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MEETING**

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at 10.35 a.m.

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

Organization of the Committee's work

1. The CHAIRMAN said that he had been informed that a number of representatives were at that moment preparing a draft resolution to be submitted under agenda item 73. He suggested that the meeting should be suspended to allow those representatives to complete their draft.

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 10.40 a.m. and resumed at 12.5 p.m.

2. The CHAIRMAN regretted to have to announce that, contrary to expectation, agreement had not been reached on the draft resolution which was to have been put before the Committee. In the circumstances, he considered that the Committee should for the time being leave aside the item on nuclear tests and pass on to agenda item 26—the question of general and complete disarmament.

3. He recalled that at the beginning of the session he had made certain suggestions which he thought might speed up the Committee's work (1309th meeting), in particular that it might be possible to combine the general debate on the question of disarmament with those on the next two items—the denuclearization of Latin America and the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. However, as some representatives had raised objections to that procedure, the most practical solution would be to leave it to each delegation to decide whether to deal with the three subjects in one statement or to make separate statements on each.

4. Mr. BERNARDES (Brazil) said that it would be better if the Committee were to follow the same procedure as at previous sessions and have a separate debate on each item.

5. After a short discussion, in which Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria), Mr. Víctor Andrés BELAUNDE (Peru), Mr. VELAZQUEZ (Uruguay) and Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) took part, the CHAIRMAN announced that

the three items would be examined in succession, in the order in which they appeared on the agenda, the draft resolutions to be considered at the end of the debate on the item to which they referred. However, each delegation would be free to deal with all three items during the debate on the question of disarmament.

It was so decided.

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

6. Mr. HASSAN (United Arab Republic) thought it might be useful to give the Committee some insight into the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee from the standpoint of one of its non-aligned members.

7. He recalled that the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament had had before it a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament submitted by the Soviet Union and a United States outline of basic provisions of a treaty on general and complete disarmament. Those two draft treaties had been based on different approaches, the Soviet plan, in its original form, envisaging the elimination of all nuclear weapons from the outset and the United States plan hinging on the retention of a nuclear deterrent until the end of the disarmament process. Finding it impossible to examine together such widely divergent approaches, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had embarked upon an intensive study of various subjects related to the fundamental issues of disarmament and in particular of the measures to be taken in the first stage of disarmament. A fairly thorough study had already been made of several of those questions, namely, the obligations incurred by States under disarmament, measures for the reduction and elimination of vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons and for the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials, and measures for the elimination of bases from foreign territories.

8. On at least three subjects the Committee had achieved considerable progress. The Soviet Union had accepted the United States formula for the reduction of conventional armaments (approximately 30 per cent in each stage), the difference between the proposed levels for armed forces in the first stage had been reduced thanks to another Soviet concession, and in the second stage, the difference in force levels was tending to disappear. The most important progress had been made, however, when the USSR had agreed to postpone the deadline for the elimination of all

*Resumed from the 1311th meeting.

vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons until the end of the second stage. Recently the Soviet Union had even gone so far as to accept the retention of the nuclear deterrent until the end of the third stage, thus removing the essential incompatibility between the two proposed schemes. His delegation welcomed that modification which, apart from its intrinsic value, bore witness to the Soviet Union's goodwill and the value of the Geneva negotiations.

9. With regard to measures for the reduction and elimination of nuclear weapons and fissionable materials, no great progress had been made. However, during the last round of talks, the United States had taken a step forward by offering to convert 60,000 kilogrammes of strategic fissionable material to peaceful applications, as against 40,000 kilogrammes for a similar step to be taken by the Soviet Union. That offer was doubly important; for, besides its immediate application, it implied the recognition of the possibility that a State possessing more nuclear weapons and fissionable materials than others might be willing to pay a "surtax" in nuclear disarmament, i.e. to reduce its weapons in those categories more rapidly than other States. The corollary of that principle would be that a State possessing proportionately more conventional armaments might agree to reduce them more drastically than its disarmament partners. He recalled that the United Arab Republic representative on the Eighteen-Nation Committee had advocated the application of the surtax theory, or theory of varied ratios of reduction of different categories of armaments, at Geneva on 20 December 1962.

10. If the Soviet Union and the United States were now in general agreement on the maintaining of a "nuclear umbrella", a great many details still remained to be settled, in particular the method of reduction, which was closely connected with the question of control. Percentage reductions implied the declaration of total stocks at the outset, as well as control over remaining levels. The USSR was opposed to the former, but had recently accepted the principle of verification of remaining delivery vehicles from the beginning of the second stage.

11. In May 1962, the United Arab Republic delegation to the Eighteen-Nation Committee had asked the nuclear Powers to study the possibility of reducing vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons by an agreed figure, to be increased each year. It had even suggested that the reducing process might be set in motion prior to disarmament, as a confidence-building measure. Similar proposals had been made by the United Kingdom Foreign Secretary at the current session of the General Assembly (1222nd plenary meeting), and by the Secretary-General of the United Nations during his visit to Moscow in August 1963. The Eighteen-Nation Committee would surely continue to give the important subject of vehicles and verification all due attention.

12. With regard to the destruction of nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union had recently agreed that, as desired by the Western Powers, countries should retain some nuclear weapons until the end of the third stage of disarmament; there would therefore now appear to be agreement on that point.

