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AGENDA ITEM 106

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (*continued*)
(A/5976, A/5986-DC/227)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Lord CHALFONT (United Kingdom) said that the Secretary-General had drawn the Committee's attention (1355th meeting) to the vital importance and the pressing urgency of the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons and to the new opportunity before the Committee to make progress towards an agreement on that subject. Over the years the Committee had been led to consider mostly the technicalities of the problem and to isolate it as though it were an end in itself. People who were otherwise reasonable and responsible were even wondering aloud whether a non-proliferation treaty was worth having and whether the nations would not be better advised to devote their time and energy to building bigger defensive walls around themselves. Others cynically suggested that the world would be a safer place when every country had its own nuclear weapons. He had no doubt that they were dangerously wrong. Even if the spread of nuclear weapons did lead to the final catastrophe of nuclear war—and there was at least a mathematical probability that it would—it could only lead to a world that would be an affront to the human spirit, a world in which human relations would be dominated by hate and fear and the constant threat of unimaginable destruction. But that was not enough to prevent people from taking the steps that would lead to such a world of dreadful anarchy. The Committee's task, therefore, was to seek the forms of international agreements that would on the one hand prevent those first steps being taken, and on the other, so change the pattern of international relations that the incentives for taking them would progressively disappear. That was why non-proliferation could not be considered by itself. The existing balance of power, which rested on the sovereign nation-State and military alliances, did not justify any country relying on another for its own defence, since alliances were unstable. Only a disarmed world, subject to the international rule of law, would see the end of the pursuit of

power through its latest manifestation, the nuclear weapon.

2. It had to be borne in mind, therefore, that non-proliferation and all the other measures of disarmament were interdependent; but that did not mean they could not be dealt with in separate agreements. His Government was convinced that the essential and most important task was to reach agreement immediately, before it was too late, on measures to prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons. Such an agreement would buy time in which the disarmament process could be started and the tensions and suspicions which led people to want to acquire nuclear weapons could be removed.

3. The United Kingdom Government's position on the question of non-proliferation and the military arrangements of the Western alliance was the following: it would take no action that was not compatible with non-proliferation, but it was equally determined to safeguard the cohesion and the strength of the Western alliance until the process of general disarmament under international supervision and control had begun. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had done much to assure the stability not only of Europe but also of most of the world; one had only to cast one's mind back to the days before it came into being to know how true that was. The Western Powers were not prepared to negotiate on the internal arrangements of NATO; that was a matter for its members. They were, however, ready to set out clearly the principles upon which the military arrangements of the alliance rested today, as the Canadian representative had done at the 1356th meeting, as well as what they had in mind for the future. Similarly, when examining proposals for changes in the strategic arrangements of the Western alliance they would do so in the context of possible agreements on arms control and disarmament. Thus, for example, the United Kingdom proposals for an Atlantic nuclear force would have built-in provisions against dissemination.

4. He appealed to the USSR representative to consider the question in the broadest context and not, as he had seemed to do at the 1355th meeting, solely from the standpoint of affairs in Europe—or indeed from that of the position of the Federal Republic of Germany. He wished to go forward on the assumption that the USSR draft treaty on non-proliferation (A/5976) was intended as a genuine basis of negotiation. In his statement the USSR representative had made it all too clear that the USSR draft was intended to exclude the multilateral force or the Atlantic nuclear force, despite repeated assurances that whatever arrangements NATO might eventually adopt,

they would not be disseminatory. He did not believe that the USSR draft was designed to exclude existing arrangements and he hoped that the USSR representative would say clearly what the USSR draft was intended to provide for, so that it could be given the closest possible study at the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. There was, of course, nothing to prevent the first decisive steps being taken by the First Committee at the current session. It could hardly be expected that a formula would be found at once to reconcile all points of view and win the unanimous adherence of all the nuclear Powers, quite apart from the fact that some of the non-nuclear countries were reluctant to engage in a permanent undertaking not to acquire atomic weapons. But a treaty did not have to be universally accepted to be valid, and in the case of the spread of nuclear weapons, the very existence of a treaty would put the brakes on the process of proliferation. It should be possible to evolve a treaty which, if it reconciled the views of the two principal Powers concerned, would then be accepted by a large number of States Members of the United Nations. As for non-member States and those which were not prepared to sign such a treaty at once, they would be free to indicate exactly what other measures would be necessary to induce them to do so. Once a treaty of that sort existed, it would generate a momentum of its own. The First Committee should spare no effort to close the gap in thinking that separated the United States and the USSR draft treaties and to present, as soon as possible, a treaty for signature.

