

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTY-FIRST SESSION

Official Records

**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1431st  
MEETING**

Thursday, 20 October 1966,  
at 10.45 a.m.



**NEW YORK**

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 97:</i>	
<i>Renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons</i>	
<i>General debate. . . . .</i>	15

*Chairman:* Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

AGENDA ITEM 97

Renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (A/6398, A/C.1/L.368 and Add.1-6)

GENERAL DEBATE

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. He welcomed the representatives of Botswana and Lesotho, who were taking part in the Committee's work for the first time, and thanked the Secretary-General for honouring the meeting with his presence.
2. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that it was impossible to discuss problems of disarmament without taking into account the existing situation in the world and the increasing activity of the forces of aggression. It was obvious that the United States was intensifying its war against the Viet-Nameese people, regardless of the dangerous consequences of its aggressive policy. That criminal war had rendered meaningless certain signs of understanding and agreement which had appeared during the last few years. As in the past, the Soviet Government was still opposed to imperialist aggression and was resolved to continue its struggle for the normalization of the international situation and the achievement of general and complete disarmament, in order to eliminate the danger of a nuclear war.
3. The question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was one of the most urgent problems of disarmament and should be solved without delay. The difficulties involved were not insurmountable. Goodwill and readiness to conclude an agreement to stop their proliferation were all that was required to prevent more and more States from obtaining possession of nuclear weapons. It was universally recognized that any increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons would lead to increased tension in international relations and would intensify the danger of mass destruction.
4. Non-proliferation was not a question which concerned the nuclear Powers alone; it affected all

States throughout the world, regardless of their geographical situation or political system. Nuclear war was not only a serious threat for the great Powers; it would also have catastrophic consequences for the smaller countries. It was therefore the common task of all States to help in solving the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. His own country, for its part, had made great efforts to achieve a solution and, at the General Assembly's twentieth session, it had submitted a draft treaty<sup>1/</sup> which fully complied with the requirements for preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and excluding all possible loop-holes.

5. In seeking an agreement on non-proliferation, the Soviet Union was not, in any sense, trying to perpetuate a "nuclear monopoly". Such an agreement would be only the first step. The Soviet Union had proposed a programme of nuclear disarmament providing for the total prohibition and liquidation of stocks of nuclear weapons, and also for a number of collateral measures such as a ban on the use of nuclear weapons, the establishment of denuclearized zones, prohibition of nuclear weapon tests in all environments, and so forth. Finally, in response to the wishes of the non-nuclear States, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR had stated in a message to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament on 1 February 1966<sup>2/</sup> that the USSR was willing to include in the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons a clause on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons against non-nuclear States which had no nuclear weapons in their territory.

6. Non-proliferation was, as it were, the most important link in the chain; and it should be the starting-point for settling other questions of disarmament, particularly nuclear disarmament. The importance and the very nature of the question of non-proliferation was such that it should be singled out from other disarmament problems, and concentrated efforts should be made to solve it as quickly as possible. If a solution to the problem of proliferation were made dependent upon the solution of other problems, it might be more difficult to achieve disarmament and reduce international tension. Further, apart from the very urgency of the problem, all the prerequisites for a solution already existed.

7. Since 1961, the question of non-proliferation had been an item on the agenda of the General Assembly and the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Com-

<sup>1/</sup> See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Annexes, agenda item 106, document A/5976.

<sup>2/</sup> See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1966, document DC/228, annex 1, sect. F.

mittee on Disarmament. At its twentieth session, the Assembly had adopted an important resolution on the subject (resolution 2028 (XX)), calling for the early conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation and laying down the basic principles of such a treaty, which, it was stated, should be void of any loop-holes. But that decision had not yet been put into effect. Why had no treaty on non-proliferation been drafted and concluded? The failure to reach agreement was due to the fact that the United States was still maintaining in the Eighteen-Nation Committee a position which prevented any agreement and which offered non-nuclear Powers the possibility of obtaining access to nuclear weapons through military blocs. Recently, however, a certain change for the better had been observed; and it was to be hoped that the United States' assurances that it would try to prevent any further proliferation of nuclear weapons would be followed by specific practical measures. At the same time, it was impossible to ignore the efforts of militarist and revanchist circles in the Federal Republic of Germany to obtain access to nuclear weapons. Evidence of such efforts had been given in several statements by spokesmen for the Bonn Government. If, as had been said, German atomic potential was being created within the framework of the peaceful uses of atomic energy, why was the Federal Republic of Germany unwilling to place its atomic installations under the control of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)? It was no mere accident that the Government of the Federal Republic had not as yet responded to the initiative taken by Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Democratic Republic of Germany, which had all expressed their willingness to place their atomic installations under IAEA control on condition that similar installations in the non-nuclear States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) would be placed under similar control. References to the control exercised by Euratom could not be taken seriously, as Euratom was a closed organization consisting of the Federal Republics' allies in NATO.

