

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTIETH SESSION

Official Records



**SECOND COMMITTEE, 1009th  
MEETING**

Thursday, 9 December 1965,  
at 11.15 a.m.

**NEW YORK**

CONTENTS

	Page
Organization of the Committee's work. . . . .	307
Agenda item 44:	
Conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament:	
(a) Reports of the Economic and Social Council;	
(b) Reports of the Secretary-General . . . . .	307

Chairman: Mr. Pierre FORTHOMME  
(Belgium).

Organization of the Committee's work

1. The CHAIRMAN announced that he had been informed by the Secretariat that it would be possible for the Committee to continue its meetings until the evening of Thursday, 16 December—two days longer than had originally been planned. In order to prevent time being lost on procedural discussions, he suggested that the Committee should agree to the following arrangements for the remainder of the session. To begin with, the Rapporteur would submit his report on items discussed during the week beginning on 13 December directly to the plenary meeting of the General Assembly. The remaining agenda items would be dealt with according to the following schedule: item 44 would be started immediately and completed at the following meeting; items 46 and 45 would be started at the following meeting and discussed, respectively, at the morning and afternoon meetings on 14 and 15 December; item 52 would be started on 10 December and continued on 13 December; item 37 would be resumed on 13 December after the completion of item 52; items 43, 96 and 100 would be examined on 15 December.

*It was so agreed.*

2. Mr. BELEOKEN (Cameroon) said that, although his delegation had no objection to the Rapporteur's submitting his reports on, *inter alia*, item 37 (Report of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development), directly to the General Assembly, it attached great importance to the inclusion in the report of a reference to the urgent need for the conclusion of a cocoa agreement, which had been stressed by the delegations of a number of producing countries in the debate.

AGENDA ITEM 44

Conversion to peaceful needs of the resources released by disarmament (A/6030; A/C.2/L.834 and Add.1 and 2):

- (a) Reports of the Economic and Social Council (A/5803, A/6003);
- (b) Reports of the Secretary-General (E/3898/Rev.1, E/3898/Add.1-6, E/3898/Rev.1/Add.1 and 2, E/4042 and Add.1)

3. Mr. KANO (Nigeria), introducing the draft resolution (A/C.2/L.834 and Add.1 and 2) on behalf of the sponsors, said that it seemed appropriate to bring up the subject of the potential economic advantages of disarmament at the moment when the Committee was about to conclude its review of the international economic situation. The Committee had had before it conclusive evidence that the developing countries' economic progress for the preceding two years was disappointing and it had approved a number of measures to mobilize the resources of the international community in order to accelerate the economic and social growth of the less fortunate two thirds of the world's population, measures which included the consolidation of the Special Fund and the Expanded Programme of Technical Assistance in a United Nations Development Programme and the strengthening of the World Campaign for Universal Literacy. Nevertheless, the international community was still justifiably concerned about the fact that, while enormous amounts were still devoted to military expenditure, millions of people were destitute.

4. It was generally accepted that general and complete disarmament would produce substantial savings for the major developed countries and thereby increase their capacity to aid the developing countries. Indeed, the former countries and many others had already initiated studies of the economic and social effects of the conversion to peaceful uses of the resources released by disarmament and had reported on their studies to the Secretary-General who transmitted them to the Economic and Social Council (E/3898/Rev.1, E/3898/Add.1-6, E/3898/Rev.1/Add.1 and 2, E/4042 and Add.1). The Secretary-General had, however, indicated that, useful as those national studies were, much more information was needed if the United Nations, through the Inter-Agency Committee on the Conversion to Peaceful Needs of the Resources Released by Disarmament, was to continue and extend its work on what could be achieved at the international level, and it was for that reason that the draft resolution expressed the hope that the Governments concerned would supply the information required.

5. The sponsors were sincerely appreciative of the support of the delegation of the United States, which had asked to be included as a sponsor; it had, however, been their intention to stress the special interest of the developing countries in the economic and social consequences of disarmament and they therefore wondered whether that delegation might wish to reconsider its position.

6. He hoped that the draft resolution, which was in the spirit of General Assembly resolution 1837 (XVII), would be approved unanimously.

7. Mr. ROOSEVELT (United States of America) said that his Government had undertaken a comprehensive programme of work on the economic consequences of disarmament and had made and would continue to make the results of its research available to the United Nations. A recent report of the United States Committee on The Economic Impact of Defense and Disarmament<sup>1/</sup> had concluded that disarmament would create no major problems for the national economy; his Government had accepted that conclusion and was prepared to use part of the savings of resources released through disarmament agreements under effective international control for the economic development of the developing countries. The United States intended to co-operate in providing the additional information required for the United Nations studies. His delegation had therefore wanted to indicate its support for the draft resolution (A/C.2/L.834/Add.1) by co-sponsoring it; but in deference to the wishes of the sponsors that co-sponsorship be confined to developing countries, it would withdraw that request.

