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Chairman: Mr. Franz MATSCH (Austria).

AGENDA ITEM 67

Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons
 (A/4125, A/C.1/L.235/Rev.3) (concluded)

GENERAL DEBATE AND CONSIDERATION OF THE
 DRAFT RESOLUTION (A/C.1/L.235/REV.3) (concluded)

1. Mr. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia) considered that the application of the USSR proposals providing for general and complete disarmament (A/4219), which all the members of the Committee had recently supported by unanimously adopting a resolution on that subject at the 1042nd meeting, would settle the problem with which the Irish draft resolution was concerned (A/C.1/L.235/Rev.3).

2. The danger of a nuclear war lay primarily in the fact that certain members of NATO had since the Second World War persisted in basing their policy and military strategy on weapons of mass destruction, which they continued to manufacture, with which they equipped their troops both at home and at bases abroad, and which they forced upon their allies. Hence, they systematically opposed the prohibition and elimination of those weapons. The present situation was particularly alarming in view of the efforts of the Federal Republic of Germany to produce its own nuclear weapons and rockets; it was collaborating with certain States members of NATO for that purpose and expected to have the Bundeswehr equipped with nuclear weapons by 1961.

3. Apart from the question of bases and forces equipped with nuclear weapons and rockets on foreign soil, there was another factor which increased the risk of a nuclear war: according to the United States Press, at least twelve countries in addition to the three existing nuclear Powers had the technical, economic and energy resources to enable them to begin producing nuclear weapons in about five years.

4. The Soviet Government's proposals for general and complete disarmament offered a means of completely eliminating the danger arising from the increasingly

widespread dissemination of nuclear weapons. The Irish draft resolution, on the other hand, offered no effective means of achieving that end. It merely sought to prevent any increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons and made no reference whatever to the vital importance of completely prohibiting and eliminating such weapons. It entirely disregarded the existence of military bases equipped with rockets and nuclear weapons, the forces armed with such weapons stationed on foreign soil or even the proposals which would establish "atom-free" zones in various parts of the world. With regard to the establishment of such a zone in central Europe, as Poland had proposed at the twelfth session (697th plenary meeting), the Czechoslovak Government had declared more than once its willingness to accept the necessary commitments if the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany would do the same.

5. Czechoslovakia, which had always supported measures designed to secure world peace, gave its unqualified support to the USSR proposals calling for general and complete disarmament. Before that goal was attained, however, certain effective measures should be taken to eliminate the dangers resulting from the dissemination of nuclear weapons. First, the nuclear Powers should not station military forces equipped with nuclear weapons on foreign territories and, where they had already done so, they should withdraw them immediately; secondly, States which possessed nuclear weapons should not supply them to, or facilitate their manufacture in other countries; thirdly, States should join in an effort to establish zones free of nuclear devices and rockets in various parts of the world, the integrity of which should be guaranteed by the Powers possessing nuclear weapons.

6. As the Irish draft resolution would not permit the attainment of that goal Czechoslovakia could not support it.

7. Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain) said that any proposal designed to ward off the danger of destruction inherent in modern weapons was bound to meet with sympathy, but that it might be self-deception to attach importance to armaments only. History showed that men had never needed perfected weapons to wage wars of extermination. It would therefore be better to endeavour to curb the spirit of aggression in man and to seek reasons for living in peace. The question was, whether a proposal such as that made by Ireland could give practical results. The United Nations could not constantly preach peace, disarmament and fraternity unless it was certain that the peoples were prepared willingly to embrace the cause of peace and disarmament.

8. It was to be feared that all peoples and even certain groups of individuals might one day be able to manufacture atomic weapons. In that connexion he recalled a statement he had made at the twelfth session (699th plenary meeting) and cited an article in

which the Auxiliary Bishop of New York, Fulton J. Sheed had stated that nuclear war was not justifiable and could not be considered a legitimate defence against injustice because the cure would be worse than the disease. At any rate, it was unlikely that much progress towards disarmament would be made in the present debate. In the debate on the previous agenda item, which had been concerned with the intention of a country to acquire atomic weapons, a number of opinions had been expressed, but respect and consideration had been accorded to those who, under present-day conditions, wished to maintain the necessary dignity and force to ensure respect of their rights if the occasion arose. If the eighty-two States Members of the United Nations all had atomic weapons, the negotiations for the reduction of armaments would no doubt be more difficult, but the juridical values would remain intact, since they were the spiritual heritage of all mankind.

