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Chairman: Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

AGENDA ITEM 26

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (continued) (A/6390-DC/228, A/C.1/L.371 and Corr. 1 and Add.1-6, A/C.1/L.372 and Add.1-3, A/C.1/L.373)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. PONNAMBALAM (Ceylon) recalled that some years earlier the General Assembly had adopted a resolution condemning the use of nuclear weapons as an act against humanity and civilization. Yet even during the past year various nuclear Powers had continued testing nuclear weapons, both in the atmosphere and underground. Most recently, the nuclear explosion of a guided missile by the People's Republic of China had given the peoples of the world reason for even greater concern about the progress of nuclear disarmament measures.

2. Even the most powerful nuclear States had come to recognize that the possession of nuclear weapons was neither a symbol of prestige nor any great advantage in the pursuit of national policies. It would be a great achievement if the Committee could, even before a complete programme of disarmament was evolved, bring about the conclusion of a treaty restricting the number of nuclear Powers for all time. The main problem now under discussion was the distribution of nuclear weapons by Powers which possessed them to others which did not; prevention of that process was best described as non-dissemination, since "non-proliferation", as the Indian representative had pointed out, could be more precisely interpreted to mean prevention of the reproduction, multiplication and rapid increase of nuclear weapons.

3. There were a hundred or more Member States which obviously had neither the capacity nor the desire to acquire nuclear weapons. On the other hand, ten or fifteen States could do so without undue strain on their economies, and it was gratifying to note that countries such as Canada and India had voluntarily and unilaterally renounced the manufacture of nuclear weapons for all time. Moreover, a denuclearized

zone in Latin America had been proposed and he hoped that countries in other regions would renounce nuclear weapons. If a country manufactured or acquired nuclear weapons, its neighbours would inevitably be prompted to do likewise out of fear for their safety. Therefore, far from constituting a sacrifice, renunciation of such weapons was the highest form of security.

4. The nuclear Powers could take a significant step in the realm of non-proliferation by concluding a comprehensive test ban treaty. The United States and the Soviet Union appeared to be closer to agreement on the question of detection and verification of underground tests. Serious consideration should therefore be given to the suggestion that a body of individual scientists from non-nuclear and non-aligned countries assist in the verification of underground explosions.

5. Every Member State agreed in theory with the principle enunciated in paragraph 2 (a) of General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), which stated that a treaty to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons should be free from loop-holes directly or indirectly permitting such proliferation. The Soviet Union and the Eastern European socialist countries, however, feared that other countries, particularly the Federal Republic of Germany, might gain possession of nuclear weapons under cover of an international defence alliance. But the Federal Republic of Germany had undertaken a treaty obligation not to manufacture nuclear weapons and there seemed to be no evidence whatsoever to indicate that it had failed to fulfil that obligation. Czechoslovakia and Poland had offered to place all their peaceful nuclear installations under international inspection and control if the Federal Republic of Germany would do likewise, and the latter was reported to be considering such action. By accepting the suggestion the Federal Republic of Germany could make a great contribution to world peace, since the question of its possession of nuclear weapons seemed to be the last obstacle to agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union.

6. The principle stated in paragraph 2 (b) of resolution 2028 (XX), concerning an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers, involved two questions. First, what were the nuclear Powers willing to do in exchange for the renunciation of nuclear weapons by the present non-nuclear Powers? The representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom had all replied that they regarded a treaty on non-dissemination as only the first step towards the reduction, demolition and conversion of their nuclear arsenals. The existence of such agreement among the nuclear Powers should offer sufficient reassurance to the non-nuclear States, if it could be incorporated

into a treaty, at least in the form of a statement of intention. The second question was what guarantees could be given for the security of potential nuclear Powers which voluntarily gave up their right to manufacture nuclear weapons. On that point, the Soviet Union had stated that it would not be the first country to launch an attack on a non-nuclear Power provided the other nuclear Powers gave the same undertaking, while the United States had said that it was prepared to make efforts to protect non-nuclear countries that had voluntarily given up their nuclear potential. He felt that the requirement for an "acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations of nuclear and non-nuclear Powers" had been adequately met by those statements of the two super-Powers.

