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CONTENTS

	Page
Agenda item 19: <i>Question of disarmament (continued)</i>	223

Chairman: Mr. Mario AMADEO (Argentina).

AGENDA ITEM 19

Question of disarmament (A/4868 and Corr.1, A/4879, A/4880, A/4887, A/4891, A/4892, A/C.1/856, A/C.1/L.297 and Add.1-2) (continued)

1. Mr. BUDO (Albania) said that the importance and historical significance of the Soviet Union's programme for general and complete disarmament (A/C.1/856) were confirmed by the warm welcome which it had been accorded by all peace-loving peoples. Its execution would deliver humanity from the nightmare of nuclear war, put an end to the arms race, and release part of the present military expenditure for peaceful purposes. It would establish a setting in which the peoples could live and work in peace and derive the maximum benefit from the prodigious progress achieved in science and technology. Contrary to what certain representatives claimed, however, the Soviet programme, bold though it might appear, was not utopian. It was based on present realities and technical data, and embodied a series of specific and undoubtedly workable measures. It likewise allowed for the tension and mistrust marking the relations between the socialist and capitalist groups, for at each stage the Soviet plan provided an effective and appropriate system of international control. The object of that system was, of course, to maintain world peace and security, and not, as the Western Powers would like, to set up control of armaments.

2. In dividing up the various measures among the different stages of general and complete disarmament, the Soviet Union had taken account of the demands by the Western Powers, particularly regarding nuclear weapons vehicles, which France wanted destroyed at the first stage. But at the same time as the destruction of the means of delivery—a field in which the Soviet Union enjoyed undisputed supremacy—the Soviet plan provided for the liquidation of military bases on foreign territory, a step necessary for the security of the socialist countries. It was to be noted that the United States, in its new programme (A/4891), did not propose the abolition of those bases, an omission incompatible with the principles set forth in the joint statement by the United States and the USSR (A/4879), according to which the programme of general and complete disarmament should in no way place one party at a disadvantage in relation to another.

3. Moreover, it should be recognized that the failure to solve the disarmament problem since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) had been due to the obstructiveness of the United States and its NATO allies, who used negotiations to deceive the peoples and lull their vigilance. That was what they had done in particular during the Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests and throughout the deliberations in the Conference of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament. The efforts made by the Soviet Union and other countries at the Assembly's fifteenth session to secure adoption of the principles which should guide general and complete disarmament had been brought to nothing by the delaying tactics of the United States: it had been impossible, for instance, to secure the adoption of the twelve-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2) which had set forth precisely those principles. At the current session the United States had once again tried to distract the Committee's attention from the disarmament problem, particularly by forcing it to give priority to the debate on nuclear tests. In any case the United States had never renounced its policy of "positions of strength" and of preparation for war, as had been shown by its opposition to the General Assembly resolutions on the denuclearization of Africa (resolution 1652 (XVI)) and on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons (resolution 1653 (XVI)). Everybody knew that the United States and its allies had still further increased their military budgets, recalled reservists, and strengthened their forces in Europe. Not only had they not replied to the Soviet Union's proposal to conclude a peace treaty with Germany, but they had also gone to the defence of the West German revenge-seekers and supplied them with equipment and atomic weapons. The United States was committing provocative acts not only in Berlin, but also in South-East Asia and the Caribbean.

4. The United Nations must take urgent and radical steps to make a thermo-nuclear war impossible and to strengthen peace. The Soviet-United States statement of agreed principles constituted a first step in that direction. The USSR and the United States must now without delay start negotiations within an appropriate body to translate those principles into detailed provisions constituting a general agreement on general and complete disarmament.

5. His delegation strongly supported the proposal by the USSR that the General Assembly should adopt a resolution based on the principles of the joint statement and set up a committee which would be given a time limit within which to draft a treaty on general and complete disarmament. It was also in favour of convening an extraordinary session of the General Assembly before 1 June 1962 to consider the draft treaty.

6. Mr. CAYCO (Philippines) said that, if humanity wanted to avoid the nuclear holocaust, it must reso-

lutely and without delay set about creating a peaceful world; it must learn to master its primitive impulses and listen to the voice of reason. The prodigious progress of science and technology must be controlled by a higher spiritual force, so that it might give a richer and more satisfying life to all. A particularly heavy responsibility thus fell on the two super-Powers on which a solution to the vital problem of disarmament mainly depended. There was therefore reason to be glad that those Powers had agreed on the principles which should guide them in that essential task.

7. His delegation found itself substantially in accord with the principles of the joint statement (A/4879). In particular it approved the formula whereby disarmament was to proceed in stages without, however, losing sight of the final goal. The "all or nothing" approach suggested in certain quarters seemed to him fallacious and misleading: disarmament was a complicated and vexing problem which could not be solved by magic; and partial measures taken by common consent, however limited their scope, would help to build up the climate of confidence without which no real progress was possible.

8. Control must be strict and effective, and should be made applicable not only to destroyed weapons but also to those that remained. That would not be disguised espionage but a security measure; to be effective, a disarmament programme must be foolproof.

9. His delegation also considered that the small non-nuclear countries should be represented on the negotiating body.

10. In conclusion, he appealed to the major Powers to endeavour to reach tangible results rapidly, for time was running out. Everyone agreed that a conflict between the great Powers would inevitably lead to an all-out nuclear war. That was the opinion expressed by the Commonwealth Prime Ministers on 17 March 1961 (A/4868 and Corr.1), as well as by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Mr. Khrushchev, when he had admitted, in an interview granted to a correspondent of The New York Times on 5 September 1961, that in modern warfare the losing side would undoubtedly use its nuclear bombs to avoid defeat.

11. Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador) said that the advent of the nuclear age had transformed basic military conceptions and aggravated the problem of disarmament. It might even be said that the ideas expressed in Articles 11 and 26 of the Charter of the United Nations had been superseded as a result of the mass manufacture of nuclear weapons. Today the world could no longer be content with plans for regulating armaments; henceforth general and complete disarmament must be sought in the interests not only of the nuclear Powers but of all the countries of the world.

12. His delegation shared the view that general and complete disarmament could only be effective if guaranteed by a system of control and inspection applying not only to the destruction of both nuclear and conventional weapons and to the elimination of armed forces, but also to the armaments that each State would retain to ensure its own security. General nuclear war must be made impossible. Thanks to the unflagging efforts of the United Nations to do away with the colonial system there might even be an end to localized wars, which were mainly wars of independence.

13. El Salvador had abstained from the vote on the draft resolution concerning the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons (resolution

1653 (XVI)). First, the subject of that resolution should have been discussed within the framework of general disarmament and not within that of the suspension and banning of nuclear tests. Besides, the statement in operative paragraph 1 (d) seemed too categorical, for it did not distinguish between the motives which might lead States to use nuclear weapons.

14. The General Assembly had also just adopted resolution 1660 (XVI) relating to disarmament negotiations. The question of the composition of the negotiating body had still to be settled by the United States and the Soviet Union. It would be advisable to await the recommendations of those two countries before establishing the composition of that body and giving it an official character within the United Nations system which the Ten-Nation Committee had not possessed. As for the eight-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.297 and Add.1-2), his delegation shared the view that the nuclear club should not be enlarged.

15. He had been pleased to read the text of the interview recently granted by the President of the United States to the editor of the Soviet newspaper Izvestia. He was pleased to note that for once the Soviet people had been informed of the United States position on current problems. A well-informed public on both sides might be able to co-operate effectively in the establishment of a lasting peace and the conclusion of a disarmament agreement.

16. Mr. PAVICEVIC (Yugoslavia) expressed the hope that, in accordance with resolution 1660 (XVI) which had just been unanimously adopted by the General Assembly, the United States of America and the Soviet Union would attempt to reach as prompt an agreement as possible on the composition of the negotiating body, and that the Committee would soon be informed of the results of their efforts. The question was urgent, for if an agreement were reached—and there was reason to hope it would be—the Committee and the Assembly would have to define their position; and if no agreement were reached, the Committee and the Assembly must have time to find a solution to the situation which would then arise. The current session must not end without an assurance that negotiations would begin. Accordingly, the discussion on disarmament should not be closed until the Committee had been informed of the outcome of the conversations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

17. Furthermore, his delegation considered that the non-aligned countries should be represented in that body but, while the principle of geographical representation had to be followed in its composition, the main criterion should be political. The contribution of the non-aligned countries would be found in their approach to the problem from the political point of view: instead of trying to achieve a deceptive balance between the blocs, they should work constructively to overcome the obstacles impeding the solution of the disarmament problem. That was the sense in which his delegation interpreted the expression "the rest of the world" in paragraph 1 of resolution 1660 (XVI).

18. A third factor of importance was the need for close contact between the negotiating body and the United Nations. That point should be settled when the composition of the body was established. Plans should also be made for convening a special session of the General Assembly or a conference at an early date so that the results of the work of the smaller body might be communicated as rapidly as possible to all countries.

19. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) was gratified that there had been a resumption of negotiations on the banning of nuclear tests. Of course there were still differences; but it was to be hoped that the negotiators at Geneva would consider the projects put forward, endeavour to find what was common to the plans of both parties, and reach agreement.

20. The Soviet-United States statement of principles (A/4879), the statement by the Commonwealth Prime Ministers (A/4868 and Corr.1) and the Declaration of the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held at Belgrade in September 1961 all spoke of the need for general and complete disarmament with effective international control. There were two obstacles preventing the achievement of an agreement. First, both sides were attempting to retain whatever military advantages they possessed or to achieve others; the resumption of nuclear tests and, in a general way, the arms race were reflections of that aspect. Secondly, the cold war persisted, each side attempting to show that the failure to reach disarmament was the fault of the other. His delegation did not expect either side to abandon its desire to ensure the balance mentioned in paragraph 5 of the principles enunciated in the joint statement, but it wished that each side might trust the sincerity of purpose of the other. The first effort should accordingly be to create an atmosphere which would foster earnest consideration of the proposals made by either party.

21. There should be control in every step taken towards the elimination of weapons, both during and after their destruction, to ensure that each weapon was completely eliminated from both sides, with the proviso that the elimination would not by itself put one of the parties at a disadvantage.

22. If both sides showed good will and stressed constructive factors, a disarmament agreement could be concluded without great difficulty. The presence of neutral countries in the negotiations would be of great advantage, and it should not be difficult to reach agreement on the composition of the negotiating body; the two sides might agree on six neutral countries or, if they could not agree, each side might designate three. His delegation had always been determined that no political element should be introduced into the Secretariat, which was a strictly international body and should not be involved in politics. Negotiations on disarmament, however, were political by their very nature, since they had to take place between two political sides. It was merely a matter of making them more international by introducing the non-aligned element. In that connexion the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 1660 (XVI) encouraged him to hope that the composition of the negotiating body would be established before the end of the present session.

23. In conclusion, he welcomed the publication in full by Izvestia of the interview granted by President Kennedy to its editor.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.