

# GENERAL ASSEMBLY

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**Chairman: Mr. Miguel Rafael URQUIA (El Salvador).**
**AGENDA ITEMS 64, 70 AND 72**
**Question of disarmament (A/3929, A/3936, A/C.1/L.205, A/C.1/L.206) (continued)**
**The discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests (A/3915, A/C.1/L.202/Rev.1 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.203, A/C.1/L.205) (continued)**
**The reduction of the military budgets of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and France by 10 to 15 per cent and the use of part of the savings so effected for assistance to the under-developed countries (A/3925, A/C.1/L.204, A/C.1/L.205) (continued)**
**GENERAL DEBATE (continued)**

1. Mr. SHTYLLA (Albania) said that the desire of the peoples of the world for effective measures to put an end to the continuing armaments race, especially in the field of nuclear weapons, had never been more urgent. The only beneficiaries of the last two world wars had been the imperialist monopolies, which regarded war as a profitable business and were working to prepare a third world war to be fought with nuclear weapons. That was the purpose of the "cold war" and the "positions-of-strength" policy followed by the rulers of the United States.

2. The attitude of the United States, the United Kingdom and France on the problem of disarmament bore witness to the truth of that statement. Their representatives had attempted to persuade the First Committee that the failure to reach a solution of the disarmament problem was the fault of the Soviet Union. Nothing could be further from the truth. For twelve years the Soviet Union had made and was continuing to make great efforts to reach a radical solution of the disarmament problem. It had long since presented a comprehensive disarmament programme under

suitable international control and, when that programme was rejected by the Western Powers, had advanced realistic new proposals for partial disarmament measures. Like other signatories of the Warsaw Treaty, the USSR had repeatedly and unilaterally reduced its armed forces and taken other practical disarmament measures. The history of the past twelve years proved clearly that responsibility for the failure to make progress on disarmament lay with the Western Powers, which had made the conclusion of a disarmament agreement conditional on the solution of other difficult political problems and had for a number of years tried to limit negotiations to the question of control in isolation from the object of such control, disarmament itself.

3. At present, those Powers were advocating the method of technical discussion as an approach to all aspects of disarmament. His delegation believed that technical and scientific discussions would be useful if their purpose was to bring about agreement on specific disarmament measures. Otherwise they would be a mere stratagem to prevent agreement and justify the continuation of the armaments race.

4. The present attitude of the Western Powers on the question of the cessation of nuclear tests cast serious doubt on their intentions. Not only were they endeavouring by every means at their disposal to evade the specific, realistic and constructive proposals of the Soviet Union but they had also sought, for propaganda purposes, to delude international public opinion by distorting the character of those proposals, while trying at the same time to represent them as mere propaganda manoeuvres on the part of the Soviet Union. But world public opinion would not be deceived, for it could no longer be satisfied with meaningless declarations. The attitude adopted so far by the Western Powers had not only prevented any solution of the disarmament problem, but was fraught with danger for world peace.

5. In his delegation's opinion, the General Assembly must act to promote the conclusion of an agreement on the disarmament problem or on individual aspects of it. In the present situation, disarmament was the key to the relaxation of tension and the safeguarding of peace. Albania recognized that a solution of the problem depended in the first instance on the great Powers. But all countries, large and small, were directly concerned in the matter, and had a right to be heard; the General Assembly must clearly express their desire for the preservation of peace and the elimination of the danger of war.

6. The great majority of speakers in the general debate had expressed the anxiety of the peoples of the world about the dangers inherent in the continuation of nuclear weapons tests and their desire that those tests should be stopped. Albania had always supported an immediate and unconditional cessation

of nuclear tests as a first step towards the elimination of nuclear weapons. It therefore welcomed the Soviet Union's initiative in proposing the cessation of such tests. The USSR had for three years been making energetic efforts to reach an agreement on the cessation of tests and on 31 March 1958 had unilaterally stopped all nuclear weapons tests, appealing to the two other "nuclear Powers" to follow its example. In the face of their refusal to do so and of their systematically negative attitude on the question, the USSR had, in his delegation's opinion, been fully justified in resuming the testing of nuclear weapons.

