

UNITED NATIONS
GENERAL
ASSEMBLY



Distr.
GENERAL

A/2949/Add.1
19 September 1955

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Tenth session

REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA
OF THE TENTH REGULAR SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED BY INDIA

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON THE EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION AND ON
THE EFFECTS OF EXPERIMENTAL EXPLOSIONS OF THERMO-NUCLEAR BOMBS

Letter dated 16 September 1955 addressed to the Secretary-General by the
Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations

New York, 16 September 1955

In continuation of my letter dated 30 August 1955, I have the honour to enclose an explanatory memorandum concerning the item entitled "Dissemination of information on the effects of atomic radiation and on the effects of experimental explosions of thermo-nuclear bombs" proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the tenth regular session of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Arthur S. LALL

Permanent Representative of India
to the United Nations

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION ON THE EFFECTS OF ATOMIC RADIATION
AND ON THE EFFECTS OF EXPERIMENTAL EXPLOSIONS OF THERMO-NUCLEAR
BOMBS

1. The use of radioactive materials has presented to the world a powerful new tool which is widely being used in many fields such as agriculture, biochemistry, biology, industry and medicine. The use of these materials, however, is attended by serious hazards to the persons working with them. Most countries are therefore studying the effects of radiation so as to extract the maximum benefit and at the same time to devise means of protecting those who have to handle radioactive material. These countries, however, are carrying on their investigations independently and even in each country there is no agreement as to the degree of exposure which can be tolerated.
2. For the attainment of full industrialization and for the continuation of civilization and its further development, atomic energy is not merely an aid; it is an absolute necessity. As the atomic energy programme develops in the whole world the number of atomic power stations and other installations producing radioactive materials will considerably increase. It is, therefore, essential that the data about the biological and other effects of radiation should be studied with scientific objectivity and thoroughness.
3. The way in which radioactive material produced in the tests of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons is dissipated over the world is not yet fully known. There is a marked divergence of opinion among scientists as to the long-term consequences of detonating nuclear and thermo-nuclear bombs for experimental purposes, more particularly with regard to the genetic effects. While almost all are agreed that ultimately the background radiation could increase to a level which would endanger the existence of mankind, many consider that a stage has already been reached when further experimental explosions of atomic weapons may have disastrous results for the entire human species some hundreds of years hence.

4. Since all nations of the world, and not merely the nations conducting the experiments, may suffer as a result of the after-effects of tests of nuclear and thermo-nuclear bombs and other activities undertaken by various countries for the development of atomic energy, the Government of India considers that it is essential to set up immediately an international organization which will collect and co-ordinate the data on the immediate and long-term consequences of nuclear radiation as well as the known effects of experimental explosions of the hydrogen and nuclear bombs, and inform the world of the same.
5. The Government of India, therefore, requests that the above item be placed on the agenda of the tenth regular session of the General Assembly.
