

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

TWENTIETH SESSION

Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1353rd
MEETING**

Wednesday, 6 October 1965,
at 3.20 p.m.

NEW YORK

CONTENTS

	Page
Opening statement by the Chairman	3
Election of the Vice-Chairman.	3
Election of the Rapporteur	3
Order of discussion of agenda items	4

Chairman: Mr. Károly CSATORDAY (Hungary).

Opening statement by the Chairman

1. The CHAIRMAN thanked the members of the Committee for electing him; they had done his country and himself an honour of which he would try to prove himself worthy. He welcomed the new Under-Secretary for Political and Security Council Affairs, Mr. Nesterenko, and paid a tribute to his predecessor, Mr. Suslov.

2. The First Committee had not met for two years, and it was faced with a heavy agenda, embracing the most important problems facing the Organization and indeed mankind. No significant progress had been made on the question of general and complete disarmament. In the introduction to his annual report on the work of the Organization (A/6001/Add.1), the Secretary-General underlined the main accomplishments of the Disarmament Commission, which had met from April to June 1965 and completed a comprehensive review of the disarmament situation. The Commission had adopted two resolutions, one welcoming the proposal to convene a world disarmament conference and the other stressing the urgent need to reach agreement concerning the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In those matters all States, large and small, industrially developed and developing, nuclear and non-nuclear, could make their contributions. World public opinion was constantly interested in discussions of disarmament at all levels and that topic had occupied a prominent place at the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in October 1964.

3. Some items on the agenda dealt with the basic political aspects of inter-State relations and with regional or local problems, which had to be considered with full respect for the sovereignty and equality of all States under the Charter of the United Nations and in conformity with international law.

4. Finally, there was the item concerning that great human undertaking, the effort to achieve international co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space.

5. The Committee was faced with many international problems, but by relying on past experience and

adopting a realistic approach it could achieve progress, if it was really determined to do so and if it followed the principles of the Charter.

6. It was highly gratifying that many new States from Africa, Asia and Latin America had become Members of the United Nations and now participated with authority in its deliberations. He extended a warm welcome to the representatives of the newly independent countries which had joined the United Nations during the nineteenth and twentieth sessions of the General Assembly. Their contributions would be as important and useful as those of other States.

7. On behalf of all members of the Committee, he conveyed sincere and heartfelt condolences to the people of the Philippines for the suffering caused by the recent volcanic disaster.

8. Finally, he expressed the hope that the Committee would proceed with its work expeditiously so as to finish within the time-limit set for the current session, and would be able to achieve practical solutions to its problems.

Election of the Vice-Chairman

9. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) nominated as Vice-Chairman Mr. Leopoldo Benites (Ecuador), who, in the course of a long and distinguished diplomatic career, had represented his country at seven sessions of the General Assembly and had served ably as Chairman of the Special Political Committee at the seventeenth session.

10. Mr. HASEGANU (Romania), Mr. AZNAR (Spain) and Mr. SIDI BABA (Morocco) supported the nomination.

Mr. Benites (Ecuador) was elected Vice-Chairman by acclamation.

11. Mr. BENITES (Ecuador) expressed gratitude to the Committee for the honour just accorded to him. He regarded his election as a tribute to the peoples of Latin America and as a reaffirmation of the principle of the equality of all Member States, large and small, to which His Holiness Pope Paul VI had referred on his recent visit.

Election of the Rapporteur

12. Mr. MISHRA (India) nominated as Rapporteur Mr. Ismail Fahmy (United Arab Republic), who had served with the delegation of the United Arab Republic for the past sixteen years and had represented his country in the First Committee since the fourth session of the General Assembly.

13. Mr. BURNS (Canada), Mr. BOUATTOURA (Algeria), Mr. OTEMA ALLIMADI (Uganda), Mr. OWONO

(Cameroon) and Mr. REDONDO (Costa Rica) supported the nomination.

Mr. Fahmy (United Arab Republic) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

14. Mr. FAHMY (United Arab Republic) thanked the Committee, and assured it that his reports would objectively reflect the Committee's discussion of the various items before it.

Order of discussion of agenda items (A/C.1/896 and Add.1)

15. The CHAIRMAN said he believed that, for reasons of logic and expediency, the order of the items listed in the two documents before the Committee should be rearranged; he invited the members of the Committee to express their views on the matter.

16. Mr. SETTE CAMARA (Brazil) said that the Committee should first consider those items which, by their nature, required priority, so that it could provide fruitful directives for the adequate consideration of other important items.

