

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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Chairman: Mr. Djalal ABDOLAH (Iran).

AGENDA ITEM 24

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction (A/3630 and Corr.1, A/3657, A/3674/Rev.1, A/3685, A/C.1/793, A/C.1/797, A/C.1/L.174, A/C.1/L.175/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.176/Rev.4, A/C.1/L.177, A/C.1/L.178/Rev.2, A/C.1/L.179 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.180, A/C.1/L.181 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.182, A/C.1/L.184, A/C.1/L.185) (continued):

- (a) Report of the Disarmament Commission;
- (b) Expansion of the membership of the Disarmament Commission and of its Sub-Committee;
- (c) Collective action to inform and enlighten the peoples of the world as to the dangers of the armaments race, and particularly as to the destructive effects of modern weapons;
- (d) Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons

1. Mr. CHRISTIANSEN (Denmark) said that Denmark supported the twenty-four-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179. and Corr.1 and Add.1) as a realistic basis for further discussion in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission. Moreover, since effective agreement was primarily a matter for the great Powers, the Danish delegation was sceptical regarding the advantages of altering the composition of those two organs.

2. Denmark was strongly in favour of a suspension of tests of nuclear weapons. However, since there were differences of opinion among the experts regarding the dangers of testing, it would be more profitable to discuss the problem when the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had been submitted. Testing was only one aspect of that problem; it was equally vital to reduce the risk

of radiation incurred when atomic energy was used for peaceful purposes. On the other hand, the core of the disarmament issue was not the suspension of tests, but the ultimate elimination of atomic weapons. Consequently, the course laid down in the twenty-four-Power draft resolution linking a test ban with the cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and the progressive transfer of stocks to non-weapons purposes, all under international control, was best designed to deal with the problem of atomic weapons as a whole.

3. The twenty-four-Power draft also indicated the objectives to be sought in respect of the related questions of reduction of conventional armaments, guarantees against surprise attack and the use of outer space for peaceful purposes. The dangers of atomic weapons should not obscure the destructive effects of conventional weapons. Production and maintenance of conventional armaments imposed a heavy burden of expenditure, especially on the smaller States, and impeded their economic and social development. Like all other peoples, the Danish people wanted to reduce that expenditure; the safeguards against surprise attack provided for in the draft would facilitate agreement towards that end.

4. In the domain of the utilization of outer space, Soviet scientists had achieved sensational triumphs and the Soviet people were sincerely to be congratulated on those accomplishments. The United States had expressed its willingness to deal with that question separately, and Denmark hoped that the great Powers would not miss the chance of ultimately establishing co-operation in that field. Denmark would also support the Belgian draft resolution (A/3630/Corr.1).

5. Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain) said that his delegation would vote in favour of the Belgian draft resolution, which would contribute to a better understanding on the part of world public opinion of the serious problem of disarmament. It would also vote in favour of giving priority to the twenty-four-Power draft resolution and in favour of the draft itself, which summed up the best ways of decreasing, localizing and doing away with the evils produced by the latest destructive inventions. As many representatives had pointed out with regard to the suspension of nuclear tests, the Powers which did not possess nuclear weapons could not play a decisive part in deciding that question; they must therefore be guided by the judgement of the nuclear Powers which they trusted and which had made careful and prolonged study of the question. The United States had proved its peaceful intentions; the fact that it alone possessed the atomic bomb had for many years been the sole protection of many countries against the Soviet Union's plans for world domination.

6. The draft resolutions on the suspension of tests of nuclear weapons submitted by India (A/C.1/L.176/Rev.4) and Yugoslavia (A/C.1/L.180) were undoubtedly