7. He hoped that agreement on a treaty on non-proliferation would not be obstructed by doubts about the need for control of peaceful nuclear explosions. There should be no restriction on the advance of science and technology, even in the nuclear field; human ingenuity, goodwill and common sense could ensure that nuclear capability was used purely for peaceful purposes.

8. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) noted that, in the current debate, as in the debate on agenda item 97, nearly every delegation had stressed the dangers involved in the proliferation of nuclear weapons and the urgent need for agreement on non-proliferation. The whole course of the discussion, together with the almost unanimous adoption of the draft resolution initiated by the Soviet Union calling upon all States to refrain from any action which might hamper the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation, augured well for the success of further efforts to reach agreement.

9. In examining the report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, the First Committee should try to re-establish a true picture of the situation in the Geneva negotiations, which some delegations had described incorrectly. It should also attempt to discover exactly why no agreement on non-proliferation had yet been reached and to clear away the obstacles to further progress.

10. General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), calling for the early conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation and outlining certain specific principles on which the treaty should be based, had been adopted by an overwhelming majority of States, including the United States and its NATO allies. There had therefore been definite grounds for hoping that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would be able to reach agreement on non-proliferation. But no agreement had been reached. The United States representative's observation, at the 1431st meeting of the First Committee, that the Eighteen-Nation Committee had made substantial progress was rather surprising. The Eighteen-Nation Committee had, of course, done some useful work in clarifying the positions of the sides, but that was no reason for saying that it had made any progress, let alone any substantial progress. It had itself stated, in paragraph 33 of its report to the General Assembly (A/6390-DC/228) that it had not reached "any specific agreement ... on questions of general and complete disarmament or on measures aimed at the lessening of international tension", that is to say, on measures such as non-proliferation.

11. Its failure to carry out the task assigned to it in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) had been due largely to the position adopted by the United States and certain other Western countries, which was reflected in the United States draft treaty on non-proliferation^{1/} and was completely at variance with the real objectives of non-proliferation and with the spirit and the letter of the principles laid down by the General Assembly. While resolution 2028 (XX) stated that the treaty should be void of any loop-holes which might permit nuclear or non-nuclear Powers to proliferate, directly or indirectly, nuclear weapons in any form, the United States position was based on the premise that nuclear proliferation was permissible and should merely be kept within certain limits. The United States draft treaty did not close all possible loop-holes for nuclear proliferation, but left the door open for a kind of legalized proliferation. As West Germany had not yet abandoned its hopes of obtaining access to nuclear weapons, the dangers inherent in the United States approach were obvious. At the 1440th meeting, the United States representative had assured the Committee that West Germany was showing no signs of a desire to acquire nuclear weapons. But it should be remembered that negotiations on the establishment of a multilateral nuclear force and on the so-called "sharing of nuclear responsibility" in NATO were still in progress, and that the Federal Republic of Germany had a rapidly expanding atomic potential which was still not subject to international control. Further, the influence of those who were intent on preventing agreement on non-proliferation, and who were anxious above all for nuclear cooperation with the Federal Republic of Germany, was still strong in certain quarters. Accordingly, the delegations of the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries had been trying in the Eighteen-Nation Committee to obtain a clear answer to the question whether the United States intended to give way to the demands of military circles in the Federal Republic of Germany by establishing a multilateral nuclear force in which the Federal Republic would have access to nuclear weapons, or whether it was ready to conclude a treaty on non-proliferation. The crux of the problem lay in the answer to that question.

