

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THIRTEENTH SESSION

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Chairman: Mr. Miguel Rafael URQUIA (El Salvador).

## AGENDA ITEMS 64, 70 AND 72

Question of disarmament (A/3929, A/3936, A/C.1/L.205, A/C.1/L.206) (*continued*)The discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests (A/3915, A/C.1/L.202/Rev.1 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.203, A/C.1/L.205) (*continued*)The reduction of the military budgets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France by 10 to 15 per cent and the use of part of the savings so effected for assistance to the under-developed countries (A/3925, A/C.1/L.204, A/C.1/L.205) (*continued*)GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. MOCH (France) said that he was afraid that the trend in recent years away from a comprehensive disarmament plan, the ideal of all countries, towards partial and limited agreements that were judged easier to achieve tended sometimes to obscure the essential objective, the reduction of armaments and thus of the danger of conflicts. Having accepted the method of limited studies, France would not, of course, reverse its decision. Such studies must, however, constitute a step towards disarmament, and not an illusion from the consequences of which everyone would later suffer, or a ratification of a *status quo* that was universally regarded as disastrous. That comment related particularly to two long-debated matters: the discontinuance of nuclear test explosions and the reduction of military budgets.

2. The general desire for the discontinuance of nuclear test explosions was readily comprehensible. The discontinuance of tests would eliminate radio-active fall-out—with regard to the hazards of which there were still differences of opinion—would entail the first step towards international control and would perhaps improve relations between the "atomic Powers". However, the discontinuance of nuclear weapons

tests, whether temporary or permanent, was not in itself a genuine step towards peace if the "atomic Powers" increased—or merely maintained—stockpiles of nuclear weapons that were already sufficient to wipe out all life throughout vast areas of the world. He would warn the representatives of the "non-atomic Powers" in particular against the danger of accepting because of weariness a solution which would remove their immediate anxiety but would seriously and dangerously mortgage the future of their countries to the advantage of the confirmed monopoly of nuclear weapons. Those Powers faced the possibly fatal danger that stockpiles, and therefore the danger of annihilation, would continue to mount after the tests had been halted and the fear of radio-active fall-out removed. All States therefore owed it to their peoples to ask for more than a cessation of nuclear tests; it was their duty to end the appalling threat of atomic war, to insist on the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes—which, as the French representative had shown in 1957, could fairly easily be verified—and to insist on the progressive reduction of stocks through the transfer of fissionable materials to peaceful purposes, which could also be verified. Supplies would, of course, continue to exist in unknown and uncontrollable quantities, but all countries would know that those stocks would be reduced every year by a specified amount. On the other hand, a decision to separate the temporary or permanent discontinuance of nuclear tests from the cessation of production and the reduction of stocks would sacrifice the essential to the incidental; genuine disarmament would be sacrificed to fears that were perhaps exaggerated and in any case could not be compared with the dangers of war. To isolate the discontinuance of tests would be to seek an agreement that had no direct bearing on peace; it was not a real step forward, but merely an alibi.

3. His delegation's position was based on those considerations. France earnestly hoped that it would never possess a single atomic or thermo-nuclear bomb. That renunciation was, however, subject to one inflexible condition: that the "atomic Powers" should immediately cease to increase and begin to reduce their stockpiles under international control. No other country would think of manufacturing nuclear weapons if their present owners agreed to reduce the stockpiles in their arsenals. In the absence of such an agreement, France would not renounce a weapon which other countries, in whose arsenals it was already included, would continue to produce. In that event, France also would proceed to conduct tests and would try to make them harmless, which was now feasible. In that connexion he cited the statement he had made before the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission in London on 16 May 1957.

1/ See DC/SC.1/PV.116, p. 6.

4. France earnestly desired disarmament. In the course of the last forty-four years, it had suffered tragic losses in wars that had killed or maimed more than one out of every ten of its young men. Moreover, it could not conceive of peace except in independence, and disarmament would remove the threat to other countries that was, despite the United Nations Charter, implicit in the existence of the most powerful armies. Those considerations were valid not only for the French people, but also for those united with them, the peoples of the seventeen great overseas territories which had recently spontaneously decided, in a referendum without precedent in history, to adhere to a free, equalitarian and fraternal community. Until the weapons had been destroyed, the security of those hundred million people rested on alliances concluded between nations equal in law; that security was undoubtedly more precarious than that of peace with disarmament, but precious in the present uncertain world.

