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Chairman: Mr. C. W. A. SCHURMANN
(Netherlands).

AGENDA ITEM 26

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (A/5408-DC/207, A/5488-DC/208) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. ARCHIBALD (Trinidad and Tobago) said that the report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament offered concrete possibilities for advance. In particular, the Committee's systematic documentation of national opinions and attitudes was of major assistance in the work for disarmament.

2. But important though the Committee was, the continuance of its work must not be regarded as a substitute for the efforts of individual countries. He shared the view, expressed by the New Zealand and Swedish delegations, that the smaller and even the smallest nations could help to create an atmosphere conducive to general and complete disarmament not only by participating in discussions at world forums but also by regional discussions among themselves, aimed either at regional action or at a general initiative.

3. The advent of nuclear weapons and their capacity for universal destruction had turned man's mind to the ideal of universal peace; the nuclear weapon was the principal material witness in the case for general and complete disarmament. Yet there existed other factors which, taken together, made up a persuasive argument for the reduction of armaments, particularly among smaller nations. Some of the purposes for which nations had used arms in the past—for example, to impose their religion upon other nations, to expand their frontiers or to secure "living space" overseas—had become outdated. The primary use of arms today was for self-defence; but even in that field national arsenals might well be losing some of their traditional virtue. A number of small countries, including Trinidad and Tobago, had gained their independence because of a movement in world thought that asserted the right of communities, however small and weak, to achieve freedom and sovereignty if they so desired. They maintained only token defence forces and yet they maintained their independence; their defence rested on the con-

sensus of world opinion. In the light of that experience, it might well prove useful for countries not classified as great Powers to re-examine their present levels of national armament and decide to what extent they were based merely on traditional and possibly outmoded beliefs rather than on actual needs.

4. There was growing agreement that the progress of disarmament must be accompanied by the progressive strengthening of the United Nations as a peace-keeping institution. If that view was accepted, then the smaller nations had an important role to play in such a process, and it was in their vital interest not to neglect any opportunity to play that role.

5. His delegation welcomed discussion regarding the creation of denuclearized zones. While denuclearization must be agreed upon by the countries concerned, the local agreement should receive international recognition; consequently, international criteria would have to be taken into account. Discussion in the United Nations would help to determine precisely how zonal denuclearization could best fit into the programme of general disarmament. The Government of Trinidad and Tobago supported in principle the creation of a denuclearized zone in Latin America and the Caribbean.

6. In conclusion, he emphasized the creative role of disarmament: the early and effective restoration of international peace and harmony would release all over the world, for the assistance of developing countries such as his own, valuable resources now devoted to the acquisition and maintenance of destructive weapons.

7. Mr. THOMAS (United Kingdom) said that his delegation welcomed the establishment of a direct communications link between Washington and Moscow and the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 1884 (XVIII) calling upon all States to refrain from stationing weapons of mass destruction in outer space. Unfortunately, however, no concrete results had been achieved with regard to any of the other collateral measures discussed at the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, although the opposing viewpoints had been clarified to some extent.

8. With regard to the question of disarmament, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had until now directed its main effort towards resolving the substantial differences concerning the first stage of disarmament. A major point of disagreement was the extent to which vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons should be destroyed in stage I. The Western plan called for a balanced programme of reduction under which 30 per cent of such vehicles would be destroyed by the end of stage I, 65 per cent by the end of stage II and the remainder by the end of stage III. The Soviet plan, on the other hand, provided for the destruction of all delivery vehicles in stage I except for a limited number of certain types of missiles which, as the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Mr. Gromyko, had

informed the General Assembly on 19 September 1963 (1208th plenary meeting), the Soviet Government was now willing to see the two sides retain until the end of stage III.