12. Unlike the United States and its Western partners, the Soviet Union and the other socialist countries had been insisting in the Eighteen-Nation Committee that a treaty on non-proliferation should be based strictly on the principles laid down in resolution 2028 (XX). Under the Soviet draft treaty,^{2/} all possible loop-holes and channels for the proliferation of nuclear weapons, direct or indirect, would be completely closed. The Eighteen-Nation Committee had itself recognized that article I of the Soviet draft treaty was entirely in keeping with the principle laid down in paragraph 2 (a) of resolution 2028 (XX). The representative of the United Arab Republic in particular had stated, at the 245th meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, on 3 March 1966, that the Soviet text of article I was more in line with the General Assembly provision than was its United States counterpart.

^{1/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, 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.

^{2/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Twentieth Session, Annexes, agenda item 106, document A/5976.

13. As his delegation had observed at the 1431st meeting, there had recently been some improvement in the prospects of solving the problem of proliferation. Leading personalities in the United States had given assurances that they were really determined to solve the problem. Assurances of that kind were of course welcome, but the United States should also take practical steps to show that it meant what it said.

14. At the Committee's 1431st meeting also, the United States representative had asserted that there was a growing awareness in the Eighteen-Nation Committee that collective nuclear defence arrangements did not necessarily lead to proliferation. If that assertion had been intended to create the impression that the Soviet Union now believed that non-nuclear States should be allowed access to nuclear weapons under so-called "collective nuclear defence" arrangements, his delegation wished to clarify the Soviet position by stating categorically that there had not been, and could not be, any growing awareness that collective nuclear defence arrangements did not involve proliferation. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by non-nuclear States in a NATO multilateral force under collective nuclear defence arrangements—which would, in fact, amount to collective nuclear measures—would be a clear case of proliferation of nuclear weapons and would be in complete contradiction with the principles set forth in resolution 2028 (XX). The Soviet Union was categorically opposed to plans for proliferating nuclear weapons in military blocs and allowing the Federal Republic of Germany to obtain access to nuclear weapons. The German Democratic Republic, for its part, had consistently advocated the denuclearization of both Germanys. In the Declaration on the Strengthening of Peace and Security in Europe adopted at the Bucharest meeting of the Consultative Political Committee of countries members of the Warsaw Pact in July 1966, it had been stated that abandonment of plans for a NATO multilateral nuclear force would be in the interest of all peoples.

15. In the discussion on agenda item 97, many delegations had referred to the principle enunciated in paragraph 2 (b) of resolution 2028 (XX), to the effect that the treaty should embody an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers. It was quite understandable that States signing a treaty on non-proliferation should require some guarantee of their security, and his country certainly believed that nuclear as well as non-nuclear States should assume specific obligations under the treaty. The proposal made in that connexion by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR in his message of 1 February 1966 to the Eighteen-Nation Committee^{3/} was designed to meet the requirements of non-aligned countries which did not wish to become involved in a possible nuclear war, and he was glad to note that it had been welcomed by many delegations. The proposed guarantee would apply precisely to non-nuclear States which had no nuclear weapons in their territory.

16. His delegation agreed with others which had urged that a treaty on non-proliferation should be a

step towards the achievement of other disarmament measures, as suggested in paragraph 2 (c) of resolution 2028 (XX). The Soviet Union had never considered a treaty on non-proliferation as an end in itself. The proposal made by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR that the nuclear Powers should consider the question of carrying out immediately the programme relating to nuclear disarmament^{2/} was still in force, but the Western Powers had not unfortunately displayed any wish to reach agreement on the measures the Soviet Government had proposed. His delegation also advocated the conclusion of agreements on the discontinuance of nuclear weapon tests and on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons. It was prepared to reach agreement on those important measures without further delay.

17. It also fully supported the principle, expressed in paragraph 2 (d) of resolution 2028 (XX), that there should be acceptable and workable provisions to ensure the effectiveness of the treaty. Many of the non-aligned States had suggested that the safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency should be used for that purpose and the Soviet representative in the Eighteen-Nation Committee had stated that his Government was prepared to consider the suggestion. It should be easy to reach agreement on the application of IAEA safeguards, but not of safeguards devised by regional groupings of States belonging to the same military alliance.