5. If, therefore, the "atomic Powers" retained their nuclear arsenals, it might reasonably be asked why France should refrain from building up its own such arsenal, however, painful the decision to do so might be. The contention that France should renounce nuclear weapons because two of its allies already possessed them was tantamount to a denial of the equality of rights of France and its allies. Nor could France be taken to task for conducting its first nuclear test explosion a few years after the other countries; it was necessary to remember the years of occupation and martyrdom, during which France not only had to interrupt all nuclear research, but had given its inventions and its best scientists to its allies to collaborate in the perfection of the formidable weapon which had then symbolized liberation; it was necessary to remember also the long years when priority had had to be given to the reconstruction of key industries. Nor could it be argued that the French economy was less capable of undertaking the manufacture of atomic weapons than the economies of other countries; such an argument would ignore the fact that French scientists and industry had built reactors, extracted plutonium from the fuel elements and carried out the first stages of the isotopic separation of uranium, in other words, had accumulated the material for atomic weapons while producing energy for peaceful purposes.

6. In that connexion, he wished to comment on the criticism made by the Soviet Union representative on 10 October 1958 (945th meeting) of part of the statement made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of France on 25 September 1958 in the General Assembly (758th plenary meeting). The Soviet representative had accused the French Foreign Minister of engaging in "dialectic acrobatics", because he had frankly outlined the nuclear policy of France. The representative of the Soviet Union was more adept than anyone else at dialectics, whether acrobatic or not: he had maintained inter alia that control should not become fully effective until the completion of the disarmament process, when mistrust had been eliminated, or in other words when control had become superfluous; but would accept only a very inadequate and rudimentary measure of control at the beginning of the process when control was essential precisely in order to diminish mistrust and demonstrate to all that every party was acting in good faith.

7. Mr. Moch urged the members of the First Committee to believe that France would be sincerely delighted and relieved to abandon such dangerous undertakings, provided it could do so on a basis of equality for all and provided all the Powers jointly renounced the stockpiling of atomic weapons. The atomic secret was a thing of the past. France was in fact proving the futility of the secrecy that had been maintained. No one had helped France in the matter of nuclear weapons; no one had furnished it any technical information. France had rediscovered the secret while rebuilding its ravaged country; it seemed reasonable to suppose that other would do the same if stockpiling continued in certain countries. There was no reason to believe that a resolution on the isolated discontinuance of test explosions could, in Francis Perrin's phrase, "re-chain Prometheus": other countries would, like France, agree not to undertake tests but only if they were certain that the production of fissionable materials for military purposes would be halted and that stockpiles would be reduced.

8. France's position with regard to the draft resolutions before the Committee was based on those considerations. As the negotiations between States that had "tested nuclear weapons" were to be held at Geneva without France's participation, the French delegation would not take a stand on the texts relating to them, i.e., section I of the seventeen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.205), the entire Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.203), other than the last paragraph, and the first four paragraphs of the thirteen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.202/Rev.1 and Add.1). In conformity with the United Kingdom representative's statement that no agreement reached at Geneva would be binding on Powers not participating in the discussions (948th meeting), any three-Power agreement that might be signed on that occasion would be res inter alios acta so far as France was concerned and would be binding on France only if the latter adhered to it at a later date on such conditions as might then be decided.

9. As an expression of France's continuing belief that a beginning should be made with effective disarmament, the French delegation was inclined to submit an amendment proposing the insertion of a new paragraph after the penultimate paragraph of the Soviet draft, operative paragraph 1 of the seventeen-Power draft and operative paragraph 2 of the thirteen-Power draft. The paragraph would read as follows:

"Considers that such an agreement [i.e., the agreement on the temporary or permanent discontinuance of tests] must, if it is to be accepted by all Powers and thus to be effective and genuinely serve the cause of peace and disarmament, also include specific clauses concerning the cessation, under international control, of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes and the progressive reconversion for peaceful purposes, also under international control, of existing stockpiles".

