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MEETING

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(Mauritius).

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1. Mr. MEGUID (Egypt): Whether it is believed that much has been accomplished in the field of arms control or claimed that not enough has been achieved, the fact remains that the road towards general and complete disarmament is a long and arduous one and makes necessary great mutual understanding and many reciprocal adjustments.

2. From the very beginning disarmament negotiations were gravely handicapped, if not altogether obstructed, because the victors of the Second World War chose to entrust their security to huge military machines having nuclear armaments as their main component. The security sought by one meant insecurity for another; the attempts to redress what appeared to be an unfavourable balance in armament provoked the nuclear arms race.

3. The breakthrough in favour of meaningful negotiations came in 1961, when the Soviet Union and the United States agreed to a set of principles to initiate and guide disarmament deliberations and ensure their continuity.

4. The arms control agreements that emerged from the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and later from the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament were undoubtedly important and welcome achievements. They formed, in a political sense, a most positive contribution, since they paved the way towards a détente between the two super-Powers and their respective allies. Their effect, however, where issues of global security and arms control are concerned, remains discouraging, particularly if we compare the level of armament of all countries in 1961 with that of today. We now realize that it is the partial scope of those agreements and the consequent non-adherence thereto by all countries that put severe limitations on their effectiveness as global disarmament measures.

5. Today, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks cover the needs exclusively of the two nuclear super-Powers. Their

success so far augurs well for the future. The forthcoming Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe is to seek further answers to that continent's particular concerns. We have little doubt that a meeting of the minds will eventually occur.

6. At the same time the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament will be coping with an impasse which is more apparent than ever on the issue of a comprehensive test ban. The prospects for a comprehensive chemical weapons ban are not bright either. Other disarmament issues before the Conference still appear to remain dormant.

7. Even a cursory glance at the international scene which forms the background to present arms control negotiations clearly shows that the world outside the two super-Power blocs has not stood still. Old security preoccupations which have not yet received attention have swelled to bigger proportions. They are still awaiting our attention.

8. Two nuclear weapon States, permanent members of the Security Council, continue to grow in stature, in weight and thus in importance. They cannot remain outside all disarmament negotiations. Their views must be considered. Their contribution is needed.

9. We believe that the time has come to deal with disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament, in a wider context than hitherto and to begin the process of initiating an era of universal and reciprocal restraints and adjustments based on the interdependent security needs and arms control expectations of all the countries of the world. This, in essence, is why Egypt supports the convening of a world disarmament conference open to all States.

10. Egypt has, in accordance with General Assembly resolution 2833 (XXVI), communicated its position relating to the convening of a world disarmament conference to the Secretary-General. It is contained in the report of the Secretary-General [A/8817], and I need not go again over the details of our answer. However, some clarifications of our views might be useful, particularly in the light of what has emerged so far from our debate in this Committee.

11. Egypt expects the world disarmament conference to give a renewed and globally shared impetus to multilateral arms control negotiations. Such an impetus should be of a nature and scope to provide a clear directive that would steer those deliberations towards the achievement of meaningful arms control and disarmament measures, above all in the nuclear field. At the same time, a close look will have to be given to the degree of functioning of the United Nations collective security system devised in the Charter, which, together with disarmament, is the mainstay of the preservation of international peace and security.

12. In this respect, the conference will have to bear in mind that, if for some countries certain measures of disarmament generate security, for others a strengthening of international security and the effectiveness of the United Nations to remove threats to peace and suppress acts of aggression render possible the undertaking of progressive measures towards disarmament.

13. This, we believe, is a modest though vitally important objective. It does not lie outside our possibilities to achieve

it. It was done before, in 1961, on a bilateral level. It could be done again—this time, however, on a universal basis.

14. As shown by the report of the Secretary-General comprising the answers of 34 countries and by the many statements heard so far, whether in the plenary meetings of the General Assembly or here in its First Committee, there does exist an overwhelming agreement on the necessity to convene a world disarmament conference that should give renewed and much-needed stimulus to disarmament negotiations. At the same time, a wide range of opinions has been offered as to how this could best be done. These must be considered in detail.