9. The desire had also been expressed that certain nations should not communicate their atomic secrets to others. So long as the motives for waging war or preparing for war existed, those secrets would inevitably be communicated between nations which shared the same ideas. The symbolical request of the small countries would have little force before the imperatives which had engendered the present disputes or in comparison with a desire for conciliation which might spring from practical or theoretical considerations. However, conciliation would be better attained by the sincere efforts of mankind rather than the renunciation, in advance, by those who had nothing to renounce, as a superfluous tribute to those who, up to the present, had everything.

10. As the Irish proposal would merely apprise the ten-Power disarmament committee of the Assembly's opinion, there could hardly be any reason to object to it, although a number of delegations regarded it with some scepticism.

11. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) considered that the item proposed by the Irish delegation (A/4125) was of paramount interest to world public opinion. While international tension had recently been reduced and a proposal for general and complete disarmament had been unanimously adopted, some delegations objected to partial disarmament measures on the flimsy excuse that security was indivisible. The Bulgarian Government, on the contrary, was prepared, pending an agreement on general and complete disarmament, to support any regional attempt to bring about a better understanding among peoples, to settle disputes between States and to eliminate nuclear weapons from specific areas. It had, *inter alia*, joined other Balkan Governments in proposing the creation of an "atom-free" zone in the Balkans.

12. The Irish proposal showed that world public opinion favoured the taking of measures to prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons, which would no doubt make an agreement on disarmament more difficult to achieve. However, the proposal did not cope with all the aspects of the question under consideration. It failed to deal with the possible transfer of nuclear weapons from a producing State to the territory of an ally where control of the weapons remained in the hands of the manufacturers. Military bases on foreign soil could thus possess nuclear armaments since control would be ensured by the producing country. It might even be possible, under the same conditions,

to continue to transfer nuclear weapons to other countries and, as a result, to set up new nuclear bases abroad. The United Nations, whose task was to work for disarmament, should never accept such a responsibility.

13. Under the terms of the draft resolution, Powers which did not possess nuclear weapons would be required to refrain from manufacturing them, and strict control would be enforced on their territory. It seemed strange that the territory of countries which did not produce nuclear weapons would be subjected to control without an agreement on some aspects of disarmament. Moreover, control would cover the production of new fissionable materials. A similar proposal had been submitted a few years earlier by the Western Powers.^{1/} It had been found unacceptable because it had been directed not towards real disarmament through the prohibition of the manufacture and use of nuclear weapons, but towards the institution of control on newly-produced fissionable materials only, thus permitting the productions and even the improvement of new nuclear weapons with existing materials. The Committee, by adopting the draft resolution on the Soviet Union proposal for general and complete disarmament (1042nd meeting), had unanimously recognized that simple and clear solutions were not only the best way to achieve disarmament, but the most effective way to restore confidence among States.

14. The Irish proposal was also aimed at preventing the nuclear Powers from surreptitiously transferring such weapons to their allies. The real danger lay, not there, but in open transfers which it was not sought in any way to conceal, and above all, in the insistent efforts of some Powers to persuade their allies to agree to the installation of nuclear weapons on their territories. The Irish proposal might create among people the dangerous illusion that something was actually being done about disarmament when in fact it ignored the basic aspects of the question. If the misgivings created by the proposal and the misunderstandings to which it gave rise were not removed, the Bulgarian delegation could not support the draft resolution.

15. Mr. SHAHA (Nepal) felt that, if no agreement was reached on measures to prevent a wider dissemination of nuclear weapons, the precarious balance of armed forces which had made possible the uneasy peace of recent years might be upset. Instead of a situation to which the world had grown accustomed, new and unknown perils would have to be faced. Many countries were in a position to manufacture nuclear weapons and might do so unless an agreement was reached very soon, thus increasing the danger of a nuclear war.