10. The Soviet Union draft resolution concerning the reduction of military budgets and the allocation of some of the resources thus released to a fund for under-developed countries (A/C.1/L.204) took up an idea developed by Mr. Edgar Faure, the French Prime Minister, at the Conference of the Heads of Government of the Four Powers, in July 1955 (DC/71, annex 16). However the idea, as set out by the Soviet representative on 13 October 1958 (947th meeting),

had been stripped of its substance and transformed into an illusion. The Soviet draft made no provision for control and there was no guarantee that the promised reductions would in fact be made or even that military expenditures would not be reduced by transferring certain items to non-military parts of the budget. Governments usually announced appropriations but not transfers of funds or payments actually authorized.

11. In conformity with the recent tendency to separate the technical aspect of disarmament problems from their political context, he suggested that the First Committee might transform the Soviet draft resolution, which was unacceptable in its present form, and convene a conference of financial experts to study the various military budgets of the principal Powers with a view to undertaking a serious comparison and perhaps developing a uniform presentation for the future or at least a uniform content covering all forms of State military activity, including scientific research for defence purposes. The experts would also examine the difficult problem of comparing actual budget expenditure with the budget estimates and would, he hoped, find methods of detailed financial control to ensure that each State honoured its undertakings. The French delegation considered that such technical research should precede any measures for reducing budgets.

12. In that connexion he would mention in passing that between 1954 and 1956, in addition to its various contributions through the United Nations, France had invested 300,000 million francs per year—i.e., a quarter of its average military expenditure—in the economic, social and cultural development of the territories for which it assumed special responsibilities. That effort had been intensified in 1957 and would increase substantially in the next few years. The Soviet delegation proposed to allocate to the under-developed regions one-tenth of the 15 per cent saving to be made on military budgets, i.e., 1.5 per cent of the budgets. In the case of France that percentage would amount to 20,000 million francs, barely one-fifteenth of the amount it was already devoting to the improvement of conditions in the under-industrialized countries.

13. With regard to the question of safeguards against surprise attack, the French delegation hoped that an agreement would be reached on the subject. As in the nuclear field, France maintained the position defined in the proposals submitted on 29 August 1957 by Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission (DC/113, annex 5). It continued to favour aerial inspection, along the lines suggested in those proposals, combined with ground control posts at carefully selected points, the whole accompanied by the submission to the control body of the inventories of fixed military installations, numerical data and the location of specified units and armaments. In that field as in others, technical progress increased the difficulties of prevention: weapons were becoming inter-continental in their range and there appeared to be no limit to the speed and range of aircraft, which would necessitate the enlargement of the areas under surveillance. However, in view of the difficulties in the way of unduly ambitious schemes, the French delegation suggested that a meeting of military experts should be convened to study general technical conditions and, possibly, the nature of the areas to be controlled.

14. In passing he mentioned in a related field the various suggestions which had been made for the establishment of areas of reduced military density in certain parts of the world which would serve as pilot areas for international control. Their existence would certainly reduce risks, but the idea involved numerous difficulties of a strategic, tactical and political nature which would have to be submitted to experts representing the Powers most directly affected by the establishment of such areas.

15. Turning to another subject, he remarked that it was necessary to establish a law for outer space just as there already was a law—although still overly disputed—of the high seas, and also to limit exploration by man-made satellites to scientific research. The circling of satellites with nuclear warheads whose trajectory could be altered by auxiliary rockets in order, at a given moment, to lay waste a continent would constitute an ever-present menace which must never be permitted to arise. France had always declared itself ready to participate in any legal or scientific conference organized for that purpose. France felt that it was imperative to establish an international and neutral status for outer space and that that status could be more easily achieved before there was a large number of satellites designed for military purposes.