18. Lastly, his Government agreed that nothing in a treaty on non-proliferation should adversely affect the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories, as suggested in paragraph 2 (e) of resolution 2028 (XX). It regarded the establishment of denuclearized zones as an effective way of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and supported the Polish proposal for a denuclearized zone in central Europe and the Romanian-Bulgarian proposal for denuclearization of the Balkans. His delegation had voted in favour of resolution 2033 (XX), in which the General Assembly called upon all States to respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-free zone, and it hoped that practical steps would soon be taken to establish a denuclearized zone in Africa. The proliferation of nuclear weapons could also be prevented by establishing denuclearized zones embracing the territories of smaller groups of States, or even of individual States. His own country was prepared to respect the status of any denuclearized zones which might be established, provided that the other nuclear Powers gave a similar undertaking.

19. For the moment, the Soviet Union was striving above all to achieve a genuine, comprehensive and lasting solution to the problem of proliferation on the basis of General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX). All States had a common duty to participate in that endeavour, and the opportunity which at present existed for the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation should be grasped before it was too late.

20. Mr. WELLS (Jamaica) said that draft resolution A/C.1/L.372 and Add.1-3, of which his country was a sponsor, reflected the doubts and concern expressed by a number of non-nuclear States. There was general

^{3/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1966, document DC/228, annex 1, sect. F.

agreement on the need to guarantee the security of non-nuclear Powers, but opinions differed as to the nature of the guarantees and the manner in which they should be provided. A conference should be convened at which the non-nuclear States could consider those questions. Jamaica did not share the fear that such a conference might have the effect of delaying the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation. No obstacle whatsoever should be placed in the way of the treaty negotiations and, if a treaty was concluded before the proposed conference, the non-nuclear States would then be able to discuss the guarantees it contained, if any. In fact, there was no compelling reason why guarantees should be embodied in the treaty; they could be just as binding elsewhere. There was no danger in a conference confined to non-nuclear States, which would in fact clarify issues among those States so that subsequent consultations with the nuclear States would be more fruitful.

21. In connexion with operative paragraph 1 (b) of the draft resolution, he emphasized that the non-nuclear States bore a heavy responsibility to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and that any arrangements to that end which they could evolve among themselves would be of great value.

22. On the subject of operative paragraph 1 (c) of the draft, his delegation was in substantial agreement with the representative of Pakistan about the difficulties non-nuclear countries might encounter in gaining access to the practical benefits of nuclear technology unless proper international arrangements were made. The conclusion of an agreement on non-proliferation should not prevent the transfer of such benefits to the developing world; the non-nuclear States should study how the problem could best be solved without jeopardizing their independence and sovereignty.

23. Lord CHALFONT (United Kingdom) said that he had already explained his Government's general policy on the subject of non-proliferation and related issues during the debate on agenda item 97 (1432nd meeting).

24. He had for the moment one comment to make concerning the statement just made by the representative of the Soviet Union. The Soviet representative had been correct in saying that no agreement had been reached in the Eighteen-Nation Committee. At the same time, the United States representative had been correct in saying that there had been some progress: problems had been isolated and differences had been identified, and even the present measure of optimism for agreement on a treaty on non-proliferation would have been impossible without the progress made at Geneva.

25. One fundamental point had been raised by the representative of India at the 1436th meeting and had also been referred to by other representatives: the exact meaning of the word proliferation. The important point, however, was not any particular dictionary definition of non-proliferation but rather the United Nations policy which that word had been selected to designate; the policy should not be manipulated in order to conform to all the semantic nuances of the word. The generally recognized aim of a treaty on non-proliferation was to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons to countries which did not at present possess them. The treaty must, of course, be coupled with or followed by

other measures to halt and reduce nuclear armaments, but the primary aim was clear from the two draft treaties which had been before the Eighteen-Nation Committee. Attempts to adopt a new and different interpretation of that aim could only sow confusion and obstruct progress.