15. The apprehensions and doubts that some of us voiced must also be looked into. This would necessitate the setting up of a preparatory committee whose task it would be to channel all these views into one main stream to which we all could agree. Undoubtedly this cannot be done by the First Committee as has been suggested. There are barely over two weeks left in which to consider all the arms control items on our agenda. Once these two weeks have passed, we will not be meeting and discussing disarmament issues for another year. It is, therefore, necessary to concentrate and unify our efforts in another forum specially set up for that purpose.

16. We have reached a highly delicate and complex crossroad in arms control negotiations. We hope that a new, universally acceptable, conceptual framework for such deliberations can be set up. Unless we do so, we will come here next year, and the year thereafter, discussing the same issues and producing the same resolutions while disarmament, in a universal sense, remains at a complete standstill.

17. The success of a world disarmament conference will depend on what the preparatory committee will be able to achieve. This committee will have to meet for as long as it takes to agree on a common stand. We are aware of the importance, and indeed the necessity, of the participation therein of all the five nuclear Powers. We hope that this is possible, since the world at large, and particularly the third world, would not wish to be deprived of their contribution towards a common cause of such vital importance.

18. I wish to conclude by recalling that the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade in 1961, recommended the convening of a world disarmament conference with a view to setting in motion the process of general disarmament. That was 11 years ago, and this call has been repeated ever since, up to 1972 when they met in Georgetown. Has not the time come for a positive response to be given to this appeal?

19. I should like to reserve the right of my delegation to intervene again if it deems necessary.

20. Mr. DOSUMU-JOHNSON (Liberia): Almost everyone who has been concerned with human affairs since the beginning of recorded time has given some thought to the search for a substitute for war systems and has manifested a genuine desire for peace. Various methods in modern times have been attempted for formulating an international process to prevent or settle disputes between nations. Workable methods relating to individual citizens were

found, but the mechanics of an instrument of a planetary scope have never been successful; military alliances, balances of power, the League of Nations, regional defence pacts, all in turn have failed, leaving the crucible of war as the only instrument.

21. While giant strides have been made in science and technology, war has taken on new horrors with the invention of nuclear weapons and to the extent that every new source from which man has increased material comfort in this world has been used to diminish his chances of survival.

22. To work for peace and security is our task; but we need to understand the national will to power and the paranoid delusions of leaders. It is not enough to encourage technologists to look at human problems. What we need is a technology of behaviour, a reconstructed view of goals and priorities.

23. The fate of men and nations is determined by the values which govern their decisions. This implies a spiritual renaissance and an improvement of the human character that will synchronize with our unparalleled advance in the material and cultural sectors of the past 2000 years. If we wish to enjoy properly the fruits of materialism, we must be imbued with the fruits of the spirit. Of course, some of the architects of our world do not believe in man's dependence on a Supreme Being, on some being over and beyond man. They see man as coming from nothing, believing that to nothing he will return. Everything in the universe, including man, is governed by primordial laws; otherwise, our adventures into space would have been impossible.

24. Disarmament is the most important problem today. Although the founding fathers of the United Nations in 1945 did not make specific reference to the subject in the formulation of the Charter, it is nevertheless the first aim of the United Nations: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war". Consequently, it has headed the list of items to be discussed at every session of the Assembly.

25. The invention of the atomic bomb aroused world leaders from their slumber to adopt the first resolution of the United Nations in January 1946, setting up the Atomic Energy Commission to study the problems raised by this discovery. Then came the Baruch Plan to own, operate and manage all atomic fuel and facilities and to license all dangerous ones for only peaceful purposes. This resulted in a confrontation between the major Powers. It became apparent, as a consequence, that a majority of votes does not necessarily remove deadlock or promote big Power agreement.

