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Chairman: Mr. Omar Abdel Hamid ADEEL (Sudan).

AGENDA ITEM 90

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (A/5197, A/5200, DC/203, A/C.1/867, A/C.1/871, A/C.1/875, A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.317) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. NYOUNDOU (Gabon) said that the issue of war or peace could not be left for the nuclear Powers to resolve. To be able to carry out their economic and social development programmes, the smaller nations needed to be sure that they were safe from the possibility of a global catastrophe. They were entitled, therefore, to take their part in any efforts to bring about general and complete disarmament. Disarmament could not be achieved in a day. No country could be expected to disarm unless it was sure that its neighbours were doing the same. It was advisable to proceed by stages and at the same time to reduce armaments, the means of delivery of nuclear weapons and the size of armed forces, to limit the manufacture of new weapons and to halt the production of fissionable material except for peaceful purposes. An agreement to that effect would involve certain problems, such as the difficulty of distinguishing military missiles from those intended for space research and of ensuring the destruction of secret stockpiles and launching sites. International verification was therefore essential. If the great Powers were to accept such verification, the organization responsible for it would have to include representatives of those Powers, of States selected by them and of the smaller countries, on a basis of equitable geographical distribution; and the United Nations would have a primary part to play. With the additional guarantee provided by the United Nations, no nation need fear that inspection would lead to spying. The weapons would be destroyed by the country concerned, perhaps at some demolition centre, as the United Kingdom representative had said. Due priority must be respected, however, and the first aim must be to end nuclear tests. Recent statements by the President of the United States and the Chairman

of the Council of Ministers of the USSR gave grounds for hope in that respect.

2. The work of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament at Geneva had shown how great the obstacles to disarmament were, but the universal desire for peace would be sufficient to overcome them. Once that was done, the enormous funds currently spent for military purposes and the millions of men serving in the armed forces of the world would be available for programmes of economic, social and cultural development, both national and international. There was no basis for fears that disarmament would lead to depression; the group of ten experts from both sides appointed by the Secretary-General to study the economic and social consequences of disarmament had reached that conclusion unanimously.^{1/} In any case, military expenditure served little purpose in the modern world, since thanks to the United Nations, conquest by force of arms was now unthinkable.

3. Gabon supported the draft resolution submitted by Bolivia, Brazil and Chile (A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1) despite the fact that to prohibit nuclear tests and weapons in two continents only might imply that they were freely permitted in other parts of the globe. The reason was that it viewed the denuclearization of Africa and Latin America as a first step towards the denuclearization of the whole world. It would give its opinion on the United Arab Republic's draft resolution (A/C.1/L.317) when it had had time to study it.

4. Mr. MALITZA (Romania) said that in recent years it had become evident that general and complete disarmament was the only road to lasting peace and international security. Mankind would never be satisfied with a peace that was merely a pause between wars. Recent events in the Caribbean had brought home the fact that thermo-nuclear war was a real possibility, which would remain as long as the means of waging such a war existed. Only by eliminating the machinery of war completely could a permanent way out be found. The arms race not only conflicted with the general desire for peace, but entailed the sacrifice of vast human and material resources which could be used for peaceful purposes. It was vital to find some means of freeing mankind from the threat of nuclear war as quickly as possible; for that reason only radical measures deserved consideration. That was the position which the Romanian delegation had constantly defended, both in the Assembly and in the Eighteen-Nation Committee. The primary aim of any disarmament programme must be to prohibit and destroy nuclear weapons from the very first stage, thus removing the danger of nuclear war immediately.

5. The great virtue of the Soviet draft treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control was that it met that fundamental

^{1/} See *Economic and Social Consequences of Disarmament* (United Nations publication, Sales No.: 62.IX.1), para. 195.

requirement. The nuclear danger could be eliminated either by destroying nuclear weapons themselves or by destroying the means of delivering them to their targets. The Soviet Government had originally proposed the first course, but had met with opposition from the Western Powers. It had then accepted the proposal made in 1959 by France^{2/} for the destruction of the means of delivery; however large the stockpiles of nuclear weapons and however great their power, they were useless without vehicles to carry them. It was the existence of such vehicles, and above all of intercontinental missiles, that now made it possible to start a war merely by pressing a button. Once they had been eliminated—by the end of the two-year first stage—the weapons themselves could be destroyed. The Western Powers, however, had refused to agree to the destruction of all means of delivery in the first stage, and the Soviet Government had accordingly proposed that during that stage the United States and the Soviet Union itself should retain a limited number of missiles and anti-missiles (A/C.1/867). That was a proposal of exceptional importance and removed any grounds for the United States objection that destruction of the means of delivery would leave it without adequate means of self-defence.