5. To achieve that, it was first of all necessary to regard a treaty on non-dissemination not as directed against communism or imperialism, as the case might be, but rather as designed to benefit the whole of mankind. In seeking to improve the wording of the draft treaties before the Committee, everyone should have in mind peace and disarmament and the essential interests of all countries concerned, and not only those of his own country. In international relations no one could hope to get exactly what he wanted when real, inalienable interests were at stake. Everyone had to make concessions and to be content with compromise. The Western Powers were making a sincere effort in that direction, as was evident from the draft treaty proposed by the United States,^{1/} which would have served a useful purpose if only because it had prompted the Soviet Union to present a draft of its own. His delegation had already at Geneva welcomed the United States draft as a valuable basis for negotiations, but in its view there would be advantage in the essential articles being even more tightly drafted to prevent an admittedly remote and hypothetical possibility being left open. That left no doubt about the United Kingdom's position on the question of non-dissemination. A second essential requirement for an effective agreement was that countries should be prepared to exchange information and ideas freely. The frankness which the Western Powers were prepared to show regarding their own arrangements should not be all on one side; they would like to have an assurance that the

Warsaw Treaty plans contained no element of dissemination, since, after all, one of the members of that alliance was a nuclear Power. Certain statements made them doubtful. On 29 September 1965 Mr. Brezhnev had spoken on perfecting the activity of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and of creating within the framework of the Treaty a permanent and operational mechanism for discussing current problems. The Western Powers would like to know what kind of mechanism was involved and whether the Soviet Union's allies had any share in decision-making with regard to the use of Soviet nuclear weapons. The greatest frankness was essential, if the chances of reaching an understanding were to be increased.

6. At all events there were now two draft treaties. The United States draft offered an excellent basis for negotiation. If the USSR draft was not the expression of an inflexible position, it might contain the seeds of compromise.

7. He recalled what the United States representative had said (1355th meeting) about the question of assurances to non-nuclear Powers. That question required careful thought. The interests of the countries which might be the object of those assurances should be paramount. However, the giving of effective assurances raised many complicated problems, for it was doubtful whether nuclear protection could be given in isolation from conventional support, whether that did not presuppose the existence of some form of military alliance and whether it did not raise the question of the stationing of forces on foreign territory. The need for credible security arrangements for non-nuclear countries which felt themselves vulnerable should not be ignored, but the matter was less urgent than the conclusion of a non-proliferation treaty and it should not be allowed to delay progress towards that end. Perhaps that was a matter which the non-nuclear Powers themselves might well study in all its complex detail. Moreover, it would be quite reasonable for them to indicate themselves whether they wanted guarantees and, if so, against what—against nuclear attack, nuclear blackmail, or conventional attack under nuclear threats—whether they considered that such protection would be better assured if those guarantees were provided by all the nuclear Powers, by some of them or by the other non-nuclear Powers, and what military arrangements would be necessary to make those guarantees credible.

8. The Committee had before it two other documents which merited study: the memorandum by the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee ^{2/}—which his delegation supported inasmuch as it stressed the urgency of the situation—and the draft unilateral declaration proposed by Italy. ^{3/}The merit of that draft, although it was only a partial and temporary palliative, was that it might gain a little time.

9. It should not be forgotten that preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons was a matter of life and death for everyone, not merely for one

^{1/} See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965*, document DC/227, annex 1, sect. A.

^{2/} *Ibid.*, sect. E.

^{3/} *Ibid.*, sect. D.

country or another. If a solution which would enable the world to live in peace and security was to be achieved, the problem would have to be approached with patience, moderation and reason, and not with eyes blinded by prejudices. His delegation would do everything within its power to contribute to the reaching of agreement, if possible during the twentieth session of the General Assembly. Two solutions were open to the countries of the world: to stop the tragic waste of money and resources on the arms race or to rush on towards catastrophe. It rested with the United Nations to prove that Mr. Nehru had been right when he said that in the conflict that was confronting the world the human spirit would prevail over the atom bomb.