8. The Federal Republic of Germany was now making every effort to ensure the establishment of a NATO multilateral nuclear force, and was trying to participate in the physical possession of nuclear weapons. It was, in fact, blackmailing its NATO allies with the threat that, if the plan to establish a multilateral force never materialized, the Federal Republic of Germany would start producing its own nuclear weapons. The German militarists' efforts were all the more dangerous in that they were encouraging certain irresponsible circles in other States to embark on the course of nuclear armament. For instance, the Republic of South Africa—helped, incidentally, by the Federal Republic of Germany—was preparing to create its own nuclear potential. That might produce a chain reaction and intensify the nuclear arms race throughout the world.

9. It was, therefore, particularly urgent to avoid any action which might hamper the solution of the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In requesting the General Assembly to include in its agenda the question "Renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement

on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", the Soviet Union had given due consideration to the opinions expressed in statements made in the General Assembly, in the Eighteen-Nation Committee and at international conferences by the representatives of various countries. Those statements showed a strong desire to create a favourable atmosphere for solution of the problem. The representative of the United Arab Republic had proposed at the 207th meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, on 13 August 1964, that both sides should refrain from taking any action which might jeopardize the success of an eventual agreement on non-dissemination. Similar proposals had been made in the Eighteen-Nation Committee in 1964 by the delegations of India and Nigeria. Later, the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in October 1964, had invited the great Powers to abstain from all policies conducive to the dissemination of nuclear weapons among States which did not then possess them. Since 1964, the course of events had made the danger more acute. Under those conditions, it was even more necessary to try by every possible means to reduce the nuclear threat.

10. The Soviet draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.368) was simple and easily understandable. Its essential part was in operative paragraph 1; and operative paragraph 2 was especially clear and logical. The draft resolution was not, of course, intended to cover all aspects of the problem. It was designed to establish a propitious atmosphere for the successful conclusion of negotiations on the question of non-proliferation and, with that end in view, to amplify the steps taken by the General Assembly at its twentieth session. His delegation hoped that all States which were genuinely anxious to achieve agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons would support the new Soviet initiative.

11. Mr. GOLDBERG (United States of America) thought that the debate on disarmament had opened in circumstances which held out substantial hope for progress.

12. While reserving the right to reply later to certain allegations by the Soviet representative, he would address himself to the first two agenda items, which warranted the high priority assigned to them. The question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons had dominated the discussions at the meetings of the Eighteen-Nation Committee held during 1966 and although no final agreement had been reached then, substantial progress had been made in four areas.

13. First, there was a growing awareness that collective nuclear defence arrangements, particularly essential in Europe, did not necessarily lead to proliferation and that the non-nuclear members of an alliance were entitled to have a voice in their collective nuclear defence without proliferation resulting therefrom.

14. Secondly, there was increased acceptance of the need for international safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities. The eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee had implicitly recognized that need by stating, in their joint memorandum of 19 August 1966, that "there should be...workable provisions to ensure the effectiveness of the treaty"

and that their delegations considered "that such provisions should guarantee compliance with the obligations of the treaty".<sup>3/</sup> There could be no more effective guarantee of compliance than acceptance of international safeguards on peaceful nuclear activities.

15. Thirdly, there was growing recognition of the fact that the technology of nuclear explosives for peaceful purposes was inseparable from that of nuclear weapons. The United States therefore took the view that the treaty must prohibit the dissemination to, or manufacture by, non-nuclear States of peaceful nuclear explosives as well as of nuclear weapons. However, the benefits of future technological progress could be made available to non-nuclear Powers without risk of spreading nuclear weapons. When peaceful nuclear explosives became technically and economically feasible within the limitations of the limited test ban treaty, nuclear States might make nuclear explosive services available to non-nuclear States. The explosions would take place under appropriate international observation, but the nuclear devices would remain in the custody and under the control of the States performing the service. Such a solution would of course be far less expensive to non-nuclear States than producing their own devices.

16. Fourthly, several delegations had proposed additional concrete procedures and fresh ideas for achieving a series of agreements to halt the arms race and reduce existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons and delivery systems. Their concern was shared by the United States.

17. The progress achieved in those four areas therefore offered more favourable prospects for the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation.

18. The United States and the Soviet Union had agreed to take advantage of the more promising situation and were engaged in efforts to overcome their remaining differences. Their discussions were still at the exploratory stage, but the business-like manner in which they had begun was a good augury. The statement made by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Gromyko, after his meeting with President Johnson was encouraging. The United States, for its part, would make every possible effort to achieve early agreement since, by its laws and policies, it was opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Being aware of the fact that the proposed treaty vitally concerned all Governments, whether they possessed nuclear weapons or not, the United States had decided to join in sponsoring the draft resolution submitted by the USSR. He fully endorsed its appeal to all States to refrain from any actions which might hamper the conclusion of an agreement, and he hoped that it would receive unanimous support in the Committee and in the General Assembly.