17. His delegation regarded the question of convening a world disarmament conference as a matter of paramount importance. It seemed logical and appropriate, however, to take up first the concrete aspects of disarmament negotiations, which encompassed two draft treaties on non-proliferation, submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union. The Committee would then have at its disposal a considerable amount of material which would enable it to go more deeply into the question of convening such a conference.

18. His delegation therefore proposed that the Committee should organize its work in the following order: first, agenda item 28 (Question of general and complete disarmament: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament); second, agenda item 29 (Question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament); third, agenda item 30 (Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament); fourth, agenda item 106 (Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons); fifth, agenda item 95 (Question of convening a world disarmament conference); sixth, agenda item 105 (Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa); seventh, agenda item 93 (Question of Cyprus); eighth, agenda item 99 (Peaceful settlement of disputes); ninth, agenda item 107 (The inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States and the protection of their independence and sovereignty); tenth, agenda item 32 (The Korean question: reports of the United Nations Commission for the Unification and Rehabilitation of Korea); eleventh, agenda item 33 (Actions on the regional level with a view to improving good neighbourly relations among European States having different social and political systems); twelfth, agenda item 31 (International co-operation in the peaceful uses of outer space: reports of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space).

19. Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) said that if the world disarmament conference proposed by the Disarmament

Commission was to yield useful results, some consultations and prior arrangements would be necessary; for that reason, he suggested that the item relating to the conference, which was really a procedural item, should be taken up first. It could be followed by the item on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and then by the items involving reports of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. Thereafter, the remaining items could be taken up in the order suggested by the Brazilian representative.

20. Mr. BURNS (Canada) supported the Brazilian representative's proposal concerning the order of items. He suggested, however, that in its discussion on disarmament the Committee, in accordance with the precedent established at earlier sessions, should hold a general debate on all the disarmament items at the same time, rather than restrict itself to one particular item at a time. While he agreed with the Ethiopian representative on the importance of a world disarmament conference, careful preparatory work would be needed both in regard to participation in the conference and in regard to its agenda; and the need for careful preparation applied equally to the production of a resolution on the subject in the First Committee.

21. For example, it had been suggested that the First Committee should merely adopt a simple resolution and then leave the details to a committee to be appointed. But that procedure would make the composition of the proposed committee a very important matter, which would have to be settled through prior negotiations before any resolution on a world disarmament conference was finally drafted. There were also intricate questions with regard to which countries should be invited to the conference and by whom the invitations were to be issued. Furthermore, the preparatory committee would have to produce an agenda and rules of procedure, and would need general directions from the General Assembly on that matter. Questions of time, place, duration and financing were very important. All those points should be discussed in private exchanges or in the general debate, and some weeks of negotiation would be required. By the time the First Committee concluded its debate on the question of a world disarmament conference, it should have formulated not merely a resolution which would leave a great many loose ends but a fairly well-developed and practical plan of organization and action.

22. Mr. BOUATTOURA (Algeria) said that his delegation regarded the discussion of effective means of halting the arms race as the main concern of the Committee, and considered that the urgent convening of a world disarmament conference was of paramount importance. According to all indications, there would be lengthy debates on agenda items 28, 29, 30 and 106 before the Committee took up the question of convening a world disarmament conference. But it might well be held that items 28, 29 and 30 could not be seriously discussed within the present framework, and that it was urgent to devise a new framework—a working body in which the vital question of disarmament could be discussed by all concerned, including, for example, France and the People's

Republic of China, both of which were nuclear Powers and could make an eminently positive contribution.

23. In its resolution of 11 June 1965^{1/} the Disarmament Commission had recommended that the General Assembly give urgent consideration at its twentieth session to the question of convening a world disarmament conference. That question should therefore be given priority in the Committee's work. Moreover, items 29, 30, 31 and 106 could be discussed in a manner much more profitable to all members of the international community if they were discussed at a world disarmament conference.

24. The idea of such a conference had already gained wide support among the members of the Committee, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union had suggested mid-1966 as the date for holding the conference. He hoped that the Committee would adopt the Ethiopian representative's suggestion and decide to give priority to item 95 (Question of convening a world disarmament conference).

25. Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) said that in view of the position taken by the delegations of Brazil and Canada, he wished to explain why his delegation felt that the First Committee's discussion of the agenda items should follow the order he had suggested.

26. It followed clearly from the resolution mentioned by the Algerian representative that the Committee must consider the item relating to a world disarmament conference very soon; if it did not do so, it would be failing to respect the decision of the Disarmament Commission, a body whose membership was in fact identical with that of the General Assembly and the First Committee. Again, it was quite true that, as the Canadian representative had pointed out, time would be needed for consultations and negotiations; all the more reason for dealing with the item at the beginning of the session, so that there would be time for all the necessary arrangements to be made by those responsible.