motivated by noble principles, but his delegation could not share the optimism of those countries with regard to the Soviet Union's policies. Although the Japanese draft resolution (A/C.1/L.174) was more realistic, it too called for the premature suspension of nuclear tests before the establishment of a definitive system of control and the cessation of the manufacture of fissionable materials. The Spanish delegation would therefore vote against that draft resolution too. The United States representative had explained (866th meeting) that the separation of the question of suspension from the other problems of disarmament was inadvisable because the suspension of tests would not halt the production of nuclear weapons, while it would halt the efforts being made to decrease the radio-active fall-out from such weapons, and would do nothing to prevent the acquisition of nuclear weapons by other countries. The root of the problem was not the question of tests but the danger of war and of the use of nuclear weapons in quantity. His delegation agreed with the representatives of France (877th meeting) and the United Kingdom (869th meeting) that justice and freedom must be maintained by force if necessary in the absence of more solid bases for agreement and that no concessions could be made at the expense of the free world's security. Too much trust should not be put in unanimity, which was difficult to obtain and sometimes even harmful in its effects. It was more valuable to obtain unity behind an idea, backed by the means necessary to make that idea prevail. It was possible that the danger with which the discoveries of science had confronted the world would make disarmament possible in some measure. If so, the adoption of the twenty-four-Power draft resolution, and of that draft alone, would contribute to that result.

7. An increase in the number of countries dealing with the problem would not contribute to its solution, nor should the Mexican suggestion to appoint a United Nations commissioner for disarmament (699th plenary meeting) be adopted, at least for the time being. Such procedural solutions could not be effective until confidence between nations was restored and the political problems which divided them into two groups were settled.

8. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) said that his delegation judged the various draft resolutions before the Committee in the light of what the Assembly could do of practical value to foster agreement among the great Powers on disarmament. It could do three things: it could submit suggestions and take certain initiatives; it could attempt to reconcile the divergent positions; and it could mobilize public opinion in favour of the urgent need for the comprehensive, legal and mandatory organization of disarmament.

9. Peru would vote for the Belgian draft resolution (A/3630/Corr.1). It was not only vital; it was especially timely. Quoting the reply of the Soviet statesman, Mr. Khrushchev, to a question put to him by a correspondent of The New York Times, Mr. James Reston, he pointed out that the official Soviet view appeared to be that, while the socialist countries would suffer huge losses in an atomic war, only the capitalist countries would be totally destroyed; the race would survive and socialism would live on and continue to develop. The Soviet people had to be given documentary, scientific proof that an atomic war would destroy the whole planet; they had to be informed of the dangers of the

arms race, which had reached a point of no return and had become virtually uncontrollable.

10. The Assembly could, it was true, take the initiative in demanding a suspension of nuclear tests. Such a measure would be a forceful symbol which might help to ease tensions and restore a measure of trust; but would it not be better if it could become more than a symbol, if it could become a reality? It could be given reality by being linked with the cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes and with the other postulates of a comprehensive disarmament plan. As a separate and isolated measure, not only was its effectiveness illusory, but it might be dangerous. It would be welcomed as a real measure of disarmament, whereas in fact it would be no more than a concession to public opinion and a pretext for putting off real disarmament. A suspension of tests effected independently of a cessation of production of nuclear arms would be a trap, a psychological stratagem: by lulling public opinion with regard to the dangers of tests, it would actually be concealing much greater dangers. Therefore, while Peru fully sympathized with the authors of the various proposals for a suspension of tests as an immediate, separate measure and recognized their sincerity, it could not support those proposals (A/C.1/L.174, A/C.1/L.176/Rev.4, A/C.1/L.178/Rev.2, A/C.1/L.180 and A/C.1/L.182). Logically, the disarmament problem was indivisible; action had to be taken on it as a whole. Moreover, the world clamour for a ban on tests had found a response in the twenty-four-Power draft resolution: the test suspension had been made the first point on which agreement was to be sought, provided, however, that it remained within the context of the comprehensive programme set forth in that draft.

11. It should be noted that some of the proposals for a suspension of tests as a separate and immediate measure had been complemented by suggestions for a study of means of inspection and control. Those suggestions had been based on the position taken by the Soviet Union at an earlier stage of the disarmament negotiations when it had accepted some form of inspection, not as an integral part of the prohibition of atomic weapons, but at a later stage. Only after discussion of the suspension of tests in isolation was there to be a study of means of control. In essence, the plea of those who had now revived that earlier Soviet view was prohibition first, control later. Peru could not accept that ambiguous position. Nevertheless, there were good ideas in the various proposals to which he referred and he would not vote against them: after the adoption of the twenty-four-Power draft, all those points should be transmitted to the Sub-Committee for study.

