

CONFERENCE OF THE EIGHTEEN-NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

ENDC/PV.179
31 March 1964
ENGLISH

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-NINTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 31 March 1964, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman:

Mr. E. de SANTIAGO

(Mexico)

PRESENT AT THE TABLE

Brazil:

Mr. J. de CASTRO

Mr. E. HOSANNAH

Bulgaria:

Mr. G. GHELEV

Mr. D. TEKHOV

Mr. V. IZMIRLIEV

Mr. G. YANKOV

Burma:

Mr. James BARRINGTON

U SAIN BWA

U HTOON SHEIN

Canada:

Mr. E.L.M. BURNS

Mr. S.F. RAE

Mr. R.M. TAIT

Mr. P.D. LEE

Czechoslovakia:

Mr. M. ZEMLA

Mr. T. LAHODA

Mr. V. VAJNAR

Ethiopia:

Ato A. AGEDE

Ato S. TEFERRA

India:

Mr. A.S. MEHTA

Italy:

Mr. F. CAVALLETTI

Mr. E. GUIDOTTI

Mr. S. AVETTA

Mr. G.P. TOZZOLI

The CHAIRMAN (Mexico) (translation from Spanish): I declare open the 179th meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

Mr. LOBODYCZ (Poland): First of all I should like to express my sympathy to the United States delegation with regard to the disaster which has affected the State of Alaska. We were shocked by the news of the earthquake, which has caused so many deaths and such great damage.

I should now like to proceed with the statement I have prepared. The divergent approaches to the problem of general and complete disarmament which have emerged during our two-year discussion reflect divergent concepts of a broader political nature. In this Committee we are first of all concerned with the impact of those divergencies on the prospects of our work.

We are all agreed that the programme for general and complete disarmament, which it is our task to elaborate here, must be based on the joint United States and Soviet Union Statement of Agreed Principles (ENDC/5). We cannot, however, accept the self-righteous assertion of the Western Powers that their interpretation of those principles is the only just and accurate one. I am referring in particular to principle 5, to the interpretation of which the representative of the United States, Mr. Fisher, devoted a good portion of his statement at the 175th meeting.

At the risk of being excessively repetitious, I should like to remind the Committee that the principle I have just mentioned stipulates:

"All measures of general and complete disarmament should be balanced so that at no stage of the implementation of the treaty could any State or group of States gain military advantage and that security is ensured equally for all." (ENDC/5, p.2)

The Western delegations place their main emphasis on the first part of the formula, dealing with balanced measures. We recognize, of course, the importance of that part of the formula; but we feel that equally important, if not most essential, is the second part of it, providing for equal security for all. Balanced measures are in our view merely a means to achieve this essential goal.

(Mr. Löbodycz, Poland)

The fifth principle is by no means explicit about how the measures should be balanced. None of the remaining principles provides a clear clue to that effect either. The assertion, therefore, repeatedly made here by the Western delegations, that percentage reductions of armaments constitute such balanced measures, is no more than a subjective interpretation and by no means flows from the agreed principles.

As I have already pointed out, we are first and foremost concerned with the situation which would prevail as a result of the reduction of armaments at each stage of the disarmament process. We look, therefore, at the method of reducing arms from the viewpoint of ensuring equal security for all States. Mr. Fisher himself has conceded that our primary efforts should be "to safeguard the balance of security as disarmament proceeds" (ENDC/PV.175, p.5). If we apply that criterion, we shall unavoidably conclude that a simplified, purely arithmetical approach to such an extremely intricate problem as the structure of modern armaments cannot meet the requirements of the balance of security.

Armaments of States have developed in different directions and at a different rate depending on progress in science and technology as well as in economic and strategic thinking. Progress in all these fields has, as we all know, not been gradual; there has been no equal percentage growth. On the contrary, progress has been most uneven, particularly in recent years. It has been extremely differentiated and in some cases revolutionary. Suffice it to compare, for example, the rate of development of aviation with that of nuclear rocketry, not to mention even more striking examples.