10. Mr. VAN DER STOEL (Netherlands) said his delegation considered that it had been a logical and wise decision to give priority to the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The only chance of preserving world peace lay in preventing nuclear anarchy, and that would be possible only if the spread of nuclear weapons was stopped; that was therefore the most urgent problem. However, objections had been raised against the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation. In some countries it had been argued that such a treaty should not be signed until certain national aims had been achieved; but the advocates of that policy seemed to forget that the community of States had an overriding common interest—survival—and that therefore a non-proliferation agreement, by lessening the risk of nuclear conflict, was likewise of vital interest to each individual State. It had also been said that a world agreement on that subject would strengthen the privileged position of the members of the "nuclear club".

11. Speaking as a representative of a country which was determined to remain non-nuclear, he considered that such arguments were of only relative value and that they overlooked an essential point: far from underestimating the importance of nuclear disarmament, his delegation was firmly convinced that in the present circumstances, the best means of attaining that broader objective would be first to conclude a comprehensive treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, a goal in which both nuclear and non-nuclear States had a stake. In that connexion it should be noted that, while the sixth preambular paragraph of the United States draft treaty specifically referred to steps towards general and complete disarmament, the Soviet draft contained no such reference. Moreover, the United States representative had proposed in the Assembly's general debate (1334th plenary meeting) that the USSR and the United States should reach agreement on a demonstrated destruction of a substantial number of nuclear weapons from their respective stocks. His delegation hoped that the Soviet Union would adopt a positive attitude toward that new and far-reaching proposition, which was, in fact, a bridge that might lead from arms control to disarmament. If the United States offer was put into effect, it would constitute the first practical example of an agreed and verified reduction of military nuclear stockpiles.

12. While his delegation welcomed the laudable efforts of the two great Powers towards the con-

clusion of a non-proliferation treaty, it was concerned and disappointed at the Soviet attitude towards possible nuclear arrangements between the members of NATO. It was firmly convinced that an arrangement for nuclear sharing in the Atlantic context in no way conflicted with the principle of non-proliferation, provided that nuclear weapons could not be used without the consent of existing nuclear Powers. It hoped that there would be no additional fingers on the nuclear trigger, but that, on the contrary, there would be a few more fingers on the safety catch, and it also hoped that the Soviet Union would have no objection to that; otherwise the conclusion would be inescapable that its action was motivated not by a genuine concern about nuclear dissemination, but by a desire to thwart the strengthening of the cohesion of the defensive NATO alliance. Previous speakers in the debate had already stressed the imperative necessity of taking bold and immediate steps. He therefore appealed to the Soviet Government not to jeopardize the chances of agreement by persisting in its present attitude.

13. At the nineteenth session of the General Assembly, in the Disarmament Commission and in the current debate, suggestions had been made that the question of the non-transfer and non-acquisition of nuclear weapons should be placed in a broader context and that it might be advisable to adopt certain other measures also aimed at eliminating the nuclear threat, and the question had arisen whether those measures, which were certainly beneficial, should be regarded as "integrated with" or merely "related to" a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear armaments. He reiterated the view of his Government that there was no advantage in seeking a solution by means of a comprehensive system of integrated measures; the road leading to disarmament was a difficult one, and it would be unwise to complicate the negotiations on the treaty by the introduction of new elements. His delegation therefore fully agreed with the recommendation of the Disarmament Commission, in its resolution of 15 June 1965,^{4/} that the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should give priority to a treaty on non-proliferation, while at the same time giving close attention to the various suggestions that agreement might be facilitated by adopting a programme of certain related measures. In that connexion, his delegation, while not failing to recognize the constructive elements of the Italian proposal, doubted whether under the present circumstances a unilateral declaration of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons could contribute towards agreement on a treaty on non-proliferation. While it would be possible to fall back on such a declaration in the event of a stalemate, the acceptance of the proposed moratorium by a large number of States at the present stage might give rise to premature optimism and obscure the lack of progress made on the cardinal issue, the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation. Furthermore, such a declaration would be binding only on the non-nuclear States, without adding substantially to their security. He shared the United Kingdom representative's view that it was important to explore the possibilities of giving effective guarantees against

^{4/} Ibid., Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/225.

nuclear attack, which might offer the non-nuclear Powers a strong incentive to refrain from acquiring nuclear weapons themselves.

