



Tuesday, 18 December 1951, at 10.30 a.m.

Palais de Chaillot, Paris

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Chairman: Mr. Finn MOE (Norway).

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943, A/C.1/667/Rev.1, A/C.1/668/Rev.2, A/C.1/669, A/C.1/677 and A/C.1/680) (continued)

[Item 66]*

International control of atomic energy : report of the Committee of Twelve (A/1922) (continued)

[Item 16]*

CONSIDERATION OF THE REVISED DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY FRANCE, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES (A/C.1/667/Rev.1) AND AMENDMENTS THERETO (continued)

1. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that, in spite of the efforts made by the authors of the joint draft resolution to give the impression that their revised text contained important changes, a careful study of the draft showed that that was not at all the case. So far as substance was concerned, the new draft still constituted the same attempt to replace the problems of the regulation and the reduction of armaments, the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the establishment of strict control over that prohibition by proposals to gather information on the armaments and armed forces of the various States.

2. Consequently, the United States representative's contention that the aim of the three-Power draft resolution was to dispel international tension should be regarded with some caution. If that had really been the aim of the United States, it ought not to have resorted to such vague and dilatory phrases as those used in the draft resolution. Although the authors of the joint draft resolution, supported by the representatives of Peru and Bolivia, were claiming that the United States was anxious to achieve an international system which would ensure the reduction of all armaments and all armed forces, they were at the same time

avoiding any concrete decision on that issue. In the meantime, the United States Government was indefatigably pushing ahead with its programme to step up the production of armaments, particularly the production of weapons of mass destruction. The most recent semi-annual report of the United States Secretary of Defence emphasized the need to increase the production of armaments still further, although the military budget of the United States already amounted to \$60,000 million.

3. The United States was not only developing its own war industry but was also trying to make the States of western Europe follow the same course. Mr. William C. Foster, the Deputy Secretary of Defence, had indeed recently urged the acceleration of war production in the States of western Europe. In those circumstances, it was hardly surprising that the governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and France should oppose the adoption of measures for the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the reduction of armaments and armed forces.

4. However, the three western Powers were clearly seeking to use the item as a cover to hide their real policy. That was indeed the idea behind their draft resolution. It was true that the draft resolution mentioned the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of the atomic weapon, but in actual fact it hampered the achievement of that purpose.

5. In spite of some clever drafting, the revised draft resolution was not improved by the alterations. For example, the second paragraph of the preamble referred to an effective collective security system. There would naturally be no objection to that if the system referred to were the same as that contemplated in Articles 51 and 52 of the United Nations Charter. But the notion of collective security had been used before in violation of the provisions of the Charter—particularly in General Assembly resolution 377 (V) which had served to disguise the intention of the United States to continue the war in the Far East and to prepare for fresh military adventures. In the same way, the reference to collective security in the preamble to the revised draft resolution was a thin pretext for the war aims of its authors and had no connexion with the reduction of armaments and the maintenance of peace.

* Indicates the item number of the General Assembly agenda.

6. It was true that the third paragraph of the preamble of the draft resolution no longer contained a reference to the reduction of armaments to levels adequate for defence. Similarly, the reference to criteria of application of the reduction of armaments had been dropped from what was now paragraph 6 of the operative part. Those two changes had not however affected the substance since the authors of the draft resolution had not changed their views on the matter. Indeed, the new paragraph 6 reproduced the original idea of a calculation of overall limits and restrictions on all armed forces and all armaments.

7. Point 9 of the USSR amendment proposed that the former paragraph 5, or what was now paragraph 6 of the revised draft resolution, should be replaced by a paragraph instructing the joint commission to submit within a period of three months practical proposals for the application of the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the reduction of armaments. That amendment had two advantages. First it set a time-limit within which the commission was to submit its proposals, and secondly, it left the commission as much freedom of action as possible, which would meet the point quite rightly raised by the representative of Syria.

8. There was no need to repeat in detail the main points of the USSR amendments, in particular the proposal for a one-third reduction of the armaments of the five great Powers. The objections with which the one-third reduction had met were based on the fact that the USSR would thereby retain its so-called military predominance, which would in its turn preclude a balance of armed forces.

9. The Peruvian representative had hinted at the 466th meeting that the USSR was trying to bring about the prohibition of the atomic weapon while retaining its freedom of action as regards other weapons of mass destruction. He must have forgotten that in 1948 the USSR had made proposals in the United Nations Commission on Conventional Armaments for the prohibition of atomic weapons and other weapons of mass destruction¹. Its attitude had not altered since. Consequently it supported the Egyptian amendment (A/C.1/681) which would have the effect of including all weapons of mass destruction in the ban declared by the General Assembly.

10. The Peruvian representative was likewise wrong in saying that according to the USSR amendment unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon would depend upon the establishment of a system of control. Clearly unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon implied that the ban should not be subject to any prior condition. The prohibition should be declared before control was established, since control by itself could not secure prohibition; control could only enforce the application of a ban previously declared.