A gradual percentage reduction of something that has not been growing gradually is not justified even from the point of view of methodology. Some Western delegations like to compare the method of reduction of armaments to a shrinking balloon. Literary metaphors are of course acceptable if they illustrate adequately the point being made; but this particular metaphor does not seem to be adequate. As we have just said -- and I do not believe this is controversial --, the arsenals of States have been expanding very unevenly; consequently the present complex of armaments reminds one rather of an amorphous, rugged-surfaced structure than of a smooth-surfaced balloon.

(Mr. Lobodycz, Poland)

In addition, if we consider the obvious fact that the growth of armaments has been proceeding at a different rate in each State, we cannot but reach the conclusion that the Western method of applying equal percentage cuts to different types of armaments for all States would not guarantee equal results for those States; by the same token, it would not ensure equal security for all. The differentiated treatment of specific elements of the structure of armaments is an advantage rather than a shortcoming; for it is precisely because different categories of arms have different specific weight in the over-all structure of armaments, and because they have been developing at different rates, that different criteria should be applied to their reduction.

Moreover, the degrees of danger inherent in particular categories of armaments are different. It can hardly be contested that nuclear missiles are more dangerous, more lethal, than conventional weapons. Nuclear arms give rise to the gravest apprehensions in all countries. It is those arms, therefore, which must be drastically cut down at the very outset of the disarmament process, if the process itself is to be meaningful. As the representative of India, Mr. Trivedi, has demanded:

"... the menace of nuclear arms has to be eliminated on a priority basis."

(ENDC/PV.177, p.28).

If the "over-kill capacity" were eliminated and if the United States and the Soviet Union retained only a strictly limited number of delivery vehicles, there could be no imbalance as some Western representatives allege.

We have also heard another objection to the Soviet plan (ENDC/2/Rev.1 and Add.1) -- namely, that it would bring about radical shifts in the present balance. It goes without saying that the measure suggested by the Soviet Union would result in shifts in the structure of armaments of individual States. Even if we assume that there might be some shifts in the balance of these or other categories of weapons, these would by no means amount to imbalance; no State would gain military advantage, and the security of none of the parties would be jeopardized.

With your permission, I shall now proceed to another problem. From the very beginning of our deliberations the Western delegations have been insisting that control, particularly in the field of nuclear armaments, should cover the physical

(Mr. Lobodycz, Poland)

destruction of weapons, weapons retained legally, and weapons retained illegally. There has never been any divergency with regard to the first type of control. As far as the second type is concerned — control over legally-retained weapons — it has been admitted by more than one delegation here that the Soviet proposal for the establishment, at the beginning of the second stage, of permanent control posts at launching pads would satisfy in principle the Western requirements.

There remains the so-called "hidden-weapons problem" which, according to the Western Powers, is not covered by the Soviet plan. May I point out, however, that it is precisely under the United States plan (ENDC/30) that the solution of this problem might present unsurmountable difficulties? It is much easier to disclose hidden weapons when the number of missiles retained legally is small than when the number of such missiles is large. In this respect the problem of their mobility is of secondary importance.

Apart from the above considerations, the scope of control required for the destruction of the bulk of nuclear potential, as envisaged by the Soviet plan, would make the concealment of missiles far less likely than would be the case under the United States plan, which provides for rather modest disarmament in its first stage. Thus there would actually be more control operations at the outset of disarmament under the Soviet plan than there would be under the United States plan.

The argument has also been advanced here that if a large number of missiles were retained the problem of hidden weapons would be less acute. We are convinced that that assumption is erroneous. The danger of a nuclear conflict is greater when large numbers of missiles are stockpiled in the arsenals of States than when their number is minimal. Large number of rockets might tempt a potential aggressor to launch a surprise attack if he felt that he could destroy the adversary with impunity. When only a strictly-limited number of rockets are retained, a nuclear strike cannot be decisive; hence the temptation to carry out a surprise attack practically cannot arise. If we approach the problem of concealed weapons from the standpoint of confidence among States, we shall also arrive at the conclusion that the more weapons that are destroyed, the greater is the degree of confidence among nations.

