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TWELFTH SESSION

GENERAL COMMITTEE

SUMMARY RECORDS OF MEETINGS
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GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TWELFTH SESSION

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Chairman: Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand).

Consideration of the agenda of the twelfth session and allocation of items (A/3673, A/3674/Rev.1, A/3680) (continued)

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE TWELFTH SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED BY THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (A/3673)

1. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his delegation proposed the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the twelfth session entitled "Declaration concerning the peaceful co-existence of States". The reasons for the proposal were set forth in the explanatory memorandum attached to the letter dated 20 September 1957 from the Chairman of the Soviet delegation, addressed to the President of the General Assembly (A/3673), which also contained a draft declaration proposed for adoption by the General Assembly.

2. Mr. LODGE (United States of America) said that his delegation would vote in favour of recommending the inclusion of the item proposed by the Soviet delegation, despite the fact that the explanatory memorandum contained the same familiar attacks against the United States and its allies as had been heard regularly at previous sessions of the General Assembly.

3. The five principles mentioned in the Soviet draft declaration were already part of the Charter of the United Nations and were approved by all men of goodwill. It was surprising, however, that those principles should be advocated by a Power which had so recently violated them and which, as Mr. Khrushchev had made so clear, was against peaceful co-existence with the United States.

4. The United States delegation would vote in favour of recommending the inclusion of the proposed item, in the hope that a discussion would help to bring about a better understanding of the meaning of peaceful co-existence.

5. Mr. NOBLE (United Kingdom) said that his delegation had no objection to the inscription of the proposed item. The five principles were not new. They had always been part of the code followed by civilized States in their mutual dealings. However, it was indeed strange that a country which recently had

flagrantly violated those principles should propose the inclusion of such an item.

6. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation would support the Soviet proposal. He drew attention to the policies pursued by certain States of negotiating from positions of strength and intensifying the armaments race. The experience of the 1955 Bandung Conference had shown that a declaration of the kind envisaged by the Soviet delegation might exert a beneficial influence.

7. Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France) said that, while his delegation did not object to the inclusion of the item in the agenda, it would abstain from the vote in view of the surprising fact that the item had been proposed by a State which recently had twice been condemned by the General Assembly for violating in Hungary the principles which it professed to advocate in the proposed declaration.

8. Mr. GUNewardENE (Ceylon) observed that his delegation would have no difficulty in supporting discussion of the item. Although the declaration envisaged by the Soviet proposal was hardly necessary, since its principles were already included in the Charter, there was no harm in drawing attention to them.

9. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala) and Mr. PEREZ PEREZ (Venezuela) said that their delegations would vote for the Soviet proposal, because they favoured the promotion of free discussion. However, their vote should not be construed as approval of the contents of the explanatory memorandum.

10. Mr. SAPENA PASTOR (Paraguay) said that his delegation was inclined to vote against the Soviet proposal, but in view of what appeared to be the general sentiment of the Committee, it would abstain from the vote.

11. Mr. TSIANG (China) pointed out that the declaration proposed by the Soviet Union repeated what was already in the Charter. It would detract from the dignity of the United Nations to adopt such a declaration. In view of the falsehoods contained in the explanatory memorandum and the obvious propaganda objectives of the Soviet proposal, his delegation would vote against recommending the inclusion of the item in the agenda.

12. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the United States representative had, for certain reasons, tried to distort the foreign policy of the USSR by stating as if it were a fact that one of the public figures of the Soviet Union was opposed to peaceful co-existence. That was a complete misrepresentation of Mr. Khrushchev's position. The Soviet Union would continue to base its foreign policy on the principles mentioned in the

Soviet declaration, whether or not the United States wished to abide by them.

13. The United Kingdom representative, who had referred to the code of civilized States, seemed to think that that code entitled his country to attack Egypt and crush the independence movement in Oman. The representative of France, too, apparently understood peaceful co-existence to mean that France could do what it pleased with Egypt and other Arab countries. The statements of the three speakers only indicated that their countries would like to continue the policy of negotiating from positions of strength.

14. Mr. LODGE (United States of America) said that his country was in favour of living in peace with the rest of the world. He was not sure, in view of Soviet actions in Hungary, that that was what the Soviet Union meant by "peaceful co-existence". For his part he could not conceive of having "co-existence" without "existence".

15. The CHAIRMAN called for a decision concerning the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Declaration concerning the peaceful co-existence of States".

The Committee decided by 11 votes to 1, with 3 abstentions, to recommend that the item be included in the agenda.

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA OF THE TWELFTH SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED BY THE UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS (A/3674/Rev.1)

16. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the second additional item proposed by the Soviet Union for inclusion in the agenda of the twelfth session, entitled "Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons", said that his delegation was requesting its inclusion as a separate item because it was a matter of importance and urgency and could be considered apart from the general disarmament programme. Agreement thereon was not contingent upon agreement on other aspects of disarmament. His delegation therefore hoped that the Committee would recommend to the General Assembly that it be dealt with as a separate item, thus making possible a positive decision on a subject of vital importance to humanity.

17. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) said that his delegation supported the representative of the Soviet Union in the view that the item in question should be included as a separate item in the agenda of the General Assembly. Future generations were threatened by the continuance of experiments with atomic and hydrogen bombs. Discontinuance of such experiments might prove to be a first step towards agreement on the outlawing of those weapons, and would play their part in checking the armaments race. It was clear from the recent deliberations of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission that the establishment of a system of international control to ensure that States were fulfilling their obligations to discontinue tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons should present no difficulty.

18. Mr. GEORGES-PICOT (France) said that his delegation had no objection to the inclusion of the item in the agenda of the General Assembly, but felt

that there was no need to deal with it separately, as it was already covered by item 24. He therefore proposed that it should appear on the agenda as sub-item (d) of item 24.

