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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 (continued) (A/6398, A/C.1/L.368/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-3)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. ODHIAMBO (Kenya) said that his country, like the United Nations itself, was committed to the maintenance of world peace. Mankind needed peace and stability because it wanted to devote its full attention to the varied problems of development and, even more important, because war in a nuclear age might destroy all that man had laboured to build on earth. In spite of the war currently being waged elsewhere in the world and in spite of the exploitation of man by man, particularly in southern Africa, Kenya believed that the conditions for fruitful discussion of progress towards world peace could and should be created; for that reason, it supported draft resolution A/C.1/L.368/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-3, which was aimed at achieving such conditions.

2. His delegation appreciated the constructive approach so far adopted by the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom; it regretted, however, that another nuclear Power, the People's Republic of China, was not represented in the United Nations.

3. In any agreement on non-proliferation the non-nuclear States must play a very important role. Moreover, the agreement must ensure that the present nuclear alliances would not—either singly or acting jointly—directly or indirectly threaten the security and integrity of the non-aligned nations by virtue of possession of nuclear weapons. To achieve that purpose, an agreement on non-proliferation would have to be followed within a reasonable time by other positive steps towards disarmament, such as the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban treaty and reduction of stockpiles of nuclear weapons.

4. His delegation also supported the proposal made by the representative of the United Arab Republic at the 271st meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-

Nation Committee on Disarmament, in July 1966, that a study group should be set up to examine the entire concept of nuclear deterrence. As a member of the emerging "third world", Kenya believed that it would be worth exploring the possibility of one nuclear deterrent mechanism for the whole of mankind.

5. Mr. CAVALLETTI (Italy) said that the objectives of the draft resolution before the Committee, which his delegation had been one of the first to sponsor, were similar to those of the proposal for a nuclear moratorium made by Italy to the Eighteen-Nation Committee in 1965, which had been favourably received by the First Committee at the twentieth session. Under that proposal,^{1/} the non-nuclear States would undertake, in unilateral declarations, to refrain from manufacturing or otherwise acquiring nuclear weapons for a specific period, during which a treaty on non-proliferation and other agreements on nuclear disarmament were to be concluded. In the revised draft resolution before the Committee, all States were requested to facilitate the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation and to refrain from any actions which would be conducive to proliferation. Secondly, the Italian proposal and the draft resolution were both based on the conviction that the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation was possible and that negotiations were proceeding along the right lines. Thirdly, both proposals applied to all countries—nuclear and non-nuclear alike—and both of them required all countries to accept appropriate undertakings. In short, the draft resolution was proposing practical and immediate application of the principle underlying the Italian proposal. But its exact meaning and scope should be clearly understood.

6. In the first place, the draft resolution related to all possibilities of proliferation without exception, and to proliferation as a world problem and not as a problem confined to a given geographical area. The restrictive and polemical interpretations placed upon it by certain Eastern European delegations were therefore misleading. The draft resolution should not be used as a pretext for further slanderous allegations against one of his country's allies, or for ascribing to the Western Powers intentions which they had never had. Allegations of that kind would not contribute to the success of an initiative which was designed to reduce tension and restore mutual confidence. Furthermore, the draft resolution addressed an appeal to all countries without distinction to refrain from any actions conducive to proliferation. The non-nuclear Powers should therefore refrain from manufacturing or acquiring control of nuclear weapons, while the nuclear Powers should refrain from any action which

^{1/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/227, annex 1, sect. D.

might directly or indirectly encourage proliferation or be regarded as a threat or blackmail against the non-nuclear countries. Nothing would be more contrary to the spirit of the draft resolution than to suggest that certain countries had a privileged position in the world merely because they possessed nuclear weapons or had carried out nuclear tests. For reasons of prestige and in the interests of collective security, constant co-operation between the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers on a basis of equality would be required to achieve non-proliferation in the first instance and to avoid proliferation in the future.

7. By adopting the draft resolution, the Committee would reaffirm its belief that a treaty on non-proliferation could be concluded in the near future. The reference in the second preambular paragraph to international negotiations which were now under way suggested that prospects for the conclusion of a treaty had improved; and his delegation believed that they had. In fact, it had never doubted that there were good chances of concluding an agreement on non-proliferation as a first step on the way to nuclear disarmament.