27. As the Algerian representative had rightly said, it was precisely because under the present arrangement not much progress could be made on most disarmament items that a large number of Members of the United Nations wished to have a world conference. If the First Committee attempted to solve some of the problems of disarmament without convening a world conference, the situation might well remain where it had been last year and the year before. If the Committee could take the procedural decision to hold a world conference it could then proceed to discuss the details; and even if it failed to reach a satisfactory decision on every point it would have done its best and could then hand the outstanding matters to those who were in a position to take a political decision.

28. Mr. ACHKAR (Guinea) supported the Ethiopian proposal. The States represented in the First Committee had discussed three months earlier, in the Disarmament Commission, most of the items which were now on the First Committee's agenda. In adopting what his delegation considered the Disarma-

ment Commission's most important resolution, the Commission had decided^{1/} that the existing arrangement for disarmament discussions should be expanded and adapted to the realities of the situation; in particular, the Commission had recognized that the work done at Geneva, at the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, was seriously impaired by the absence of very important countries. The most effective way to arrive at solutions to disarmament problems which would find the widest acceptance was to convene a world disarmament conference.

29. The fact that time was required for negotiations in connexion with the question of convening a world disarmament conference was in itself a reason for giving that question priority in the Committee's work. The possibility of establishing a preparatory committee, referred to by the Canadian representative, could, of course, be envisaged in a resolution, but that did not mean that the membership of that committee would have to be decided on from the outset. Once agreement had been reached in principle on the question of a preparatory committee, negotiations on its exact composition could continue through the rest of the session, if necessary.

30. His delegation therefore hoped that the First Committee would agree to give priority to agenda item 95 (Question of convening a world disarmament conference). It had no objection to discussing the other items in the order suggested by the Brazilian representative.

31. Mr. OWONO (Cameroon) said he had no objections to the proposals made by the representatives of Brazil, Ethiopia, Algeria and Guinea but suggested that the question of general and complete disarmament should be linked with the question of convening a world disarmament conference and that the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons should be linked with the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons.

32. Mr. FEDORENKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that he agreed with the representatives of Ethiopia, Algeria and Guinea that first place on the Committee's agenda should be given to the question of convening a world disarmament conference. It was essential that all major States, including the nuclear Powers, should participate in such a conference. That item should be followed by the one relating to the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and then by the group of items relating to disarmament, namely, the question of general and complete disarmament, the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, and the urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests. The next three places on the agenda should go to the item on the inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States and the protection of their independence and sovereignty, the question of Cyprus, and the item on actions on the regional level with a view to improving good neighbourly relations among European States having different social and political systems, and the remaining items should follow.

^{1/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/224.

33. His delegation felt that in view of the importance and urgency of the questions before the Committee they should be considered individually instead of being grouped together in one manner or another.

34. Mr. FOSTER (United States of America) strongly supported the proposal made by the representative of Brazil concerning the order of items on the agenda, and also the Canadian representative's suggestion that the consideration of specific resolutions should follow a general discussion in which all the items could be considered. He could also agree partly with the Cameroonian representative's remarks, but would like to study his suggestion in greater detail.

35. Experience in the Committee had shown the wisdom of starting with a general debate. It was extremely important that the Committee should debate the substantive disarmament items before taking up the question of a world disarmament conference. It was well known that the United States Government had strong doubts as to the advisability of seeking a decision now to hold such a conference. Such a decision could interfere with and delay negotiation on the urgent disarmament questions on which there had been recently a considerable amount of definite progress, even if no agreements had been achieved.

36. Furthermore, many of the supporters of a world disarmament conference had stressed that its success would depend largely on careful preparations and the selection of a suitable time. As part of such preparations many points still remained to be studied; for example, the auspices under which a world conference would be convened, the agenda of the conference in relation to the negotiations in the Eighteen-Nation Committee, and the question, already referred to by the representative of Canada, of the invitations to be extended and the acceptances likely to be received.

37. Before beginning discussion of that question in the Committee, it would seem most useful to examine the prospects for progress on the substantive disarmament items. Again, it would be advisable before any such discussion to hold informal talks, so that many of the points of disagreement could be eliminated. Unless the Committee proceeded in that way, it could easily spend two or three weeks or more in a discussion of a world disarmament conference, an item which, if there were some informal preparation, might otherwise be disposed of in a week or so.

