

United Nations  
**GENERAL  
ASSEMBLY**

FIFTEENTH SESSION  
Official Records



**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1101st  
MEETING**

Thursday, 3 November 1960,  
at 10.50 a.m.

**NEW YORK**

**CONTENTS**

	Page
<i>Agenda items 67, 86, 69 and 73:</i>	
<i>Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament (continued)</i>	
<i>Report of the Disarmament Commission (continued)</i>	
<i>Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (continued)</i>	
<i>Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (continued)</i>	
<i>General debate (continued) . . . . .</i>	103

Chairman: Sir Claude COREA (Ceylon).

**AGENDA ITEMS 67, 86, 69 AND 73**

Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament (A/4463, A/4503, A/4505, A/4509, A/C.1/L.249, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1) (continued)

Report of the Disarmament Commission (A/4463, A/4500, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1) (continued)

Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/4414, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1) (continued)

Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (A/4434, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.253/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1) (continued)

**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. RIFA'I (Jordan) said that, to ensure the resumption of negotiations on disarmament in accordance with the general desire, it was necessary to find a means of renewing contact between the two main parties, particularly since there appeared to be a certain area of agreement between them. The first concern of the United Nations should be to halt the production of arms forthwith, pending the conclusion of a final agreement on general and complete disarmament and the total destruction of all the armaments in the world. By virtue of their right to live in peace and security, the small nations had a part to play in the pursuit of that goal.

2. It was gratifying to see that the question of disarmament was being kept within the orbit of the United Nations. Indeed, at the 67th meeting of the Disarmament Commission on 17 August 1960, the

Jordanian delegation had stressed the need to forge a link between the Commission and the Ten-Nation Committee, so that the two bodies could be brought within the same framework while performing different functions. In order to facilitate negotiations in the Ten-Nation Committee in accordance with the General Assembly's recommendations, the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission should act as Chairman of that Committee. In addition, the Disarmament Commission might if necessary elect one or more vice-chairmen and a rapporteur for the Committee. The role of the General Assembly was to make recommendations on the principles governing disarmament, and practical arrangements to facilitate their application.

3. Since the proposals of the two sides seemed irreconcilable, no purpose would be served by adopting any of them. On the other hand, the Irish draft resolution (A/C.1/L.253/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1) and the draft declaration submitted by Ethiopia (A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1) deserved serious consideration, for they dealt with urgent and serious issues. The draft resolution introduced orally by Canada at the 1098th meeting<sup>1/</sup> was on the whole commendable. However, the Jordanian delegation might wish to make a few comments on it, particularly with respect to the composition and the exact functions of the proposed ad hoc committee.

4. Mr. BENITES VINUEZA (Ecuador) stressed the increasingly important role of the small and medium-sized Powers in regard to disarmament. The new sociological factor created by the emergence of an international public opinion had to be reckoned with because States, in their anxiety to win the favour of world opinion, vied with one another in making promises without, unfortunately, always considering the prospects for keeping them. Those considerations applied to disarmament because it involved, not merely a technical problem, but a moral and political problem as well: namely, the problem of confidence. The USSR representative had recognized the justice of the desire that safeguards should be forthcoming, in order to strengthen confidence, even before an agreement was concluded.

5. The main source of mistrust was the existence of two utterly irreconcilable political systems. The aim of the Marxist dialectic was to destroy a so-called "bourgeois" society and to replace it by a classless society and a communist State directed by the international proletariat. Confronted with that system, Western democracy sought to preserve the freedom and dignity of the individual. The inevitable clash between those two theses largely explained the factors which had produced the cold war. Unfortunately, the ideological struggle, behind which an immense destructive power had been built up, was further complicated by divergent economic interests and by

<sup>1/</sup> Subsequently circulated as document A/C.1/L.255.

the desire of certain parties to extend their area of influence. True, the destructive power of modern weapons was such that States might hesitate to use them. It would be a mistake, however, to attach too much importance to that factor; the Mexican representative had issued a warning at the 1086th meeting in regard to the danger of accepting the ideas of "clean bombs" or of adjustment to life in underground shelters. In practice, ideological rivalry need not necessarily lead to a trial of strength. The positive factors, such as technical progress, which modified the evolution of human relations by making States interdependent must not be overlooked. The evolution of the Western world towards the abolition of colonialism, the development of the semi-colonial countries, land reform among peoples with a semi-colonial economy, the increased production of consumer goods, and the formation of international opinion, meant that ideological competition could exist without a cold war. The cold war would have no reason to survive if the struggle between systems was reduced to rivalry in improving living conditions.