14. One of the most effective measures for preventing the dissemination of nuclear weapons would be a treaty prohibiting all nuclear tests, including underground tests, which would have the advantage of imposing the same obligations on both nuclear and non-nuclear Powers. He noted that the United States had initiated a programme of research to improve the facilities for monitoring seismic events, and he hoped that the Soviet Union would respond favourably to the United States offer to exchange scientific and other information in order to facilitate agreement on a complete test ban. In that connexion, his delegation expressed its appreciation of the Swedish initiative^{5/} with a view to establishing an international seismological data service giving access to first-class data for independent analysis—a proposal which was entirely in line with the views repeatedly expressed by the Netherlands. For similar reasons, his Government attached great importance to the recent adoption by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of a revised safeguards system. An undertaking by all parties to a treaty of non-proliferation to accept the application of the IAEA safeguards to their peaceful nuclear activities would be an important corollary to the provisions of such a treaty. The Soviet draft contained no reference to international safeguards; but the application of the system proposed by IAEA would be the best means of ensuring that the "manufacturing, research or other information or documentation" referred to in the second paragraphs of articles I and II of the Soviet draft (A/5976) were not used for military purposes.

15. The Netherlands delegation would revert to the question of denuclearized zones at the appropriate time. For the present, it would say only that it was following with keen interest the efforts being made in that regard by the Latin American countries. The Netherlands Government had already indicated that it was prepared, in principle, to assume the same obligations for Surinam and the Netherlands Antilles as would be incurred by the Latin American States and to become a party to a multilateral agreement, provided that there was sufficient agreement among the countries in the area and adequate provisions for verification and inspection. With reference to the latter point, it was encouraging that the draft articles for a treaty on the denuclearization of Latin America (A/5985) stipulated that the parties should assume all the obligations and adopt all the procedures of the revised safeguards system of IAEA. The Netherlands also supported the desire expressed by the African Countries that their area should be made a denuclearized zone. The political and military conditions prevailing in Latin America and Africa did not seem to preclude early agreement on a treaty on denuclearization, and the Netherlands Government wished all the Governments concerned a full measure of success.

16. His delegation favoured the earliest possible resumption of the Eighteen-Nation Committee's deliberations on the two most urgent problems: the treaty

on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and a comprehensive test ban treaty. Finally, without wishing to dwell on the question of a world disarmament conference, he expressed the opinion that the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee should not be inhibited by the prospect of a world conference.

17. Mr. TRONKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that, in his delegation's view, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was one of the most important questions before the General Assembly at its current session, which coincided with the twentieth anniversary of the dropping of atomic bombs on the Japanese towns of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. If a nuclear war were to break out in the future, it would inflict upon all mankind material and human losses of inconceivable magnitude; the awareness of that danger therefore made it imperative for peoples and Governments in all countries to do everything to prevent a nuclear fire from being kindled on the planet.

18. The draft treaty submitted by the Soviet Union was tangible evidence of the desire of the Soviet Government to abolish the threat of nuclear war, since one of the main ways of achieving that goal was to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. As Mr. Gromyko had said in the Assembly's general debate (1335th plenary meeting), it would be too late to halt that process if other countries joined the five which already possessed nuclear weapons. It could be said that the vast majority of the countries of the world had come to understand the need to check the nuclear disease before it became a world epidemic. Mere awareness of the danger, however, was no longer enough; it was essential to find a solution to the problem. His delegation considered that the USSR draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons clearly pointed to a solution.

19. The position of the United States on that question was tantamount to legalizing the access of the Bundeswehr to nuclear weapons. The United States proposed a ban on the transfer of nuclear weapons by nuclear States to the national control of non-nuclear States but did not mention a ban on their transfer through a multilateral nuclear force. In other words, it would legalize the entry of the Federal Republic of Germany into a multilateral or Atlantic nuclear force. The fact that the agreement proposed by the United States prohibited the transfer of nuclear weapons to other States only at the national level meant that such weapons could be given to non-nuclear States on a multinational basis, for example. No negotiations on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons could bear fruit if the Western Powers persisted in their desire to create a NATO multilateral nuclear force in which the Federal Republic of Germany would participate. The facts confirmed that certain NATO countries were putting the military objectives of that organization before the need to conclude an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