(Mr. Lobodycz, Poland)

We have also heard some criticism with regard to the Soviet proposal for the withdrawal of troops and the elimination of military bases from foreign territories in the first stage of disarmament. The critics were concerned with the impact of such steps on the existing military alliances. However, it stands to reason that the very concept of such alliances must, as a result of disarmament, undergo certain changes; for how is it possible to imagine that the fabric of military groupings could remain unaltered in a disarming world? Would the security of any of the parties to the disarmament treaty be put in jeopardy because of such a development? It is our belief that disarmament by itself would lead to a truly effective system of collective security and that all sorts of military blocs would eventually be done away with.

We have also heard some remarks concerning the alleged insufficiency of the means for maintaining peace under the Soviet disarmament programme. As a matter of fact they are a criticism rather of the United Nations Charter than of the Soviet plan, for the peace-keeping system under the Soviet plan is based on the United Nations Charter. Is it not clear that, if we have not succeeded in carrying into effect the peace-keeping machinery envisaged by the United Nations Charter, it is not because the respective provisions were defective but only because no agreement could be reached concerning their implementation? Once a decision of such great importance as the conclusion of an agreement on general and complete disarmament has been reached, there should be, I submit, no extraordinary difficulties in carrying out Articles 42 and 43 of the United Nations Charter.

Moreover, the retention of a certain number of missiles for self-defence until the end of the third stage of disarmament simplifies the peace-keeping problem — or at least renders it much less urgent. That is what we understood from the statement made by the United Kingdom representative on 10 April 1963 when, referring to the original version of the "nuclear umbrella" in the context of peace-keeping, he said:

"...the Soviet proposal might be more appropriately related to the third rather than to the second stage of any disarmament scheme."

(ENDC/PV.120, p.19)

(Mr. Lobodycz, Poland)

How, then, can the Western delegations resort to the same old arguments after the Soviet proposal has been related to the third stage?

Equally unsubstantiated are the apprehensions about the possibility of anarchy in the international community as a result of the implementation of the Soviet plan. Apprehensions of that kind can arise only if criteria and concepts of a fully-armed world -- in particular, "cold war" doctrines -- are applied to a disarmed world. In a world without arms, armed aggressions will become a physical impossibility. Peaceful settlement of disputes will be not merely a legal obligation but an inescapable necessity. A nuclear war will become unthinkable. The horrors of conventional wars, to which Mr. Burns referred on 17 March (ENDC/PV.175, p.17) and of which we in Poland have had such severe experiences, will also cease to haunt the world.

It is important that the disarmament process should be carried out in the shortest possible time so that any attempts at its disruption might be rendered impossible. Our opinion coincides with that of the representative of India, who stated in this Committee a week ago:

" ... it is essential that the international community should pursue its efforts vigorously towards achieving a speedy solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament and of the security of mankind."

(ENDC/PV.177, p.26)

Speaking of the need for speedy action, I may be excused for paraphrasing the question asked by the representative of Canada on 17 March (ENDC/PV.175, p.18): if, instead of insisting on the idea of percentage reductions, the Western Powers had adopted the Soviet disarmament plan, and if that had been put into effect in 1962, what would have happened? There would have been no means for delivery of nuclear weapons in existence; the nuclear warheads would have been in the process of being destroyed; and armed forces and conventional armaments would have been at a low level. What a difference there would be! Alas, while we continue our discussions here, the arms race goes on and the difficulties in putting a halt to it become more and more complicated.

It has not been our intention to embark upon a sterile controversy. We have merely tried to focus the attention of the Committee on those issues the comprehension of which is decisive for any progress towards an agreement. We

(Mr. Lobodycz, Poland)

appreciate the constructive efforts of all those who have been applying their minds to finding a common basis for a businesslike discussion. In this respect the contribution of the non-aligned States has been considerable. The last statement made by the representative of India, Mr. Trivedi (ENDC/PV.177, pp.26 et seq.), has provided further evidence of it.

Needless to say, no agreement can be signed until all the elements of it, and even the details, have been agreed upon. That is all the more true of such an extraordinarily complicated matter as general and complete disarmament. But it is equally true that no discussion of details, however exhaustive, can lead to an agreement unless fundamental issues have been agreed upon.

