



CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 19:</i>	
<i>Question of disarmament (continued) . . . . .</i>	183

**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, A/C.1/L.299) (continued)

1. Mr. MARTINO (Italy) recognized that there had been some progress in the field of disarmament, as was shown by the joint statement of the United States and the Soviet Union (A/4879), which could serve as a basis for future negotiations. Italy accepted the principles agreed to therein. However, one such encouraging sign meant little in the light of the deterioration in the international situation resulting from the breaking of the moratorium on nuclear tests and the abandonment of the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests. Italy would have liked to contribute at the current session to negotiations aimed at bringing about the controlled cessation of nuclear tests, the banning of weapons of mass destruction and the gradual extension to other regions of the world of the principles contained in the Antarctic Treaty.<sup>1/</sup> Unfortunately, circumstances were very different and it was the Committee's duty to prevent the disarmament problem from being used for propaganda purposes and to try to bring opposing viewpoints closer by stressing the issues on which there was agreement.

2. Italy feared that the question of the composition of the negotiating body, the importance of which it did not underestimate, might be used as a pretext for delaying the resumption of negotiations. It believed that the Ten-Nation Committee should be enlarged so that the different aspirations found in the United Nations could be expressed more readily and international co-operation promoted. However, agreement on the composition of the negotiating body would not automatically remove all obstacles. The first question which arose was whether the parties concerned really intended to stop the armaments race and put an end to nuclear testing. All prospects of a relaxation of tension would remain in doubt so long as the armaments race continued, and the rest of the world would be unable to escape the dramatic consequences of the nuclear age. A further cause for concern was the lack of trust in the relations between peoples and the tendency for national interests to override those of the international community. Those were two preliminary questions which were in urgent

need of solution and which had to be tackled by the two Powers directly concerned.

3. The disarmament negotiations should also help to produce a specific answer to the main problems dividing the world. War today would resolve nothing; it would merely mean collective suicide. The United Nations, whose purpose was to promote the coexistence of peoples living under different systems—an impossible task without disarmament—should do everything in its power to get the question of disarmament embarked on the road of serious negotiations conducted on a rational and realistic basis. Failure there would put the world in deadly peril. All problems of international life, which were already interdependent, were tied up with collective security, which itself depended upon disarmament. At a time when the forces of morality, despite the gap between the strong Powers and the weak Powers, were constantly growing in strength, the United Nations should use the trust which the world placed in it to eliminate recourse to force and to bring about the triumph of the moral forces. The Italian delegation appealed to the two main nuclear Powers to resume their discussions on the basis of the draft resolutions which they were preparing.

4. Mr. Krishna MENON (India) recalled some of the stages through which disarmament negotiations had passed and which included the establishment by the Disarmament Commission in 1954 of a Sub-Committee, which was to meet in private; the adoption in 1959 of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV), which set the objective of general and complete disarmament; the tabling in 1960 of a twelve-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2),<sup>2/</sup> which would have given directives to the great Powers concerned or to the negotiating committee on the principles which should govern negotiations, but which had not been put to the vote; and, finally, the resumption of the fifteenth session of the Assembly in March 1961 when the United States, having elected a new Administration which was committed to the idea of general and complete disarmament, indicated that it needed a little time in order to consider the whole problem. As a result of the direct negotiations which had since taken place between the United States and the Soviet Union, those two countries had issued a joint statement (A/4879) which accepted general and complete disarmament as the purpose of their negotiations and set forth the principles on which those negotiations should be based.

5. The Indian delegation welcomed the adoption of those principles. Admittedly it would be naive to think that a joint declaration of that type was tantamount to disarmament, but it was a healthy beginning. The armaments race was continuing, nuclear explosions had recently been resumed in violation of the mora-

<sup>1/</sup> Antarctic Treaty, signed at Washington, D. C., on 1 December 1959.

<sup>2/</sup> Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifteenth Session, Annexes, agenda items 67, 86, 69 and 73.

torium, and the speeches of the main nuclear Powers were still couched in the same language, but there was every reason to believe that a higher level of negotiation had been reached.

6. In their joint statement, the United States and the Soviet Union had agreed that disarmament must be general and complete and that war must no longer be the instrument for settling international problems; that was in keeping with the Indian Government's point of view that disarmament was but a step towards something more important: the outlawing of war. They had also recognized that disarmament should be accompanied by the establishment of reliable procedures for the peaceful settlement of disputes, in order that armaments might be replaced by other means for keeping the peace. His delegation was happy to see that the principles agreed between the United States and the Soviet Union incorporated practically all the points of the twelve-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2)<sup>2/</sup> which had been submitted at the fifteenth session and was still before the Assembly. It was encouraging that the United States and the Soviet Union had envisaged a world without arms, a world in which nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and their methods of delivery, had been eliminated. He also noted with satisfaction that, in harmony with India's position, it had been agreed that at no stage in the disarmament negotiations should any one group of Powers be put in a better position than another.