19. Such unanimous support would remind the world that a treaty on non-proliferation was not the concern of the nuclear Powers alone. Many non-nuclear States desired some assurance that their security would not suffer if they renounced the manufacture or

acquisition of nuclear weapons. The United States would give the problem careful study and was ready to explore with all delegations what action the General Assembly might take to satisfy their understandable concern.

20. The guidelines for a treaty remained those set forth in resolution 2028 (XX) adopted at the previous session. The United States agreed that the treaty must have no loop-holes and should embody an acceptable balance of mutual obligations and responsibilities as between nuclear and non-nuclear Powers. There had been much emphasis on the concept of balance and a disquieting tendency to view a treaty on non-proliferation as an attempt by nuclear States to get something for nothing or to impose unequal obligations upon non-nuclear States.

21. It had been suggested that for reasons of balance the nuclear-weapon States must give some tangible equivalent if the non-nuclear-weapon States were to forswear the acquisition or development of nuclear weapons. That was a misreading of the facts and a misjudgement of the consequences of the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by a growing number of sovereign States, far from helping to solve the particular political issues between them, would only sharpen those issues, create more tension and mutual fear and add seriously to world instability. The increased danger would be felt more by the non-nuclear States than by States with nuclear weapons.

22. A non-nuclear State could not promote its long-range security today by acquiring nuclear weapons. The national security of every State would be really promoted by a treaty on non-proliferation, since that would reduce the possibilities of nuclear war.

23. A treaty on non-proliferation was a basic step towards disarmament, but other measures were equally needed to halt and turn back the arms race. Nothing, however, should be done to risk encumbering negotiations on the proposed treaty by attempting to link it to additional disarmament measures. Trying to do everything at once might result in nothing being done. Subject to that caution, the United States emphatically endorsed the wish expressed by the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee in their memorandum of 19 August 1966 that the treaty should be coupled with or followed by tangible measures of nuclear disarmament. Several of the measures recommended in their memorandum had been proposed by the United States, while others were supported by the United States because they would strengthen the security of all countries while protecting vital United States interests.

24. The United States had proposed a complete and verified halt in the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes. If that proposal was not acceptable at the outset, the United States was prepared to consider a gradual shut-down of production facilities on a plant-by-plant basis.

25. It was prepared also to reduce its own nuclear stockpiles and it had offered to transfer 60,000 kilogrammes of enriched uranium to peaceful uses under international safeguards if the Soviet Union would so transfer 40,000 kilogrammes from its own stockpiles.

<sup>3/</sup> *Ibid.*, sect. P.

The United States had further proposed that those amounts of fissionable material could be obtained through the demonstrated destruction of nuclear weapons by the United States and the Soviet Union. The number of weapons destroyed could run into thousands.

26. The United States had also proposed a verified freeze on the number and characteristics of strategic nuclear weapon delivery vehicles and was pleased at the inclusion of that proposal in the eight-nation joint memorandum. If progress was made on that proposal, the United States was ready to explore a reduction in the number of such vehicles. The United States had stressed that the freeze should also encompass anti-ballistic-missile systems and that was proof of its genuine desire to halt and turn back the nuclear arms race. Nevertheless, the agreement of the other nuclear Powers, particularly the Soviet Union, would be needed.

27. Another measure to which the United States assigned high priority was an agreement banning underground nuclear weapon tests. Such a ban would be effective only if each party was sure that the other parties would abide by it. Technological advances had led to better means of detecting earth tremors and identifying their origin. Nevertheless,

the Soviet and United States positions on verification arrangements were still wide apart. The United States was therefore following with special interest the efforts of a number of countries, on the initiative of Sweden, to develop international seismological co-operation.

28. General and complete disarmament remained the ultimate objective of the United States, but present dangers obliged it to recommend urgently: first, the conclusion of a treaty forbidding the further spread of nuclear weapons; secondly, a halt in the nuclear arms race and the reduction of nuclear weapons stockpiles; thirdly, a complete ban on the underground testing of nuclear weapons; and fourthly, a slowing down of the races in so-called conventional armaments which were today an immediate threat to peace in certain regions of the world.

29. To achieve general and complete disarmament, a start must be made by preventing the advent of a world in which some ten or twenty States would have mounting stockpiles of nuclear weapons with a frightening profusion of delivery vehicles and in which neighbours neglected peaceful development to engage in an armaments race leading to tension and instability.

*The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.*