In the present situation a political decision is needed concerning which road should be followed in order to solve the problems confronting us. The Indian proposal for the adoption of the "nuclear umbrella" principle is an expression of sincere conviction that in the interest of all States the disarmament process should begin with the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles, which constitute the greatest danger to peace. As the Soviet Union, in a spirit of compromise, has agreed to the retention of a strictly limited number of missiles by the two Powers, there exists a just basis for agreement. Many statements made in the United Nations General Assembly by countries represented in this Committee, as well as by others, and many statements made in this room, have provided ample proof that the Soviet concept of general and complete disarmament enjoys wide and ever-increasing popularity.

In conclusion, I take the liberty of quoting the words of the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs who honoured us by participating in our deliberations last week. Mr. Martin stated: "... the impetus created by the agreements reached last year must not be lost ..." (ENDC/PV.178, p.15); and Mr. de Araujo Castro declared:

"We cannot accept the idea that the world must continue to live in the shade of nuclear terror and that there is no peaceful alternative to the present system of intensive military preparations ..." (ENDC/PV.177, p.12). We share that opinion; for indeed there is an alternative.

Mr. FISHER (United States of America): Before beginning my statement I should like to thank the representative of Poland for his warm and generous expression of sympathy concerning the natural disaster which occurred in the State of Alaska. I express these thanks not only on behalf of my Government; I am confident that in expressing thanks for that manifestation of sympathy I do so also on behalf of the State of Alaska itself and of those who were injured and the families of those killed.

A number of delegations at recent meetings have urged upon this Committee different ways of proceeding in our work on general disarmament.

The Soviet representative, his allies and certain other delegations have suggested that it might be useful to reach certain agreements in principle. Specifically, it has been suggested that we should all agree to work on the basis of the suggestions which Foreign Minister Gromyko has made on behalf of the Soviet Union (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1). It has been urged that, if we were to agree in principle on the elements of that proposal, it would make it easier for us to find ways of reaching agreement on the reduction and elimination of armaments.

As I understand it, the proposal that it is suggested we should accept "in principle" is a proposal involving the destruction of from 99 to 97 per cent of all nuclear delivery vehicles in the first stage of disarmament. Nuclear delivery vehicles, under the Soviet proposal, presumably include all vehicles capable of delivering nuclear weapons. The percentages I have mentioned are illustrative, but they are the only figures that have been given to us. Under that proposal, the remaining 1 to 3 per cent -- or a comparable figure -- would be retained by the United States and the Soviet Union through the third stage but limited to their own territories. The proposal does not provide for the retention of Polaris submarines, or similar missile-launching submarines being developed by the Soviet Union, presumably because the nature of the system of control included in the proposal is not adequate to permit their retention.

As I understand that proposal, the reduction of from 99 to 97 per cent in nuclear delivery vehicles is to take place at the same time as a 30 per cent reduction in the conventional field. As I understand the proposal, that reduction is not to be accompanied, until the end of the third stage, by any verification procedure to deal with the problem of undeclared, clandestine nuclear delivery vehicles. It is not to be accompanied by any substantial further development of peace-keeping institutions.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

The United States is of course interested in any proposal which the Soviet Union makes in the most important field of general disarmament. That is why we will continue to seek information about that proposal and are prepared to discuss it on its merits. The United States, however, cannot agree to the suggestion which has been made that we accept that proposal in principle as a means of getting on with our work.

This Conference already has an agreement in principle to guide us in our efforts to achieve general and complete disarmament in a peaceful world. We have the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (ENDC/5) -- the charter document for our efforts. That document, which was endorsed in a resolution of the General Assembly, sets forth in a straightforward manner the guidelines for our work.

The Joint Statement of Agreed Principles reflects an understanding on where we stand now -- a situation in which there is a rough balance of destructive capability. It sets forth an agreement on where we wish to go -- a situation in which we shall have achieved the elimination from national arsenals of armaments and weapons except those necessary for keeping the peace in a disarmed world and those necessary for maintaining internal order.

What, then, are our difficulties? These lie in the area of how we bridge the gap between where we now stand and where we wish to go -- the way in which we disarm. It is to that question that the Soviet suggestion is related. It is related, however, in a way which appears to us to be quite inconsistent with the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles.