19. Mr. TSIANG (China), while of the opinion that the introduction of a separate item in the agenda was superfluous, since discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons was already covered by an existing item, said that his delegation would not oppose the proposal submitted by the Soviet Union, although it did not agree with the contents of the attached explanatory memorandum (A/3674/Rev.1).

20. Mr. LODGE (United States of America) supported the French view that discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons should be considered under item 24. The subject was dealt with under item 24 (d) (Report of the Disarmament Commission) and was part of the larger question of the regulation and limitation of armaments.

21. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala), while agreeing with the representative of China that it was not necessary to inscribe a separate item on the agenda, said that his delegation would support the proposal of the representative of the Soviet Union, in keeping with Guatemala's policy concerning the free inclusion of items.

22. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the inclusion in the agenda of the item entitled "Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons".

The Committee decided unanimously to recommend that the item be included in the agenda.

ALLOCATION OF ITEMS (A/3673, A/3674/Rev.1, A/3680)

Additional item entitled "Declaration concerning the peaceful co-existence of States" (A/3673)

23. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that in his view, and for reasons which were fully explained in the explanatory memorandum (A/3673), the item should be allocated to the First Committee.

The Committee decided unanimously to recommend that the item be allocated to the First Committee.

Additional item entitled "Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons" (A/3674/Rev.1)

24. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), referring to the French representative's proposal that the item should be dealt with as sub-item (d) of item 24, reiterated his view that the item was of such importance that it should be considered independently and not treated as a sub-item.

25. Mr. NOBLE (United Kingdom) supported the French proposal. The question of the discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons should not be discussed as an isolated problem, but as part of the general question of disarmament and the production of nuclear weapons. In the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States, had jointly submitted proposals (DC/113, annex 5) for the discontinuance of such tests for a period of two years, subject to adequate safeguards. He therefore felt that its treatment as a separate item was not warranted.

26. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) supported the Soviet Union in its request that the item should be dealt with separately, and felt that it should be allocated to the First Committee.

27. Mr. SLIM (Tunisia), believing that the discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons was part of the larger problem of disarmament, supported the French proposal.

28. Mr. KHOMAN (Thailand) likewise supported the French proposal, pointing out that even the explanatory memorandum attached by the Soviet Union to its draft resolution (A/3674/Rev.1) had linked the question to the larger issue of disarmament.

29. Mr. ARENALES CATALAN (Guatemala), while recognizing that the question could be dealt with either as a separate item or as part of the larger problem of disarmament, supported the proposal of the French representative that it should be dealt as item 24 (d) of the agenda, since it could then be discussed either as part of the whole problem of disarmament or separately.

30. Mr. GUNWARDENE (Ceylon), while aware that the discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons was part of the larger issue of disarmament in general, agreed with the representative of the Soviet Union that it was of such vital importance that it should be dealt with separately.

31. Mr. PEREZ PEREZ (Venezuela) declared himself in favour of the French proposal on the grounds that the question was closely connected with that of disarmament.

32. Mr. SAPENA PASTOR (Paraguay) felt that disarmament was by far the most important item on the agenda of the General Assembly, and that the various aspects of the question should be considered together. He therefore supported the French proposal.

33. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in view of the differences of opinion which had emerged as to the best way of dealing with the item, he felt it would be useful if he explained in some detail why he believed that it should be treated separately. A decision on the discontinuance of nuclear tests could not be delayed. If they were allowed to continue, higher radiation levels would endanger the whole human race. Moreover, the main object of tests was to evolve still more dangerous types of weapons. It was therefore imperative that the tests should be discontinued. The discontinuance of tests of thermo-nuclear weapons would slow down the atomic armaments race and would be a first step towards the complete prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. World opinion was in favour of the discontinuance of the tests. If the question were linked to other aspects of disarmament,

action on the discontinuance of the tests would be delayed. Only three States, the United States, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union, were making such tests. It should therefore be relatively easy to reach agreement — far easier in fact than to reach a multi-lateral agreement on disarmament. With regard to the control of the practical implementation of the proposed agreement, the establishment of control posts, as recommended in the Soviet draft resolution, would present no organizational difficulties. The item should, in his view, be allocated to the First Committee as a separate item.

The Committee decided by 12 votes to 3 to recommend that the item be allocated to the First Committee as sub-item (d) of item 24.

Items 64 and 65 (A/3680)

34. The CHAIRMAN recalled that the Secretary-General had recommended that items 64 and 65 of the agenda should be considered by the General Assembly in plenary meeting without reference to a committee, and proposed the adoption of that procedure.

The Committee unanimously decided to recommend that items 64 and 65 of the agenda be considered by the General Assembly in plenary meeting.

Question of the establishment of a ninth Vice-Presidency for the twelfth session of the General Assembly

35. Mr. VAN ASCH VAN WIJCK (Netherlands) said that, in view of the increase in the number of Member States, several delegations felt that the number of Vice-Presidents permitted under rule 31 of the rules of procedure was no longer sufficiently large to ensure the representative character of the General Committee. To amend rule 31 would be a cumbersome process and would take time. He thought that an *ad hoc* measure providing for an additional Vice-Presidency for the current session might meet the case. If the Committee agreed to that suggestion, it could make a recommendation to the General Assembly accordingly, as a matter of urgency, and an election could then be held as soon as the additional Vice-Presidency had been established.

36. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), speaking on a point of order, drew attention to the fact that the item referred to by the representative of the Netherlands was not included in the agenda of the meeting of the Committee.

37. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) formally moved the adjournment of the meeting.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.