20. No agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons could be a guarantee of world security unless it ensured the non-proliferation of those weapons in Europe. It was in Europe that the two world wars had started and, even if there were still people in the United States who believed that their continent

^{5/} *Ibid.*, document DC/227, annex I, sect. B.

was far from the threats of the Federal Republic of Germany, the European countries—and the Ukraine in particular—could never forget the losses and destruction suffered by their peoples. The current trend of events in West Germany showed that the Bonn leaders—without trying to conceal their plans—again wanted to walk the tightrope of war from which Hitlerite Germany had fallen to its doom. According to the statements of its leaders, Bonn certainly wished to give the army of the Federal Republic of Germany nuclear weapons, and the NATO multilateral nuclear force was the door through which Bonn intended to enter the atomic club. Furthermore, several nuclear centres had been created in West Germany and there were many preparations for the mass production of rockets of various ranges. The most important project known at present was the construction of the third stage of the "European rocket", which would enable Bonn to manufacture its own medium-range rockets. The Space Research Company, 95 per cent of whose capital came from the West German Government, played an important part in rocket research, technology and production and exercised a decisive influence on the German Committee on Space Research, which included representatives of the West German war industry.

21. The political purpose underlying the attempts of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to equip the Bundeswehr with nuclear arms and the means of their delivery was the fulfilment of its far-reaching designs of revenge and its territorial aspirations. The Bonn Government frankly declared that it did not recognize the existing frontiers of Europe and, since no German leader could count upon the neighbouring States yielding to German demands of their own volition, the policy of Bonn was in fact based on the assumption of an armed conflict, which would create the threat of a third world war.

22. The policy of nuclear armament pursued by the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany was in direct opposition to the obligations imposed on that country by the 1945 Potsdam agreement and was also contrary to the 1954 Paris agreements. There could be no doubt that, after the first stage of gaining access to nuclear weapons through the NATO multilateral force, West Germany would try to have the restrictions imposed on it lifted one after another. Sooner or later, the German revenge-seekers would have nuclear weapons completely at their disposal. The Ukrainian delegation was not alone in that belief, which was shared by many Western politicians. The conclusion was self-evident: those who opened the door to the nuclear armament of the Federal Republic of Germany were helping to create a threat of war in Europe and hence throughout the world. If all the Governments represented on the First Committee really wanted to put an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons, they should also be logical in their approach to the contents of the agreement on that question.

23. A careful study of the draft treaties on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons submitted by the USSR and the United States could not fail to reveal the great difference of principle in the way they

interpreted and approached the solution of the problem. The Soviet Union had submitted a draft treaty which totally prohibited the direct or indirect transfer of nuclear weapons to non-nuclear States. The United States proceeded on the premise that the transfer of nuclear weapons to third States on a multinational basis did not constitute proliferation of nuclear weapons. The United States position could not be accepted by those who really wanted to put an end to the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

24. The Ukrainian Government had stated its categorical opposition to all ways and means of disseminating nuclear weapons, on a national or multinational basis. Consequently, the considerations advanced by representatives of certain Western countries in favour of some kind of "nuclear co-operation and integration" within military alliances were, in its view, indefensible; it would in effect constitute merely a justification of any indirect means of disseminating nuclear weapons. The USSR draft treaty, which the Ukrainian delegation fully supported, provided a clear and concrete solution to the problem of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons: it would close all channels, without exception, through which nuclear weapons could be further disseminated and would proceed to the elaboration and application of measures to ensure the complete destruction of such weapons. Those were two interconnected stages, leading to the complete removal of the threat of nuclear war which was hanging over mankind. The Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water was a first important step in that direction and the USSR draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons would make it possible to advance further along the path of removing the threat of nuclear war.

25. His delegation expressed the hope that other States and other Governments would consider the USSR draft treaty with due care and help to achieve agreement on the problem, which was of vital importance for the future of all mankind.

26. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) reviewed the stages in the proliferation of nuclear Powers from the United States atomic monopoly to the five-Power "nuclear club", and in the proliferation of means of mass destruction, from the first 20-kiloton United States bomb exploded at Alamogordo in 1945 to the 70-megaton bombs of the Soviet Union. He recalled President Kennedy's words on the obligation to prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons; those words constituted a testament of which the First Committee was the heir. Proliferation of nuclear weapons could take place in three ways: first, through an increase in the number of States manufacturing such weapons; secondly, through the transfer of such weapons to non-nuclear States; and thirdly, through the use of such weapons by allied or unified forces even in the absence of transfer from one State to another.

