

United Nations  
GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY

SEVENTEENTH SESSION

Official Records

FIRST COMMITTEE, 1251st  
MEETING

Thursday, 18 October 1962,  
at 10.50 a.m.



NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. Omar Abdel Hamid ADEEL  
(Sudan).

AGENDA ITEM 77

**The urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/5141 and Add.1, A/C.1/873) (continued)**

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. ALI (Pakistan) said that he wished to associate himself with the vigorous protests made against the continuance of nuclear testing. Both sides recognized that testing endangered human health and that, far from strengthening their security, it was increasing international tension and the danger of war. However, mutual distrust was preventing them from reaching agreement, since one side feared that the other's proposals were intended to open the way for espionage, while the other side feared that its adversary's proposals were designed to facilitate the continuance of testing in secret. Whatever basis there might be for that distrust, his delegation felt that, given goodwill and sincerity, it should be possible to work out arrangements which would reassure each side with regard to the other's good faith. In that connexion, his delegation warmly supported the proposal made by the Austrian representative (1247th meeting) that the parties concerned should convene a meeting of their experts for the purpose of devising, within the next few months, a method of identifying recorded seismic events. The disagreement concerning the identification of such events seemed to be the only obstacle to the conclusion of a treaty banning all nuclear tests for all time.

2. It was not for his delegation to suggest what kind of arrangement would offer reassurance to the two sides. The memorandum of the eight non-aligned nations of 16 April 1962<sup>1/</sup> indicated the lines along which further negotiations could be conducted, and it provided a basis for discussion. The essential point was that the countries concerned must resume negotiations in a constructive spirit. It would not be useful for the Committee to enter into the details of the problem or to lay down specific terms of reference for the negotiators. Since both sides had responded favourably to the eight-nation memorandum, it appeared that in spite of their differing interpretations, further exploration of that document should pave the

way for an agreement. In addition, there would be a more favourable atmosphere for negotiation if a time limit could be set for the cessation of all testing—either 1 January 1963, as had been suggested, or some other acceptable date—so that the two sides would not rush to carry out a last series of explosions before the treaty entered into force. That did not mean recommending a moratorium, which, apart from the fact that it could be violated unilaterally, would merely serve to increase suspicion and heighten tension. The only lasting solution was to conclude an agreement providing the necessary guarantees for both sides. However, negotiations could be conducted most effectively if they were no longer punctuated by periodic nuclear explosions.

3. There could be no absolute guarantees until a world of law and order had been gradually created and an international authority had been provided with the means of maintaining peace. In the meantime, there should be an immediate ban on testing in outer space, in the atmosphere and under water, since such tests could be detected without difficulty. It had been stated that a partial ban would have the effect of legalizing underground tests and would not reduce tension. Even if it did not ease tension, however, a partial ban would eliminate the danger or radioactive fall-out and save millions of people from its baneful effects. It should also be possible to extend the ban to cover underground explosions which exceeded a certain level of intensity and could therefore be detected by national verification systems. That possibility might be examined by experts of the two sides. Technical studies might lead to the discovery of methods of detecting other underground tests. If not, it should be possible to work out a system of international inspection providing adequate safeguards against espionage. In any case, the present situation, which legalized not only underground tests but all others as well, was surely far more dangerous than a partial ban would be.

4. It was essential to conclude a nuclear test ban agreement as soon as possible. That would prevent an increase in the number of nuclear Powers, which would make it even more difficult to conclude a treaty. In any event, arrangements should be made with that end in view. He recalled in that connexion that in its resolution 1665 (XVI) the General Assembly had called upon all States to conclude an international agreement under which the non-nuclear Powers would undertake not to manufacture or otherwise acquire control of nuclear weapons. Several countries, including South Africa, had announced that they were able to manufacture those weapons, and the number of such countries would steadily increase. It was therefore essential, pending agreement between the nuclear Powers, to conclude at once a treaty prohibiting the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons. The United States and the Soviet Union had

<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January 1961 to December 1962, document DC/203, annex I, sect. J.

recognized the urgency of that problem in their plans for general and complete disarmament. They had also recognized, in their joint statement of 20 September 1961,<sup>2/</sup> that separate measures of disarmament could be taken without prejudicing negotiations on the over-all programme for general and complete disarmament. The question of concluding a treaty or convention outlawing the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons should therefore be considered without delay and given the highest priority at the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. While he did not wish to make a formal proposal at the present time, he was offering that suggestion to the members of the First Committee, particularly the representatives of the smaller Powers, to which the problem was of special concern.

5. Mr. COULIBALY (Mali) recalled that his Government, which was not a member of any military bloc and wished to live in friendship with all countries, had consistently opposed atomic explosions, particularly those which had been carried out in the Sahara.

6. He was greatly disappointed at the attitude of the nuclear Powers, which, while they continued their deaf men's dialogue, were conducting additional nuclear tests with apparent unconcern for the threat thus posed to all mankind. The Soviet proposals, those put forward by the United States and the United Kingdom, and the memorandum of the eight non-aligned countries should, in view of the advances made in national verification systems, make it possible for the General Assembly, at its current session, to impose a treaty banning nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests in all environments. A partial treaty might represent a measure of progress, but it would not solve the problem; it would merely direct the nuclear arms race into a new channel, enabling it to continue freely underground.