8. In a memorandum of 20 August 1966^{2/} submitted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee with a view to facilitating agreement, his delegation had pointed out that the draft treaties submitted by the United States^{3/} and the Soviet Union^{4/} contained identical, or similar, proposals on many points. It was clear even from a cursory examination of the two drafts that the preambles and several articles in the two draft treaties contained similar wording and substantially similar provisions. Accordingly, his delegation had urged that the points of agreement should be seized upon at once as a basis for drafting some of the first articles of a treaty. This would not, of course, produce complete agreement, but the recognition of areas where agreement already existed would help to define and solve the remaining difficulties. The mere fact of taking the first steps and overcoming the first obstacles would have considerable political significance; it would be further evidence of the good will of both parties and would help the negotiations to progress.

9. In submitting that memorandum, his delegation had not, of course, forgotten that there was still one important point of disagreement. While articles I and II of the two draft treaties contained similar provisions on the prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear weapons, there were substantial differences between the provisions regarding the control of nuclear weapons; and, as everyone would be aware, the point at issue was how to define—in a treaty on non-proliferation—the limits of nuclear defence responsibilities within an alliance. In accordance with the fundamental principle of non-proliferation, the Western Powers had advocated that in any alliance the right and decision to use nuclear weapons should always rest with the nuclear Powers, so that no new decision-making centre would be created. But, though

their assurances had been clearly expressed in the Western draft treaty and had been repeated on a number of occasions, the Soviet delegation in the Eighteen-Nation Committee had not regarded them as adequate. The Soviet representative seemed to believe that non-proliferation should be given a very wide interpretation; and, while appreciating the role which alliances could still play in maintaining peace, he had stated that any form of nuclear defence collaboration within an alliance would enable other countries to obtain access to nuclear weapons. The Western Powers had reaffirmed their sincerity, and were anxious to continue their efforts to find a compromise formula which would meet the legitimate requirements of collective security and safeguard the integrity of their alliance, and at the same time be acceptable to all parties.

10. The Committee was aware that those efforts at conciliation had been resumed in talks in New York and Washington between the United States and the Soviet Union, whose representatives were co-Chairmen of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. They would probably be continued in the near future, and the statements by the United States and Soviet representatives at the 1431st meeting of the First Committee had suggested that the negotiations had not been fruitless. The United States representative had specifically referred to four areas in which progress had been made in the direction of nuclear disarmament, and those areas were indeed very important. The fact that the Soviet representative had addressed the Committee in a spirit of understanding, as though he had come to believe at last in the sincerity of the other side, was equally encouraging. It would be a great step forward if Soviet suspicions regarding the sincerity of the Western Powers were replaced by a feeling of trust, and by the realization that the West genuinely wanted peace and co-operation. The new atmosphere evident in the statements by the Soviet, United States and United Kingdom representatives would contribute greatly to the conclusion of a complete and final agreement when negotiations in the Eighteen-Nation Committee were resumed.

11. Due advantage should also be taken of the valuable co-operation of the non-aligned countries which, by their work in Geneva and their statements in the First Committee, had shown their determination to participate in an increasingly constructive manner in the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation. The draft resolution they had submitted on non-proliferation was further proof of their goodwill; and, as they were not covered by any nuclear guarantees and would have to accept certain restrictions, it was only natural that they should insist on their views being taken into account in a treaty on non-proliferation. He was sure that they would do so without creating any obstacles or delays, as they too were convinced that such a treaty would immeasurably improve the general political situation to the advantage of all countries, and would set in motion the irresistible process of disarmament itself.

12. The Italian Government's official position on disarmament had been expressed by its delegation in the Assembly's general debate (1441st plenary meeting) and by the Minister for Foreign Affairs who, in a

^{2/} *Ibid.*, Supplement for 1966, document DC/228, annex 1, sect. Q.

^{3/} *Ibid.*, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/227, annex 1, sect. A; and *ibid.*, Supplement for 1966, document DC/228, annex 1, sect. K.