12. The Peruvian delegation considered that transmission of the various proposals and suggestions to the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee for study was the only practical method by which the Assembly could help to reconcile the divergent views of the great Powers. Such procedural methods as the expansion of the membership of those organs or the appointment of a United Nations commissioner for disarmament were inapplicable because they could not affect the substance of the technical negotiations which had to take place among the great Powers. The Assembly could not impose a solution on those Powers; such a solution had to be reached and accepted in good faith and in a spirit of mutual confidence. If the great Powers

considered that they needed the assistance of a mediator or additional experts, they would certainly exercise their privilege and authority to call upon them.

13. The present Soviet disarmament proposals constituted a reversal of the position adopted at the sixth session of the General Assembly, when the USSR had declared its willingness to accept control of the prohibition of atomic weapons (453rd meeting). It would also be recalled that the Prime Minister of the USSR, Mr. Bulganin, had at one time accepted the idea of aerial inspection to safeguard against surprise attack and that, although the Soviet representative, Mr. Gromyko, had omitted any reference to it in his most recent speech (867th meeting), the USSR had previously expressed agreement that the reduction of conventional armaments should also be subject to control. If the Soviet Union were prepared once again to accept control in those fields and to extend control to the test suspension, the cessation of production and the conversion of stocks to non-weapons purposes, the divergent views would have been reconciled.

14. Unfortunately, the Soviet Union now accepted only subjective guarantees, that is, the unilateral judgement of each party regarding controls instead of that of an international authority. It had reverted to its 1948 position and thus altered the whole prospect of effective disarmament. Its reversal was the result of psychological changes and political aims: the most recent feats of Soviet science in successfully launching artificial earth satellites had strengthened the Soviet Union's belief in its "psychological supremacy". Peru paid a tribute to those great scientific achievements and deplored the fact that, despite the great advances of the Soviet people, the Soviet Government refused to envisage a legal form of coexistence and failed to recognize that atomic war would mean the end of the human race. Peru would vote against the Soviet proposals.

15. Peru would vote for the twenty-four-Power draft resolution because that text would effectively mobilize world opinion in favour of comprehensive, legal and mandatory disarmament and because it viewed the entire problem as an integrated whole, no aspect of which could be left to unilateral action by the parties and all of which would be subject to control by an effective international authority. The Assembly had the choice of adopting broad lines of action which might include many ideas advanced in the Indian and Yugoslav draft resolutions and transmitting them to the Disarmament Commission for study, or of doing nothing to further the progress of disarmament.

16. The Peruvian delegation would also vote in favour of the amendment submitted by five Latin-American States (A/C.1/L.181 and Add.1).

17. Mr. WINIEWICZ (Poland) said that his delegation's vote on the draft resolutions before the Committee would be based on the premise that on a problem so important as disarmament it was inadvisable to adopt a resolution dealing with questions of substance by a majority vote, in disregard of the attitude of one of the major Powers concerned. That point of view was in conformity with the opinion expressed during the general debate by a large number of representatives from different regions of the world. Many of those representatives had appealed for an effort to seek a formula which might gain unanimous support. Another

expression of the same point of view had been the proposal put forward by the representatives of Mexico (884th meeting) and Ecuador (882nd meeting) that a working party should be appointed to prepare an agreed draft resolution on disarmament. Indeed, even the representatives of States such as Canada, which shared one of the unreconciled points of view, had emphasized that they did not consider their proposals to be final. His delegation was therefore opposed to the position taken by those representatives who were trying to force the adoption of the twenty-four-Power draft resolution by a majority vote. The draft resolution could not obtain unanimous support. Moreover, it aroused serious doubts in his delegation because the proposals it contained stopped at the threshold of the most important and urgent problems of disarmament: the prohibition of nuclear weapons and the speedy suspension of nuclear tests.