6. But, as was stated in paragraph 5 of the joint statement of agreed principles for disarmament negotiations submitted by the Soviet Union and the United States (A/4879), it was essential to ensure that neither side gained an advantage during the implementation of a disarmament treaty. To preserve the balance, therefore, foreign military bases must be abandoned and troops stationed abroad must be withdrawn simultaneously with the elimination of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons. The security of both sides would then be guaranteed. The other first-stage measures provided for in the Soviet draft, such as reductions in the armed forces strengths and in conventional armaments, would likewise lessen the danger of war and help to increase international confidence.

7. The United States disarmament plan, in contrast to the Soviet proposals, provided for only a 30 per cent reduction in the means of delivering nuclear weapons during the first stage, not for their complete destruction. As a consequence, the danger of nuclear war would persist during the three-year first stage proposed by the United States. According to the United States Secretary of Defense, the United States planned to increase its stockpile of strategic missiles within the next five years to a total of 1,687, capable of carrying nuclear warheads with a total explosive power of about 2,000 megatons. Thus, at the end of the first stage of the United States plan, the United States would still have 1,181 strategic missiles and the ability to deliver nuclear weapons totalling 1,400 megatons. Furthermore, even at the end of the second stage, six years after the entry into force of the agreement, the totals would be 590 missiles and 700 megatons, which would still be sufficient to destroy the entire world.

8. In addition, the United States proposals completely ignored the question of eliminating foreign military bases. It would be unrealistic to suppose that any State could agree to eliminate the means of delivering nuclear weapons during the first stage of disarmament if the 300 United States bases, posts and stations

in the territory of various foreign States were not eliminated at the same time. The United States should take a position consistent with its attitude during the recent crisis and liquidate its foreign military bases, including the missile launching platforms directed against the socialist States. Under the Soviet draft treaty, both foreign military bases and the means of delivering nuclear weapons would be eliminated during the first stage, while nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction would be liquidated during the second stage. Thus, the danger of a nuclear war would be completely removed within four years after the treaty's entry into force.

9. Notwithstanding the statements made by certain Western representatives, the socialist countries regarded control as an essential part of the process of general and complete disarmament. They felt that each disarmament measure should be accompanied by the strictest international control. The nature and extent of such control, as well as the powers conferred on the control body, would depend on the nature and extent of the disarmament measures carried out during each stage. That approach, which was embodied in the Soviet disarmament proposals, was in complete accord with the joint statement of agreed principles. At the same time, the socialist countries were opposed to any measures for control over armaments, which would represent merely a means of obtaining military information for purposes other than disarmament. That was clearly the purpose of the United States proposals, which provided, among other things, for control over atomic production during the first stage even though there were to be no effective measures of nuclear disarmament at that point. Thus the United States was still demanding, in effect, a ton of control for each gramme of disarmament.

10. In an effort to give the impression that it had abandoned its insistence on control without disarmament, the United States had proposed, under stage I of its draft (A/C.1/875), in the section relating to the international disarmament organization, a system of zonal inspection under which the parties to the treaty would divide their territory into an agreed number of appropriate zones and at the beginning of each step of disarmament would submit to the international disarmament organization a declaration stating the total level of armaments, forces, and specified types of activities subject to verification within each zone. That proposal was clearly intended to provide the United States with information on military objectives in the Soviet Union. The Western Powers should abandon their policy of deliberately using the issue of control as a means of preventing progress towards disarmament.

11. His Government was in favour not only of the earliest possible achievement of general and complete disarmament, but also of any other measures that would promote that end by reducing international tension and strengthening confidence between States. It attached particular importance to the establishment of denuclearized zones in various parts of the world. Precedents already existed in the Antarctic Treaty of 1 December 1959 and in General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI), which called for the denuclearization of Africa. Moreover, a draft resolution providing for the denuclearization of Latin America (A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1) had been introduced at the current session. His delegation would also favour the establishment of denuclearized zones on the continent of Europe, where two world wars had begun during the twentieth century.

^{2/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Fourteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 70, document A/C.1/821.

He recalled that in 1957 his Government had proposed the conclusion of a regional agreement among the Balkan States.

