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Chairman: Mr. João Carlos MUNIZ (Brazil).

Measures to avert the threat of a new world war and measures to strengthen peace and friendship among the nations (A/C.1/L.39)

[Item 72]*

- 1. The CHAIRMAN felt that to place questions of too wide a scope on the agenda might lead to misunderstandings. In the present case, the item under discussion, which had been proposed by Poland, appeared to cover the whole purpose of the United Nations, in all its complexity.
- 2. Nevertheless, since the General Committee and the Assembly itself had come to a decision, all that remained to be done was to reach agreement on the interpretation to be given to the formula that had been adopted, which related primarily to the world situation as a whole and to measures which might relieve the tension. The debate on questions already dealt with by the General Assembly during the current session should not be reopened, even if those questions were closely connected with the problem of peace. No doubt they could not be left completely on one side, but the debate should not be allowed to disintegrate into discussion of a number of separate and isolated points.
- 3. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) observed that the Chairman was certainly right to urge the necessity of remaining within the framework of the agenda item and to point out that the decision of the General Committee and the Assembly had been unanimous. Nevertheless his introductory statement had been somewhat surprising. It was not the first time that the present difficulty had arisen. Some doubt might therefore be felt about the purpose of the Chairman's warning, which of course could not be interpreted as intended to limit freedom of expression or to avoid the consideration of specific questions which remained crucial even though they had already been discussed.
- 4. However that might be, it was for the Chairman to guide the discussion, on the clear understanding that delegations could not be prevented from dealing with

*Indicates the item number on the agenda of the General Assembly.

the substance of the various problems. The title of item 72 had been adopted without amendment, and anything that came within the field envisaged by the sponsors of the proposal should be taken into consideration. Any other course, even if a saving of time were the pretext, would be contrary to the spirit of the Charter and the principle of free discussion of an item regularly included in the agenda by the competent organs of the United Nations.

- 5. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that it would be impossible to examine the question thoroughly without referring to such questions as Korea, disarmament and collective measures. It was the Chairman's duty, however, to see that the problem was treated as a whole and not divided up into as many different aspects as the Charter had articles.
- 6. He would therefore not oppose references to specific questions, provided that they were not discussed as though they were separate agenda items.
- 7. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (Syria) remarked that there could be no confusion in the light of the Polish explanatory memorandum (A/2229) and draft resolution (A/C.1/L.39). The real danger was less the division of the problem than the lengthy discussion of questions which had no connexion with the agenda item.
- 8. The CHAIRMAN said that that remark justified his anxiety.
- 9. Mr. SKRZESZEWSKI (Poland) thanked the USSR representative for upholding the principle of free discussion of a question on the agenda. A solution must be found for certain vital problems, and he welcomed the assurance that the Chairman would not oppose their examination.
- 10. The draft resolution was divided into three parts, which in turn were divided into paragraphs. The moment when a solution of the problems that divided the world appeared possible was not the proper moment to hinder discussion of all the questions covered by the Polish proposal.
- 11. In submitting the agenda item under discussion, the Polish delegation had been inspired by a profound conviction that the world, torn by the last war and by the tension that had existed during the post-war

period, might now find a remedy for its ills. The important step recently taken by the People's Republic of China and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea with a view to reopening the negotiations at Panmunjom and finding a peaceful solution for the dangerous problem of Korea had been unreservedly supported by the Government of the Soviet Union, and hope had been reborn in the hearts of hundreds of millions of human beings determined to do everything in their power to avert war. That was the spirit in which the Polish delegation had drawn up part I of its draft resolution.