16. With regard to inspection, no system was completely foolproof, but the risks involved in the Irish proposal would be less than those entailed in complete disarmament. The Nepalese delegation would therefore support the draft resolution, which was in line with its own position in the matter.

17. Mr. SOSA RODRIGUEZ (Venezuela) observed that at the thirteenth session (970th meeting) his delegation had voted in favour of the second paragraph of the Irish draft resolution (A/C.1/L.206), which was re-

^{1/} Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1957, document DC/113, annex 5.

produced in the present draft (A/C.1/L.235/Rev.3), because the proposal had provided for additional measures to reduce the danger of an atomic war. For the same reasons, Venezuela would also support the Irish draft resolution at the current session.

18. Mr. LOUTFI (United Arab Republic) said that at the thirteenth session (970th meeting) his delegation had voted in favour of the second paragraph of the Irish draft resolution, on the grounds that a wider dissemination of nuclear weapons was a real danger. The revised draft submitted at the fourteenth session was procedural in character since it invited the ten-Power disarmament committee to study the matter and to report to the United Nations Disarmament Commission. The question was delicate and the manner of studying it could raise awkward problems. Without wishing to enter into those considerations, the delegation of the United Arab Republic congratulated Ireland on its useful initiative and would vote in favour of the draft resolution.

19. Mr. WEI (China) appreciated the motives that had prompted the Irish delegation to propose the inclusion of the item in the agenda (A/4125). The most urgent problem was how to achieve nuclear disarmament in a programme of general disarmament with effective international control, failing which nuclear weapons might be more widely disseminated throughout the world. However, the Chinese delegation was not convinced that the possession of nuclear weapons could be limited to a given number of countries. It therefore reserved its position on the substance of the question.

20. While there could be no objection to a procedural study, it might be asked whether the General Assembly should in fact request the ten-Power committee to consider the feasibility of the Irish proposal since the committee was neither a United Nations organ nor a representative body. The Chinese delegation would therefore abstain in the vote, although it appreciated the spirit of the Irish proposal.

21. Mr. SCHWEITZER (Chile) said he would support the Irish proposal, which was in line with the sincere wish of the Chilean people to live in a world free from the anxiety caused by the armaments race aggravated by the presence of terrible nuclear weapons. While the adoption of the draft resolution would not solve all outstanding problems, the world would know what spirit animated the United Nations. The Chilean delegation would vote for the draft resolution, which was both reasonable and wise.

22. Mr. ESIN (Turkey) said that he would support the Irish draft resolution. First of all, it was purely procedural in character, whereas recommendations on matters of substance would have raised problems which the Committee had not dealt with. Secondly, the draft envisaged the study of the question within the proper framework, namely that of disarmament.

23. Mr. MOCH (France) said that he would abstain in the vote for four broad reasons. First, the question under discussion represented only a particular aspect of the problem of the manufacture and transfer of fissionable materials and nuclear weapons, which had been studied at length, particularly in 1957, in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission. Secondly, France did not wish to see a monopoly in nuclear weapons take definite shape, regardless of how many Powers benefited from it, if those Powers

remained free to continue the arms race. Instead of trying by discriminatory methods to halt the scientific development of a particular country, measures subject to international control should be applied to everyone. Thirdly, the transfer of fissionable materials or nuclear weapons was, like their retention, difficult, if not impossible, to control. It was therefore dangerous to base a general disarmament effort on measures of that kind, representing nothing more than moral commitments which could not satisfy the security requirements of any country. Fourthly, the Powers concerned should fully examine the real problems of disarmament: control of the manufacture of fissionable materials for military purposes and cessation of such production and then of the production of nuclear weapons; gradual, controlled reconversion of military stockpiles to peaceful ends; control of the manufacture of nuclear weapons carriers, which was still possible, and prohibition of their manufacture. His delegation would not vote for the Irish proposal because the measures envisaged in it were not disarmament measures; however, it would not vote against the proposal, since it felt that such measures must follow upon any genuine disarmament measures.

