

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

FIFTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1097th  
MEETING**

Monday, 31 October 1960,  
at 10.50 a.m.

**NEW YORK**

**CONTENTS**

*Agenda items 67, 86, 69 and 73:*

*Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament (continued)*

*Report of the Disarmament Commission (continued)*

*Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (continued)*

*Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (continued)*

*General debate (continued) . . . . . 79*

**Chairman:** Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

**AGENDA ITEMS 67, 86, 69 AND 73**

Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament (A/4463, A/4503, A/4505, A/4509, A/C.1/L.249, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1) (continued)

Report of the Disarmament Commission (A/4463, A/4500, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1) (continued)

Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/4414, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1) (continued)

Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (A/4434, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1) (continued)

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) said that the preservation and consolidation of peace and the need for the peaceful coexistence of States were matters of vital concern not only to political leaders, but to all men. The chairman of his delegation had emphasized that fact in the General Assembly (875th plenary meeting) when he had stated that there was no more urgent task than that of saving mankind from a nuclear disaster. That objective could be achieved only through general and complete disarmament. That was why the masses had increasingly come to accept the idea of such disarmament, which had been put forward at the fourteenth session by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Mr. Khrushchev (779th plenary meeting), and which the General Assembly had been compelled to recognize by adopting resolution 1378 (XIV), the most important document of its history. Unfortunately, that idea, which was to have been put into effect by the Ten-Nation Committee, had encountered opposition in certain circles which, after doing their utmost to delay the convening

of that Committee, had transformed the discussion into a painful and fruitless delaying action.

2. The charges made by the United States representative in an effort to cast the blame for the failure of the talks on the socialist countries were a poor disguise for the Western Powers' determination to adhere to the same course and to maintain their positions. Most of the Western representatives considered that disarmament negotiations should be resumed immediately. No one denied the need to negotiate; but, when those calling for negotiation did not specify general and complete disarmament as the goal to be achieved, the futility of the efforts made over the last fifteen years inevitably sprang to mind. To negotiate merely for the sake of negotiating was harmful and dangerous. The time had come to draw a lesson from the past and to conclude a disarmament agreement as rapidly as possible.

3. The Western Powers were still maintaining the positions they had taken before and during the Geneva Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament because their aim was not to achieve general and complete disarmament. It was apparent, moreover, that they refused to deviate from their positions. In fact, the United States representative had acknowledged that the greatest difficulties encountered in the Ten-Nation Committee had stemmed from differences in purpose. That was indeed the case. The United States representative, referring to paragraph 3 of resolution 1378 (XIV), had stated (1086th meeting) that measures leading towards the goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control had been the primary objective of the talks. However, he had completely ignored the first two operative paragraphs of the resolution, in the hope of being able to steer the negotiations towards isolated measures which he sought, in effect, to reduce to measures for control of armaments without disarmament. Yet operative paragraph 1 was categorical: it called upon Governments to make every effort to achieve a constructive solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament.

4. Certain circles in the United States regarded general and complete disarmament as a distant and unattainable objective. While the Western Powers, under pressure from the socialist delegations, had been compelled to make vague statements referring to general and complete disarmament as their ultimate objective, their actions belied those statements. At the 14th meeting of the Ten-Nation Committee at Geneva, the United States representative had stated that he could not accept any sweeping, meaningless, age-worn slogans as a guide for the negotiations. The other Western Powers had shared that view. For example, at the 9th meeting the French representative had stressed that resolution 1378 (XIV) had merely expressed a hope. At the 32nd meeting, preceding the adjournment of the work of the Ten-Nation Committee

on 29 April 1960 before the summit conference, he had said, in connexion with the same resolution, that the Western Powers had fallen into a trap but that they would not do so again. All the proposals submitted by the Western Powers reflected the same attitude. The propaganda machine at their disposal at Geneva had been skilfully used to discredit in the eyes of the peoples the very idea of general and complete disarmament, which they described as visionary, impractical and Utopian. The measures outlined in the Western plan of 16 March were all designed to establish control over existing armaments or to ensure advantages for the Western Powers alone. The plan of 27 June (DC/154), which had been put forward by the United States, did not differ substantially from the Western proposal. In that connexion, the United States representative had stated that he was submitting that document as a proposal by his own country, since his Western colleagues had not had time to consult their Governments. However, four months later, the West had still submitted no co-ordinated plan for general and complete disarmament.