7. The Soviet Union had declared itself ready to cease nuclear weapons tests immediately and unconditionally under suitable international control; that position was reflected in its draft resolution (A/C.1/L.203). Albania warmly supported that draft, which alone proposed a radical solution of the problem and would enable the General Assembly to make its voice and the voice of world public opinion heard at the Geneva conference scheduled to begin on 31 October 1958. His delegation considered that all countries which favoured the cessation of nuclear tests should vote in favour of the Soviet draft.

8. The draft resolution submitted by the Western Powers (A/C.1/L.205) reflected their refusal to abandon their negative attitude in the question of tests. While ostensibly favouring agreement on the matter they advanced a whole set of preliminary conditions for the obvious purpose of making such an agreement impossible. The temporary suspension of tests which they proposed would last only for the length of time needed to prepare a new series of tests, while the provision for a subsequent extension of the suspension was hedged with conditions which made it impossible to carry out. Moreover, if no agreements had been reached at the end of the one-year period of suspension, test explosions would be resumed with increased intensity in order to make up for lost time. From every point of view, therefore, temporary suspension was unacceptable.

9. There were a number of other reasons why the seventeen-power draft resolution was unacceptable. It imposed no clear and precise obligation on the "nuclear Powers" to conclude an agreement for the effective cessation of nuclear weapons tests. By fixing the suspension interval to coincide with the period of negotiations in Geneva, it left the United States and the United Kingdom free to break off those negotiations whenever convenient to them and to resume tests immediately. It clearly reflected the tendency of the United States to transform political negotiations on the cessation of tests, as well as on other aspects of the disarmament problem, into technical discussions. Moreover, the last paragraph of the preamble made it clear that in the final analysis the purpose of the forthcoming Geneva conference would be to help the United States gather military information, a goal which was utterly at variance with the fundamental purposes of the United Nations. The draft resolution's remaining provisions seemed wholly superfluous.

10. The amendments proposed by the Irish delegation (A/C.1/L.207) in no way changed the substance of the seventeen-Power draft resolution and his delegation hoped that the great majority of the Committee would reject the draft as unacceptable.

11. The General Assembly should take vigorous action to ensure the immediate cessation of nuclear tests. It could do so by rejecting the seventeen-Power draft resolution and adopting the text submitted by the USSR.

12. Another question of great political and practical importance in connexion with disarmament was that of the reduction of military budgets. The Soviet Union's proposal for a reduction of 10 to 15 per cent in the military budgets of the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France, and the use of part of the savings so effected for assistance to the underdeveloped countries (A/C.1/L.204), would not only entail a reduction of armaments and armed forces by those four Powers and thus constitute a genuine step towards disarmament, but would also make possible a signal improvement in the living conditions of a great part of the world's population. His delegation welcomed the Soviet Union's initiative in the matter and hoped that its draft resolution would obtain the unanimous support of the Assembly.

13. In the light of experience, agreement on a comprehensive disarmament programme did not seem possible under the conditions of tension and mutual distrust now prevalent in the world. His delegation considered that the method of seeking separate agreements on the various aspects of the problem proposed in the Soviet memorandum on disarmament measures (A/3929) was the one most likely to lead to positive and specific results, and unreservedly supported the measures it proposed.

14. On the other hand, the Secretary-General's memorandum on disarmament (A/3936) could not be regarded as a valuable contribution to the Assembly's efforts. It contained no proposals for specific disarmament measures; moreover, in speaking only of the suspension, and not of the cessation, of nuclear weapons tests and in giving preference to the method of technical discussions, it failed to maintain objectivity.