7. The conclusion of a treaty banning all types of nuclear weapon testing by all countries was an essential step in the direction of general and complete disarmament. Existing conditions made it possible to conclude such a treaty. The determination and identity of views evinced by the non-nuclear States, and the anguish felt by all mankind at the peril confronting it, represented a moral force which the nuclear Powers could not disregard. They were Members of the United Nations and must make an effort to submit to its discipline and contribute to the realization of its ideals. Both East and West must realize that their rivalries and distrust could not be permitted to go on indefinitely keeping the peoples of the world in the grip of fear and insecurity. The great Powers should strive instead, through peaceful co-operation and competition, to make the benefits of scientific and technological progress available to all mankind.

8. Mr. PAZHWAQ (Afghanistan) said that neither logic nor even technical considerations could be of much help in solving the problem under discussion if it was considered from a purely political and military viewpoint. The problem was primarily a humanitarian one, and its solution was dependent on a humanitarian approach to the whole question. It was regrettable that that approach had not prevailed in the past; however, the United Nations should concentrate not on past history but on the present situation and the future of mankind.

<sup>2/</sup> See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 19, document A/4879.

9. In deploring the continuance of tests, his delegation felt alarmed not only about the serious consequences of the tests but also about the sincerity of the efforts allegedly being made for reaching an agreement on the cessation of nuclear weapon tests and on general and complete disarmament. No matter what the justification might be, the nuclear arms race was contrary to the interests of international peace and security. One of the most serious facts was that the United Nations seemed to be becoming accustomed to the idea of the destruction of humanity, for it had gradually become much calmer in the expression of its concern, during a period in which the race in testing nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons had been accelerated. The United Nations should strongly condemn that race and reject the reasons put forward to justify it. That would not be moral pressure; it was a duty on the part of the non-nuclear Powers in the interests of the whole world.

10. The division of the non-nuclear world into two camps was as foolish as the continuance of the nuclear tests. Every country had the right to conclude alliances in order to ensure its security, but his delegation could not understand how countries could join the camp of annihilation of mankind and not join the camp of humanity in the interest of its survival. The United Nations should unanimously urge both camps to bring to an end at once their destructive activities. The nuclear Powers should have no allies on this issue.

11. Since in the event of a nuclear war there would be neither security nor victory for either side, and neither would dominate or even survive, the only possible explanation for the nuclear arms race was the lack of confidence among the great Powers. The solution then was to urge them to have confidence at least in the United Nations, where it was precisely those Powers that were in some respects the privileged ones.

12. His delegation greatly appreciated the efforts made at Geneva by the non-aligned countries and hoped that the Assembly would give its support to those efforts.

13. Summarizing his Government's views on the question, he said that the United Nations, on behalf of the people of the world, should: first, express its deep concern over the continuance of any tests in any environment; second, strongly condemn policies which would allow further continuance of any nuclear or thermo-nuclear tests; third, declare that no nation had the right to test; fourth, demand from the nuclear Powers the cessation of all tests and a pledge to the world that the tests would not be resumed in any circumstances; fifth, declare that the gradual and partial process of the cessation of nuclear tests would ultimately not be effective and that all tests should be discontinued immediately; sixth, urge the nuclear Powers to refrain from following any policies that would result in the spreading of nuclear weapons to countries which did not possess them at the present time; seventh, urge the nuclear Powers to enter into negotiations during the current session in order to reach an agreement on the technical aspects of the matter, particularly on effective measures of international inspection and control, on the basis of the joint memorandum of 16 April 1962 and in the light of the views expressed in the First Committee's discussion of the present item; eighth, urge all nuclear Powers to declare

jointly that the use of nuclear weapons would be considered a crime against humanity as a whole and that such weapons would not be used under any circumstances; ninth, urge all nuclear Powers to enter into negotiations, as a further step for the achievement of general and complete disarmament, and to destroy all nuclear weapons which already existed.

14. His delegation was co-operating with a number of delegations toward presenting certain measures for the consideration of the Committee and the General Assembly.

15. Mr. HSU (China) said that even though the question of the cessation of nuclear tests was related to that of general disarmament, it could and should be treated independently. The arms race might result in war, with its attendant death and suffering, but nuclear tests actually endangered the health of the living and the welfare of humanity and created a sense of futility and hopelessness before the prospect of a disaster beyond human control.

16. For that reason, his delegation was glad to see that the Soviet Union was now ready to discuss the question of nuclear tests—more particularly, tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, which were the most dangerous and the most fateful—independently of the more general problems of disarmament. Unfortunately, the USSR continued to attach a condition to its acceptance: an agreement not to engage in tests underground in the period of negotiations but with no control by on-site inspection.

17. The USSR was in fact asking other Powers to have confidence in it. But confidence in international relations would come only through the observance of good faith and fair play, and those conditions, regrettably, did not exist at the present time. The realistic course would therefore seem to be to seek an agreement on the cessation of verifiable tests—which would at least end the pollution of the atmosphere by radio-active fall-out—while temporarily putting aside the thorny problem of underground explosions.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.