5. In their draft resolutions (A/C.1/L.250 and A/C.1/L.251), the Western States had shown that they did not wish to move in the direction of general and complete disarmament. Withdrawal of 30 tons of fissionable material from weapons stockpiles did not in any way constitute a disarmament measure, quite apart from the conditions laid down by the United States. What counted was the amount of fissionable material remaining in weapons stockpiles. If the United States really wanted to eliminate the threat of nuclear war, it would accept a total prohibition of nuclear weapons, the destruction of all stocks and the transfer of all fissionable material to peaceful uses.

6. The measures proposed by the United States in regard to outer space were not disarmament measures either—as the United States itself recognized—since the armaments race had not yet begun there. Those measures had been proposed because inter-continental ballistic missiles were the principal defensive weapons which the Soviet Union possessed: the United States was, therefore, seeking to obtain a military advantage.

7. As for the measures relating to the prevention of surprise attack, the United States representative had himself admitted that they did not fall within the scope of disarmament, but related to measures for the control of armaments. Such measures, designed to collect information on the disposition of enemy troops and weapons and on the precise location of rocket-launching pads, could only encourage certain military circles to commit an aggression. In a recent article, the American military theoretician Henry A. Kissinger had written that continuous surveillance of the retaliatory forces might help a potential aggressor more than the defender.<sup>1/</sup> It was therefore clear that any measure designed to control weapons of mass destruction was likely to increase the risk of aggression. Furthermore, the proposal to establish controls over existing armaments in order to prevent surprise attack had been made at a time when the United States and its allies were refusing to make a formal declaration that they would not be the first to use nuclear weapons, thereby claiming the right to

carry out a surprise nuclear attack. The only way to avoid the danger of surprise attack was the way proposed by the Soviet Union: the destruction of the means of delivery of all weapons of mass destruction and the elimination of foreign military bases. The United States opposed the latter proposal because its bases would enable it to launch an attack against other countries. It was just as necessary to eliminate those bases as it was to eliminate the means of delivery of the most destructive weapons. They created tension between the countries in which they were located and those which they threatened, and they served as bases for reconnaissance flights and other aggressive acts the consequences of which could not be foreseen. It should be noted in that connexion that the West German army was establishing its own bases in certain Balkan and Middle Eastern countries.

8. The United Kingdom draft resolution (A/C.1/L.251) relating to the control of armaments sought to prove that disarmament was impossible at present and to convince public opinion that it would be unrealistic to carry out disarmament measures. It was clear, however, that control did not present any insoluble technical problems. From a scientific and technical point of view, therefore, the preliminary work suggested in the United Kingdom draft resolution was completely unnecessary. Moreover, from a political point of view, it would be harmful and dangerous as it would divert attention from the basic problem—the need to reach agreement on the fundamental political principles applicable to disarmament. No one would deny the need for work by experts, but such work would produce results only if it was directly related to disarmament measures.

9. At the 1093rd meeting the United States representative had said that it was only necessary to look at the third stage of his Government's plan in order to see that its objective was a world without war. But that applied only to the third and last stage which was to be reached in the distant future. In reality, the United States proposals were clear evidence of its firm intention to oppose any measure directed towards bringing about a treaty on general and complete disarmament. It was, however, clear that, as the United States representative himself had said (1086th meeting), the difficulties had not stemmed from scientific or technical reasons, but from the difference in the purposes pursued by the two parties. The prime necessity was therefore to agree on a goal for the negotiations and to define the tasks to be undertaken, so that clear and precise instructions could be given to the body which would be entrusted with the task of drawing up a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

10. The fundamental obstacle to the solution of the disarmament problem was the arms policy of the United States. The events of the last few years had, however, strikingly disproved the theory that military preponderance would permit a country to impose its will on the entire world. The Western Powers had not dared to present their so-called "plan for general and comprehensive disarmament in a free and peaceful world" of 16 March 1960 to the General Assembly at its current session, presumably realizing that that plan did not hold out any hope of progress. The only proposals before the Assembly at its current session were those contained in the Soviet plan (A/4505), which envisaged measures to bring about balanced,

<sup>1/</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, "Arms Control, Inspection and Surprise Attack", *Foreign Affairs*, vol. 38, No. 4, July 1960, p. 557.

genuine and controlled disarmament, to be put into effect in stages.