15. Some speakers in the debate had expressed regret that the United Nations had been unable to deal with the disarmament question since the twelfth session of the General Assembly. It should be remembered that the United Nations Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee had failed in their task partly because of their composition, which had ensured in advance a majority for the United States position. There could be no fruitful negotiations without equality between the parties. At the twelfth session the United States had sought to impose upon the General Assembly a Disarmament Commission which, while numerically larger, would still ensure a majority for that country. It was that attempt to impose a policy of force which had led to the present impasse.

16. In spite of the recent deterioration in international relations, for which United States policy was responsible, his delegation did not believe that war was inevitable. The relationship of forces in the world now favoured the forces of peace. His delegation hoped that the General Assembly would place itself on the side of the forces of peace and take effective action for disarmament.

17. Mr. SMITH (Canada) expressed gratification at the increasing tendency in the Committee to seek common ground on the question of nuclear weapons tests in

the hope of working out a draft resolution which would command unanimous support. An expression of unity was particularly desirable in view of the Geneva conference scheduled to open on 31 October 1958.

18. There had been too much emphasis on matters of semantics, involving the words "cessation", "discontinuance" and "suspension"; common aims, rather than differences, should be emphasized. It was regrettable that the Soviet representative, in his remarks at the 953rd meeting, had appeared to make light of the Swedish representative's efforts to find a compromise solution.

19. Most of the Committee's members were apparently in agreement on the basic objective of discontinuing nuclear weapons testing under sufficient control. There were, however, important differences as to timing and the relationship of a discontinuance of tests to other aspects of disarmament. The Soviet Union's obscurity in the matter of tests gave ground for real concern. The United States and the United Kingdom had made a contribution to the success of the forthcoming Geneva conference by announcing their willingness to suspend test explosions for one year starting on 31 October 1958, but the Soviet Union had not yet disclosed whether it intended to follow their example.

20. Furthermore, total disarmament, rather than merely nuclear testing, was the central problem confronting the Committee. The existence of nuclear weapons had been made necessary by the existence on a larger scale of conventional weapons; in particular, nuclear weapons were required to offset the huge stocks of conventional armaments controlled by the USSR and its allies. The immediate abolition of nuclear weapons without regard to other factors would create an unhealthy balance of power that might not safeguard peace and might leave exposed the countries on the rim of the communist empire.

21. Canada recognized that the objective of balanced disarmament could be approached only by stages. The suspension of nuclear testing would in many ways be a valuable first step; it could become a permanent cessation of testing, and the accompanying control machinery could become a first-rate experiment in international scientific collaboration, pointing the way to a solution of the problem of controlling other, more difficult, aspects of disarmament. The control establishment might also carry on positive scientific programmes in the spirit of the International Geophysical Year. Nevertheless, the suspension of testing entailed serious risks for the United States and the United Kingdom, which had based their security on nuclear weapons so that they could put their manpower to productive use. Those two Powers were to be commended for the concessions they had made in the interests of reaching agreement on the matter; if the Soviet Union accepted their programme, there was no reason why the total cessation of testing could not be achieved.

22. The great Powers could not be expected to abandon forthwith their capacity to develop and test nuclear weapons, since any agreement to halt testing would necessarily be tentative until a control system was operating effectively. He was convinced that the United States and the United Kingdom were sincerely striving for the cessation of testing. While less convinced of the Soviet Union's good intentions, he was prepared

to accept the statements of its representatives in the Committee and at the Conference of Experts to Study the Possibility of Detecting Violations of a Possible Agreement on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests, held at Geneva in July and August 1958. Canada's stand had been placed on record in April 1958 by Mr. Diefenbaker, the Canadian Prime Minister, who had announced his support for the discontinuance of nuclear tests, "except for the application of known explosive techniques to peaceful purposes, provided that there is suitable international supervision".

23. He shared the fear expressed by the Irish representative at the 953rd meeting that the wide dissemination of nuclear weapons would create anarchy in the world, and he joined in Mr. Aiken's appeal to those not yet engaged in producing such weapons to refrain from doing so. The indiscriminate transfer of nuclear weapons to nations that did not possess them should also be discouraged, but it should not be prohibited completely until appropriate disarmament measures had been agreed upon.