13. However, many technical and political questions remained to be settled: the nature and ultimate purpose of the proposed disarmament treaty; whether it should be an irreversible process with semi-automatic transition from one stage to another, or whether transi-

tion should be conditional on the results of future studies; whether all nuclear weapons should be destroyed at the end of the third stage, or whether provision should be made for equipping an international peace force with some; whether it was possible to draw a clear distinction between atomic and non-atomic weapons, and how to define weapons that could fire atomic as well as non-atomic shells. Other questions also had to be settled: the composition and organization of the international peace forces, and the authority to which they were to be subordinated; the nature and modalities of the verification system, and the terms of reference of the international disarmament organization; the definition of the balance theory (whether to preserve the actual military balance of power between the two camps, or to attain a new and equal balance of security); the preservation of the balance of power or of security throughout the disarmament process; determination of the exact length of that process; and finally, how to keep the peace in a disarmed but changing world.

14. Continued negotiations in the same spirit of realism and accommodation which had characterized the recent agreements should ultimately see the positions of the two parties draw closer together, it should thus be possible to devise a disarmament scheme satisfactory to all, especially if the present favourable atmosphere persisted and if both parties succeeded in time in eliminating or reducing other areas of friction or suspicion.

15. Contacts between Heads of Governments had often proved to be catalytic in that regard, and it was for that reason that his Government had readily agreed to the Soviet proposal that the Heads of Government of the countries represented in the Eighteen-Nation Committee should meet to discuss the question of general and complete disarmament and the collateral measures intended to alleviate tension. The Eighteen-Nation Committee had indeed recognized the importance of such collateral measures, which was clear from paragraph 8 of the joint statement of agreed principles for disarmament negotiations.^{1/} Among such collateral measures which were favoured by the Soviet Union were: the cessation of war propaganda; the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons; the establishment of denuclearized zones in central Europe and the Mediterranean area; the reduction of the risk of war by accident or by surprise attack, including the exchange of military missions and observation posts; the withdrawal of bases from foreign territories; and the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty,^{2/} and the States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty.^{3/} The United States, for its part, was in favour of the following measures: the cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes; the conversion of some quantities of weapons-grade fissionable materials to peaceful purposes; the reduction of the risk of war by surprise attack, accident,

^{1/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 19, document A/4879.

^{2/} Treaty of Friendship, Co-operation and Mutual Assistance between the People's Republic of Albania, the People's Republic of Bulgaria, the Hungarian People's Republic, the German Democratic Republic, the Polish People's Republic, the Romanian People's Republic, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the Czechoslovak Republic, signed at Warsaw on 14 May 1955 (United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 219, 1955, No. 2962, p. 24).

^{3/} North Atlantic Treaty, signed at Washington on 4 April 1949 (United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 34, 1949, No. 541, p. 244).

or failure of communications; and the prohibition of the placing in orbit of weapons of mass destruction.

16. Fortunately, agreement had already been reached on three partial measures, namely, the cessation of nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water; the installation of a direct line of communication between Washington and Moscow, to reduce the risk of war by miscalculation or failure of communications; and the understanding on the prohibition of the placing of weapons in orbit in outer space, which his delegation particularly welcomed, having always advocated that type of measure in the General Assembly, in the Eighteen-Nation Committee and in the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space.

17. Among the various partial measures which could be contemplated, he recalled those which the United Arab Republic had proposed in the Eighteen-Nation Committee in May 1962. His Government was convinced that general and complete disarmament could best be attained by means of such partial or collateral measures. That opinion was shared by many countries; it was reflected in the communiqué issued at Belgrade in May 1963 by the Presidents of the United Arab Republic and Yugoslavia. The resolution adopted in May 1963 by the Summit Conference of Independent African States, which had been issued as an official document of the Eighteen-Nation Committee,^{4/} recommended among other things the denuclearization of Africa. On 10 October 1963, in the General Assembly (1236th plenary meeting), the Foreign Minister of the United Arab Republic had expressed approval of

^{4/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1963, document DC/208, annex 1, sect. G (ENDC/93/Rev.1).

measures to inhibit the dissemination of nuclear weapons and measures for the establishment of nuclear-free zones. He also recalled the collateral measures which the United Arab Republic delegation had proposed in the Eighteen-Nation Committee at Geneva on 10 June 1963, and which had been so arranged as to form a balanced series that might be more acceptable than individual measures.

18. A survey of the various partial measures proposed by the interested Heads of Government and the Secretary-General since July 1963 revealed that there appeared to be agreement on measures which might be given special consideration: first, the reduction of the risk of war by accident or surprise attack; second, the prevention of the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and the creation of nuclear-free zones; third, the conclusion of a non-aggression pact or an exchange of declarations of non-aggression between the States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty and the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty. Other interesting proposals included the freezing of military budgets, the thinning out of troops in areas of friction and the reduction of the number of missiles capable of being used in warfare. His delegation believed that those measures would be worth studying, especially the conclusion of a non-aggression pact.

19. The General Assembly should therefore request the Eighteen-Nation Committee to endeavour to widen the areas of agreement on important disarmament issues and to give sustained attention to the study of collateral measures, especially those which, for technical or political reasons, seemed to promise early agreement, such as the reduction of the risk of surprise attack and the prevention of the dissemination of nuclear weapons.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.