16. Where the Disarmament Commission was concerned, the French delegation thought that it would be best for it to meet without delay. The Commission would then convene the proposed committees of experts and give them directions concerning the questions to be examined; the committees would report to the Commission instead of existing independently of the United Nations and, if their number increased, creating confusion. Nevertheless, the French delegation placed such hope in those technical meetings that it would prefer to postpone the convening of the Commission rather than of the technical committees, if the latter's work would be delayed by the revival of the Commission. The question of the membership of the Commission was less important: since it could take decisions only by unanimous agreement and since each of its members exercised the right of veto, *de facto* if not *de jure*, any inequality in the representation of the parties was immaterial. For that reason, the French delegation was prepared to make every concession in order to restore harmony. Since it would not be easy to reach and formulate an agreement, however, such an agreement should be put into final form by a very small number of drafters. The membership of the Commission should therefore be kept as low as possible, or, if some delegations should object, a decision should be taken immediately to reappoint a sub-committee. In order to work effectively, the latter ought not to be much larger than the former Sub-Committee. Likewise, if the Assembly adopted the suggestion of the representative of Mexico (946th meeting) and set up a temporary body similar to the four-member sub-committee which had met in Paris in 1951, France would be prepared to collaborate. He made the same reply to the representative of Ireland. The French delegation considered form of little importance so long as progress could be made with regard to substance.

17. In conclusion, he wished to recall the principles by which France was guided in all its actions. First, France believed that any disarmament agreement

must be unanimously supported by the States directly concerned. Secondly, it believed that an increase in universal security was possible on the sole condition that disarmament, even if only partial, was applied to all fields. Thirdly, it was convinced that international relations today were dominated by mistrust, just as they had been during the past twelve years, and that controls were indispensable. (What the French delegation had in mind was control of disarmament and not of armaments, although sometimes, in order to know how much was being subtracted from a total, it was first necessary to know what that total was.) Lastly, France believed that the need to restore international confidence set limits to the degree of disarmament which was practicable at the present time. It was necessary, therefore, to limit initial disarmament to measures which could be made subject to immediate control and to wait patiently for further disarmament—to be accompanied by a corresponding increase in controls—which the French delegation was convinced no one would wish to reject.

18. Thus, the unchanging principle of the French delegation, which was based on solid facts, remained the following: no disarmament without control, no control without disarmament, but progressively all disarmament that could currently be controlled. France proposed that the members of the Committee should adopt a technical approach, that they should agree on the composition of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, and convene committees of technical, military, legal and financial experts to study—if possible, under the authority of the Commission or, failing that, on their own—the following questions: (1) composition of the military budgets of the chief Powers and the means of controlling reductions; (2) reduction and control of specified armed forces and armaments in accordance with the principles on which a general agreement, without particulars, had been reached in 1957; (3) controlled discontinuance of the production of fissionable materials for military use, as well as a controlled start towards converting stockpiles to peaceful uses, in accordance with the principle expressed above; (4) prevention of surprise attacks and demarcation of inspection zones; (5) and (6) control of outer space and international law respecting outer space, subjects for which two distinct groups of experts would be required.

19. He recalled that the French delegation had already proposed the formation of those various groups of experts in previous years.<sup>2/</sup> The only group of experts which had actually been formed—the group assigned to work out an effective means of controlling the discontinuance of nuclear test explosions—had scored a technical success which impelled him to advocate the general application of that procedure, in the hope that the USSR delegation would withdraw the reservations it had recently repeated.

20. It was true that the First Committee would not achieve any immediate progress towards disarmament by deciding to revive the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee and to form the six groups of experts, but it would have sown the seeds for future harvests and rectified an awkward situation, thus answering, in part at least, the hopes of the entire world.

21. Mr. ALEMAYEHOU (Ethiopia) noted that the settlement of the disarmament problem unfortunately seemed to be taking much longer than was desirable in the interests of world security. By taking a positive decision with a view to relieving the world from the fear of a nuclear war, the General Assembly would be promoting the solution of other basic problems. In theory, all peoples and Governments were in agreement in admitting the need to prevent a nuclear war, to destroy existing stocks of nuclear weapons and to discontinue tests. The differences of opinion came into operation on the means of putting those principles to practice. In that connexion, the small countries had undoubtedly been mistaken in adopting a purely passive attitude.

22. The General Assembly would be able to help the great Powers to accomplish the difficult task of disarmament if, instead of recommendations, it adopted declarations of principles similar to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights or the declaration which led to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Such declarations of principles, made by eighty-one States and backed by world opinion, would greatly influence the attitude of the Governments concerned. They might open the way to the conclusion of treaties, conventions or protocols of a more specific nature.

23. In that connexion he referred to the precedent of the Declaration signed in 1868 at St. Petersburg. Several major conventions and protocols had been based on that Declaration. There could be no doubt that those documents had been greatly instrumental in discouraging the use and production of those gases.