6. As to disarmament proper a distinction must be made between the desirable and the possible. As the Mexican representative had said, it was not the majority it obtained, but mutual confidence and understanding, that made a plan viable. The Assembly should confine itself to formulating the principles that would restore confidence and creating the machinery needed for negotiation. The proposals for the appointment of a neutral chairman, a vice-chairman and a rapporteur to the negotiating body were worthy of consideration, and Mr. Padilla Nervo, the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, was certainly the most competent person to preside over that body.

7. The draft resolutions before the First Committee showed that the two sides were in agreement on a number of principles, if not on methods. It was for the Committee to make negotiation possible. At the present stage no purpose would be served by making detailed proposals. The best course would probably be for the small and medium-sized Powers which enjoyed the confidence of both parties to prepare a draft resolution stating the general principles and providing for the establishment of a body in which the parties could resume negotiations. The Canadian proposal (1098th meeting) for the establishment of an ad hoc committee seemed especially timely. As to the general principles, all those that were designed to damp down the cold war should be retained, and it should be made clear that the objective was general and complete disarmament and not a mere reduction in armaments, although the latter might be considered as one step on the road to general disarmament. Mention should also be made of the development of economic, social and political co-operation as a means of creating a climate of peace in interdependence. The draft resolution submitted by Ireland on the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (A/C.1/L.253/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1) and the declaration, proposed by Ethiopia, on the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction (A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1) deserved special attention. If it did not prove possible to draft a text acceptable to all it would, as Mexico had suggested, be well to defer any decision on the points in dispute until the Disarmament Commission had attempted to reconcile the opposing views.

8. Mr. FOURIE (Union of South Africa) recalled that General Assembly resolution 1378 (XIV) had raised very high hopes. Hence the Union of South Africa had been deeply disappointed when the Soviet bloc countries had abruptly broken off the Geneva negotiations.

9. The realization of disarmament laid obligations on all countries, for even a small nation might, in the event of a limited conflict, lose control of events and create a situation dangerous to the whole world. Also the cost of armaments was a burden on the small States as well as the great Powers. It must be recognized, however, that agreement among the great Powers was the essential condition for general and complete disarmament. The situation had not developed satisfactorily since the fourteenth session. The attitude of the Soviet Union seemed to have hardened. It had been largely in order to meet that country's demands that the Ten-Nation Committee had been established outside the United Nations. Now the Soviet Union wished to change the composition of that Committee, probably so as to be sure of a majority. As a condition for its agreement to continue disarmament negotiations, it went so far as to demand a change in the structure of the Secretariat and the Security Council. It was unfortunate that those factors should be brought into the already complex disarmament problem. Furthermore acceptance of the condition imposed by the Soviet Union would not bring about complete disarmament. The United Nations would merely be saddled with an additional veto that might paralyse it; nor did he see how the world could have faith in a control system in which every move would be subject, directly or indirectly, to a veto. Nevertheless the Soviet Union and its allies had stated that they genuinely desired disarmament; that was another reason why they should abandon their unrealistic conditions.

10. As to the Western Powers, the United Kingdom representative had given an assurance (1089th meeting) that his country was as determined as ever to find the basis of an agreement with the Soviet Union at that very session, and had added that the Assembly's main task was to promote the resumption of negotiations. At the 1086th meeting the United States representative had shown himself to be entirely of the same opinion.

11. The draft resolution of the Soviet Union (A/C.1/L.249) and that of Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States (A/C.1/L.250) reflected a similarity of views not only on the aim to be pursued—general and complete disarmament—but also on the need to cover at least the following areas in any treaty on general and complete disarmament: (1) the disbanding of all national armed forces and the destruction of all armaments except those required for internal security; (2) the elimination of means of delivering weapons of mass destruction; (3) the destruction of stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction and the cessation of their manufacture; (4) the establishment of an international force within the United Nations.