9. The Western countries felt that their proposal would achieve a substantial reduction in the military nuclear capacity of both sides while at the same time maintaining the balance of power which at present helped to preserve world peace. By providing for an equal percentage reduction in all categories of weapons, moreover, it avoided the problem of defining a nuclear weapons delivery vehicle, which arose under the Soviet plan. In addition, the Western stage I proposals, unlike those put forward by the Soviet Union, would not overload the international disarmament organization at a time when it was not yet adequately prepared for the tasks of destruction and verification. It was also his Government's view that confidence would not have been sufficiently established in stage I to permit the implementation of radical measures.

10. As far as stage I was concerned, Mr. Gromyko's latest proposal did not represent any change in the position taken by the Soviet Union during the past year. In the context of disarmament as a whole, however, it removed one of the United Kingdom's objections to the proposals put forward by Mr. Gromyko in 1962 and, as a move in the direction of greater realism, would be carefully studied by his Government. He hoped that the Soviet delegation at Geneva would join in a constructive examination of Mr. Gromyko's proposal and would, for example, comment on the points raised at the 1319th meeting of the First Committee by the representative of the United Arab Republic.

11. The second main issue on which there was disagreement at Geneva was the destruction of nuclear warheads. Some of the nuclear disarmament measures provided for in stage I of the Western plan had already been described by the United States representative at the 1320th meeting, and he would go over that ground again. He wished to emphasize, however, that the Western plan called for a cut-off of the production of fissionable materials for military purposes and that the United States had indicated its willingness to transfer 60,000 kilogrammes of such materials to peaceful uses if the Soviet Union transferred 40,000 kilogrammes, i.e., to give up the equivalent of some thousands of Hiroshima-type bombs. He also hoped that the Soviet Government would reconsider its attitude towards the Western proposal to set up a group of experts to undertake technical studies, even before agreement was reached on a disarmament treaty, of questions relating to the further reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons stockpiles in stages II and III; the statements by the representatives of the United Arab Republic and Sweden showed that there was growing support for that proposal.

12. The foregoing remarks were his reply to the Soviet representative's complaint that the Western disarmament plan contained no firm obligations with regard to nuclear disarmament. The Soviet plan did not provide for any comparable measures in stage I, although the Soviet Government had expressed willingness to transfer all its stage II nuclear disarmament measures to stage I—an unrealistic suggestion which, in the United Kingdom's view, would have the effect of overloading stage I. Since, however, the Soviet Union had now proposed that some nuclear warheads should be retained until the end of stage III, he hoped that it would be possible to examine the whole problem of

nuclear disarmament in a new and more realistic light when the Eighteen-Nation Committee reconvened.

13. The third basic unresolved issue was that relating to the verification of both conventional and nuclear disarmament. The problem of verification, which in his delegation's view lay at the very root of disarmament, had two main aspects. There was general agreement in principle on the need to verify the actual destruction of armaments and the disbanding of armed forces. However, agreement had not been reached on the verification of the remaining war potential, i.e. on measures to ensure that the various agreed levels of arms and armed forces were not exceeded and that there was no clandestine production. Although the Western Powers had offered assurances that they would not ask for more verification than was necessary for the amount of disarmament and risk involved, the Soviet Government still rejected the Western proposals as an attempt to establish a system of espionage, and had thus far made no alternative suggestions. He agreed with the Indian representative's statement that agreements establishing denuclearized zones must provide for verification, to ensure that nuclear weapons were not being secretly manufactured, received or stored; the Committee would surely agree that the same principle applied with even greater force in the case of disarmament. The fact that Mr. Gromyko's latest proposal called for control to be instituted over retained missiles and warheads at the very outset of stage II suggested that the Soviet Union was approaching the problem of verification more realistically than in the past; nevertheless, the new Soviet proposal provided no solution of the vital problem of ensuring that States did not secretly retain armaments above the agreed levels.

14. It should be noted that the following other matters relating to stage I were still on the agenda of the Eighteen-Nation Committee: measures regarding military bases, the reduction of armed forces and military expenditure, peace-keeping measures, the question of transition from stage I to stage II, and measures relating to the establishment, organization and functioning of the international disarmament organization. The question of setting up effective peace-keeping machinery was of particular importance.