18. The twenty-four-Power draft resolution not only completely disregarded the attitude and proposals of the other side, but was inconsistent with the resolutions on the subject unanimously adopted during the previous sessions of the General Assembly. His delegation agreed with the representatives of India (873rd meeting) and Egypt (884th meeting) that such a resolution would hinder rather than assist the future work of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee. It was vitally important that the present session of the General Assembly should facilitate the future work of the negotiating bodies and create the proper atmosphere for seeking solutions to the many remaining points of contention.

19. Divided as opinion was in the Committee, however, it was still possible to find a unanimous solution to the problem of the suspension of nuclear tests, the great importance of which was denied only by those who had a vested interest in the continuation of the nuclear arms race. His delegation agreed with the representative of Sweden (884th meeting) that a moratorium on atomic tests would contribute to averting harmful developments. The suspension of tests could act as a brake on the production of newer and deadlier nuclear weapons and prevent an increase in the number of States producing such weapons. It had recently been learned that France would soon be joining the number of the atomic Powers, and there were reports that the West German army was to be equipped with nuclear weapons and the Federal Republic of Germany permitted to manufacture them. Those steps would undoubtedly lead to a serious increase in international tension and could not be received with indifference by world public opinion or the countries which would be endangered by such developments.

20. During the debate (875th meeting) his delegation had spoken in favour not only of an immediate and unconditional suspension of nuclear tests but of an immediate undertaking by the major Powers to refrain from using nuclear weapons for an initial period of five years. Poland's proposal, supported by Czechoslovakia and accepted by the German Democratic Republic, that the production and stockpiling of atomic and thermonuclear weapons in the territory of those three States should be prohibited, provided that the same obligation was assumed by the Federal Republic of Germany, might serve the same purpose, although in a geographically limited area.

21. The amendments to the Belgian draft resolution

proposed by his delegation (A/C.1/L.185) were also an expression of the great importance it attached to the problem of nuclear weapons and the suspension of nuclear tests. The present wording of the draft resolution emphasized only control, which by itself could neither stop nor prevent an armaments race. His delegation understood the importance of control, but felt that it should not be made an end in itself. Acceptance of the Polish amendments would bring the Belgian draft resolution into conformity with the General Assembly resolution 808 (IX), which had been adopted unanimously, and would place proper emphasis on the ultimate goal of the United Nations in undertaking the proposed publicity campaign. That campaign should fully reflect the agreed policy of the United Nations on disarmament and should put particular aspects of the problem in their proper perspective. His delegation hoped that its amendments would meet with the Committee's understanding and support.

22. With regard to the organization of future disarmament discussions, his delegation agreed that broader participation by the smaller nations was desirable, for they were as vitally interested in the problem as the major Powers which bore the primary responsibility for solving it. Discussions involving complicated political and technological aspects of disarmament should not necessarily be conducted by a small group; the debate in the First Committee had made it clear that many representatives could contribute not only new ideas but also expert scientific analysis to the discussion. It had thus been proved that disarmament discussions could be carried on in a large body, especially if it was stipulated, as the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/797) proposed, that the officers of the re-organized Disarmament Commission should exercise broad consultative, and, therefore, also conciliatory, functions. In his delegation's opinion, negotiation, consultation and conciliation—which had unfortunately been insufficiently applied during the First Committee's discussions at the current session—were the best means of achieving agreement and bringing divergent points of view together. That was the road which must be taken if mankind's great new scientific discoveries and technical advances were to serve the cause of peace instead of war.

23. Mr. QUIROGA GALDO (Bolivia) noted that, while the United Nations and its various organs discussed disarmament, stockpiles of armaments of all types were increasing throughout the world. The two opposing views seemed hopelessly divided and there appeared no hope of any real progress toward disarmament so long as the climate of distrust continued to prevail in international relations.

24. Neither the nature nor the composition of the bodies studying the problem should make it difficult to achieve a general agreement. In fact, public discussion, instead of encouraging understanding, seemed to emphasize the disagreements and rivalries. It was obvious that the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, as presently constituted, were perfectly capable of establishing the bases for an agreement. The deadlock was a result of the conflict between the great Powers.