^{4/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 106, document A/5976.

speech to the Chamber of Deputies on 20 October 1966, had reaffirmed the importance his country attached to general and complete disarmament and to the early conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation as a first step towards the improvement of mutual understanding. While the achievements of the Eighteen-Nation Committee during the past two years had fallen short of the General Assembly's hopes, they had been neither negative nor useless. Against the background of a troubled international situation, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had done as much as it could; it had kept the door open for an East-West dialogue for peace and had provided promising prospects for agreement. The fact that representatives of countries of the Atlantic Alliance and of the Warsaw Treaty alliance had continued to work for peace at Geneva, in co-operation with delegations from non-aligned countries, and had solemnly and unanimously reaffirmed their desire for mutual understanding and disarmament was in itself of considerable political importance. He hoped that the world would soon reap the fruits of that co-operation. Apart from the question of non-proliferation, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had discussed many other disarmament measures, including a test ban, a "cut-off" of production of fissionable materials for weapons use and a freeze of nuclear weapon delivery vehicles. On all those questions, and especially the test ban, ingenious new ideas had been advanced, many of them by the non-aligned countries. If they had not yet borne fruit, they could, with the First Committee's encouragement, be adopted as a useful basis for future negotiations.

13. Convinced as it was of the overriding and urgent need for disarmament, Italy would continue to participate in the Eighteen-Nation Committee's work in accordance with the Assembly's directives. Disarmament was not only essential for the maintenance of peace and security, which could not be based indefinitely on a balance of power; it was also a unique way of ensuring for all peoples a future based on justice and human dignity. The reduction or total abolition of expenditure on armaments was the only way of releasing enough resources for a joint effort to put an end to social injustices and raise the level of living of all peoples. That meant that there was a double motive to work for disarmament. The Committee should not lose sight of the humanitarian aspect of disarmament measures, and it should renew its appeals for the practical application of humanitarian principles.

14. Experience showed that, if favourable opportunities were not grasped at once, they might be lost for ever. The moment was now favourable for the conclusion of an agreement on non-proliferation; and the success or failure of the efforts to conclude an equitable treaty might decide whether the world moved forward towards peace and mutual understanding or came to grief amidst the increasing dangers which beset it. All countries would have a grave responsibility to bear, if they did not act with the necessary promptness and determination.

15. Mr. FAYAT (Belgium) said that during the past twenty-five years great advances had been made in the uses of nuclear energy for the benefit of mankind in medicine, hydrology, power generation, water desalination and many other respects. Unfortunately,

the same source of energy could also be used for the total destruction of mankind. The Committee's present work was aimed at averting the nuclear danger. Final elimination of that danger would be possible only as a part of general and complete disarmament. It seemed essential, however, to stop the proliferation of modern weapons of mass destruction at once in order to prevent a growing number of States from acquiring the capacity to trigger a nuclear war. That was why the Foreign Minister of Belgium had appealed in the General Assembly for the early conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and why his delegation had become a sponsor of the draft resolution.

16. Some progress had been made during the past twelve months. The General Assembly had by an overwhelming majority adopted resolution 2028 (XX), setting forth the basic principles for a treaty on non-proliferation. The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament at Geneva had defined the terminology and clarified the positions of the different parties. Efforts to establish denuclearized zones in Latin America and Africa, as well as the various formulas of guarantees offered by the nuclear Powers, tried to meet the concern of countries which possessed no nuclear weapons and were not members of any military alliance. Non-nuclear countries which did belong to such alliances could not disinterest themselves from the various means to assure their collective self-defence; that legitimate interest was not necessarily bound to introduce loop-holes in the treaty.

17. Such a treaty would, however, constitute only one step towards general and complete disarmament, and its conclusion should not be jeopardized by insistence on the simultaneous adoption of collateral measures. Fulfilment of the obligations assumed by States under such a treaty would be ensured by their acceptance of the guarantees of the International Atomic Energy Agency or equivalent international guarantees concerning peaceful nuclear activity.

18. Lastly, the technology of nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes should be covered by the treaty on non-proliferation, since that technology was identical with that of military nuclear explosions.

19. Taking advantage of the progress that had been made and of the atmosphere of confidence that was evident from the constructive tone of the First Committee's debate, the Eighteen-Nation Committee should take early steps to draft a treaty on non-proliferation, and all the Governments of the world should then demonstrate their willingness to conclude and abide by the treaty.

20. The recent fourth Chinese nuclear experiment showed the importance of having all the great military Powers discuss questions of disarmament and weapons control around the same table. In particular, it made it even more urgent for the nuclear Powers to succeed in their efforts to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

21. He recalled the hopes which had accompanied the work of the League of Nations Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, more than thirty years ago, and the devotion of spokesmen like

Arthur Henderson and Louis de Brouckère. The sad story of the failure of the League of Nations disarmament negotiations should be a stern reminder for all.