- Poland was convinced that peace depended chiefly on the relations between the great Powers. Every decision taken to that end must have their support, in accordance with the principle laid down in the Charter. It was not lack of modesty that had led him to make proposals intended to avert the dangers inherent in the situation; it was rather a demonstration of the peaceloving spirit of a people for whom war represented very real suffering: the loss of 6 million men, destruction, famine, epidemics, the horrors of the concentration camps, executions, the obliteration of towns and villages, 250,000 persons buried under the ruins of Warsaw, every family in Poland stricken by the loss of at least one of its members—those had been the fruits of the war launched by fascism. After such experiences the Polish people had the right to claim that its desire for peace was born of the sufferings it had endured.
- 13. The friendship between the Soviet Union and Poland had been cemented in the darkest hours of the war; the first units of the new Polish army had been formed within the framework of the army of the USSR, while the help given by the Soviet Union in every sphere, without any political conditions, had saved the Polish nation from destruction and made possible the country's recovery and economic development. That friendship, born on the battlefield in the course of a struggle for the same goals and for the triumph of peace, was today indestructible. Thus the Polish people, liberated politically and socially, wholeheartedly accepted their duty to contribute to the happiness of other peoples.
- 14. At the conclusion of hostilities all eyes had turned towards the United Nations, established, with a view to preventing the outbreak of a new war, on the principle of international co-operation. If that co-operation had continued, peace would have rested on solid foundations. The Polish delegation had from the outset stressed the importance of collaboration between the great Powers, which bore the chief responsibility in the political and military spheres. On 6 November 1944 Stalin, speaking of the achievements of the Dumbarton Oaks Conference, had said that the international organizations could function effectively only on one condition: the maintenance of a spirit of unanimous co-operation between the great Powers, on which the heaviest responsibility rested.
- 15. Unfortunately the United Nations had not fulfilled the hopes placed in it. Eight years later the international situation was tense and threatening. The United Nations should not tolerate the establishment of blocs hostile to a group of Member States. Similarly, to promote effectively the cause of collective security, the Organization should contribute towards putting an end to

the war in Korea. That could be achieved if among the representatives to the United Nations were the lawful representatives of the Chinese nation, a nation of 500 million people, and of the Korean people. Their absence was bound to prejudice the authority of the United Nations and the cause of international peace and security.

- 16. The United Nations should confront the danger and plan means of strengthening peace by large-scale economic and political co-operation. All delegations should be inspired by faith in the United Nations to make a common effort to give the peoples a better future.
- 17. Part I of the Polish draft resolution related to the problem of the cessation of hostilities in Korea. The Polish delegation had always considered that the cruel war imposed on the Korean people, apart from the destruction and suffering it entailed, was a source of tension and danger for international security. The solution of that problem would lead to the solution of other difficulties which disturbed public opinion; hence the attitude of the various governments with regard to Korea was a yardstick of their plans and intentions. The People's Republic of China and the People's Democratic Republic of Korea had taken a step which might result in the termination of hostilities and in consultations with a view to a peaceful settlement of all the other related problems.
- 18. Although the history of the Korean question in the United Nations was very melancholy, the United Nations must make every effort to reach a solution of the problem based on the interests of the Korean people and of world peace, in accordance with the Charter. The Korean people were entitled to expect that the Organization would recognize their independent, peaceful, sovereign status as a unified democratic State. Millions of peace-loving human beings expected that the United Nations would bring about the end of hostilities and thus remove the danger of a spread of the conflict. That was the spirit in which the Polish delegation, following the step to which he had just referred, had, in its revised draft resolution (A/C.1/L.39), changed sub-paragraph (b) of part I of its original text, as submitted in its explanatory memorandum (A/2229). On the basis of those proposals, it would be possible to take up the other most urgent international problems in an atmosphere of calm.
- With regard to disarmament, in 1946 the United Nations had in General Assembly resolution 41 (I) reached a unanimous decision on the principle of the general regulation and reduction of armaments and the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. Unfortunately those principles had not been put into practice. Certain governments had taken advantage of the conflict in Korea to accelerate the armaments race, thus increasing the danger of a new war and placing a heavy burden on the workers of their countries. If proof were needed of the injury done to the peoples, it was sufficient to think of the possibilities of economic progress, especially in the least-developed countries or those that had suffered the most, which were frustrated by the concentration of resources and efforts on the production of weapons of war. Moreover, disarmament would lessen international tension and increase confidence among the peoples.