8. Mr. KUMI (Ghana) said that his delegation attached great importance to the item under discussion because it bore a direct relation to the accelerated economic and social development of the developing countries. The lack of adequate progress in bringing science and technology to bear on the problems of the developing countries was due in part to the burden of armaments; large financial and human resources were wasted on the armaments race. Expenditure on armaments was almost equal to the aggregate national income of all the developing countries and about ten times their net capital formation. They were therefore not interested only in disarmament per se but also the benefits accruing from it.

9. He saw no difficulty in the developed countries making a substantial portion of the funds released by disarmament available for economic assistance. That would require not studies but the political will. However, other prior studies were needed, for instance on the adaptation of machinery producing armaments to peaceful uses and the mobilization for peaceful purposes of the intellectual resources of science and technology. His delegation appreciated the efforts made by the United Nations to study the consequences of disarmament and welcomed the establishment by the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination of the Inter-Agency Committee to assist in formulating a concerted programme of studies for the specialized agencies and its initiative

in preparing a questionnaire to assist Governments to provide adequate factual information.

10. Future studies should not be limited to the consequences of general and complete disarmament, but should be extended to problems resulting from partial arms control or reduction. Studies by Governments must be impartial and objective; the information supplied so far by some Governments had been largely based on studies by persons whose economic interests were likely to be adversely affected by disarmament. Furthermore, Governments should not use protracted studies as a pretext to delay actual disarmament. Disarmament and studies should be concurrent and rapid.

11. He hoped that the draft resolution would be adopted unanimously.

12. Mr. HOVEYDA (Iran) said that his delegation supported the draft resolution and would like to become a co-sponsor. He was glad to see from the Secretary-General's report (E/4042 and Add.1) that many States had provided considerable information on the subject. He trusted that the difficulties arising from disarmament during the period of conversion to peaceful needs mentioned in the report would not discourage Governments from decreasing expenditure on arms. It was important that the report should be made public and circulated as widely as possible.

13. Mr. M'BAYE (Guinea) expressed support for the draft resolution, but pointed out that its implementation was linked to political considerations. The estimated figure of \$120,000 million for total military expenditure was approximately equal to the income of the developing countries. Such enormous resources could further the industrialization of the developing countries, provide social capital, release young people to contribute to the economy and promote foreign investment. However, physical disarmament alone was not enough; mental and spiritual disarmament was also needed, especially in the case of the great Powers.

14. Mr. FRANZI (Italy) said that the draft resolution deserved unanimous approval. At the beginning of operative paragraph 3, he suggested that the word "Hopes" should be replaced by "Requests", which was stronger and better reflected the views expressed so far in the debate.

15. Mr. VIAUD (France) said that the idea of converting the resources released by disarmament to the needs of the less developed regions had met with a sympathetic response in all international bodies and should be followed up as far as possible. While supporting Council resolution 1087 (XXXIX), his delegation had voiced certain doubts based on the difficulty of making further studies at present. Moreover, the time for implementing additional measures was not yet ripe. Too much stress on the resources which could be converted to development purposes might slow down other efforts on behalf of the developing countries. As to operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, his country would try to develop the studies which it had already made, though he doubted whether any new information could be provided for the time being. It would therefore be more realistic to leave

<sup>1/</sup> The Economic Impact of Defense and Disarmament, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., July 1965.

the paragraph as an expression of hope, and he asked the Italian representative to withdraw his proposal. With those reservations, his delegation could vote for the draft resolution.

16. Mr. CHADHA (India) said that his delegation was co-sponsoring the draft resolution as it had always supported general and complete disarmament under international control. It therefore favoured further studies to stimulate interest in achieving lasting peace and security through disarmament. Tremendous resources could be released for peaceful purposes, although it was difficult to estimate what proportion could be devoted to the developing countries. The release of some \$120,000 million would have a substantial impact on the world economy and benefit both the developed and the developing countries. The United Nations should therefore urge the developed countries to increase their aid at the same time as seeking disarmament. It would be unrealistic to hope for a major increase until there was a prospect of achieving disarmament; nevertheless, studies of the conversion of resources to civilian uses should not be deferred, so that national and world economies would be disturbed as little as possible.

17. Although studies of the economic and social consequences of disarmament to India had not yet been made, they were unlikely to be large as the industries concerned were in the public sector and their products were relatively unsophisticated. India's defence expenditure stood at the level of 2 per cent of its gross national income as against 10 per cent or more for other countries. Because of present circumstances that percentage had been raised, but was still only 4 per cent. The Government regarded it as an unfortunate but necessary drain on its resources. Moreover, because of its policy of non-alignment, his country had not joined military groupings and had been obliged to bear the whole cost itself. Hence, it would derive proportionately greater benefits from disarmament than countries receiving substantial military aid. The population would obtain immediate relief; greater resources would be available for expanding production and personal consumption, living levels could be raised, and productive and disciplined manpower could be released to support the national economy. He therefore urged the continuation of studies of transitional and complete disarmament.

