



Thursday, 31 October 1957,  
 at 10.50 a.m.

**NEW YORK**

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**Chairman: Mr. Djalal ABDOH (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.2, A/C.1/L.177, A/C.1/L.178/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.179 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.180, A/C.1/L.181) (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. The CHAIRMAN called on the Committee to proceed to a consideration of the draft resolutions before it, the general debate having been concluded.

2. Mr. PRICA (Yugoslavia) said that he wished to explain the principal features of the Yugoslav draft resolution (A/C.1/L.180). The debate had shown that the members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission were not fully prepared to make the mutual concessions needed for a compromise solution. Some of them might perhaps, without departing from their unyielding attitude, obtain the requisite majority on certain draft resolutions, but a purely formal success of that kind could not lead to an agreement, nor even to a step forward along the road to disarmament.

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3. The Yugoslav delegation believed that the primary responsibility of the First Committee was to ensure a resumption of conversations in the United Nations bodies entrusted with the question of disarmament and, at the same time, to draft a more realistic programme to serve as a basis for agreements. Formulation of such a programme would in itself constitute substantial progress. The Yugoslav draft resolution proposed a programme which, while recalling the general objectives set forth by the General Assembly in its resolution 808 (IX), drew attention to the immediate tasks of the competent organs and suggested elements that might enter into one or several initial agreements. That did not mean, of course, that no progress could be achieved at the present session of the General Assembly. On the contrary, the Yugoslav delegation was convinced that, with such a programme, a number of solutions could be reached during the present session, and it was prepared to support any constructive proposal of that kind.

4. With respect to the preamble of the Yugoslav draft resolution, no one could deny that there was a universal desire for the armaments race to be ended or that tests of nuclear weapons gravely imperilled mankind. Moreover, it seemed to be the general opinion of the members of the Committee that the efforts of the Sub-Committee had not been in vain; despite the absence of practical conclusions, those efforts had resulted in a narrowing of differences on certain aspects of disarmament and had provided a number of elements which could lead to one or several agreements.

5. With reference to the operative part of the resolution, he pointed out that initial and partial agreements were generally accepted in the present circumstances as the most effective method for achieving progress in the field of disarmament. But since the proposals for initial or partial agreements made in the Sub-Committee or during the present session of the Assembly were still too complex and too encumbered by various conditions to allow of satisfactory results, the Yugoslav delegation felt that it would be more practical to attempt to reach agreement on a number of separate measures or even on just one measure.

6. The measures in question could be divided into three groups. The first group consisted of measures for the reduction of armed forces, armaments and military expenditures. That group no longer seemed to give rise to controversy. There appeared to be complete agreement regarding the first stage in the reduction of the armed forces of the Powers which were members of the Sub-Committee. Both sides had also reached agreement concerning the levels to which armed forces should be reduced in the second and third stages. Disregarding political considerations which had no direct bearing on the question of disarmament, final agreement was feasible. The second group consisted of measures contributing to the cessa-

tion of the armaments race in the nuclear field, such as: (a) an undertaking by countries which produced fissionable materials for military use not to transfer such materials to other countries; (b) a cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes; (c) the gradual transfer, in accordance with arrangements previously agreed upon, of fissionable materials now stockpiled for military use to non-weapons purposes.

7. The Yugoslav delegation considered that such measures should be included among the elements which could provide the basis for one or several initial or partial agreements, since they could at least contribute to halting the nuclear arms race, in the absence of an agreement providing for a complete prohibition of the production and use of nuclear weapons and for the elimination of stocks of such weapons. An agreement on such measures would obviously not exempt nations from the obligation of continuing their efforts to reach a more general agreement on the ultimate goals defined by the General Assembly in resolution 808 (IX). The Yugoslav delegation, of course, made no claim to having listed all the elements that would be conducive to an agreement. For example, consideration could also be given in the negotiations to the idea of a temporary renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons.

8. The third group comprised measures to ensure the use of intercontinental ballistic missiles and of all other devices for outer-space motion for peaceful and scientific purposes only. Both sides had shown some interest in steps of that kind and had even declared that they agreed in principle on the subject.