26. The United Kingdom endorsed the principles set out in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) and in the joint memorandum of 19 August 1966 of the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee.^{4/} The cut-off of production of fissile material and the freeze of nuclear weapon delivery vehicles would together constitute a massive slowing-down of nuclear weapon production, and the United Kingdom favoured their adoption. However, they were listed in the memorandum as measures which should be coupled with a treaty on non-proliferation or should follow it; the Indian representative's view that an acceptable treaty should forbid the nuclear Powers to continue the production of nuclear weapons was, therefore, not consistent with the provisions of the non-aligned memorandum, but went beyond it. It was, of course, the right of any delegation to adopt a position which went beyond that of the joint memorandum; the Brazilian representative had pointed out (1437th meeting) that his own delegation held such a position. It was important, however, to make it clear when a particular opinion was that of an individual delegation rather than that of the eight-member group of non-aligned States, since the opinions held jointly by the group were usually given special weight by everyone who recognized the group's importance in the deliberations of the Eighteen-Nation Committee.

27. Of the draft resolutions before the First Committee, the first (A/C.1/L.371 and Corr.1 and Add.1-6) would no doubt command universal support, except for operative paragraph 3, on the question of assurances to non-nuclear-weapon States after the signing of a treaty on non-proliferation. Some non-nuclear countries wanted those assurances to be mentioned in the resolution, while others did not. It was virtually impossible to reconcile the many shades of opinion in one short paragraph and the whole question of assurances required much deeper and more detailed study, not by the nuclear Powers alone, as the present wording of operative paragraph 3 seemed to suggest, but in the Eighteen-Nation Committee. There, all proposals and ideas which might meet the varying needs of the non-nuclear countries could be examined by nuclear and non-nuclear countries together.

28. The suggestion concerning assurances to non-nuclear countries made by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR in his message of 1 February 1966 to the Eighteen-Nation Committee raised a number of difficulties. For example, as the Italian representative had pointed out (1443rd meeting), it would be necessary to set up a system of verification in certain strategically vital areas, especially in Europe, to determine whether a particular country was covered by the terms of the guarantee, and in the past it had been impossible to secure agreement on such verification. Moreover, if a nuclear-weapon State did not subscribe to the treaty or to the

^{4/} *Ibid.*, sect. P.

guarantee, the value of that guarantee to its non-nuclear neighbours was clearly limited. A more positive guarantee, of the sort suggested by the President of the United States in his message of 27 January 1966 to the Eighteen-Nation Committee,^{5/} might be of more practical value, provided that it could be formulated multilaterally to avoid any appearance of alignment. In any event, the problem of assurances and guarantees was extremely difficult, and it might be better to omit operative paragraph 3 altogether rather than concentrate on one particular solution before there had been a proper examination of the issues. If the sponsors of the draft resolution could not agree to deletion of the paragraph, then the Eighteen-Nation Committee should be asked to examine urgently not one proposal, but all proposals that had been or might be advanced for the solution of the problem. The terms of reference should be set out in operative paragraph 3 in the most general way in order to avoid debate on the substance of a complicated subject as part of the present draft resolution.

29. As to draft resolution A/C.1/L.372 and Add.1-3, his delegation's main doubts concerned timing, which was of the greatest importance at present. There appeared to be a real chance of agreement between the two main alliances on a treaty on non-proliferation, but the delicate balance of the situation might well be upset by any one of a number of developments outside the current negotiations. A conference of the size and importance proposed in the draft resolution would require long preparation, and any effort to set it up at present might hinder speedy conclusion of agreement on a treaty, contrary to its sponsors' intentions. It would therefore be a mistake to proceed with the conference plan at the present session; on the other hand, if unexpected difficulties arose in the present discussions, the Pakistan proposal might serve a vital purpose in keeping open the opportunities for negotiation.

30. His delegation could not support the Cameroonian representative's amendment, which seemed to relate more closely to agenda item 29 than to the present item.