27. There were now between fifteen and twenty States capable of producing nuclear but not thermo-nuclear weapons. Although an increase in the number of nuclear States would not upset the nuclear balance in the quantitative sense, it would do so in the qualitative sense; in other words, the larger the number of nuclear States became, the greater would

be the risk that the use or possession of even low-power nuclear bombs could bring on a world-wide nuclear conflict. The risk of proliferation of the second type had been reduced, owing to the use of mobile bases, the longer range of intercontinental missiles and the possibility of establishing launching bases in outer space. As far as the third form of proliferation was concerned, it was to be hoped that essential agreements for the protection of mankind would be concluded.

28. He recalled the efforts made to apply the moral power of the United Nations, particularly in General Assembly resolution 1665 (XVI), adopted on the initiative of Ireland, and the measures concerning the dissemination of nuclear weapons already proposed by the United States^{6/} and the Soviet Union.^{7/} There were three drafts at present before the First Committee, two of them submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union respectively. His delegation did not think that it would be constructive to discuss at length the divergences between the two draft treaties; rather was it desirable to emphasize their common features and reduce the divergences, as had been suggested by the United Kingdom representative. The two drafts appeared to be more or less similar with regard to two of the three possible aspects of proliferation: the undertaking by non-nuclear States not to manufacture or accept nuclear weapons and the obligation of nuclear Powers not to transfer such weapons for any reason whatever. The disagreement between the two drafts related to the possible use of nuclear weapons by military alliances. The Italian proposal had great merit even though it would not be effective unless a certain number of States made the same declaration within a specified time; moreover, what was proposed was a moratorium and not a definitive prohibition of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In any event, the Italian draft constituted a valuable contribution to the solution of the problem.

29. Mention had been made elsewhere of the denuclearization of geographical zones, which was one of the measures designed to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Denuclearization could be achieved by two methods: by a United Nations declaration creating a denuclearized zone or by an agreement concluded between the sovereign States of a single geographical zone. Latin America had followed the second method; a Preparatory Commission created

^{6/} *Ibid.*, Supplement for January to December 1963, document DC/208, annex 1, sect. I, draft article 9; *ibid.*, Supplement for January to December 1964, document DC/209, annex 1, sect. B.

^{7/} *Ibid.*, Supplement for January to December 1964, document DC/209, annex 1, sect. E, part 6.

to draw up a regional treaty had held two sessions, and the final act of its second session (A/5985) stated that the system of verification, inspection and control, which constituted the most difficult part of such a treaty, was at present under study. That document would be studied by everyone who was interested in the question of the denuclearization of Latin America.

30. His delegation thanked the Canadian representative for his words on the denuclearization of Latin America and Africa. In connexion with Africa, however, he wondered whether, in order to secure the agreement of all countries of the geographical zone under consideration, the consent of South Africa would have to be awaited. It might also be asked whether, in the case of Latin America, the word "countries" should be taken to include territories still held by non-Latin American States; in that connexion, his delegation welcomed the understanding displayed by the Netherlands. To avoid any possible doubt on the matter, he recalled the position he had stated on behalf of his delegation in the First Committee at the eighteenth session (1328th meeting). First, the capacity to sign bilateral or multilateral agreements rested solely on the sovereignty of States, and the United Nations had no tutelary power over Member States; if the Latin American countries wished to conclude a denuclearization agreement that was in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter, the United Nations not only could not legally oppose them but had the duty to assist them. Secondly, it had been asserted that a zone could not be denuclearized unless due regard was paid to the balance of military forces; that was obviously true in respect of the balance of nuclear armaments, but it did not apply to zones in which there were no nuclear weapons. Thirdly, appropriate measures of verification were extremely important, but in that respect, too, Latin American States would take decisions on the basis of their own sovereignty, limited only by the provisions of the Charter and of existing regional agreements.

31. In conclusion, he observed that the most effective method of preventing nuclear proliferation was to extend the partial test ban to the underground environment and thus prevent additional Powers from manufacturing nuclear bombs. His delegation would revert to that subject at the proper time. In the present debate, it considered that there were negotiable elements of agreement which could lead to the conclusion of a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.