11. The French representative had stated at the 464th meeting that the USSR wished to retain supremacy in conventional armaments and rob the western Powers of their headway in atomic armaments. That baseless charge was best met by reference to the 1951 records of the United States Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives which showed clearly that the forces of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization amounted to nearly 5,500,000 men. Moreover, the prohibition of the atomic weapon as contemplated in the USSR amendment applied to all States producing atomic energy, and the one-third reduction of armaments applied to each of the five Powers without conferring any special advantage on the Soviet Union. It should be added that the armed forces of the Soviet Union were for the defence of the

country's frontiers. A large country like the USSR, with a big population and long frontiers, had to have large armed forces. But they were not a threat to peace because the USSR was a peaceful country, whereas the armies of a small aggressive State, like Prussia in the past, might constitute a serious danger.

12. The existing international tension was due to the armaments race, and the development of the United States network of air bases round the USSR and the extension of the war which the United States was waging in the Far East. Under pressure from the United States Government the governments of all the States of the "Atlantic bloc" were increasing their war budgets.

13. The contrast between the peaceful policy of the USSR and the warlike machinations of the ruling circles in the United States, the United Kingdom and France was reflected in the fundamental difference between the three-Power draft resolution, which provided neither for the prohibition of the atomic weapon nor for the reduction of armaments and armed forces, and the USSR amendment which made provision for banning the atomic weapon and proposed practical measures to enforce the ban. The USSR amendment also provided for the establishment of an international control organ responsible for control of the reduction of all types of armaments and armed forces. The control was to be carried out by means of a system of effective international inspection and was also to include verification of the information submitted. The international control organ was to inspect atomic plants immediately after the convention establishing it was concluded. Accordingly, the purpose of the USSR amendment was to correct the shortcomings of the three-Power draft resolution which put off till later the establishment of an international control organ. The United States, the United Kingdom and France were consequently not only rejecting the proposal that the General Assembly should declare the prohibition of the atomic weapon, but were avoiding direct reference to the establishment of an international control organ.

14. Mr. Jessup, at the 467th meeting, had accused the Soviet Union of a lack of elasticity because it had not accepted the provisions of the Baruch plan for the control of atomic energy. But Mr. Vyshinsky was at a loss to describe the United States representative who untiringly continued to submit a plan which was regarded by *The Times* of London as utopian and which was unacceptable to all those States that sought to maintain their independence and to escape the economic hegemony of an American super-trust.

15. The United States representative has also stated that the USSR wanted only a paper ban on atomic weapons; he had further considered that the process of setting up an international control organ might be long and difficult. The Egyptian representative had likewise observed (467th meeting) that it would take time to set up an international control organ and for that reason had proposed that in the meantime a convention on the prohibition of the atomic weapon should be drafted, in line with the humanitarian conventions for which the Red Cross had taken the initiative or with the Geneva Protocol of 17 June 1925 prohibiting the use in war of asphyxiating, poisonous or other gases. If, however, it was considered that the establishment of an international control organ was likely to take time, it was surely all the more necessary not to make the ban on atomic weapons dependent on the setting up of machinery for such control. The USSR, therefore, urged that the General Assembly should forthwith order the unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon and that the corresponding international control organ should be established as speedily as possible.

¹ See documents S/C.3/SC.3/4 and S/C.3/SC.3/17.

16. When enumerating the General Assembly resolutions that had allegedly not been respected by the USSR, the United States representative had stated that his Government could not agree to a prohibition of the atomic weapon which was unaccompanied by a correlated system of control. He had, in fact, observed that such a decision of the General Assembly might not have the same moral force for the USSR as for the western Powers. In making his case, Mr. Jessup had omitted to say that the resolutions that had not been respected by the USSR had been resolutions to which it had been opposed either because they had not promoted the maintenance of international peace and security or because they had been adopted in violation of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, as, for example, the notorious resolution of the General Assembly declaring the People's Republic of China to be an aggressor or the resolution of the Security Council on the use of foreign troops in Korea. The United Nations was not a national parliament; and a sovereign State, Member of the United Nations, could not be compelled to give effect to a resolution that was illegal or endangered the maintenance of peace.

17. The USSR had respected all the decisions of the General Assembly for which it had voted. The United States, on the other hand, which had voted for resolutions 1 (I) and 41 (I) adopted by the general assembly in 1946 on the control of armaments and of armed forces and resolution 110 (II) of 3 November 1947 denouncing war-mongering, had manifestly violated those resolutions. The United States had also violated the provisions of the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements. Also, it had entered into a gentleman's agreement in 1946 concerning the representation of non-permanent members of the Security Council, but now, in violation of that agreement, was trying to impose Greece as the representative of the Slav States. Hence, it could be gathered that the United States did not believe in obligations that were not backed by force.

18. The USSR delegation felt that the changes made in the joint draft resolution were insignificant. On the other hand, the amendment submitted by the Egyptian delegation (A/C.1/681) was desirable and would be supported by the USSR delegation.