24. Mr. KUZNETSOV (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his Government advocated the complete and unconditional prohibition of nuclear weapons, their elimination from the arsenals of States and the destruction of stockpiles of such weapons. An increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons, or the shipment of such weapons to other countries, would heighten the danger of a nuclear war, add to existing distrust and make a disarmament agreement more difficult to achieve. However, it did not appear from operative paragraph 1 of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.235/Rev.3) and from the explanations provided by the Irish representative (1054th meeting) that the proposed measures actually represented a step towards a reduction of the danger of nuclear war. The paragraph in question did not even mention prohibiting States from having nuclear weapons outside their own territory, outlawing such weapons and destroying stockpiles, eliminating foreign bases, or establishing "atom-free" zones. Those problems must be resolved if the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons was to be prevented. A proposal as inadequate as that submitted by Ireland could only create dangerous illusions.

25. The draft resolution did not take into account the far-reaching changes which had occurred recently in international relations; for example, the First Committee had unanimously adopted a draft resolution on general and complete disarmament. Furthermore, it did not attach sufficient importance to the fact that some States were equipping their troops stationed in other countries with nuclear weapons. Very recently, certain countries had agreed to permit the use of their territory as military bases and the construction on their territory of launching pads for rockets containing nuclear warheads. The Western Powers were, moreover, supplying nuclear weapons to their allies. Finally, a programme adopted by NATO called for the equipment of NATO forces in Europe with tactical nuclear weapons. His delegation could not support the Irish draft resolution, because, far from seeking to correct the situation which certain Powers had created, it ignored the dissemination of nuclear weapons to which he had just referred, thus giving it tacit approval.

26. Mr. AIKEN (Ireland) said that his proposal dealt with a limited subject which was, however, of paramount importance at the present time: if the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons was not prevented, those weapons might fall into the hands of smaller countries or revolutionary groups and be employed by them. With regard to the criticisms made by the Soviet, Bulgarian and Czechoslovak representatives, he recalled that some countries had in the past submitted proposals dealing with a single aspect of disarmament; for example, at the twelfth session (697th meeting) the Polish delegation had proposed the establishment of an "atom-free" zone in central Europe and had not mentioned the question of foreign bases at the time. Ireland favoured a limited approach in the matter of disarmament as in others. It would take years to solve the disarmament problem, which had been under discussion since 1919, but the situation which was being taken up for the first time in 1959 might become increasingly dangerous. That was what the Irish proposal was intended to prevent; its aim was not to compel the ten-Power committee to confine its deliberations to the text of the draft resolution, but merely to ensure that the suggestions contained in the draft were included among those that were brought before the committee.

27. As to the drafting change in the first paragraph of the preamble suggested by the representative of Afghanistan (1055th meeting), he had used once again the wording adopted the year before and thought it was not completely satisfactory.

28. Mr. LODGE (United States of America) said that the Irish delegation had drawn attention to a highly important aspect of a larger problem. Therefore, to adopt the procedure of requesting the ten-Power committee to study that question within the framework of this over-all responsibilities did not in any sense imply, as the Soviet representative had contended, that the matter could be considered and resolved separately. His delegation would vote for the draft resolution.

29. The CHAIRMAN put the draft resolution submitted by Ireland (A/C.1/L.235/Rev.3) to the vote.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Sweden, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Sweden, Thailand, Tunisia, Turkey, Union of South Africa, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Burma, Cambodia, Canada, Ceylon, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Ethiopia, Federation of Malaya, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Laos, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Pakistan, Panama, Philippines, Portugal, Saudi Arabia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Albania, Bulgaria, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, China, Czechoslovakia, France, Hungary, Peru, Poland, Romania, Spain.

The draft resolution was adopted by 66 votes to none, with 13 abstentions.

AGENDA ITEM 69

Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/4186, A/C.1/L.236, A/C.1/L.237)

30. The CHAIRMAN announced that the sponsors of the two draft resolutions which had been submitted (A/C.1/L.236, A/C.1/L.237) were trying to work out a joint text. Since several speakers had already dealt with the matter during the discussion of other agenda items, the general debate would undoubtedly be brief and could be combined with the debate on the draft resolutions.

31. Mr. PATHAK (India) said that, although the debate would probably be fairly brief, the question was sufficiently important to warrant the fullest possible exchange of views.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.