38. He could not support the suggestion made by the Algerian representative, who had seemed to imply that the Committee should leave the urgent disarmament matters on its agenda to be discussed at a world disarmament conference. Most representatives would agree that the substantive disarmament items on the agenda were much too urgent to be put off for discussion at an undetermined time by an undetermined world conference. For example, the question of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons had been acknowledged by almost everyone in the Committee to be a matter of great urgency. Surely, the Committee must take up that item as soon as possible, in order to see what progress it could make towards reaching an agreement which they had all discussed now for some time.

39. For those reasons, his delegation believed it advisable that the discussion of a world conference should follow immediately the consideration of the substantive disarmament items. A world conference could then be considered as a separate matter if others so wished. With the benefit of prior substantive discussions and concurrent informal talks, his delegation believed that agreement on that item would actually be facilitated.

40. Mr. PONNAMBALAM (Ceylon) said he was inclined to agree with the Canadian representative's suggestion. To discuss only the convening of a world disarmament conference—a proposal which his delegation unequivocally supported—might confuse means and ends. He did not see why there should be any opposition to a discussion of the vital questions which were listed as the first three items in the letter from the President of the General Assembly (A/C.1/896), together with the question of convening a world disarmament conference. He therefore invited the Canadian representative to make a formal proposal that agenda items 28, 29, 30 and 95 should be taken together for general discussion, at the conclusion of which the Chairman could call for a substantive motion on any one of those items.

41. Mr. FUENTEALBA (Chile) supported the Ethiopian suggestion. The convening of a world conference on disarmament was a new idea which aroused great hopes for faster progress along the road to general and complete disarmament. Such a conference would provide a suitable means of expressing the overwhelming aspirations of all peoples for the final achievement of disarmament. It would also allow the participation of the smaller Powers, and of Powers that were outside the United Nations. Obviously, if agreement was reached on the holding of such a conference, all the necessary steps would be taken to ensure that it was held at the right time and organized in such a way as to guarantee its success. The conference offered the greatest chance of reaching concrete agreements on disarmament.

42. For the rest of the agenda, he agreed with the order of priority suggested by the representative of Brazil. However, his delegation felt that the question of the inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States deserved priority also, and regretted that it had not met with the unanimous acceptance necessary for that purpose.

43. Mr. LEKIC (Yugoslavia) said that questions of disarmament should be given priority on the agenda. Among those questions the first to be taken up, as suggested by the representatives of Ethiopia, Guinea, Algeria, the USSR and Chile, should be that of a world disarmament conference. The Disarmament Commission had recommended that the General Assembly should take up that problem as a matter of urgency. So far, the general debate had shown that there was broad agreement of principle concerning the need for such a conference; his delegation therefore believed that agreement could be reached concerning the priority to be granted to the question, which by its very nature seemed to be suitable for separate consideration. The adoption at the very outset of positive recommendations concerning a world disarmament conference would undoubtedly

have a favourable influence on the atmosphere in the Committee and on its further work.

44. Sir Roger JACKLING (United Kingdom) supported the order of priority proposed by the representative of Brazil. It seemed logical that the Committee should first focus its attention on agenda items 28, 29 and 30, since the reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament would provide the Committee with a background for dealing with several of the related questions of disarmament.

45. His delegation agreed that the question of the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons was of great importance and urgency. Accordingly, the item proposed by the Soviet delegation—agenda item 106—should be taken early in the discussion, provided that it was discussed in conjunction with that part of the report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament which dealt with the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons.

46. Furthermore, several items connected with disarmament could be discussed, as had been the custom in the past, under the general heading of the report of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. In the course of the main discussion delegations could address themselves to those aspects of disarmament in which they had special interest. On that point he agreed with the suggestions made by the representative of Canada.

47. On the question of convening a world disarmament conference, progress was more likely to be achieved if some discussion took place first outside the Committee. It would be unwise for the Committee to begin its work with such an item, which might give rise almost immediately to difficulties and divisions unless the ground had been very carefully prepared.

48. With regard to the order of the rest of the items, his delegation agreed with the proposals made by the representative of Brazil. He welcomed in particular the Brazilian suggestion that the item introduced by the United Kingdom concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes should be taken relatively early in the discussion, after the disarmament items and the question of Cyprus had been considered. The subject was one central to the whole work of the United Nations, and the twentieth anniversary of the United Nations was an appropriate time to consider very seriously what more the Organization could do to ensure that disputes between countries were resolved in a peaceful manner. For that reason the item should be given full consideration and dealt with as early as possible.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.