26. Inasmuch as we are desirous of quick solutions to the problem of disarmament, let it be borne in mind that, in this area especially, the freely negotiated concurrence of certain Powers is essential. Everything feasible, therefore, must be done at this stage to secure full agreement before the conference is convened, otherwise it will become embroiled in sterile debates, extravagant rhetoric and cliché opinions. To ensure success, I think that we should henceforth put all the permanent members of the Security Council in the super-Power category in order to assuage the

pride of nations and cause the intensity of their rivalries to abate.

27. Notwithstanding the many cold-war road blocks between 1946 and 1960, we slowly but surely moved ahead toward the détente of today. In 1959 the Antarctic Treaty, reserving that territory for peaceful uses only, was signed. In 1963 the establishment of the hot line between Moscow and Washington to reduce the risk of war by miscalculation became a fait accompli. In the same year, 1963, the USSR and the United States reached agreement in private talks to ban nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction from outer space. The détentes between China and the United States, between the USSR and the United States and between Japan and China are evidence of mutual accommodations. The achievements in international relations since 1960 are too well known to be detailed here.

28. We are all familiar with the strides that have been taken in the field of disarmament at the United Nations. Our congratulations go to all individuals and institutions on their contributions in this field, particularly the members of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, whose presence at the meetings, if nothing more, deserves our commendation.

29. Progress in the coming years will depend to a large extent upon success in the implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks now going on. The urgency of the situation demands that immediate steps be taken to convene the disarmament conference as a stop-gap in the interests of both States with the nuclear capability to develop their own stockpiles and small nations which may be frightened into seeking development and protection on a regional basis, leading to joint nuclear production for peaceful purposes.

30. Acting under General Assembly resolution 2833 (XXVI), the Secretary-General canvassed the views of Governments on the idea of a world disarmament conference. The Liberian Government gave unequivocal support to such a conference. In its reply to the Secretary-General's letter [*see A/8817*], it said, *inter alia*:

"One of the principal purposes of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security, as called for in Article 1, paragraph 1, of the Charter. To this end, the objective of the Conference should be to adopt realistic and effective measures aimed at eliminating all types of nuclear weapons and achieving general and complete disarmament under effective international control. It is in the interest of mankind that the spiralling arms race be brought to an immediate halt. A number of achievements in the field of disarmament have been witnessed in the decade of the 1960s, thus providing proof that progress in the elimination of nuclear weapons and general and complete disarmament is within the grasp of the international community.

"It is the view of the Government of Liberia that in pursuance of this effort to update procedures and the machinery dealing with the question of disarmament, it would seem desirable to maintain the one organ and create another body to replace the Disarmament Com-

mission presently handling the problem of disarmament, that is to say, the General Assembly and the World Disarmament Conference with the latter body's membership being opened to 'all States' for participation in the work of this body.

"The provisional agenda for the World Disarmament Conference should be drawn up to include all aspects of the disarmament question and should be detailed and comprehensive."

Referring to the site of the conference, it went on to say:

"As the question of disarmament is of paramount interest to the international community, it would seem desirable that the venue of the conference should be the Headquarters of the United Nations, which would thus enable fuller attention and interest to be focused on the work of the Commission. The fact that all Missions accredited to the United Nations are seated at Headquarters means that much more interest could be generated by the entire United Nations membership in the task and accomplishment associated with the question of disarmament. In addition, the holding of meetings of the World Disarmament Conference at Headquarters would curtail costs both to the Secretariat and to Member States, many of whom may accredit the staff of their Mission in New York as their representatives to the conference. . . .

"Taking into consideration the need for adequate preparations for the conference and the problems involved, it is the view of the Government of Liberia that the conference should be planned for 1974 for a duration of three months. . . .

"It would seem desirable that the preparatory work of the conference should be handled by a body of the United Nations membership on the basis of geographical representation. A membership of about 40 would be adequate for this purpose. Documentation on the subject-matter of the conference, which would be extremely necessary, should be provided by the Secretariat. . . .

"The World Disarmament Conference should be considered an important body of the United Nations. On the basis of its work in 1974, the General Assembly could consider the desirability of future meetings of the conference and the intervals at which such meetings should be convened."