24. He was deeply concerned at the fact that the United Nations Disarmament Commission had been rendered inoperative by the Soviet Union's demand for parity. The principle of parity, if adopted, would quickly destroy the institutions of the United Nations, for it would divide the Member States into rigid opposing groups. The various schools of thought in the General Assembly had not always been properly represented in United Nations bodies; indeed, in 1957, Canada had actively supported a more equitable distribution of seats in the Disarmament Commission. However, the Soviet parity plan constituted a distortion of the prevailing political situation in the world.

25. A new approach to the question of United Nations disarmament machinery was perhaps required. As the Secretary-General had suggested in his memorandum (A/3936), the United Nations might be called upon to add administrative functions to its existing deliberative functions in the field of disarmament if positive results were achieved at the forthcoming Geneva conference. New organs might have to be set up, and the countries participating in them should be selected for functional as well as geographical reasons. There was merit in the suggestion by Prince Wan Waithayakon of Thailand that the Disarmament Commission might be made a consultative body, with sub-committee set up for purposes of negotiation on the basis of the functions to be performed (950th meeting, para. 31). Such questions must be considered urgently, either in accordance with the suggestion of the representative of Mexico (946th meeting) or in some other way.

26. The Soviet Union draft resolution proposing the diversion of funds from military budgets to economic assistance (A/C.1/L.204) was laudable, provided that it was meant seriously. In the past, the Soviet Union had given the under-developed countries little enough except propaganda and bad advice. It was gratifying that the USSR had now begun to furnish economic and technical assistance, even though it had been notably reluctant to channel such aid through non-partisan organizations like the United Nations. The Soviet Union should correct the vast disproportion between its defence expenditures and its contributions to the under-developed countries before directing appeals to other countries with records better than its own.

27. The Canadian Government welcomed the fact that there existed a wide measure of basic agreement on objectives.

28. Mr. DE LEQUERICA (Spain) observed that the Committee was divided, in its present discussion, into two groups, the one of seventy-eight Members which did not possess atomic weapons and the other, of three Members which did. However, considerable efforts were being made to reconcile opposing ideas, for all wanted to avoid the ultimate calamity for mankind. If the essential problems remained unsolved, it was not because of a lack of contacts within the United Nations. Much was hoped for from the quasi-technical talks to start on 31 October 1958. As to what the General Assembly itself could do, the representative of Mexico had made (946th meeting) an excellent suggestion.

29. The United Nations, certainly, had an important part to play in the collective efforts to bring about disarmament, but it should beware of being panicked into a hasty agreement out of fear of the consequences of the continuation of nuclear weapons tests. Goodness of will and generosity of spirit were not enough. Constant vigilance and clear insight into the possibilities of deception were essential to ensure that any agreement was not abused. Nor would the suspension of atomic tests by itself be an adequate measure. It should be but one of a series of measures dealing with all aspects of the disarmament question, worked out in full consciousness of the present situation in the world. Naturally, no country could be expected to forgo its right to retain such arms as were necessary to its own security and self-defence. Various statements had been made in that respect, and he agreed with them. But the security of some should not be sought at the expense of the security of others, and the prospect of peace for the present should not persuade Members to subscribe to agreements which contained dire possibilities for the future. Over-simplified solutions should not be seized upon, lest they allow loop-holes for those who acted in bad faith. That applied, for instance, to the matter of the detection of nuclear test explosions, about which much had been said. When the Soviet Union allowed international control to function in the countries under its domination a step forward would have been achieved. Naturally there was no question of violating the provisions of Article 2, paragraph 7, of the Charter of the United Nations, but everyone knew that that was not the issue involved in the present instance. He would caution against haste, too, in respect of the alleged danger of atomic radiation. First impressions were apt to be misleading, and actions taken under their influence could have disastrous consequences later.