12. The two parties also appeared to be in agreement on several points relating to the principles which should guide the negotiations: (1) disarmament should be carried out progressively, in stages, within specified periods of time; (2) the disarmament measures should be so balanced that no State or group of States could obtain an advantage at any stage; (3) the disarmament process should be subject to international

control from the outset. Therefore, while there were many differences, there were also areas of agreement. General and complete disarmament would certainly not be achieved by a propaganda war. There would be more chance of achieving it if specific measures were taken in those directions where agreement seemed most likely, such as the cessation of nuclear tests, the use of outer space for peaceful purposes only, and the controlled cessation of the manufacture of nuclear weapons. There was also the question of stopping the spread of nuclear weapons.

13. As to the synchronization of control and disarmament, it seemed that in that field, too, some progress had been made. The West apparently did not insist on the institution of general control machinery before disarmament began. It was concerned rather with setting up control machinery step by step with disarmament measures. Hence the Soviet Union would have no reason to fear that the control system might serve to conceal espionage.

14. Experience had shown that there was no hope of reaching agreement on the whole field of disarmament straight away. Moreover, the mere replacement of one negotiating body by another would not solve the problem. What was needed, first of all, was a sincere desire to reach agreement. The South African delegation saw no reason why the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission should not act as Chairman of the Ten-Nation Committee, provided that he did not have the right to vote; if he had that right, he would eventually not be regarded as neutral.

15. If the appointment of a neutral chairman was not enough to ensure the resumption of negotiations, it might be necessary to consider establishing some interim body which would lapse when it had brought about the renewal of contacts in the Ten-Nation Committee.

16. Mr. BRUCAN (Romania), exercising his right of reply, stated that general and complete disarmament could be obtained only by a global, radical approach. All the attempts made over the past fifteen years to limit and reduce armaments by piecemeal measures had failed; general and complete disarmament could never, *a fortiori*, be achieved by such measures. The only exception was the question of the cessation of nuclear tests, which was of a different nature. In other directions the piecemeal method was ineffective owing to the complexity of modern armaments, advances in military technology, inter-service rivalry, and the world balance of power. The United States leaders themselves had acknowledged that their country's position should be judged in terms of over-all military strength and not in terms of one or other category of weapons. The isolated measures now proposed were not even partial measures of disarmament,

for they lost all significance when compared with the military might of the nuclear Powers. That was why the United Nations had turned towards the new prospects held out by the Soviet proposals for general and complete disarmament.

17. The armaments race could not be halted by isolated measures, for the desire of one party to reach an agreement on a particular matter would always be viewed as an attempt to obtain an advantage over the other party. Moreover, even if an isolated measure was agreed and carried out, each side would strive to offset the reduction in its armaments by accelerating the manufacture of other categories of weapons. In the meantime, nothing would prevent other States from joining the race for nuclear weapons, missiles, or bacteriological or chemical weapons. Hence it was imperative to turn the tide. That could be done only by concluding a treaty which would cover all stages and would ensure that all steps were taken until general and complete disarmament was achieved; for if agreement was reached only on individual stages, the Powers concerned would be free, after the first stage, to resume the armaments race.

18. The question of surprise attack prompted similar comments. It would be futile to try to divorce it from general disarmament, and to think that a surprise attack could be prevented merely by establishing aerial or ground control. There was no means of telling whether a missile would be launched or not, when it could be fired merely by pressing a button. The only way to remove the danger of surprise attack was by eliminating the means of launching it. There again isolated measures would be ineffective, for each side felt that the other could employ various means and different weapons to launch such an attack. Therefore, in order to prevent surprise attacks, an over-all programme of disarmament should provide, from the first stage, for the reduction or elimination of the means and weapons that might be used to mount such an attack, and for control to ensure that all measures were enforced.

19. The refusal to destroy armaments and thus to renounce war as a means of settling international disputes was the most profound source of mistrust; that mistrust could be removed only by dispossessing States of the means of waging war. It was true that partial measures were not without value, in that they might help to lessen tension, to reduce the areas of conflict, and to create conditions for more significant measures of disarmament. However, they could not solve the major problems, such as the arms race, the prevention of surprise attacks, and the elimination of war, which required the adoption of a world-wide programme of disarmament.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.