22. It was encouraging that the representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics had achieved a better grasp of each other's ideas in the course of the discussions in the Eighteen-Nation Committee and that a revision of the original draft resolution before the First Committee had been readily agreed upon so that unanimous approval might be expected. It was to be hoped that the movement toward a broader mutual understanding might gather momentum: the present opportunity should not be neglected.

23. Mr. TOMOROWICZ (Poland) did not intend to engage in a detailed examination of the provisions of the treaty to be concluded on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but wished to make clear his delegation's position on certain issues which had been raised publicly or in private in connexion with it. First, would a treaty on non-proliferation be related to other measures of disarmament, and if so, how? Secondly, what would the non-nuclear countries gain in return for their renunciation of the acquisition of nuclear weapons? Thirdly, how would they be safeguarded against a nuclear attack?

24. The problem of proliferation was difficult enough without making its solution contingent upon other measures; such an approach could only delay, or even compromise altogether, the most burning question now before the Committee.

25. A treaty on non-proliferation could not and would not supersede the commitments of the United Nations to explore ways of achieving more comprehensive disarmament measures. It would, like the partial test ban treaty, constitute an important step forward on the road to general and complete disarmament. The future of the cause of disarmament would be determined to a great extent by international events; for example, it was difficult to envisage any real progress towards general and complete disarmament at a time when United States military forces continued to wreak destruction and death in Viet-Nam, whether accompanied by Manila conferences or not.

26. General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) had stated that the proliferation of nuclear weapons would endanger the security of all States. In addition, however, a treaty on non-proliferation should not only enjoin nuclear abstinence upon one group of States but also place restrictions, even if different in character, upon all. The commitments of non-nuclear Powers not to acquire nuclear capability should therefore be matched by a corresponding obligation of the nuclear States not to transfer nuclear weapons to any non-nuclear country, whether party or non-party to the treaty, through any means, directly or indirectly, individually or collectively, within or without military alliances. Moreover, all the parties to the treaty would have to undertake a firm commitment to continue the search for other measures of disarmament.

27. Lastly, if States wanted safeguards against a nuclear attack, they could not gain them by acquiring nuclear weapons; on the contrary, in a nuclear war,

nuclear installations would be prime targets for attack. More security would be provided if the parties to the treaty on non-proliferation solemnly pledged not to use nuclear weapons against those countries on whose territory no nuclear weapons were stationed.

28. It was of primary importance for all nations to desist from any steps that might hamper or preclude the conclusion of the treaty. One such step that must be avoided was any satisfaction of the incessant call of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany for nuclear arms.

29. At the 211th meeting of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, on 27 August 1964, the representative of India had urged that while negotiations for a treaty were in progress neither side should make any change in the arrangements that currently existed for the control, use, possession or transfer of nuclear weapons or for training nationals of non-nuclear States in the use of such weapons. The desire to prevent any fait accompli in the nuclear weapons field, and thereby to safeguard the opportunity for serious negotiation, was the main idea behind the draft resolution before the First Committee, which was sponsored by thirty-eight Member States.

30. While striving for the conclusion of a universal agreement on non-proliferation, all States should continue their efforts to bring about various regional collateral measures of nuclear disarmament, such as non-nuclearization or denuclearization of certain areas, or at least a freeze on the nuclear armaments existing there. The Government of Poland had put forward proposals in that matter with regard to central Europe and would persevere in its efforts to ease tension and create conditions of confidence and security in the area.

31. He hoped that the Committee would unanimously adopt the draft resolution and thereby make an important contribution to speeding the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation.

32. Mr. Endalkachew MAKONNEN (Ethiopia) said that the Committee had been quite right to give priority to the item entitled "Renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons", thereby underlining the importance which the family of nations attached to the early conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation. He was grateful to the Soviet delegation for suggesting the inclusion of that item in the Assembly's agenda and attached particular significance to the fact that the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union was being co-sponsored by the United States and others; co-operation between the major nuclear Powers was the key to the realization of agreement on non-proliferation. The positive and encouraging note struck by the Soviet and United States representatives in their statements at the 1431st meeting was equally auspicious. Indeed, the Committee's discussions of non-proliferation had opened in circumstances perhaps more hopeful than ever before.