15. With regard to collateral measures, the questions of establishing observation posts against surprise attack and preventing the dissemination of nuclear weapons seemed to offer the best prospect for early agreement. The question of observation posts should be considered on its own merits and divorced from other, more complex issues. It might perhaps be argued that there was no need for a non-dissemination agreement, since in any case no country possessing nuclear weapons would hand them over to another country which had none; apart from its intrinsic value, however, such an agreement would promote international confidence and help to maintain the momentum of negotiations on other collateral measures and on disarmament itself. He wished to add that as the United States representative had pointed out (1322nd meeting), the plan for a NATO multilateral nuclear force did not entail the transfer of nuclear weapons to any other country, the Federal Republic of Germany not excepted. The unflattering remarks which certain representatives had recently made about the Federal Republic of Germany were not in keeping with the "spirit of Moscow" to which the Soviet representative had referred, nor were the recent incidents in connexion with Western access to Berlin.

16. With regard to disarmament itself, his delegation felt that the Eighteen-Nation Committee should intensify its work on stage I measures and that, as the representative of Trinidad and Tobago and other speakers had said, the smaller Powers had an important part to play in that connexion. Since the first step in any undertaking was often the hardest, it was not surprising that agreement on stage I had not yet been achieved; once agreement was reached on stage I, it should prove easier to agree on the last two stages.

17. His Government considered that the Eighteen-Nation Committee had proved its value as a forum in which detailed preparatory work could be undertaken for the broad negotiating processes between East and West. He did not share the pessimistic comments on the Committee which had recently been made in some quarters, and his delegation would support a draft resolution calling upon it to resume its efforts. He hoped that the Soviet delegation's appeal for business-like discussion at Geneva foreshadowed a reduction in the flow of formal speeches; his own and other delegations, including those representing non-aligned countries, were in favour of making greater use of working parties and sub-committees in order to facilitate the Committee's work. While there might be some value in the Soviet proposal for a meeting of the Committee at the summit level, the best hope for progress lay in making businesslike use of the present Geneva forum. The United Kingdom delegation would return to Geneva determined to contribute all it could to that end.

18. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) said that conditions were far more favourable for progress towards disarmament than they had been the previous year, when the General Assembly had for the first time considered the question on the basis of a report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. The relaxation of international tension had made possible three important steps: the conclusion of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, signed at Moscow on 5 August 1963; the establishment of a direct communications link between Moscow and Washington to reduce the risk of war by accident; and the adoption by the General Assembly of resolution 1884 (XVIII) calling upon all states to refrain from placing weapons of mass destruction in outer space. But however welcome those measures might be, they did not even begin to solve the problem of achieving general and complete disarmament. The tasks before the Eighteen-Nation Committee could be summed up under three heads: first, the drafting of a treaty on general and complete disarmament, a duty assigned to the Committee under resolutions adopted at the sixteenth and seventeenth sessions of the General Assembly; second, the drafting of a treaty prohibiting all nuclear tests; and third, the formulation and adoption of collateral disarmament measures designed to improve the atmosphere and facilitate disarmament negotiations. Of those three tasks, the first was the most important, the others being merely ancillary to it.

19. The Eighteen-Nation Committee was the most representative negotiating body ever set up by the United Nations to study the question of disarmament, including representatives not only of the two major blocs but also of the non-aligned nations, which had had an important catalyzing influence on the discussions. Nevertheless, the results so far achieved had been extremely meagre. The continuing arms race aggravated international relations, limited the possi-

bilities of international co-operation, entailed an ever-present threat of nuclear war and weighed heavily on national economies; indeed, its effects were ubiquitous. The world had no alternative but to tread the path of disarmament and peaceful coexistence; but for that to come to pass, deeds, not words, were necessary.