24. Atomic radiation had something in common with those fluids, but its effects were much worse in all respects. If the use of less dangerous weapons had been prohibited by a less efficiently organized society at a less enlightened period, why should it not be possible to follow that example today? Universal condemnation of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons would facilitate the conclusion of an agreement whereby the "nuclear Powers" would renounce the use of such weapons; and it would provide an additional guarantee against any infringement of such an agreement.

25. His delegation appealed to the smaller and middle-sized Powers for support. He then read the rough draft of a declaration which, if the suggestion was approved, could be embodied in a formal proposal to be put before the Committee at a later stage.

26. Mr. SHANAHAN (New Zealand) noted that optimism had not been the prevailing mood in the First Committee with regard to disarmament. The possibility of a surprise attack was creating an atmosphere of acute tension. A large part of the world's resources was being drawn away from the urgent needs of human welfare to increase retaliatory strength that was kept in a state of instant readiness. It was especially disturbing that such conditions should persist when so many countries stood in need of more capital for the economic betterment of their peoples.

27. His delegation shared the Secretary-General's view that the United Nations must welcome and be associated with all real progress in disarmament, in whatever forum it was achieved (A/3936, para. 8). He did not propose to enter into a detailed discussion of the manner in which that association could be made

<sup>2/</sup> See DC/SC.1/PV.51, 116, 131, 149 and 153.

more effective, but he did wish to say how helpful and useful he had found the observations made by the representatives of Canada (954th meeting) and Thailand (950th meeting).

28. But the history of United Nations endeavours to regulate and reduce armaments had for too long been one of lost opportunity, of vain initiatives, of unanimity only on the certainty of disagreement. Principles attracting wide general support had remained mere abstractions, ineffectual guides towards action that had never been taken. The Members of the United Nations had been eloquent in their diagnosis of the evil, but had done very little to cure it. They had progressed, not in harmony, but only in their ability to destroy themselves. That immobility in negotiation had been very different from the swift course of the arms race and the multiplication of its dangers.

29. Yet if the years of its activity had had no other effect, they had, in his view, helped the United Nations to clarify its objectives; they had helped to isolate differences, if not to reconcile them.

30. At the twelfth session, after examination of the disarmament problem against the background of almost six months of intensive negotiation in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, the General Assembly had given its endorsement, by an emphatic majority, to the programme of partial measures suggested by the Western Powers. His delegation had supported that programme as a practical and sensible one which was fully capable of being controlled and would neither create nor accentuate any security imbalance. It had believed and still believed that measures of that character, with whatever modifications might be necessary, could provide essential elements for a first-stage agreement on disarmament. Such measures were still a long way from the comprehensive solution which must be sought, but they would mark a beginning.

31. Progress in disarmament depended upon the unanimity of the great Powers. Whatever the forum where the problem was discussed, and whatever might be recommended by the majority, the veto was a reality in that question. For the First Committee, and for any other United Nations bodies, the essential aim should be to encourage the continuance of the disarmament dialogue on sound and practical lines. New Zealand had always sought to assist that objective. It regretted that the Soviet Union had chosen to interpret the resolution adopted by the General Assembly at its twelfth session (resolution 1148 (XII)) as an attempt to dictate the terms of the deliberations of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, to establish advantages for one side or to substitute arbitrary Assembly recommendations for the decisions to be arrived at in private meetings through free discussion and negotiation. It equally regretted the fact that the Soviet delegation, in its draft resolution on the discontinuance of nuclear weapons testing (A/C.1/L.203), should have asked the General Assembly to endorse an approach open to the very criticisms that the Soviet delegation had levelled at the Assembly at the twelfth session.

32. The New Zealand Government, which had consistently desired the early conclusion of an accord to bring about the cessation of nuclear weapons tests, had been heartened to observe the progress made in recent months on that issue. The two sides had

shown a more conciliatory spirit. It was permissible to hope that the negotiations which, thanks to that progress, were to start at Geneva on 31 October 1958, would be brought to an early and successful conclusion. To assist that result, the General Assembly should leave the participants in no doubt as to the importance it attached to their efforts. It should urge them to suspend their nuclear weapons tests during the negotiations, as the two Western "nuclear Powers" were proposing to do. The seventeen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.205), of which New Zealand was a sponsor, fully reflected New Zealand's views. It would be consistent with the spirit of that resolution if all Powers refrained from testing while the negotiations were in progress.