12. At its fourteenth session, the General Assembly had adopted resolution 1378 (XIV) describing the question of general and complete disarmament as the most important one facing the world; two years later, it had given its endorsement, in resolution 1722 (XVI), to the agreed principles for disarmament negotiations to take place in the Eighteen-Nation Committee. The Assembly should now take a further step and lay down directives regarding measures to be taken during the first stage of general and complete disarmament. The highest priority should be given to the elimination of the means of delivering nuclear weapons, the liquidation of foreign military bases, the withdrawal of troops stationed in foreign countries, and measures to prevent nuclear war. He recalled in that connexion that at the tenth Pugwash Conference, held at London in September 1962, scientists from thirty-six countries, including the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom, had urged that the process of general and complete disarmament should begin with the elimination of the means of delivering weapons of mass destruction and with measures to solve the problems resulting from the presence of troops and bases in foreign territory.

13. Mr. KOIRALA (Nepal) said that the survival of mankind depended on a solution being found to the disarmament problem. His delegation felt that although the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament had not produced an agreement on general and complete disarmament, it had nevertheless created a healthy atmosphere for further negotiations. The fact that a stalemate had been prevented was due in large measure to the presence of the eight non-aligned nations, who had played a significant part in bridging the gap between the two Power blocs.

14. The United States and Soviet disarmament proposals both provided for the complete elimination, at different stages, of weapons of mass destruction, conventional armaments, foreign bases and military installations, and of military forces except at the minimum level needed for internal security; they disagreed, however, on the number of stages required and on the duration of the disarmament process. His delegation believed that the central principle in the negotiations should be the maintenance of an equal balance of military forces at every stage of the disarmament process. The Soviet plan called for the total elimination in the first stage of all means of delivery of nuclear weapons and of foreign bases, and for the withdrawal of troops from foreign territories; the Western Powers believed that that plan would eliminate the military forces on which their strength and strategy were based. The Soviet Union, on the other hand, felt that the Western plan would mean the maintenance of bases around the USSR, coupled with a reduction in Soviet power to launch long-distance rockets. While he would not suggest specific methods for settling the disagreements, he wished to state that although the interests of all nations were at stake in the disarmament issue, it was primarily the responsibility of the two major nuclear Powers to try to arrive at

a decision in a spirit of compromise. One compromise proposal, that a strictly limited number of certain types of missiles should be retained by the United States and the Soviet Union in their national territories until the end of the second stage, had been made by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Assembly's general debate (1127th plenary meeting).

15. Another obstacle to progress in the disarmament negotiations had been the issue of control and verification. Control as envisaged by the United Kingdom and the United States was in the Soviet Union's view only a means of conducting military espionage. The Western Powers, on the other hand, viewed with suspicion the Soviet proposal, which called for verification only of weapons which were destroyed. His delegation did not feel itself competent to pass judgement on that highly technical issue, but it considered that disarmament and control should go together, and that the present atmosphere of short-range political expediency and mutual distrust reduced the incentive to negotiate seriously. The recent General Assembly resolution (1762 (XVII)) urging the great Powers to achieve agreement on the cessation of nuclear testing by 1 January 1963 was at least one vital step toward the goal of general and complete disarmament.

16. The delegation of Nepal welcomed draft resolution A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1, calling for the denuclearization of Latin America, because it believed that the prevention of any wider dissemination of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons was one of the most important steps towards general and complete disarmament. For the same reason, his delegation had voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI), calling upon Member States to respect the continent of Africa as a denuclearized zone; and it would also welcome a proposal for the expansion of denuclearized zones to the continent of Asia. In that connexion he agreed with the Indian representatives, who had stated in the First Committee and in the Eighteen-Nation Committee that all militarily significant States must join in the process of disarmament and that the disarmament negotiations must be meaningful and realistic. His delegation interpreted those statements to mean that the People's Republic of China must participate in the disarmament negotiations, a view which it firmly supported. It also supported draft resolution A/C.1/L.317, which urged the parties concerned and the Eighteen-Nation Committee to take up the matter of general and complete disarmament in a spirit of understanding and urgency. Lastly, it hoped that France would reconsider its position and resume participation in the disarmament negotiations.

17. The recent Cuban crisis had shown the reality of the nuclear danger and had proved the usefulness of the United Nations, through which the large nations could act to avert a serious crisis. Accordingly, his delegation trusted that the First Committee would call upon the Eighteen-Nation Committee to resume its work as soon as possible, and it hoped that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would be able to report an agreement on general and complete disarmament long before the opening of the General Assembly's eighteenth session.

The meeting rose at 4.20 p.m.