To support this assertion, let me now examine the relevant principles and compare them with the Soviet suggestions. Principle 5 of the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles provides:

"All measures of general and complete disarmament should be balanced so that at no stage ... could any State or group of States gain military advantage and that security is ensured equally for all." (ENDC/5, p.2)

The Soviet proposal seems to have abandoned that principle in favour of the most rapid imaginable reductions of nuclear delivery vehicles together with varying and different rates of reduction in other arms. The present balance would, as a result, be replaced by a rapid and radical alteration in the structure of forces on each side.

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

Some armaments on which a State relied might be completely eliminated. Other arms would be retained in small quantities, with no real regard for the place of those armaments in the defence system of a State. Other armaments would be brought down on a less rapid and less hurried basis. All of this seems to us to open the way to early, large imbalances and to radical shifts in the present make-up of forces in many States, the end result being that States would be likely to find themselves in a very short time in radically different relationships with their neighbours.

Let me assure the Committee that the interpretation I have just placed on principle 5, and my indication of the way in which the Soviet approach is inconsistent with that principle, are given, not in any spirit of self-righteousness, but really in what I hope is a spirit of humility and in a search for truth. Our view of the balance to be maintained is not a simplified mathematical formula; it rests upon present military realities, upon the rough balance with which we live; and that balance, we submit, is not maintained in the approach by the Soviet Union.

Principle 6 of the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles states that all measures should be implemented from beginning to end under such strict and effective international control as would provide firm assurance that all parties are honouring their obligations. The nature and extent of the control should depend upon the requirements for verification of the disarmament measures being carried out in each stage. To implement the control an international disarmament organization should be formed within the framework of the United Nations, and its inspectors should have unrestricted access without veto to all places as necessary for the purpose of effective verification.

The Soviet plan proposes the elimination, with the limited exceptions to which we have referred, of all nuclear delivery vehicles in the first stage. The Soviet proposals do not contain any provisions to verify or ensure that the vehicles have in fact all been destroyed. No means have been suggested to ensure that clandestine vehicles are not retained.

We are told that the inclusion in the Soviet proposal of the retention of a limited number of nuclear delivery vehicles until the end of the third stage will make up for that deficiency in the verification system. But we have pointed out a number of times that under the conditions envisaged in the Soviet proposal, with no

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

provisions for verification, the proposal would not provide a reasonable guarantee against clandestine retention of arms. Without effective verification there is bound to be a fear that a side might be actually encouraged to keep more vehicles than it was supposed to have. That is particularly true if the number of weapons to be legally retained on each side is very small, as Mr. Burns pointed out on 18 February (ENDC/PV.167, pp. 6, 7). In other words -- and this is stated with the greatest respect -- the Soviet proposal appears to ignore the fact that the lower the number of retained armaments the more critical would be the existence of a clandestine stockpile of weapons. It is essential, in the view of the United States, that a verification procedure be established which will provide assurance that no such stockpile exists.

Principle 7 of the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles states that progress in disarmament should be accompanied by measures to strengthen international institutions for maintaining peace and the settlement of international disputes by peaceful means. The Soviet proposal appears to be wholly deficient in that regard. We are told, however, that the threat of nuclear retaliation embodied in the Soviet proposal will take care of that problem and will make up for the peace-keeping inadequacies of the Soviet plan. We have shown, however, that without adequate peace-keeping machinery the disputes which may arise after substantial disarmament may result in either the resort to raw force or lawlessness. Surely disarmament to the depth of a 99 to 97 per cent reduction in nuclear delivery vehicles requires some comparable development of peace-keeping institutions. It is no answer to cite the mere fact that 1 to 3 per cent of the vehicles are retained as a deterrent.

Before closing I should like to remind the Committee that the United States has put forward a comprehensive plan for disarmament (ENDC/30 and Corr.1 and Add. 1,2,3). The reduction and elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles from national arsenals is an integral part of that plan. That plan was formulated in full knowledge of the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles. It was designed to take us from our present situation of rough balance to our goal of the elimination of national armaments in a regular, ordered and balanced manner. We have sought to preserve the balance throughout disarmament by reducing arms in an equitable manner, spreading reductions

(Mr. Fisher, United States)

over three stages, with adequate verification at each step of the way and a proportionate build-up of peace-keeping. We believe these proposals are in accord with the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles and with the realities of today's world.