11. The United States representative had called the Soviet proposals impracticable; but the only way to achieve real results was clearly to establish the ends in view, to mark out the stages and to define the means by which those ends were to be attained. The United Kingdom representative had also said that the proposals were impracticable because, he had argued, it would be necessary to wait for all States Members of the United Nations to accede to a treaty on general and complete disarmament. But it was not a question of accession by all countries: the question was whether the United Kingdom, the United States, and those of their allies which possessed large armed forces and weapons of mass destruction, were prepared to sign a treaty on general and complete disarmament. If the Western countries agreed to the implementation of real disarmament measures such as those provided for in the Soviet plan, all countries would agree without difficulty on a treaty.

12. It was easy to understand, furthermore, why the United States representative was opposed to the reorganization of the United Nations Secretariat and of the Security Council as envisaged in the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.249). It was in the interests of the United States that the United Nations should retain its present structure, which served that country's aims and policy perfectly. Whatever his talents, the Secretary-General was a man with definite political opinions and was consequently incapable of the impartial execution in present circumstances of the policies laid down by the Organization. Events in the Congo had confirmed that fact. In proposing to modify the structure of the Secretariat and of the Security Council, the USSR was seriously facing the grave problems which confronted the United Nations, particularly the achievement of general and complete disarmament and the extremely important duties which would fall to the Secretary-General in a totally disarmed world.

13. The resumption of negotiations would serve no purpose unless the Committee drew up precise instructions on the basic principles of general and complete disarmament, and indicated means, methods, stages and time-limits for the implementation of an agreement on the subject. If the United States and their allies continued to obstruct all concrete work in the First Committee, the Bulgarian delegation would no longer feel able to participate in the discussions. It hoped, however, that the great majority of delegations would realize the urgent need to take definite measures if general and complete disarmament was to be achieved.

14. Mr. TOURE Ismaël (Guinea) said that, in its resolution 1378 (XIV), the General Assembly had acknowledged the disarmament question to be the most urgent, the most important and the most universal problem facing the world. In that connexion, even though it was primarily the task of the Powers engaged in the armaments race to put an end to the multiplication of instruments of destruction, it would be dangerous to minimize the active role which the uncommitted Powers could play in smoothing out present difficulties. Instead of being content merely to deplore the mistrust and misunderstanding which prevented East and West from embarking on concrete disarmament measures, the uncommitted Powers

could help to reduce the gap between the views of the two countries principally concerned—namely, the Soviet Union and the United States—and between the methods they proposed. Moreover, while the non-aligned States had no interest in the cold war, disarmament was, on the contrary, a matter of major concern to them. The disarmament question must therefore be considered in a more universal context, in which the aspirations and duties of all peoples were involved.

15. The armaments race was caused not only by mistrust but also by the desire for domination shown by certain Powers. As long as relations between peoples were influenced by the spirit of conquest and exploitation, there could be no disarmament, in the universal sense of the term. That was why the questions of the independence of colonized peoples, the harmonious evolution of Africa, and aid to all underdeveloped countries, particularly those of Asia, Africa and Latin America, had a direct bearing on the disarmament problem. Again, it would be hard to over-emphasize the moral influence exerted by the uncommitted Powers, including the former colonies of Africa and Asia, which were convinced of the dangers and of the material and moral consequences of war and knew also that it was fruitless to attempt by that means to induce other peoples to accept ideas which were not their own. The Powers in question could and must play a role of first importance, not only by objectively furthering the reduction of international tension and opposing all war propaganda, but also by seeking every opportunity to restore an atmosphere of trust in negotiations between opposed blocs. With that end in view, the new States of Africa and Asia must scrupulously avoid siding with one bloc or another. Their behaviour might be a source of conflict if, instead of observing such neutrality, they considered it possible and advantageous to exploit the opposition between the two camps.