33. New Zealand had been one of the fifty-six countries which had supported the Western proposals at the twelfth session linking a cessation of tests with other measures, including a cessation of the production of nuclear material for weapons (A/C.1/L.179 and Add.I). If those proposals, which had been rejected by the Soviet Union, had been accepted, the necessary suspension might have been achieved. Their acceptance might also have dispelled the doubts which had surrounded the problem of control measures. But no agreement on the suggestions for partial disarmament had so far proved possible. In the circumstances, and in full awareness of the strong arguments which existed for maintaining the links established in General Assembly resolution 1148 (XII), the New Zealand Government had come to share the view that if a wider agreement could not be found at the present time, there would be value in seeking a separate agreement to end tests, for reasons of a most compelling nature.

34. First, such a separate agreement would end the problem of radio-active fall-out from nuclear test explosions, which had been so disturbing to public opinion. Although many of its findings were of necessity only preliminary, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had recorded the important conclusion that all steps designed to minimize irradiation of human beings, including cessation of nuclear tests, would be to the benefit of human health (A/3838, chap. VII, para. 54).

35. Secondly, if it were universal in its application, such an agreement would rule out the danger, which otherwise seemed inevitable, that efficient nuclear weapons would be developed by an ever-increasing number of countries. If tests were not ended, there was a danger that nuclear weapons, and with them the fate of humanity, might fall into the hands of a Hitler of the future, in whatever country he might rise to power. Assiduous efforts must be made to avoid the situation to which the Secretary of State of the United States, Mr. Dulles, had referred in the General Assembly at its twelfth session, when he had spoken of nuclear weapons spreading "promiscuously throughout the world, giving irresponsible persons a power for evil that is appalling, even to contemplate" (680th plenary meeting, para. 31).

36. At the 953rd meeting of the First Committee, the representative of Ireland had given a lucid and impressive analysis of that aspect of the problem, and the New Zealand delegation was in sympathy with many of the views he had put forward. With Ireland, New Zealand shared the hope that sovereign States, in the



Substitute the following text for the text now appearing on page 68 of the bound volume:

(See overleaf.)

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\* This erratum does not apply to separate fascicles, but only to the bound volume.

interests of their sovereign rights and in the wider interests of peace, would not manufacture nuclear weapons and would forgo the right to develop them. His delegation hoped that the suggestion made in the Irish amendments (A/C.1/L.207), urging the "nuclear Powers" to refrain from supplying nuclear weapons to other States, would receive serious consideration. Such an appeal must derive its strength from the hope that the concern it expressed was shared by all the "nuclear Powers".

37. The third benefit of an agreement to suspend tests was that it would establish for the first time a world-wide inspection system. In his delegation's view, that was really the key to disarmament, and it was encouraging to know that at least in one limited field it had been possible to remove the issue of control from the realm of controversy and propaganda. The fact that the Conference of Experts to Study the Possibility of Detecting Violations of a Possible Agreement on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests had shown that a control system was feasible had therefore cleared away one major difficulty in the way of political agreement. Moreover, if such a control system could be made to work successfully, the experience gained would, as the Secretary-General had observed in his memorandum, be invaluable preparation for implementing, with the least delay, further world-wide inspection and control systems as agreements were reached on other disarmament measures (A/3936, para. 7).

38. The fourth and perhaps the most important benefit which would come from an agreement to end nuclear tests under effective international control was a lowering of tension and an increase in understanding and international confidence.

39. The New Zealand delegation would not wish to ignore the difficulties which must be overcome in order to complete an agreement even on the limited issue of ending tests. One of the main problems which would have to be resolved was the universal application of any measures agreed upon at Geneva by the three "nuclear Powers". In that connexion, the problem arose of extending the control system to the mainland of China.

40. A properly safeguarded agreement to end nuclear tests was therefore an urgent necessity. However, one of the substantial benefits his delegation looked for in suspension of test explosions would be lost if the suspension were not to be the prelude to a wider disarmament agreement resulting in balanced measures of genuine disarmament bringing about reductions in conventional as well as nuclear armaments.