20. The problems which were holding up progress on general and complete disarmament in the Eighteen-Nation Committee could be solved, provided that the Western Powers displayed the same goodwill as had the Soviet Union, which had submitted proposals offering solid foundations for agreement. In its endeavours to meet the Western Powers halfway, the Soviet Union had made several important concessions: it had agreed to extend the time allowed for the disarmament process from four to five years; it had accepted the system proposed by the United States for the reduction of conventional armaments during stage I; and it had accepted a compromise formula regarding the armed forces to be retained by the Soviet Union and the United States after the end of stage I. Moreover, in his statement of 19 September 1963 to the General Assembly (1208th plenary meeting), the Soviet Foreign Minister had agreed to the retention on United States and Soviet territory exclusively, of a limited number of certain types of nuclear missiles until the end of the disarmament process.

21. Despite those far-reaching changes in the original Soviet draft treaty, the United States had taken no significant steps to bring its position into closer harmony with that of the Soviet Union. On the contrary, in his statement at the 1320th meeting the United States representative had again asked the Soviet Union to accept the approach of the Western Powers and to consent to further changes in its draft treaty. Far from displaying a spirit of "give and take", the Western Powers were showing every inclination to take and a marked unwillingness to give anything in exchange.

22. More disquieting still was the tendency to suggest the immediate adoption of isolated physical disarmament measures which had been shown in the statements of both the United States and Canadian representatives at the 1320th meeting and which had just been echoed by the United Kingdom representative. What they had in mind was not the adoption of collateral measures, which, as was agreed, were outside the framework of the general disarmament treaty, but actual measures of physical disarmament divorced from the context of general and complete disarmament. It had taken the General Assembly fifteen years of debate to come to the conclusion that the question of disarmament could not be solved piecemeal and that an over-all agreement on general and complete disarmament offered the only possible solution. What was now being suggested amounted to abandoning that idea; it was a retrograde step which could only dim the prospects of the forthcoming negotiations at Geneva. To isolate integral elements of the process of general and complete disarmament and serve them up piecemeal under the guise of collateral measures could only jeopardize the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee.

23. If the problem of general and complete disarmament was to be solved, the Western Powers must follow the example of the Soviet Union and adopt a flexible and co-operative attitude. But the only area in which they were showing any sign of flexibility was the arms race; even while talks on disarmament were being pursued, they were discussing the creation of a multilateral NATO nuclear force. Such plans

complicated the negotiations and were at variance with the spirit of the Moscow treaty. Moreover, they would inevitably lead to the transfer of nuclear weapons to the Federal Republic of Germany, whose desire to acquire such weapons was very plain. Both the United States and the United Kingdom representatives had stated that the organization of a NATO multilateral nuclear force would not enable the Federal Republic of Germany to obtain nuclear weapons or control of such weapons. Such assurances, however, were in flat contradiction with the facts, with the opinions generally expressed by statesmen and in the international Press, and with the statement made to the General Assembly on 20 September 1963 by the President of the United States that one of the further measures to curb the nuclear arms race on which agreement should be sought was "controlling the transfer of nuclear weapons" (1209th plenary meeting, para. 50). That statement carried the clear implication that a transfer of nuclear weapons would take place, subject to United States control.

24. Among the collateral measures which could be taken as a means of paving the way to agreement on general and complete disarmament, great significance attached to the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty and the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. But for the opposition of certain Western militarist circles, particularly irredentist circles in the Federal Republic of Germany, such a pact could easily be arrived at. To argue that it was unnecessary because the Charter of the United Nations excluded war as a means of settling international disputes was begging the question. It should also be possible to reach agreement without difficulty on the reduction of the military budgets of the great Powers and on the creation of nuclear-free zones, which could greatly improve international relations by reducing tension, preventing the dissemination of nuclear weapons and increasing confidence among States. Bulgaria, which was situated in an area where the forces of the two blocs confronted each other directly, was particularly interested in the establishment of such zones, as had been made clear by the Bulgarian Minister for Foreign Affairs in his statement to the General Assembly (1225th plenary meeting). The Bulgarian delegation considered that the Eighteen-Nation Committee should be asked to study the question of denuclearized zones and report to the General Assembly as soon as possible. It wished to stress its view that the establishment of such zones should not be made subject to prior conditions, but should be encouraged everywhere, particularly in regions such as central Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean, where the danger was greatest.