The Committee should avoid shutting doors on any of the proposals before us. We hope, however, that at future meetings the Soviet representative will be able to clarify further the proposals of the Soviet Union and thus make more fruitful our discussion of this agenda item.

Mr. DUMITRESCU (Romania) (translation from French): First of all, I should like to associate my delegation with the expression of sympathy conveyed by the representative of Poland, Mr. Lobodycz, to the people of the United States for its losses in the catastrophe which has befallen Alaska and California.

As will be seen from the speeches made at the 177th and 178th meetings by the Foreign Minister of Brazil, Mr. de Araujo Castro, the Minister for External Affairs of Canada, Mr. Martin, the representative of India, and the representative of Burma, our Committee's work has been increasingly stressing the importance attached by governments and peoples to disarmament problems, and the intense interest displayed in the labours of our Committee, whose main task is the preparation of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. During this recent period all our activities have brought out very clearly the fact that the principal element and starting-point for the achievement of general and complete disarmament is the elimination as soon as possible of the threat of a nuclear war.

The Romanian delegation has always insisted that the main criterion for appraising a disarmament plan is its effectiveness in regard to the speedy and final elimination of the threat of nuclear war. It may be said that this view is shared by most of the delegations present and that it reflects the aspirations of all the peoples of the world.

We have always considered and still consider that our Committee, which I would remind you is the only body in the world entrusted by the United Nations General Assembly with the preparation of a treaty on general and complete disarmament, has, as its immediate task, the solution of these problems.

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

The Romanian delegation wishes to-day to set forth certain considerations regarding the problems involved in the proposals which have been before us for the last two years.

One of these proposals, that of the Western Powers (ENDC/30), sets out from the premise that the international security of States is based on what is termed the "deterrent effect". On 12 March, for example, the United States representative said:

"In the present situation the security of nations depends to an increasingly large degree on its ability to deter an attack".

(ENDC/PV.174, p.32)

As we see it, that attitude can only encourage the arms race, thus endangering the security of States. The fact that this deterrent undermines the security of States was likewise recognized by the United States representative, Mr. Foster, who wrote in a report quoted by Mr. de Araujo Castro:

"As military strength has steadily increased, national security has correspondingly diminished". (ENDC/PV.177, p.8)

The United States Secretary of State, Mr. Dean Rusk, whom I have already had occasion to quote, remarked likewise:

"Although the United States has devoted to armaments something like \$700,000 million ... that country ... enjoys less and less security".

(ENDC/PV.173, p.13).

These are no isolated observations. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Brazil, Mr. de Araujo Castro, rightly said:

"Everybody seems to agree that the arms race is not conducive to security ..." and in an earlier passage:

"... there seems to prevail a universal consensus that armaments do not add up to security". (ENDC/PV.177, pp. 8,9)

Nevertheless there are some who continue to insist on the alleged need to retain a deterrent. I should like to point out that the Western delegations, which uphold this view and refuse to accept the principle of the Gromyko amendment (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1), are representing their philosophy -- that is to say, the retention of a deterrent -- as a principle, or rather as an axiom, to which all the delegations have a priori subscribed.

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

I think I may say that most delegations present do not share this philosophy. A precarious peace based on a deterrent -- that euphemism employed to describe a threat exercised by nuclear weapons -- is by its very nature opposed to general and complete disarmament. In our view, the concept of the deterrent as a principal or sole means of achieving security aims basically at obtaining certain military advantages.

But all States have an equal right to security. The representative of Poland, Mr. Lobodycz, has stressed that the right to security is an essential component of the sovereign equality of States; and I too consider that that right is a basic principle of the United Nations Charter and forms an integral part of our Committee's directives, which lay down that throughout the process of achieving general and complete disarmament, we must see to it that there is equal security for all.