19. The draft resolution submitted by the Polish delegation (A/C.1/680) was also justified, for the proceedings of the sub-committee had shown that a thorough consideration of such important questions as the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic weapons had yielded substantial and positive results. It was, therefore, necessary to proceed along such lines with a view to arriving at an agreed decision. That was why the USSR delegation supported the Polish draft resolution which was likely to help the new commission to contribute effectively to the development of international peace and security.

20. Mr. LLOYD (United Kingdom) thanked the Bolivian representative for his tribute to the late Lord Perth at the previous meeting.

21. Proceeding to answer Mr. Vyshinsky, he reminded him that the western Powers were reorganizing their defences solely because of the USSR's actions. Before taking on trust Mr. Vyshinsky's statement that the USSR was weaker than the western Powers, Mr. Lloyd felt there ought to be means of verifying such contentions. The western Powers simply wished to continue to work and to maintain peace.

22. Admittedly, the advantage of adopting such a draft resolution as that submitted by the Polish delegation (A/C.1/680) would be that the First Committee need not make an awkward decision and that it would leave matters in a neutral form. That, however, would mean that the

First Committee would not have taken a decision on the USSR proposal that there should be an unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon without the prior establishment of any control system. Thus, the Committee would not have rejected the idea of dissociating the problems raised by atomic weapons from those raised by conventional armaments. The door would be left open to the idea of disarming by one-third, but without any knowledge of the levels to which that disarmament should take place. It would also mean abandoning the areas of agreement reached by the sub-committee and returning to where it had started. Mr. Lloyd was of the opinion that the First Committee should rather express an opinion on fundamental matters.

23. Should the Committee accept the revised three-Power draft resolution, he felt that it would not be fair to say that the three Powers had shown themselves unreasonably obstinate in that respect. Nonetheless, so far as the unconditional prohibition of the atomic bomb was concerned, the western Powers did not intend to strip themselves of their essential defensive weapon on the strength of a mere verbal promise and in the absence of any agreement concerning other armaments and control.

24. Contrary to what Mr. Vyshinsky had stated, the prohibition of atomic weapons and the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only were dealt with in the preamble and in paragraph 3 of the operative part of the joint draft resolution. Similarly, although the three Powers felt that the Baruch plan, which should more correctly be called the "majority plan", was the best so far conceived, it could certainly be improved by any constructive proposal which the western Powers were quite prepared to discuss. Mr. Vyshinsky stated that the USSR would consent to international control immediately after the prohibition of atomic weapons. But at the very least, the procedure for such verification must be decided.

25. Secondly, after dealing with the prohibition of atomic weapons, in the joint draft resolution it was intended to regulate conventional armaments. In paragraph 3 (c) of the operative part it was stated that the proposed commission should be ready to consider any new proposals.

26. Thirdly, with regard to the reduction of conventional armaments, the alteration of paragraph 3 (c) and of the former paragraph 5—now paragraph 6—left the widest latitude to the commission to work out a practical plan for disarmament.

27. In addition to those three essential points, as amended, which seemed to meet with acceptance by ninety per cent of the members of the Committee, there had been genuine efforts to make further concessions to the USSR. That Government had not responded. Mr. Vyshinsky claimed to have made a concession in accepting the principle of a joint commission. Yet that was what the USSR had been demanding from the outset.

28. In view of the USSR representative's observation that the three-Power revised draft differed in no way from the original text, Mr. Lloyd felt he should explain what had been done to broaden the area of agreement.

29. The preamble had been amended in four instances.

30. The second paragraph of the preamble, referring to an effective collective security system guaranteeing in fact the security of the small Powers, had not met with Mr. Vyshinsky's approval. In the revised text there was a reference to the progressive reduction of armaments in accordance with the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

31. In the third paragraph of the preamble (second paragraph of the original text) the reference to " levels adequate for defence " had been deleted.

32. In the fourth paragraph of the preamble (third paragraph of the original text) the reference to " substantial armed forces " had been deleted. That had been done to meet Mr. Vyshinsky's objection that the term " substantial " was hard to define.

33. Similarly, to meet the USSR representative's request, in the last paragraph of the preamble the reference to the report of the Committee of Twelve had been deleted and the name of the proposed commission had been altered.

34. Substantial alterations had been made in the wording. The new paragraph 3 (c) of the operative part gave the new commission just latitude. A new paragraph 4 had been inserted, dealing specifically with the establishment of an international control organ (or organs) and, to meet

Mr. Vyshinsky's wishes, that new paragraph referred explicitly to the establishment of a control organ.

35. In paragraph 7 a definite date had been set for the submission of the commission's report.

36. That was ample evidence of the three Powers' goodwill. If the USSR disliked what it called the " Baruch plan ", it should propose a better one and it would be accepted at once.

37. Above all, the proposed commission's work should not be paralyzed beforehand by dooming it to interminable discussion. The overwhelming majority were agreed on certain points. The commission's attention should be drawn to those areas of agreement and then, with sufficiently broad terms of reference, it should be enabled to begin its work and to work fast.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.