9. Of course, the application of any one of the measures which he had just mentioned would require the adoption of suitable control and inspection measures. He reminded the Committee of the opinion which he had expressed on that subject at a previous meeting (871st meeting).

10. The Yugoslav draft resolution attached great importance to a cessation of nuclear weapons tests. His delegation would therefore support any proposal to that end. However, if the General Assembly did not reach any practical solution of that question at its present session, the least it could ask of the disarmament bodies was that they should give priority to efforts to reach an agreement on the immediate cessation of tests of nuclear weapons.

11. He recalled his delegation's opinion on the subject of the membership of the United Nations disarmament bodies. The need for expanding that membership had been asserted during the debate.

12. The Yugoslav delegation reserved the right to comment at a later stage on the other draft resolutions before the Committee.

13. Questions could not be solved by formulas, however ingenious, if those formulas departed unduly from reality. Undoubtedly conditions existed which were favourable to the solution of certain questions relating to the armaments race, but mutual distrust, whether justified or not, the desire to maintain advantages, whether real or illusory, and a reluctance to make concessions—without which no agreement was possible—had prevented any progress towards disarmament. The purpose of the Yugoslav draft resolution was to bring about a different, more constructive attitude. It endeavoured to present a fairly flexible

framework in which the elements were not so interdependent as to prevent progress in respect of any one of them.

14. Mr. CAÑAS (Costa Rica) said that, as Costa Rica was not permitted under its Constitution to have an army, it was able to devote to economic development, public health and education the resources which would otherwise have been spent on armaments. Moreover, the advances in the manufacture of destructive devices had been so great that the services of a small army, having barely enough armaments of the conventional type, would be of scant significance in any war.

15. The Costa Rican delegation considered that the suspension of tests of nuclear or thermo-nuclear weapons would not represent even a beginning of disarmament. Disarmament meant the reduction of armaments. Accordingly, if the cessation of tests was to represent an advance, the suspension of nuclear weapons production had to be guaranteed. No one had yet explained what advantage there would be in suspending the tests if stocks of weapons of that kind continued to increase. The Costa Rican delegation would therefore be unable to vote in favour of the first Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.176/Rev.2), considering it to be inadequate and incapable of bringing about any disarmament. For the same reason, it would be unable to vote for the draft resolution of the Soviet Union (A/C.1/L.175/Rev.1).

16. The draft resolution submitted by the Belgian delegation (A/3630/Corr.1) appeared to be very useful and filled a gap left by earlier resolutions of the General Assembly. It was important that public opinion should be objectively enlightened with respect both to nuclear weapons tests and to the necessity for control of production and stockpiling, with a view to the progressive reduction of such weapons. The Costa Rican delegation would vote enthusiastically in favour of that draft resolution.

17. The draft resolution submitted by Japan (A/C.1/L.174) was worthy of consideration. It should not be forgotten that Japan's concern over nuclear weapons had a stronger foundation than that of any other country, as it was the only one which had suffered the consequences of the use of atomic weapons on its own soil. His delegation thought that it might be useful if the Japanese delegation could come to an agreement with the sponsors of the twenty-four-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179 and Corr.1 and Add.1) to bring the two texts into line with each other, thereby enabling his delegation to vote for both.

18. With regard to the twenty-four-Power draft resolution, his delegation would give it preference because it dealt with all the main aspects of the disarmament problem whereas the other drafts only dealt with some of them. That draft resolution covered the essential points on which the other drafts were based, particularly that relating to the suspension, subject to safeguards, of tests of nuclear weapons, but did not separate that question from the others; the draft included that question within the framework of a general disarmament plan which fulfilled the conditions necessary for real progress. It was to be hoped that the Soviet Union would be persuaded of the value and sincerity of that draft.

19. His delegation, however, regretted the omission, to which attention had already been drawn by the rep-

representative of Uruguay (883rd meeting), of any provision inviting the great Powers to study the possibility of devoting to economic development the sums which might be saved as a result of effective disarmament. That idea might profitably be taken up in the twenty-four-Power draft resolution.