I listened with great interest to the explanations given in our Committee today by the United States representative; but I must say that they were not of a nature to modify the conclusions suggested to us by an examination of the realities of the situation. In our view, every military advantage carries within it the seeds of insecurity; it is a factor in the armaments race, with all the ensuing dangers to the security of all States, including the State which secured the initial advantage. The proposal to reduce by a certain percentage the number of nuclear delivery vehicles would result in preserving, if not increasing, the strategic military advantage which the authors of the proposal think they possess. Clearly, proposals of that type are not likely to ensure the security of States.

There is an alternative concept of security and of the means to achieve it, which is to base the security of States in present circumstances on disarmament, and in the first place, since the biggest danger to the security of States to-day is the nuclear menace, on nuclear disarmament. That concept underlies the view that the process of achieving general and complete disarmament should begin with the elimination of the threat of nuclear war, and should continue in a world freed from the prospect of such an unprecedented catastrophe.

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

The merit of the Gromyko amendment is that it aims at the elimination, during the very first stage, of all nuclear delivery vehicles and thus of the possibility of a nuclear war. That is the essential point. The retention by the Soviet Union and the United States, on their respective territories, of an agreed minimum number of intercontinental ballistic missiles, anti-missile missiles and ground-to-air missiles is merely a secondary element, conducive -- as has been stated several times -- to the conclusion of an agreement.

Attempts have been made to place on the same level that proposal and the Western proposal for reducing the number of nuclear delivery vehicles by 30 per cent during the first stage. But, while the former proposal would considerably reduce, if not eliminate, the possibility of a nuclear war, the latter would not only not eliminate that possibility, but would preserve or even increase it.

In this connexion, let the figures speak for themselves. The arms race, based on the concept of security through deterrence, has led to a situation in which, as Mr. Tsarapkin, the Soviet representative, pointed out recently, only 1 per cent of current stocks of nuclear weapons would be enough to wage a devastating war (EMDC/PV.175, p.29). Despite all this, we are offered, during the first stage which would last three years, nothing more than a 30 per cent reduction of all nuclear delivery vehicles. What does that proposal really mean? It means that, three years later, there would still be enough nuclear delivery vehicles to wage a nuclear war, while the number of nuclear bombs would not only not diminish, but would actually increase. As you know, the United States plan provides, in the first stage, for a halt in the production of fissile materials but not in the manufacture of nuclear weapons, which could continue with the use of existing stocks of fissile materials.

Those, in substance, are the reasons for which all the peoples of the world will, in our opinion, welcome the adoption of the proposal aimed at delivering humanity from the nuclear threat at the very first stage of disarmament. It should be remembered that other measures to which reference has often been made in our Committee would lead in the same direction of eliminating the nuclear threat, beginning with the limitation of its possible spheres of action.

(Mr. Dumitrescu, Romania)

What else are the Moscow Treaty, the United Nations General Assembly's decision to ban the placing in orbit of nuclear weapon carriers, the Ethiopian Government's proposal to convene a conference for the signature of a convention banning the use of nuclear weapons, the proposal for the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the two major groups of States in Europe to which all the nuclear Powers belong -- what are all these but measures directed in the final analysis to the same end: the elimination of the nuclear danger?

Of the two disarmament plans before us, that proposed by the Soviet Government meets that essential aim. That is precisely why the Soviet proposal enjoys so much support in our Committee, as evidenced among others by the important statements made by the representatives of Burma, Nigeria and India.

Before concluding, I should like to recall the words of the Minister for External Affairs of Canada, Mr. Paul Martin, who at the meeting of 26 March said:

"World opinion is practically fully represented on this Committee as a result of the present composition of the Committee as a whole."

(ENDC/PV.178, p.23)

If we bear in mind the aspirations of the peoples of the world, we must set to work to prepare a draft treaty for general and complete disarmament, taking as our starting-point the need to eliminate as soon as possible the threat of a nuclear war and to safeguard in this way the security of all States.

Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) (translation from French): First of all, I should like to associate myself with the words of sympathy which the representatives of Poland and Romania have addressed this morning to the United States representative in regard to the misfortune which has struck his country.