25. The Bolivian delegation had carefully studied the USSR draft resolution for the establishment of a permanent disarmament commission consisting of all the States Members of the United Nations (A/C.1/797) as

well as the Indian draft resolution for increasing the membership of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee (A/C.1/L.177). It had also given due consideration to the suggestion for the designation of a United Nations commissioner for disarmament. While recognizing the spirit which had motivated those three proposals, the Bolivian delegation could not vote in their favour. It was convinced that, although disarmament was a vital concern of all members of the international community, it depended exclusively on the conclusion of a direct agreement between the great Powers that were in possession of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.

26. The Bolivian delegation was in full agreement that all Members of the United Nations should do their utmost to help dispel distrust in international relations. His delegation would vote in favour of the Yugoslav draft resolution (A/C.1/L.180) which urged the members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission to seek agreement on a number of specific aspects of the problem of disarmament.

27. Its affirmative vote on the Yugoslav draft resolution would not prevent the Bolivian delegation from wholeheartedly supporting the draft resolution of the twenty-four-Powers, which, in general terms, incorporated all of the Western proposals on disarmament. He agreed that disarmament was impossible without an effective system of controls which, unfortunately, the Soviet Union opposed.

28. The Bolivian delegation would abstain on the other draft resolutions relating to the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons because, despite their political motivations, it was in general agreement with their ultimate goals. Bolivia would therefore abstain on the revised Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.178/Rev.2) and on the USSR draft resolution (A/C.1/L.175/Rev.1).

29. The Bolivian delegation supported the Western position that cessation of atomic tests was impossible as an isolated measure divorced from cessation of production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. Nevertheless, for reasons of solidarity, his delegation would vote in favour of the Japanese draft resolution (A/C.1/L.174).

30. The Bolivian delegation would also vote in favour of the Belgian draft resolution for informing the peoples of the world of the dangers of the armaments race (A/3630/Corr.1), a proposal which deserved unanimous support.

31. Lastly he referred to the amendment of which Bolivia was a sponsor (A/C.1/L.181 and Add.1), which would incorporate in the twenty-four-Power draft resolution a paragraph recommending consideration of the possibility of devoting funds made available as a result of disarmament to the improvement of living conditions throughout the world and particularly in the less-developed countries.

32. Bolivia would support any proposal the aim of which was to transmit the various draft resolutions before the Committee to the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission.

33. Mr. AHMED (Pakistan) introduced the amendments which his delegation had co-sponsored with the delegation of Norway (A/C.1/L.184) to the twenty-four Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179 and Corr.1 and Add.1).

34. The debate in the Committee had disclosed a narrowing of differences between the Western Powers and the Soviet Union as a result of the Sub-Committee's deliberations in London. The debate had also established the earnest desire of all Governments for continued negotiations in order to break the present deadlock. It had been pointed out that the most promising way to achieve progress in the negotiations was to give independent consideration to specific questions. As suggested by the Pakistan delegation (881st meeting), the question of the reduction of armaments and armed forces and the question of prevention of surprise attack should be dealt with independently. It was to be regretted that those suggestions had not been accepted by the members of the Sub-Committee. However, as indicated by the representative of Canada (878th meeting), it was important to impart a measure of flexibility to the twenty-four Power proposals.

35. The General Assembly was now called upon to find a way out of the present impasse by defining a basis for the resumption of disarmament talks in the Sub-Committee. The amendment by his delegation and the Norwegian delegation had been presented in the hope of making a tangible and positive step forward. The first additional paragraph proposed requested the Disarmament Commission to invite its Sub-Committee to establish as one of its first tasks groups of technical experts to study inspection systems for any of the disarmament measures on which the Sub-Committee might reach agreement in principle and to report within a fixed period. The second proposed paragraph prescribed the composition of those technical groups. Those amendments would, in the sponsors' view, enable the Sub-Committee to make concrete progress towards devising appropriate systems of inspection which were essential if disarmament measures were to become a reality. There seemed no reason why the problem of inspection and control should not be studied concurrently with negotiations for agreement on the unsettled points at issue. The recommendation on the composition of the technical group would help to meet the views of those delegations calling for wider and closer participation of Member States.