18. Mr. DATCU (Romania) said that the studies mentioned in the draft resolution would be useful as they would show that disarmament, with its beneficial consequences for economic and social progress, was both necessary and possible. Consequently, it would help to counter arguments against the very idea of disarmament. Most of the work done so far in the matter concerned the resources that would become available, how they should be used, and the need for intensifying efforts. Insufficient emphasis had been laid on the effects of converting intellectual resources to peaceful needs. The importance of scientific skills for technical progress was increasing, but in some countries scientific personnel was used for military purposes. As the consultative group had stated in paragraph 48 of its report on the economic

and social consequences of disarmament,<sup>2/</sup> if human ingenuity, in the space of a very few years, had so vastly increased man's powers of destruction, it should be able to make an equally massive contribution to peaceful and constructive achievement.

19. His delegation fully endorsed the draft resolution and would vote for it.

20. Mr. COMO (Albania) said that the attainment of general and complete disarmament was one of the basic aims of his country's socialist régime. His Government was continuing to make every effort to find a solution to the problem of disarmament on which the future happiness of all mankind depended. The interminable negotiations which had taken place within the United Nations during the past twenty years had not yielded a single positive result. Disarmament talks had been undermined by the United States which had constantly reinforced its nuclear armoury in preparation for a new world war. The United States was continually stepping up the arms race and multiplying its aggressive acts throughout the world. Such acts had been particularly flagrant in Viet-Nam, the Congo and the Dominican Republic. The accumulation of weapons was absorbing vast quantities of resources and constituted a serious obstacle to economic development.

21. The whole world demanded an end to the arms race which brought advantages only to imperialists and monopolists. The aggressive policy of the United States must be condemned and an effective agreement on general and complete disarmament achieved. Only after such an agreement was it appropriate to consider studies on the economic and social consequences of disarmament. At the moment, such studies would be likely to foster illusions which would lessen the vigilance of the peoples confronted with the aggressive plans of the United States. For that reason, his delegation was unable to support the draft resolution.

22. Mr. ALIANA (Pakistan) said his country had always supported the principle of disarmament and the conversion to peaceful needs of the resources thereby released. However, in existing circumstances, Pakistan found it impossible to reduce its military expenditure to the extent that it would have wished. Such expenditure was a heavy burden but so long as Pakistan's neighbours were increasing their own military might it must remain on its guard.

23. He suggested that operative paragraph 5 of the draft resolution should read "Decides that this item be placed on the provisional agenda of the twenty-first session of the General Assembly".

24. Miss MISKE (Mauritania) said the developing countries were interested more in genuine disarmament and genuine resources than in studies of theoretical resources released by theoretical disarmament.

25. If the big Powers were really sincere in their desire for disarmament, they should make available immediately a given percentage of their military expenditure for transfer to the developing countries and they should increase that percentage each year. In

<sup>2/</sup> United Nations publication, Sales No.: 62.IX.1.

that way, real and progressive disarmament would be achieved. Her delegation would vote for the draft resolution in the hope that abstract studies of disarmament would soon give place to real achievements.

26. Sir Keith UNWIN (United Kingdom) noted that the draft resolution appeared to be concerned mainly with national studies of the economic and social consequences of disarmament. The sponsors were right to emphasize such studies which were much more useful than hypothetical studies of international disarmament.

27. His Government had studied the problem carefully and had concluded that the adjustment problems of disarmament would not differ greatly from the problems of any major change in the composition of final demand. One of the biggest problems would be the redeployment of unskilled labour, but his Government was confident that manpower problems could be overcome and that the economy would benefit from converting the resources now devoted to armaments to more productive uses. There would be certain changes in the economic pattern and governmental intervention might be needed in some cases, but the most constructive course was to develop planning machinery sufficiently strong and flexible to effect any major structural adjustments from whatever cause. His Government's planning machinery had been further strengthened by the establishment of the Department of Economic Affairs whose work included the formulation of an economic development plan for the period up to 1970.

28. Although the United Kingdom believed that the problem could best be tackled on the domestic front and shared the Secretary-General's doubts concerning further international studies, it was ready to continue to supply the necessary data to the United Nations and had co-operated actively in the studies made by the Economic Commission for Europe. The United Kingdom would support any activity that was likely to give a useful return on the resources invested.

29. The United Kingdom was also deeply concerned with the effects of disarmament on the fortunes of the developing countries. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development had recognized that a significant portion of resources released by disarmament should be allocated for the promotion of economic development in developing countries. Any substantial improvement in the external financial position of the United Kingdom would ease its position in other respects and would facilitate an increase in overseas aid. Nevertheless, a certain amount of leeway must be made up before the United Kingdom reached the point of allocating additional sums for the developing countries.

30. His country would support the draft resolution but opposed the Italian amendment to operative paragraph 3.

31. Mr. BELEOKEN (Cameroon) shared the concern voiced by the Nigerian representative in introducing the resolution and expressed his willingness to support that text. He would be glad to become a sponsor.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.