31. In his book *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom*,¹ the eminent Soviet physicist, Andrei Sakharov, emphasizing the dangers arising out of disagreements between the super-Powers, writes: "If mankind is to get away from the brink it must overcome its division. Estrangement of the world's super-Powers must end."

32. It will be a travesty as regards the security of small States if such a conference does not involve the participation of all the permanent members of the Security Council. I think the small States hold the key to such participation. It is up to them to convince their nuclear friends, the five

super-Powers, that genuine friendship dictates their participation in such a conference with a view to ensuring their sovereignty and territorial integrity. Every independent nuclear Power is, in our opinion, a super-Power and is individually responsible for the success of the conference. The super-Powers can do more for the third world by participation in the conference than by staying out of it.

33. Underdeveloped States need such a conference to guide their future destiny against imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism. In their inability to manufacture even the arms needed for police protection, they need the collective goodwill of the super-Powers—the United States, the USSR, China, the United Kingdom and France—to shield them from external abuse and nuclear holocaust.

34. To refrain from participation will not induce other States to destroy their stockpiles. Continued unilateral testing will only aggravate fear and increase tension, to the disadvantage of non-nuclear States. Now is the opportunity for our friends to support the Declaration adopted by the Conference of Foreign Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries at Georgetown in August 1972.

35. Because some States react to world events as a society rather than as a State, and some as a State rather than as a society, we build road blocks to understanding of the dynamics of peace and security. Some of us are dubious about limitation agreements in the face of great-Power rivalry and the jealousy of small Powers; yet we are all hopeful of speedy limitation, to free our meagre resources for saving lives in our respective countries. The important facet of human behaviour is, however, psychological, and it pervades our sleeping and waking thoughts. A disarmament conference aimed at limitation will not have an easy task, but with perseverance, courage and patience it may produce a *modus vivendi* and an opportunity for a cleansing and a rededication of national spirit towards a better and more peaceful world, providing hope for the ultimate removal of the nuclear sword of Damocles which has long disturbed the peaceful repose of leaders of States.

36. Membership in the United Nations implies constructive accommodation and creative relationships with all States on a basis of equality. In aiding the growth of others we enhance our own national growth. In an atmosphere of collective solidarity, no nation should be sceptical of another. In total and complete disarmament predicated on mutual confidence rests the peace, progress and technological development of our world. Recent social trends involving the great industrial States dictate the imperative need for nations to live together regardless of differences in the fundamental beliefs, ideologies and political systems under which they operate. The alternative to coexistence is co-destruction. Friendship in theory must be translated into friendship in practice, for the common good.

37. The Liberian delegation is flexible on the venue and the other details of the conference. All we earnestly ask is that it be carefully prepared, that the Disarmament Affairs Division of the United Nations be expanded, and that the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament be continued.

38. Seizing the opportunity created by the cessation of the international cold war, with its divisive effects on peace

¹ A. D. Sakharov, *Progress, Coexistence and Intellectual Freedom* (New York, W. W. Norton & Company, Inc., 1968).

efforts, it behoves us as a matter of benevolent self-interest to impose voluntary self-restraint and a willingness to accommodate our divergent national interests in peaceful association with all nations on the basis of mutual respect, rather than to resort to ideological confrontation. This, in our view, is in essence the spirit and guideline of the twenty-seventh session of the General Assembly of the United Nations.

39. Africa has a great stake in disarmament. Confidence is the key to such a conference. While it is the prerogative of each State to do as it pleases within its national conception, as Members of a world organization we are committed to the well-being of the world, within self-imposed limitations on the exercise of our sovereignty.

40. It is our considered judgement—and we should have no reason to think otherwise—that all the five permanent members of the Security Council will participate fully in the conference, if and when it convenes, as an earnest indication of their genuine interest in the security of the third world, so obviating some of the extravagant speculations engendered by misplaced confidence.

41. We reserve the right to speak again on the relevant draft resolution, if it becomes necessary to do so. In the meantime, permit me to say that the success of all the items on our agenda hinges on what we do with the general and complete disarmament issue. It is the kingpin of all United Nations efforts.

