the Italian delegation, aware of the need to arrive at a solution of the problem of halting the production of fissionable materials for military purposes, put forward at Geneva on 1 August 1967, a specific proposal based on the concept of allocating to the developing countries a part of the assets freed by the reduction of military stockpiles.⁵

82. In this same spirit, the Italian delegation lent priority support to extending the Moscow Treaty of 1963⁶ to include underground nuclear tests. Agreement on this matter cannot be delayed for long without giving rise to doubts as to the seriousness of intent of disarmament negotiations and without compromising for a long time the progress made so far. Moreover several ideas were put forward from various sources in an attempt to overcome the difficulties which have heretofore blocked the halt of all military testing. The Italian delegation, in the hope that the advances in science and technology will soon enable us to guarantee a global ban on all military testing, put forward at Geneva⁷ another suggestion of a limited and provisional character, which provided for certain preliminary measures within the context of an international régime set up to lay down rules for explosions for peaceful purposes. The main provision in that suggestion was that a

⁵ *Ibid.*, document DC/230, annex IV, section 22.

⁶ Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water.

⁷ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1967 and 1968*, document DC/231, annex I, section 9.

report of all underground nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes, containing all pertinent information, should be submitted to the United Nations. Explosions not reported to the United Nations would thus be deemed to be tests for military purposes. Secondly, Governments wishing to carry out underground explosions for peaceful purposes would be required to permit a limited number of experts from non-nuclear countries to be present at the explosions in question. Scientists and technicians of the non-nuclear Powers would thus have an opportunity to acquaint themselves with the technological aspects of nuclear explosions and, in particular, to learn about their practical applications. This procedure would make it possible gradually to arrive at acceptable formulas for inspection.

83. I should like to make it clear that the only purpose of these two proposals which Italy made at Geneva, and which I have just recalled, is to promote the conclusion in the nuclear field of any agreements which can be reached under present conditions.

84. Outside the strictly nuclear field, the Italian delegation is of the opinion that the problem of chemical and biological weapons must also be included in the terms of reference which the United Nations General Assembly is no doubt preparing to entrust to the Eighteen-Nation Committee. This problem can be considered only after the proposed group of experts⁸ has submitted its report. For the moment and without going into the technical aspects of this highly complex question, we think it might be useful to suggest some criteria which we feel could guide some future negotiations in this matter.

85. First, the 1925 Geneva Convention on the prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons⁹ seems to us objectively to be inadequate, and we feel that its provisions do not cover the entire range of modern biochemical weapons. Of course, in other respects the Geneva convention retains its usefulness. Any new agreement should therefore supplement it, and not supersede it or weaken it.

86. Secondly, in order to be able to ban the production of chemical and biological weapons, a solution must be found to the problem of inspection. Any system of this sort must be set up on a non-discriminatory basis.

87. Thirdly, any new agreement should also be based on the principle of universality, rather than on the principle of reciprocity which underlies the Geneva Convention. This presupposes the adherence of a sufficiently large and eligible number of countries.

88. Finally, another problem which the Italian delegation feels should be examined without delay is that of restricting weapons on the sea-bed. Before opening its discussion on disarmament today, this Committee has already given close

attention to the problem of the sea-bed as a whole. However, with regard in particular to its military aspects, the Italian delegation agrees with the opinion already expressed that it is within the purview of the Eighteen-Nation Committee to study the possibility of an agreement on arms limitation, based on the principle of the balance of forces, making a distinction between defensive and offensive weapons and, of course, within the context of an international system of inspection.

89. I should also like to add a few remarks regarding the memorandum submitted by the Soviet delegation [A/7134] which appears as a specific item on our agenda. The Italian delegation has taken note of that document with interest, or, to be more exact, it has taken note of it again, since previously, at Geneva, where it was submitted by the Soviet delegation on 16 July, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had an opportunity to study and analyse it, as evidenced by the fact that it appears as an annex to its report. In this connexion, it might be useful to recall that the report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, which was drawn up after submission of the Soviet document, illustrates, if I may use the expression, "the art of the possible"; in other words, it represents the meeting point of the opinions expressed by various delegations at Geneva, and among them, naturally enough, that of the Soviet Union delegation, a co-Chairman of the Conference. It is precisely that "conciliatory" and "realistic" character which gives value and weight to the report of the Conference.

90. Thus, I do not see what new motives or new circumstances would justify taking up this report again either from the point of view of priorities or with regard to statements on disarmament measures.

91. Then again, it seems to us that the points raised by the Soviet memorandum are covered in the report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, and that they can be discussed in greater detail later on in that context.

92. We are confident that the General Assembly will see to it that the Eighteen-Nation Committee has the most suitable terms of reference to ensure that the programme of work established at Geneva can become a solid point of departure towards the final goals which we all set ourselves, and whose attainment is anxiously being awaited by all mankind.

93. My Government is convinced that a resumption of negotiations on disarmament at the earliest date will do much to re-establish an atmosphere of international trust.

94. The Italian delegation, which played an active part in drawing up resolution 2373 (XXII) which the United Nations General Assembly adopted on 12 June 1968, and before that, in drafting the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, will for its part spare no effort in promoting negotiation on further disarmament measures.

The meeting rose at 12.25 p.m.

⁸ *Ibid.*, DC/231, para. 26.

⁹ Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare (League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV (1929), No. 2138).