7. Since the adoption of their joint statement, the United States and the Soviet Union had issued statements that did not contradict the agreed principles but placed interpretations on their implementation which required further elaboration from each side. Both parties recognized, apparently, that in order to implement those principles negotiating machinery was necessary, but they had not yet agreed as to what that machinery should be. Prolonged discussion in the First Committee might prevent progress in regard to the implementation of the agreed principles, and the creation of the negotiating machinery should therefore now be encouraged. In that connexion, his delegation did not regard bilateral negotiations between the United States and the Soviet Union as something that derogated from the authority of the United Nations. If such negotiation took place in some other forum, and if more particularly they sprang from decisions made in the Assembly, there was no cause for regret. While the question of disarmament was a matter for all nations, great or small, the reality had to be recognized—as India had maintained since the seventh session of the Assembly—that without agreement between the United States and the Soviet Union, disarmament could never be achieved. Accordingly his Government had supported the establishment of the Ten-Nation Committee, although it had not been a member of it, and was now in favour of negotiations between the United States and the USSR, though that did not mean that India was evading its responsibilities.

8. At the current session, the First Committee must take certain new factors into account, particularly the fact that, as a result of direct negotiations, the two great nuclear Powers had reached an agreement on principles and on various particulars concerning their application. The Indian delegation had therefore submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.299), according to which the General Assembly would urge the great Powers to come to an agreement on the composition of a negotiating body. That was, in fact, the prior con-

dition for any progress, and the composition of that body should be such that the parties concerned and the rest of the world would regard it as satisfactory.

9. The Ten-Nation Committee had been rejected outright in the USSR proposal. Furthermore, it seemed that for a year or more the possibilities of negotiation in that Committee had been exhausted. The United States had suggested, in its memorandum of 29 July 1961 (A/4880, I), the addition of a chairman and two vice-chairmen to the Committee. The Indian Government was not likely to agree to the nomination of individuals as distinct from their countries, for the negotiating body would not be called upon to settle a legal dispute or a question of interpretation, but to solve vast political issues. Political power and political experience were therefore necessary attributes. Furthermore, the other countries of the world, whether committed or uncommitted, could not be excluded. In the circumstances, the views of eminent personalities were of less importance than world public opinion as expressed in the Charter of the United Nations.

10. Other proposals had been put forward, any of which, if accepted, would have the approval of his Government. He wished to say, however, that the so-called uncommitted countries did not form a bloc. The essence of non-alignment was the conviction that bloc politics were unlikely to bring about international co-operation; the addition of a third bloc would not, therefore, be a solution. The proposals of both sides contemplated the addition of non-aligned countries, but a geographical and political balance had to be maintained and the first step should be to avoid fruitless polemics. While it would be wrong to close the debate on the subject prematurely, the most practical procedure would seem to be to leave the United States and the Soviet Union to continue their bilateral talks and reach agreement on the composition of a negotiating body.

11. Another proposal was that the Disarmament Commission should meet as a committee of the whole. Since that Commission comprised 103 countries, it could hardly make much progress unless there was some elaboration of the principles in terms of implementation. Therefore the two main Powers should now be urged to come to an agreement. That was the purpose of the Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.299). The other countries did not wish to escape their responsibilities, but they could only present their views to the negotiating body, through the countries represented on it, and later to the Disarmament Commission itself.

12. He approved the idea of convening a special session of the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission or a world disarmament conference, to which the representative of Yugoslavia had referred at the previous meeting. That idea had emerged from the discussions at the Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Belgrade in September 1961. But even that proposal should first be considered by the negotiating body, which should be created as a matter of urgency.

13. The First Committee should not lose sight of the decisions previously taken by the General Assembly: suspension of nuclear tests pending the conclusion of treaties (resolution 1648 (XVI)), and constitution of a nuclear-free zone in Africa (resolution 1652 (XVI)). Those decisions, adopted by overwhelming majority votes, were signs of progress, as was the joint statement of the United States and the USSR (A/4879).

14. There should be no departure from the principle of full and complete disarmament as a preliminary to the outlawing of war. Recourse to war had become futile, as the representatives of the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom had all pointed out, for the destruction wrought by nuclear war would be such that there would remain neither victors nor vanquished. It would be useless merely to consider the limitation of armaments and still retain war as an instrument for the settling of disputes. Indeed, with the present levels of technological achievement, all the weapons that had been abandoned would eventually be reintroduced as a result of the hatreds and passions that prevailed, and everything would have to be started all over again.

15. In spite of the vicissitudes through which it was passing, the United Nations had many achievements to its credit, such as the progressive liquidation of the colonial empires and the expansion of the freedom of mankind. At the current session, resolutions had been adopted restricting the scope of nuclear warfare; and there were various constructive proposals for promoting international co-operation. The positive side of the situation should not be overlooked, and there was every reason to hope that the same forces which had resulted in agreement between the two great Powers on the principles for disarmament negotiations would finally triumph and lead to the abolition of war.

The meeting rose at 11 p.m.