42. The necessary ingredients of coexistence—wisdom, precision, clear thinking and a readiness to accommodate and compromise—are, I am sure, qualities possessed by every member of this Committee; and I hazard the guess that they will spare no efforts in placing their collective talents at the disposal of the United Nations for the general good of the world. It is my further wish that they will not permit the forthcoming disarmament debate to degenerate into divisiveness and ideological or ethnic disagreement on questions of priority.

43. Mr. AL-JAMALI (Oman): My delegation has listened with great interest to the speeches delivered in this Committee at the 1872nd meeting by the representatives of the Soviet Union and the United States of America. We have noted with great satisfaction and hope the keen and sincere desire of those great Powers resolutely to progress on the path of disarmament and strategic arms control. Nothing is more gratifying to all of us than to hear those two representatives discussing their mutual desire to reduce tension and the threat of international holocaust by means of disarmament and control over the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

44. Recently humanity has witnessed with great joy the agreement that has been reached between the United States and the Soviet Union to limit strategic nuclear weapons, to supplement the other prior agreements to curb the arms race and prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This has indeed been a great achievement towards the realization of mankind's long-cherished dream of peace and tranquillity. In fact, it can be said that mankind is today on the threshold of witnessing a major relaxation of tension in the relations among the big Powers. We are confident that if

these relations are further strengthened by co-operation in other fields the chances of eternal peace on this planet will be significantly fortified.

45. The representative of the United States, it seems to me, does not want us to bask in an illusion of the certainty of a disarmament conference in the near future. The United States representative believes that the best way to achieve the common goals of all humanity in this matter is through various agreements and negotiations, whereas the representative of the Soviet Union favours the convening of a global conference on disarmament. It is our conviction that the gap between these two positions can be bridged by the strong desire and deep commitment that they have already shown to realize their noble objectives.

46. The representative of the United States has said that the United Nations bears the primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security. My delegation firmly believes that to shift the responsibility for securing peace on to the shoulders of the United Nations is somewhat unfair. The United Nations cannot function in the most effective manner without much support and co-operation from those Powers that can give real assistance in making it an effective organization, having a real say in all matters that at present confront mankind.

47. Great progress has been achieved towards the goal of freeing the world from another holocaust.

48. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the limited test-ban Treaty,² the outer space Treaty³ and the agreements on strategic arms limitation and other measures which have been taken to reduce the risk of nuclear conflagration, have all been major landmarks in the fulfilment of the long-cherished dream for eternal peace among nations.

49. Since the representatives of the two major Powers have evinced their keen desire to make progress in maintaining peace in our troubled world and to enhance the prestige of the United Nations, what is it then that prevents them from achieving those lofty goals and thereby alleviating the plight of the smaller nations? We may ask ourselves now, what prevents these two major Powers from coming to an understanding in order to dispel any suspicions that may be haunting the smaller nations regarding the agreement to convene such a conference as long as there is a genuine desire for it. But before a conference of this nature is considered, there is a vital issue that must be settled once and for all.

50. There are still in this world people who are struggling valiantly to obtain independence and freedom, people who are being denied these basic human rights in Asia and Africa and other parts of our world. There are people who are engaged in armed struggle against their oppressors and tormentors. What is to be done with these people? Should we tell them that they should forfeit their freedom for the

² Treaty Banning Nuclear Weapon Tests in the Atmosphere in Outer Space and Under Water.

³ Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies.

sake of the peace that we all want? Should we tell them to lay down their arms and live peacefully with their oppressors?

51. Global disarmament could be a great achievement towards the realization of the cherished dream of humanity to obtain peace. Every nation wants to live and let live, without being subjected to aggression. But the issue of other peoples striving for emancipation from all kinds of

colonialism must, of all things, be settled to the satisfaction of these people, if any real progress is to be achieved in the obtaining of peace and international harmony.

52. I thank the Chairman for having given us this opportunity to address the Committee on a topic of the greatest concern to my Government and to all humanity.

The meeting rose at 11.35 a.m.