30. It was noteworthy that, despite a general desire to outlaw nuclear weapons, practically every nation, once such weapons were placed within its reach, sought to obtain them. In 1957 France had expressed such an intention. Very recently the Committee had heard the representative of Sweden say that his country was on the way to acquiring nuclear weapons. Everyone wanted to be on an equal footing with the rest and each was convinced that he could stay his hand at the crucial moment. But along that road, disaster lay, as his delegation had pointed out in the general debate at the twelfth session (699th plenary meeting). States should be willing to forgo what they considered to be their

rights for the sake of the general good. An inferiority in arms did not necessarily mean an inferiority in moral force. Even those without atomic bombs could lend their weight to world opinion, a fact which was a force in itself. Moreover, science, which had opened up such possibilities for self-destruction, might itself find the way to protection against them. There was even hope for the moral improvement of humanity, the ultimate defence. Meanwhile, negotiations there must be, and agreements, if possible.

31. Of the draft resolutions before the Committee, the seventeen-Power draft (A/C.1/L.205) seemed to his delegation to offer the best formula for a solution and would therefore receive its vote.

32. Mr. VIDIC (Yugoslavia) observed that the question of the cessation of nuclear weapons tests had taken the foremost place in the Committee's deliberations so far. It was evident, however, that there was no unanimity of views on the matter. The three draft resolutions before the Committee offered three different solutions. The question was whether there was not enough in common between them to offer the basis for a generally acceptable recommendation. Judging only by the actions and the unilateral but conditional declarations of intention of the Powers principally concerned to date, there would appear to be good practical ground for the conclusion of an appropriate arrangement between them for the stopping of tests after 31 October 1958. He understood the term "appropriate arrangement" to mean anything from a unilateral, tacit discontinuance of tests based on the sense of responsibility of the "nuclear Powers", to a formal arrangement for discontinuance. It would not be useful to decide the matter by a majority vote. It was essential to request the "nuclear Powers" to conclude an early agreement on the cessation of nuclear weapons tests under adequate control.

33. He would accordingly offer the following formulation:

"The General Assembly,

"Having in mind the decision of the Supreme Soviet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the declarations of the Governments of the United States of America and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland with regard to their readiness to discontinue tests of nuclear weapons,

"Deeply convinced that this will facilitate the conclusion of an agreement on the cessation of tests,

"1. Calls upon the Powers which have carried out nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons tests to arrange, on the basis of their stated readiness for unilateral discontinuance of such tests, immediate discontinuance of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons tests;

"2. Urges the Powers participants in the forthcoming conference on the cessation of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons tests to conclude an early agreement on the cessation of those tests under an adequate system of control."

34. If adopted, his delegation's proposal would serve to give impetus to the forthcoming talks at Geneva. Should those talks fail, the situation should be reconsidered within the United Nations, perhaps at a special session of the General Assembly convened for the purpose.

35. Mr. TAMAYO (Bolivia) stated his delegation's support for the seventeen-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.205). Mankind had arrived at a stage in history where its only salvation lay in a complete ban on weapons of mass destruction. He was pleased that the draft resolution gave expression to a desire for peace and that it explicitly set out United Nations responsibility in the field of disarmament. The small as well as the great nations were investing huge sums in armaments which could otherwise be devoted to alleviating misery and want. It was therefore to be hoped that the General Assembly would succeed in adopting a disarmament measure at the present session.

36. He proposed that the seventeen-Power draft resolution should be amended to include an appeal to the

great Powers, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 1148 (XII), to devote part of the funds released by any future disarmament agreement to assistance to the under-developed countries.

37. Mr. UNDEN (Sweden), replying to the observations of the Spanish representative, denied that he had said that Sweden would embark upon the manufacture of nuclear weapons if a ban on testing was not soon adopted; indeed, the Swedish Government and Parliament had not yet taken a position on the matter. He had merely stated (946th meeting) that Sweden favoured a halt in testing even though it would soon have the technical capacity to produce nuclear weapons.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.