20. In its second draft resolution (A/C.1/L.177), the Indian delegation was proposing to expand the membership of the Disarmament Commission and of its Sub-Committee. Moreover, the Mexican delegation, in the course of the general debate (699th plenary meeting), had suggested the appointment of a United Nations commissioner for disarmament to act as moderator and mediator at the debates of the Disarmament Commission or its Sub-Committee. His delegation found that idea extremely interesting, especially as the United Nations already knew from experience the value of the good offices of a person thus appointed by the General Assembly. He hoped that the Mexican delegation would formally submit a draft resolution to that effect. If such a draft resolution was not adopted, the Costa Rican delegation would vote for the Indian draft resolution.

The meeting was suspended at 11.20 a.m. and resumed at 11.35 a.m.

21. Mr. SLIM (Tunisia) stressed his country's concern over disarmament. Tunisia possessed no nuclear weapons. It was already experiencing difficulty in obtaining the armaments needed to safeguard its domestic security and for use if necessary in self-defence. Everyone knew that a third world war would not spare the small countries, as the two belligerents would from the outset endeavour to secure the most advantageous positions.

22. The destructive power of modern weapons endangered the very existence of the human race. Accordingly, all the peoples of the world, including those of the three States which possessed weapons of mass destruction, were calling for disarmament and following the debates on that subject with the greatest attention. The London negotiations of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission had aroused an interest which was all the keener in that they had led to some reconciliation of views. Unfortunately they had ended in a deadlock.

23. The two trends which had emerged in the debates of the Sub-Committee had also been demonstrated very clearly in the debate in the First Committee. His delegation thought that the twenty-four-Power draft resolution, of which it was a sponsor, might provide a basis for agreement. Everyone admitted the need to prevent a war of annihilation, to begin by partial disarmament and to concentrate on the preparation of plans for the destruction of nuclear weapons.

24. Most delegations had stated that they were in favour of the suspension of nuclear test explosions. But it should be pointed out that such a measure would only result in increased distrust and an intensification

of the armaments race unless at the same time agreement was reached to halt the production of weapons of mass destruction and to transform stocks of nuclear weapons into materials for peaceful use. Moreover a system of international control must be worked out to ensure the effective application of those measures.

25. All the delegations which had participated in the First Committee's debate had stressed how great an obstacle distrust was to even partial disarmament. Neither side would agree to disarm while it considered itself in danger of attack. That atmosphere of distrust could not be dispelled by statements, or undertakings, however solemn. The sincerity of words must be guaranteed by action, and a system of control must be arranged.

26. Control was the keystone of any effective plan for partial disarmament, as it alone could restore confidence, which was the foundation of security. Of course the States concerned would have to agree on the extent and methods of control. Each of the parties must be able to feel certain that the undertakings assumed were being honoured.

27. The question of the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments was of particular concern to small States. It was almost certain that no Power would have recourse to nuclear weapons as long as it feared possible retaliation with the same weapons. But it was not necessary to use such extreme measures to infringe upon the territorial security of a State, whether for the purpose of imposing a view believed to be the right one, as in the Suez case, or with a view to dominating a people which wished to live in dignity, as in the cases of Hungary and Algeria.

28. The very existence of armed forces and conventional armaments disproportionate to normal requirements was sometimes enough to create tension between two States. There was therefore an urgent need for the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments. But it would be illogical and unfair to envisage that reduction only for certain regions of Europe.

29. For all those reasons, his delegation had wished to be included among the sponsors of the twenty-four-Power draft resolution. The measures proposed in that text were effective, coherent and practical. They could help to restore confidence and open the way to general disarmament. That position would certainly not prevent his delegation from considering any proposal or constructive amendment in keeping with the general principles on which the twenty-four-Power draft resolution was based.

30. He was sure that the parties concerned wished to reach agreement. He had considered it necessary to define his position clearly, because the reconciliation so much desired by all would be achieved more easily if delegations indicated plainly what they considered the most realistic approach.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.