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Agenda item 29

QUESTION OF GENERAL AND COMPLETE DISARMAMENT

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. C. Torsten W. ÖRN (Sweden)

1. The item "Question of general and complete disarmament: (a) Report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament; (b) Report of the Secretary-General on the effects of the possible use of nuclear weapons and on the security and economic implications for States of the acquisition and further development of these weapons" was included by the Secretary-General in the provisional agenda of the twenty-second session (A/6680/Rev.1), on the basis of General Assembly resolutions 2162 C (XXI) and 2162 A (XXI) respectively of 5 December 1966.
2. At its 165th meeting, on 20 September 1967, the General Committee recommended the inclusion of the item in the agenda (A/6840).
3. At its 1564th plenary meeting, on 23 September, the General Assembly approved the recommendation of the General Committee (A/6850/Rev.2) and allocated the item to the First Committee (A/6851/Rev.2) for consideration and report. It was considered at the 1545th-1555th meetings from 11-18 December 1967.
4. The following draft resolutions and amendments were submitted under sub-item (a):
  - (a) A draft resolution submitted on 7 December by Malta (A/C.1/L.411), a revised text of which was subsequently submitted on 13 December (A/C.1/L.411/Rev.1). By the revised draft resolution, which incorporated amendments submitted by the Netherlands (A/C.1/L.415), the General Assembly would: (1) recommend that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament consider as a matter of urgency the

problems relating to the definition and use of chemical and biological weapons with a view to revision, updating or replacement of the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session; (2) request the Secretary-General to prepare a concise report on the nature and probable effects of existing chemical and biological weapons and on the economic and health implications of the possible use of such weapons, with particular reference to States that are not in a position to establish comprehensive methods of protection; (3) recommend that the report be based on accessible material and prepared with the assistance of qualified consultant experts appointed by the Secretary-General; (4) request further that the report be transmitted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and to Governments of Member States in time to permit its consideration at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly.

(b) A draft resolution submitted on 11 December by Hungary (A/C.1/L.412), subsequently co-sponsored by Madagascar (A/C.1/L.412/Add.1) and Mali (A/C.1/L.412/Add.2), by which the General Assembly would: (1) demand strict and absolute compliance by all States with the principles and norms established by the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925; (2) declare that the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons for the purpose of destroying human beings and the means of their existence constituted a crime against humanity; (3) appeal to those States, which had not done so, to accede to the Geneva Protocol for the Prohibition of Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare of 17 June 1925.

(c) Amendments submitted on 14 December by Upper Volta (A/C.1/L.417) to the above draft resolution, by which:

(1) The second preambular paragraph would be replaced by the following text:

"Considering that weapons for the mass destruction of human beings and the means of their existence constitute a danger for all mankind,".

(2) Operative paragraph 1 would be reworded as follows:

"Requests all States to comply strictly with the principles and aims of the Protocol for the Prohibition of Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925, and condemns all acts contrary to those aims;".

(3) Paragraph 2 would be deleted.

(4) In paragraph 3, the following words would be deleted: "for the Prohibition of Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or other Gases and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare".

(d) A draft resolution submitted on 15 December by Afghanistan, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Canada, Colombia, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, Hungary, Iceland, India, Italy, Mexico, Mongolia, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Sweden, the United Arab Republic and Yugoslavia (A/C.1/L.419), subsequently co-sponsored by Japan (A/C.1/L.419/Add.1), and Chile (A/C.1/L.419/Add.2), by which the General Assembly would: (1) request the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to resume at the earliest possible date consideration of the question of general and complete disarmament in accordance with resolution 2162 C (XXI); (2) decide to transmit to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament all the documents and records of the meetings of the First Committee, as well as those of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly pertaining to this item; (3) request the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to report on the progress achieved on the question of general and complete disarmament to the General Assembly at its twenty-third session.