33. His Government's policy on non-proliferation, and the importance it attached to an early solution of the problem, had been clearly indicated in a number

of documents submitted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee. In a message to the Eighteen-Nation Committee on 1 March 1966,^{5/} the Emperor of Ethiopia had endorsed the principles underlying the assurances which the President of the United States and the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR had both given against the possible threat or use of nuclear weapons; and, inspired by that message, his delegation had included among its proposals regarding the substance of a treaty on non-proliferation the concept of a multilateral undertaking by all the nuclear Powers—or, failing that, at least by the major nuclear Powers—to protect the non-nuclear Powers against nuclear threats.^{6/} It had also suggested that the nuclear Powers should accept a clear commitment to reduce all existing stockpiles; the assurances by the United States and the United Kingdom representatives that their respective Governments were prepared to honour those commitments were most encouraging. Lastly, the Ethiopian delegation had fully subscribed to the joint memorandum of 19 August 1966 of the non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee.^{7/} A further statement of his delegation's position on non-proliferation had been made at the 242nd meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, on 22 February 1966.

34. If now the First Committee, in the favourable atmosphere which had characterized the opening stages of its discussions, were to concentrate its attention on the non-proliferation question, it could greatly facilitate the early conclusion of a treaty based on General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), as a first step on the road to greater understanding and co-operation in regard to general and complete disarmament, which was the ultimate objective. The development of powerful weapons of destruction had brought man to the point of no return, where he was obliged either to relinquish the right to use such weapons or to perish in mass self-destruction. His country, in its awareness of that grim alternative, was committed to the achievement of general and complete disarmament; and, to that end, it was resolved to co-operate with all countries within and outside the United Nations.

35. The draft resolution before the Committee had the merits of directness and simplicity. In order to understand the message which it was intended to convey, however, it was essential to realize that the phrase "renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement on non-proliferation" did not mean merely that States should pursue a policy of inaction. On the contrary, all Powers—nuclear and non-nuclear alike—should take positive steps to facilitate the conclusion of an agreement.

^{5/} See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1966*, document DC/228, annex I, sect. I.

^{6/} *Ibid.*, sect. R.

^{7/} *Ibid.*, sect. P.

36. As part of the general process leading to general and complete disarmament, a treaty on non-proliferation should contain specific provisions not only on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but also on the gradual reduction of existing nuclear stockpiles. Such provisions would increase the confidence of potential nuclear Powers and would create the atmosphere of mutual trust required for the achievement of general and complete disarmament. Further, if a treaty on non-proliferation were to be a meaningful step in the process of general and complete disarmament, it should at once be linked with an agreement banning underground nuclear weapon tests. Otherwise, the burden of restraint would fall entirely on the non-nuclear Powers, some of which might feel the need to acquire a deterrent arsenal if the nuclear Powers were allowed to improve and refine their atomic weapons by continued underground testing. The non-nuclear Powers would sooner or later refuse to tolerate that injustice if a non-proliferation treaty were not immediately followed by the cessation of all nuclear weapon tests. Another danger inherent in underground testing was that one of the existing nuclear Powers might achieve a breakthrough in the search for the ultimate weapon—the so-called fool-proof deterrent. Such a development would give the other nuclear Powers an irresistible urge to follow suit, and would initiate an armaments race even more difficult to control than the present one.

37. His people, like all others, was anxious to arrest that dangerous exercise in self-destruction, so that the immense resources which were at present being wasted in the arms race could be diverted to peaceful uses. A treaty on non-proliferation, followed by an agreement on disarmament, would increase the resources available for world development, as the great Powers would be able to concentrate on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and to increase their investment in economic development, while the non-nuclear Powers would also be able to invest in economic progress the financial resources they might otherwise waste in producing their own nuclear weapons. In that sense, disarmament was the key to world progress.

38. The report that mainland China had developed an atomic bomb which could be delivered by guided missiles made it clearer than ever how important it was to ensure the participation of all nations in agreements on non-proliferation and disarmament. In the absence of mutual commitments and guarantees by all nations, potential nuclear Powers would always be tempted to enter the nuclear arms race. The draft resolution before the Committee stressed the need for positive measures by all States to facilitate the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation; and a treaty embodying a suitable balance of mutual responsibilities would act as a stimulus to reduction of existing nuclear stockpiles and the conclusion of a comprehensive test ban agreement leading to the achievement of general and complete disarmament.

The meeting rose at 4.50 p.m.