I should like to add a few very brief remarks inspired by this morning's discussion. The Romanian representative raised the question of the deterrent. I should like to assure him that we are as anxious as he is to ensure the security of peoples and to guarantee peace by means less dangerous than the deterrent. Like the Romanian representative, we wish to base peace and security for all on disarmament -- progressive disarmament concluding with the destruction of all armaments -- and on the peaceful organization of the world. But the real difficulty is to know how to get rid of this deterrent force which has been built

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

up on both sides, while at the same time increasing the security of both sides and not making it more precarious.

The reply to this very serious and fundamental question has already been given by the United Nations itself in its approval of the Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations (ENDC/5). It is therefore right that, as Mr. Fisher did this morning, we should constantly refer back to those principles when we have to evaluate proposals put forward in this Conference.

I also followed with very great attention the speech made by the Polish representative, and I should like to thank him for having kept to the order which I myself suggested for the examination of the Gromyko proposal (ENDC/2/Rev.1/Add.1) -- that is to say, to study first matters concerned with balance, next those concerned with control, and thirdly those concerned with the peaceful organization of the world.

I intend to study the text of Mr. Lobodycz's speech very carefully; but it already suggests to me certain remarks.

It seems to me difficult to preserve the criterion of balance -- to which the Polish representative also attaches great importance -- if two different criteria are applied to the various armament sectors. It is not the danger of the weapons that can determine how the criteria to be applied should be modified; the criterion of balance depends rather on the quantity of weapons to be destroyed on both sides, and this quantity should be taken into consideration both for each category of arms and for the various categories; that is to say, not only for atomic weapons on both sides but also for armaments in general, conventional armaments as well as nuclear armaments.

The Polish representative also dealt with the question of control. To me it seems evident that control becomes increasingly delicate and necessary as disarmament proceeds. It becomes the more delicate and necessary as the armaments retained become fewer. So true is this that the Soviet draft treaty (ENDC/2/Rev. 1 and Add. 1) also envisages complete control at the end of the process of disarmament, empowering those carrying out the control to look in every country for any arms that might be concealed. If the Gromyko proposal were put into effect, there would be almost complete disarmament. In that case I believe that control should also be almost complete.

(Mr. Cavalletti, Italy)

The Polish representative has rightly appealed for confidence as a means of facilitating control. Here I agree with him. I hope that confidence will be a very useful factor, on the one hand reducing the demands of control and on the other facilitating the acceptance of control to the greatest possible extent. But it is difficult to imagine that confidence will be established in both camps as early as the end of the first stage, and that it can be a very important factor in reducing the demands of control at that stage. Confidence is necessarily a somewhat slow process, which will certainly be very effective in the long run but can hardly be so at the beginning.

I am very glad that the Polish representative established a connexion between the application of the Gromyko proposal and the peaceful organization of the world. That is a very important point. We are in entire agreement in saying that the mass abolition of armaments cannot take place in isolation but must be associated with the peaceful organization of the world. I agree with the Polish representative that alliances have to undergo an evolution. I would even say that at a certain stage in the process they should disappear, at least as military groupings. More specifically, at a certain moment in the process, they will have to be replaced by an adequate system of collective security. We believe that this system is absolutely necessary and we should like to establish it as soon as possible. But it seems to me that it would be difficult to do this at the end of the first stage, after the lapse of two or three years. I say "difficult", not "impossible". But this is precisely one of the problems which we have raised in our examination of the Gromyko plan and which we shall have to solve and study in order to see more clearly what that plan involves.

Generally speaking, I think that the difficulties which arise are due to the refusal implicit in the Gromyko proposal to proceed to progressive, gradual disarmament. To introduce measures in too great a hurry and, as I have already said, to put an excessive load on the first stage, is to create extremely difficult if not insoluble problems.

The CHAIRMAN (Mexico) (translation from Spanish): I should like to associate myself, as representative of Mexico, with those who have expressed their sympathy to the United States representative in regard to the disaster that has taken place in Alaska as the result of a severe earthquake. As Chairman of today's meeting, I believe I can likewise speak for all those representatives in our Committee who have not had the opportunity of expressing their sympathy; and I take the liberty of doing so in their name.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament today held its 179th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the Chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador Ernesto de Santiago, representative of Mexico.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Poland, the United States, Romania and Italy.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 2 April 1964, at 10.30 am."

The Meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.