5. On 11 December, Canada, India, Japan, Mexico, Nigeria, Norway, Poland, Sweden and the United Arab Republic submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.413) under sub-item (b), subsequently co-sponsored by Denmark, Malta and Pakistan (A/C.1/L.413/Add.1), Ethiopia, Finland, Hungary, Libya, Mongolia and Yugoslavia (A/C.1/L.413/Add.2), Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Czechoslovakia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad and Tobago, Uganda, Upper Volta and Venezuela (A/C.1/L.413/Add.3) and Belgium (A/C.1/L.413/Add.4). By the draft resolution, the General Assembly would (1) take note with satisfaction of the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/6858 as an authoritative statement on the effects of nuclear weapons and on the implications of their acquisition and further development; (2) express its appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the consultant experts who assisted him for the prompt and effective manner in which the report had been prepared; (3) note the conclusions of the report and express the hope that all parties concerned will consider them carefully; (4) recommend that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament take

into account the report and the conclusions thereof in its efforts towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control; (5) request the Secretary-General to arrange for the reproduction of the full report as a United Nations publication and, making full use of all the facilities of the United Nations Office of Public Information, to publicize the report in as many languages as was considered desirable and practicable; (6) recommend to all Governments the wide distribution and the publication in their respective languages as appropriate of the report so as to acquaint public opinion with its contents; (7) invite regional inter-governmental organizations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and national and international non-governmental organizations, to use all the facilities available to them to make the report widely known.

6. At its 1552nd meeting, on 15 December, the representative of Malta informed the Committee that he would not insist on a vote on his draft resolution (A/C.1/L.411/Rev.1), if no vote was requested on the draft resolution submitted by Hungary (A/C.1/L.412).

7. At its 1552nd meeting, on 15 December, the representative of Hungary stated that the sponsors of draft resolution A/C.1/L.412 and the amendments in A/C.1/L.417 would not press these documents to a vote.

8. At its 1555th meeting, on 18 December, the Committee adopted the thirty-one-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.413 and Add.1-4) by 100 votes to none, with 1 abstention (see paragraph 10 below, draft resolution A).

9. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted the twenty-four-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.419 and Add.1 and 2) by 97 votes to none, with 2 abstentions (see paragraph 10 below, draft resolution B).

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE FIRST COMMITTEE

10. The First Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolutions:

Question of general and complete disarmament

A

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2162 A (XXI) of 5 December 1966, in which the Secretary-General was requested to prepare a concise report on the effects of the possible use of nuclear weapons and on the security and economic implications for States of the acquisition and further development of these weapons,

Noting that the report has been completed and is available,<sup>1/</sup>

Convinced that the wide dissemination of the report would contribute to a better understanding of the threat presented by nuclear weapons and encourage speedy progress in the prevention of their spread, as well as in other measures of nuclear disarmament,

1. Takes note with satisfaction of the Secretary-General's report as an authoritative statement on the effects of nuclear weapons and on the implications of their acquisition and further development;
2. Expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the consultant experts who assisted him for the prompt and effective manner in which the report was prepared;
3. Notes the conclusions of the report and expresses the hope that all the parties concerned will consider them carefully;
4. Recommends that the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should take into account the report and the conclusions thereof in its efforts towards the achievement of general and complete disarmament under effective international control;
5. Requests the Secretary-General to arrange for the reproduction of the full report as a United Nations publication and, making full use of all the facilities of the United Nations Office of Public Information, to publicize the report in as many languages as is considered desirable and practicable;
6. Recommends to all Governments the wide distribution of the report and its publication in their respective languages, as appropriate, so as to acquaint public opinion with its contents;

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<sup>1/</sup> A/6858.

7. Invites regional inter-governmental organizations, the specialized agencies and the International Atomic Energy Agency, and national and international non-governmental organizations to use all the facilities available to them to make the report widely known.

B

The General Assembly,

Having received the interim report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament,<sup>1/</sup>

Recalling resolutions 1378 (XIV), 1722 (XVI), 1767 (XVII), 1908 (XVIII), 2031 (XX) and 2162 C (XXI),

Noting that since the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament has not been able to devote sufficient time to the consideration of the questions of general and complete disarmament,

Reaffirming its conviction of the necessity to continue to exert new efforts, for the purpose of ensuring tangible progress towards the achievement of an agreement on the question of general and complete disarmament,

1. Requests the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to resume at the earliest possible date consideration of the question of general and complete disarmament in accordance with resolution 2162 C (XXI);

2. Decides to transmit to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament all the documents and records of the meetings of the First Committee, as well as those of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly pertaining to this item;

3. Requests the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament to report on the progress achieved on the question of general and complete disarmament to the twenty-third session of the General Assembly.

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<sup>1/</sup> A/6951.