31. There was an unfortunate tendency among some delegations to discern a direct confrontation between the nuclear and the non-nuclear Powers or between the great military alliances and the non-aligned countries. That artificial and dangerous cleavage might be formalized and perpetuated by such proposals as that of Pakistan for a conference of non-nuclear Powers. A solution to the problem of controlling nuclear weapons should be sought in the most effective forum that now existed: the Eighteen-Nation Committee. His comments on the Indian representative's views were not intended to be and should not be interpreted as an element in a confrontation of the kind mentioned. He appealed, however, to all the non-aligned members of the First Committee, and not only those represented at Geneva, to continue to exercise during the present crucial stage of negotiations the wisdom and moderation they had demonstrated in the past. While the treaty on non-proliferation was only a first step on the road to nuclear disarmament and then to more comprehensive disarmament measures, even that first

step would be impossible unless agreement was first reached between the two nuclear super-Powers and their allies. It would be tragic if the proper and justifiable preoccupations of the non-aligned and non-nuclear-weapon Powers should jeopardize the possibility of such agreement.

32. Mr. BAROODY (Saudi Arabia) said that, whereas before the Second World War the major Powers had been divided into colonial countries and non-colonial countries, those categories had now been replaced by new ones: nuclear countries and non-nuclear countries. The use of nuclear energy for military purposes seemed a greater evil than colonialism. At least the colonized peoples had been able to hope for liberation but men lived in constant fear that nuclear weapons would be used to annihilate not only warring enemies, but the entire human race. It was not true that the existence of highly developed nuclear weapons was a guarantee against world war because those who possessed such weapons would not dare to use them. The nuclear arms race was continuing in the utmost secrecy and no country could be sure what strength the others had attained. It was because they were untrammelled by the demands of secrecy made by the arms race that the non-nuclear countries could view the situation more objectively. Time was running short; world tension was mounting daily and the fear of nuclear weapons was affecting man's subliminal mind. Government officials in the nuclear States were only human and they might seek relief from the tension to which they were subjected in involvement in a conflict which could thrust the whole of mankind into an abyss.

33. It was therefore high time for the non-nuclear Powers to meet together at an international conference and evolve a common approach to the question of non-proliferation which would translate their concern about the survival of mankind into some active plan. They should not be content to remain spectators of the abortive dialogue in the Eighteen-Nation Committee, in which France and China did not participate and where technical jargon tended to obscure the basic issue. The cost of a conference of non-nuclear States would not be too high in comparison with the millions of dollars the nuclear Powers were spending on nuclear devices. The non-nuclear countries were sovereign States, just as the nuclear Powers were, and their plans for the conference should not be thwarted.

34. Several ideas might emerge from a conference of non-nuclear countries. It might, for instance, be suggested that the two major nuclear Powers should undertake to stop developing nuclear weapons, destroy the advanced nuclear weapons they already possessed and reduce their nuclear armaments to a level which could be attained by the other nuclear Powers. It would be impossible to negotiate with China until that country had attained nuclear parity. In addition, all States should forswear the use of nuclear energy for the production of weapons. All nuclear scientists and research workers should join in a single international association under the auspices of the United Nations. They should insist on the inclusion in their employment contracts of a clause to the effect that the fruits of their nuclear research would be used only for

^{5/} Ibid., sect. D.

peaceful purposes. The nuclear scientists and research workers should formulate an international code of ethics and be granted immunity for any action they might take against their Governments, if the latter broke their promise to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes only.

35. Mr. TRIVEDI (India) noted that the United Kingdom representative had referred to a statement which he himself had made at the 1436th meeting. In that statement, he had taken care to emphasize that, in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), principle (b), relating to a balance of responsibilities and obligations, and principle (c), showing that a

treaty on non-proliferation was not an end in itself, should not be confused.

36. The suggestion that a treaty on non-proliferation should deal with the cessation of weapons production, to which the United Kingdom representative had referred, was not new. The nuclear Powers had emphasized that point as early as the 1950's. Mr. Nutting, who had then been the principal British negotiator on disarmament, had said that, unless there was agreement on a halt in the production of fissile material for weapons, other countries would inevitably join the nuclear race.

The meeting rose at 1.5 p.m.