16. The maintenance of peace was an imperative necessity for the African States, which had to make up the ground lost through several centuries of foreign domination in their political, economic and social development and in their cultural evolution. The Guinean delegation unreservedly supported the proposals for associating representatives of the uncommitted countries in the quest for a solution to the disarmament negotiations, because it recognized the universal character of all general, complete and final disarmament. From that standpoint, it was not only the great Powers and their present allies which must assume commitments; for, while it was those countries which were called upon to agree to a large reduction in their military power, all other nations must, in return, agree to a common programme precluding the use of the scientific techniques which the great Powers had renounced by any other Powers still in process of development.

17. The problem of imperialism was closely bound up with that of disarmament and the one could not be solved without the other. Thus, no one would now think of asking the Algerian people to renounce the armed struggle which they were waging for the recognition of their inalienable right to independence. As long as the desire existed to exploit the wealth of defenceless peoples by force, it would not be possible to tackle the disarmament problem honestly and in all its aspects. He wondered what would become of a

disarmament plan if, in the course of its implementation, an act of aggression such as the one committed against the Republic of the Congo was still feasible. The most basic rights of the Congolese people and of all peoples insufficiently equipped with means of self-defence would have no protection under a system of disarmament which tolerated imperialist manoeuvres. The same was true of the segregation problem, as well as of the commercial colonialism still practised by certain Western Powers. The imperialists should therefore renounce the colonial system, as a first step in any disarmament negotiations, for the latter presupposed recognition of the sovereignty of every people and the elimination of all wars of conquest and colonialist aggression. Disarmament depended on the re-establishment of peace in Algeria, the abolition of racialism in South Africa and the recognition of the independence of the Congo. If the world could be rid of imperialism, a great step would have been taken towards the removal of international tension and towards peaceful co-existence, and the final solution of the disarmament problem would have been brought nearer.

18. Moreover, no disarmament agreement would be desirable without the participation of the People's Republic of China, which represented more than a quarter of the world's population. Indeed there could be no peace without the participation of all peoples. The People's Republic of China should therefore be represented in the United Nations. However, so long as no change was made in the structure of the Security Council and of the other United Nations organs with a view to achieving a more equitable participation by the peoples of newly independent countries, who made up the vast majority of mankind, it would be difficult to reach a disarmament agreement.

19. Notwithstanding General Assembly resolution 1379 (XIV), the French Government had conducted nuclear weapons tests in the Sahara at the beginning of 1960 and it was preparing to carry out further tests there. The African States condemned the utilization of the Sahara for that purpose, not only because of the danger of radioactive fall-out but also because it was a provocation of an imperialistic nature which disdained the opinion of the peoples concerned; they denounced France's behaviour as excluding any sincere desire on its part to disarm.

20. The serious danger of involving Africa in the arms race and in the propaganda of preparation for war could not be over-emphasized. The opposing blocs should therefore refrain from establishing strategic bases in Africa, for in that continent the cold war might rapidly degenerate into war itself. For that reason, his delegation supported the proposal made by the President of Ghana at the 869th plenary meeting of the Assembly to make Africa a neutral zone which would remain apart from any nuclear strategy. For that purpose, it would be necessary to prohibit outright any testing in Africa of nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles and other devices, to call on the nuclear Powers, present or future, to abandon the search for nuclear weapons bases and rocket-launching sites on African soil, and to call for the liquidation of existing strategic bases, beginning with nuclear bases, through negotiations between the African States and the non-African Powers concerned. By adopting such a resolution, the United Nations would allay the major concern of the African peoples

and of all peaceful peoples, who had not forgotten that the Second World War had had its origin on African soil.

21. Despite the current difficulties, his delegation was convinced that the principles it had set forth and the suggestions it had made would be calculated to increase the security of all peoples and would favour the final solution of the disarmament problem.

22. Mr. OBEID (Sudan) pointed out that the real desire of all the armed Powers for disarmament had been expressed once again in General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) and had been evidenced in the course of many conversations and discussions. After the failure of the summit conference, however, the optimism which had resulted from the Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament had given place to a pessimism intensified by the mutual suspicion existing between the East and the West. It was evident, however, that deterrent weapons and the balance of terror could not ensure peace. The true and permanent solution lay in disarmament and the rule of law.