25. At the time when its meetings had been suspended, the discussions on general and complete disarmament in the Eighteen-Nation Committee had reached an impasse; and despite the desire for agreement which had been evident in the debate in the General Assembly and the First Committee, the prospects for speedy progress were not encouraging because of the rigid position adopted by certain Western Powers. His delegation therefore supported the Soviet proposal that a meeting of States members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee should be held at the highest level during the first half of 1964; it was convinced that such a meeting would contribute to the solution of the problem. It was the duty of the United Nations to do its utmost to bring about the prohibition of armaments for all time; the Bulgarian delegation would spare no

effort to promote an agreement on general and complete disarmament which would save mankind from the nightmare of nuclear war.

26. Mr. RAJAABELINA (Madagascar) said that the efforts of the United Nations in the cause of disarmament had resulted in some relaxation of international tension, one outward sign of which was the recent nuclear test ban treaty signed at Moscow; however, much more work remained to be done if agreement was to be reached on general disarmament. The diversion of thousands of millions of dollars from military to peaceful purposes could achieve significant results in grappling with the world housing problem, industrializing the under-developed countries in order to increase their economic potential, and combating ignorance, poverty, hunger and sickness.

27. If disarmament was to be genuine and effective, it would have to be simultaneous, progressive, controlled and general. No State would continue to disarm if it found that other States were not disarming simultaneously; progressive disarmament would ensure that at the end of each stage no State would be at too great a military disadvantage in comparison with States which had not complied with the plan; and control was essential to the national and international security of each State. Lastly, disarmament must be general: that meant not only the destruction of armaments but also and especially the abandonment of any desire to crush an adversary, any ambition of imposing an economic or political system upon others and any desire for domination. No progress would be possible until both sides had renounced the spirit of intolerance expressed in the struggle for world rule engaged in by the great Powers of today.

28. Mr. RANA (Nepal) said that while the great Powers had not reached agreement on general and complete disarmament, the limited agreements that had been concluded in 1963 showed that they had come to realize the futility and danger of an open and endless arms race. Yet the world was still caught in the vicious circle of a massive arms race which absorbed a large part of the resources that could be used for economic development, thus retarding economic development and perpetuating the basic source of tension. The United Nations must direct its efforts toward the elimination of that evil.

29. His delegation had been greatly encouraged by the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1884 (XVIII) giving international sanction to the expressions of the Soviet Union and the United States of their intention not to station weapons of mass destruction in outer space. A similar procedure might be applied in other areas of immediate concern: for example, the Assembly could adopt a resolution welcoming declarations by the nuclear Powers of their intention not to hand over the control of nuclear weapons to other countries not possessing them.

30. But declarations of intention were not enough. Unless the nuclear Powers began in the very near future to undertake actual measures of physical disarmament, other militarily significant States outside the Geneva negotiations would probably seek to develop their national nuclear capabilities.

31. His Government had always favoured the creation of denuclearized zones; such arrangements would benefit not only the small Powers but also the great

nuclear Powers, which were equally desirous of checking the dissemination of nuclear weapons. However, his delegation felt that it was reasonable to propose that in return for each nuclear-free zone established, the nuclear Powers should undertake the destruction of at least a minimal number of missiles in their stockpiles. The aim of that proposal was to emphasize the acknowledged fact that no progress had yet been made towards the actual physical destruction or reduction of existing nuclear stockpiles. It could constitute a precedent of great significance and result in the creation of machinery for international verification; moreover, it

would undoubtedly have a salutary effect on other disarmament measures.

32. He expressed his satisfaction at the decision of the Eighteen-Nation Committee to continue its deliberations. However, the absence of France and the People's Republic of China from the Geneva negotiations was a great drawback; he hoped that both those States would soon be represented in the Committee's deliberations, so that they might be brought to a successful conclusion.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.