41. His delegation agreed that all the possibilities presented by a technical approach to such disarmament problems as left room for study of a non-political nature should be explored promptly and fully. While unanimity among technical experts would not mean much without unanimity at the political level, it seemed clear that Governments would attach no value to mere protestations of faith. They would want to be satisfied that they could be protected against non-compliance before they committed themselves. Technical studies of inspection and control systems, therefore, had a contribution to make in the essential process of building confidence. His delegation hoped that the study of the technical aspects of measures against the possibility of a surprise attack would be followed by similar technical studies on other initial disarmament measures.

42. Mr. DE LA COLINA (Mexico), introducing his delegation's draft resolution (A/C.1/L.208), recalled that Mr. Padilla Nervo, head of the Mexican delegation, had explained in his statement of 13 October (946th meeting) the reasons of principle and the practical reasons for the draft, the sole purpose of which was to ensure a resumption of the disarmament negotiations which had been broken off more than a year previously.

43. The step taken by his delegation would in no way interfere with the general debate or with the consideration of and voting on the draft resolutions under items 64, 70 and 72 of the General Assembly's agenda, which had been referred to the First Committee. His delegation wished the Committee to examine the important procedural question it had raised after the substance of the problem now under discussion had been studied.

44. As the opening of the proposed informal conversations would depend on agreement between the representatives of the Powers mentioned in the Mexican draft resolution, it would be for the Chairman of the First Committee, after consulting them and the Secretary-General, to set the date of the first meeting. Again, it would be for the Chairman to decide, with the consent of the parties concerned, when his report should be submitted to the Committee.

45. The Mexican delegation, as its Chairman had stated on 13 October, fervently hoped that the negotiations which would begin at Geneva on 31 October 1958 and the work of the next meeting of experts who would examine measures to prevent surprise attacks, would be crowned with success. While the United Nations must continue its endeavours to arrive at a general balanced agreement on disarmament—one of its principal purposes—anything that represented genuine progress towards disarmament was to be welcomed. Moreover, his delegation was convinced that the active participation of the General Assembly, the plenary body of the United Nations, was not merely desirable and useful, but essential. That explained and justified the step it had taken in submitting the draft resolution.

46. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it transpired from Mr. Moch's statement that France intended to make nuclear test explosions, that it would endeavour to make such tests harmless and that it would not regard any agreement reached at Geneva without its participation as binding. As Mr. Moch had himself recognized, there was less and less support for France's view on the question of nuclear tests. It would be readily understood that the USSR was unable to support it.

47. With regard to the reduction of military budgets, his delegation had never denied that the idea had been originated by France, but it noted with regret that France deemed it impossible to put the idea into effect at the present juncture. France's whole attitude might be summed up as wishing to hand over as many questions as possible to committees of experts, without previous political commitment.

48. Mr. Moch had emphasized the continuity of French policy in the matter of disarmament. Unhappily, that continuity was entirely negative, as the policy had been one of rejecting all practical disarmament measures.

49. Mr. MOCH (France) requested the USSR representative to read carefully the text of his statement.



He would find that the French Government had taken the view that the discontinuance of nuclear test explosions, unaccompanied by other measures, was a kind of alibi for not disarming. If the USSR really wished to remove the nuclear threat, agreement could be reached on the cessation of manufacture for military purposes and the reduction of stockpiles at the same time as on the cessation of tests. On all three points, control was possible.

50. Given the mistrust among the Powers, the reduction of military budgets would have to be preceded by a study. There had to be ways of verifying whether a reduction had actually been made; otherwise those who had kept their word would be victimized by those who had not.

51. Disarmament problems were too complex to be resolved by negotiation among political leaders, who

could not commit themselves without previous assurance that there was no way of circumventing the measures they had agreed upon—an assurance which could be given only by the experts. An international team of 3,000 men would no doubt suffice to control the cessation of the production of nuclear energy for military purposes, but that opinion should be verified by experts. France wanted to refer as many matters as possible to the experts only because that was the only way to gain an understanding of extremely complex problems. He would let the members of the Committee judge for themselves whether the continuity of the French position had been the continuity of a negative attitude.

The meeting rose at 5.30 p.m.