23. As the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom had stated at the 877th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, a period of crisis was always a period of opportunity. It was time to try a new road to co-operation, for day by day the accumulation of atomic weapons, of means of retaliation and of fissionable material increased the risks of an accidental war so long as disarmament measures were not put into effect. It was time for the great Powers, instead of exchanging accusations, to give evidence of a more conciliatory spirit and to decide to work out an effective plan for disarmament. Sooner or later, the day might come when either camp would consider it more terrible to lose face than to cause nuclear annihilation.

24. For his delegation the number, duration and form of the stages of disarmament were of little importance; the essential point was that general and complete disarmament should be achieved as soon as possible. To achieve that end, the East and the West must recognize that the fate of humanity lay in their hands and must draw up a workable plan for complete and general disarmament in the shortest possible time. On behalf of all mankind, and particularly of all the peoples who had placed their hopes in the United Nations, his delegation appealed to the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty<sup>2/</sup> and the States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to forget their differences, ideological or otherwise, and to work together to achieve the desirable through the possible.

25. Mr. UNDEN (Sweden) expressed the view that the negotiations going on at the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests were the only bright spot in the disarmament picture. The General Assembly should stress the urgent necessity of an agreement on such prohibition, call upon the three Powers taking part in the negotiations to continue their voluntary suspension of tests and appeal to all other States to desist from conducting tests.

26. With regard to the present task of the First Committee, if the Governments represented on the

<sup>2/</sup> See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 219, 1955, No. 2962.

Ten-Nation Committee had succeeded in bringing about a "rapprochement" of their respective positions, it would have been natural, at the current session, to try to reach an agreement on the basic principles of a treaty on disarmament. Basing itself on resolution 1378 (XIV) and guided by the debates of the Ten-Nation Committee, the First Committee could have made an attempt to merge the draft resolutions before it into generally acceptable directives for the continued negotiations. A large number of representatives seemed to feel that a compromise between the Eastern and Western draft resolutions should be worked out. If such a compromise was achieved, negotiations on a disarmament treaty would continue in a committee set up for that purpose. If not, the regular proceedings of the Committee would lead to a vote on the various draft resolutions. It was evident, however, that a decision by majority vote would not carry the same weight as a unanimous agreement. It was not likely that, in a question of that nature, a great Power would consider itself obliged to comply with a resolution adopted despite its negative vote.

27. The sponsors of the draft resolutions before the Committee seemed to assume that there would be a thorough exchange of opinions in the Committee on the different disarmament programmes proposed. His delegation regretted that it could not share any of the opinions expressed on that subject by the sponsors of the draft resolutions, which seemed to be too ambitious, although they only proposed the examination of "basic principles". He did not see how the First Committee could, in a few weeks, come to a decision on the basic provisions mentioned in each programme without running into the same difficulties as those that had beset the Ten-Nation Committee. He did not think that in the existing political situation

the Committee could do more than, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Norway had put it at the 890th plenary meeting of the Assembly, re-establish suitable machinery for the resumption of negotiations. That involved many questions of a procedural nature: composition of the negotiating body, possible establishment of another advisory body on which other States would be represented, appointment of an impartial chairman for the negotiating body. There was also the suggestion by the Soviet Union that a special session of the General Assembly might be convened on the question of disarmament.

28. His delegation felt that, above all, experts should study the technical problems in connexion with disarmament, pending the outcome of the political negotiations, for sooner or later such studies would have to be made. Besides the questions of control mentioned in the United Kingdom draft resolution (A/C.1/L.251) and the problems referred to by the representative of France in the First Committee at the fourteenth session (1030th meeting)—prevention of surprise attacks, cessation of the manufacture of fissionable materials for military purposes, reduction of military budgets, reduction of armaments and armed forces, utilization of outer space—other questions, such as those of nuclear-free zones, the means of delivery of nuclear weapons and the concept of "weapons of mass destruction", might also be studied. It would be unrealistic to discuss general and complete disarmament before a study had been made of the many questions which would arise when States proceeded from words to deeds in the field of disarmament.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.