36. The delegation of Pakistan commended those amendments to the sponsors of the twenty-four Power draft resolution and in particular to those Powers which were members of the Sub-Committee. It considered that an expert study of the technical aspects of disarmament would facilitate and expedite agreement on disarmament measures.

37. Mr. de la COLINA (Mexico) said that the Committee was approaching a vote on the various draft resolutions without resorting to any of the measures originally suggested by the head of the Mexican delegation (699th plenary meeting) and later seconded by the representative of Ecuador (882nd meeting). Such a vote would before long widen the gap between the two sides which bore the responsibility for reaching an agreement.

38. The Mexican delegation had already emphasized the risks of proceeding immediately to the vote, particularly in view of the positive and valuable elements contained in various proposals. Moreover, the problem of disarmament could not be solved by mere votes, and the General Assembly should not be content with the adoption of a numerical expression of views on so important and vital a subject. Negotiation was the only

hope of achieving progress. Unfortunately nothing had been done in the First Committee to ensure brighter prospects of future work. Nor had there been any move to follow the precedent set in the past and refer the proposals and records of the Committee's work to the Disarmament Commission and, ultimately, to its Sub-Committee for study.

39. The Mexican delegation would vote in favour of all draft resolutions containing constructive ideas and would abstain on any proposal which, in its opinion, would block the course of negotiation. It was pleased to note from the statements which had been made that the proposals in the twenty-four Power draft resolution were not to be regarded as rigid proposals but as a basis for ultimate negotiations.

40. He favoured the Yugoslav draft resolution (A/C.1/L.180) which, generally speaking, was well balanced and prudent. He also praised the Japanese draft resolution (A/C.1/L.174) and the Belgian draft resolution (A/3630/Corr.1).

41. The Mexican delegation considered that the Indian amendments (A/C.1/L.182), greatly improved the twenty-four Power draft resolution by providing greater flexibility. Referring to the amendment of Bolivia, Costa Rica, El Salvador and Uruguay (A/C.1/L.181), he pointed out that the Mexican delegation had asked to be included as a sponsor (A/C.1/L.181/Add.1).

42. He hoped that, despite the advanced stage of the Committee's work, it would be possible to find a procedural solution which would help to ensure resumption of negotiations among the members of the Sub-Committee.

43. Mr. ISMAIL (Federation of Malaya) said that the draft resolutions before the Committee must be considered in the light of the general longing for peace and also in the light of conditions in the world today. The uneasy peace prevailing the world was the result of fear and distrust between the great Powers. The realities of the present situation called for a limited but positive step toward disarmament. The principle of limited disarmament as a first step towards full and general disarmament would involve a number of related and interdependent factors: first, an assurance of security among the great Powers; secondly, the immediate suspension of tests of nuclear weapons; thirdly, an assurance of such suspension of tests by all Powers which had or would have nuclear weapons; fourthly, the concurrent cessation of the production of nuclear weapons and the orderly reduction of stocks of those weapons; fifthly, the concurrent reduction of conventional armaments; sixthly, the institution of a system of inspection and control.

44. His delegation fully sympathized with the desire to have the tests of nuclear weapons stopped immediately. It joined in the general feeling of abhorrence at the harmful effects of such tests on the human race. The Committee's debate on the question of the tests alone should have a salutary effect on future action by the Powers possessing nuclear weapons.

45. In the opinion of his delegation the factors which he had enumerated and which were closely related and interdependent were essential in any attempt to reach ultimate agreement on disarmament. Those factors were present in the solution suggested in the

twenty-four Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179 and Corr. 1 and Add.1) as amended by Pakistan and Norway (A/C.1/L.184), both of which his delegation would support.

46. It would also vote in favour of the Belgian draft

resolution (A/3630/Corr.1) on collective action to inform and enlighten the peoples of the world as to the dangers of the armaments race, and particularly as to the destructive effects of nuclear weapons.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.