- 20. In that connexion the utilization of atomic energy for military purposes and other weapons of mass destruction must be internationally prohibited and a strict control established. The fate of Hiroshima and Nagasaki hung over the world, and in the meantime the power of that weapon had been increased and bacterial weapons had inflicted terrible sufferings on the Korean and Chinese people. The Polish draft resolution called upon all States which had not yet acceded to or ratified the Geneva protocol of 1925 to accede to or ratify it. Seeing that no nation had a monopoly of atomic energy, nobody need imagine that he would be spared in a war.
- 21. Sincere collaboration among the five great Powers was essential for the resumption of negotiations and the re-establishment of confidence. The Polish delegation appealed to those States, with a view to ending the paralysis which afflicted the United Nations, to conclude a peace pact to which other States could adhere.
- The Polish delegation, desiring to remove the obstacles hindering the resumption of normal relations, felt obliged to point out that participation in the Atlantic bloc was incompatible with membership in the United Nations. That bloc had been established on the pretext of an alleged danger from the Soviet Union and the States which maintained friendly relations with it. That was a gross misrepresentation of the policy of the Soviet Union and of the States which had had to mourn the greatest number of victims during the last war and which had consistently affirmed their will to peace, both in their international relations and in their domestic policy. Thus the Atlantic bloc had become dangerous to the maintenance of peace, especially since it had been joined by neo-Hitlerites and avengers. It was a weapon against the peace-loving peoples and merely aggravated international tension, thus injuring the national interests even of its members. The Polish people were particularly disturbed by the reawakening of hitlerite, revisionist and militarist Germany and by the reconstruction of its army under the command of ex-hitlerite generals. Poland, warned by bitter experience, was therefore opposed to the North Atlantic Treaty. Would not the governments which had acceded to that treaty, so dangerous to peace, finally listen to the millions of human beings who recoiled from the idea of a "cold", "psychological", "preventive", "ideological" or "inevitable" war?
- 23. The Polish delegation submitted the proposals embodied in parts II and III of its draft resolution. It realized of course that all the problems could not be solved immediately. But peace was worth untiring efforts. Recent years had shown that a policy of *diktat* could lead the world only to more terrible sufferings than those it had endured during the last war.
- 24. Having stated the essential problems which called for positive action by the United Nations, the Polish delegation reserved the right to explain its views at a later stage in the debate.
- 25. The People's Republic of Poland, backed by the entire Polish people, had always endeavoured to promote peaceful relations between States, whatever their political or social system might be, and had repeatedly proved, especially in the United Nations, that it was determined to fight for peace. Similarly, its domestic

- policy had concentrated all efforts on reconstruction. It refused, therefore, to believe that all that had been achieved might be destroyed by a new war; there was no international problem that could not be settled by co-operation based on respect for the rights and interests of the different States. If the seventh session succeeded in averting the danger of a new war, it would deserve a place in history.
- 26. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) emphasized that the question before the First Committee raised problems of the utmost importance for all the people of the world—the cessation of hostilities in Korea, the reduction of armaments and armed forces, the prohibition of atomic weapons, and the conclusion of a peace treaty between the five great Powers. It was essential to find a solution for the problems mentioned in the draft resolution submitted by the Polish representative if the threat of a new war were to be averted. That was why questions concerning measures to that end had always appeared in the Assembly's agenda in recent years.
- In its efforts to achieve a rapid settlement of the problems the USSR had been guided by its constant policy, which had been so well defined by Stalin when he had stated that its aim was peace and friendship among peoples and the development and strengthening of international friendship. As it had repeatedly stated, the USSR felt that the contrast between the socialist and the capitalist systems did not in any way preclude collaboration between the Soviet Union and the capitalist States. From the very outset the USSR had constantly adhered to that principle. Lenin and Stalin had stated on many occasions that the aim of the Soviet State was to achieve peaceful economic development. Mr. Vyshinsky went on to quote various state-ments by Lenin and Stalin, the first made in 1920 and the most recent in December 1952, emphasizing that it was perfectly possible for capitalism and communism to exist peacefully side by side and that the USSR had acted on that principle when it had concluded economic and diplomatic agreements with many capitalist countries. Those facts spoke for themselves and could not be minimized, in spite of the efforts made by those who harboured unfriendly and even hostile feelings towards the Soviet Union. It should suffice to recall the practical steps indefatigably undertaken by the USSR to strengthen collaboration among all peoples and to promote commercial relationships on the basis of the principles laid down by Stalin when, in reply to questions asked by American journalists, he had stated that the peaceful co-existence of capitalism and communism was possible provided that there was a mutual desire for such co-operation, and that States were prepared to respect their obligations and to apply the principle of equality of their interests and of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other States.
- 28. On 9 March 1953, on the occasion of Stalin's funeral, Mr. Malenkov, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, and his deputies, Mr. Beria and Mr. Molotov, had stated that the foreign policy of the USSR would continue to aim at maintaining and strengthening peace, opposing all preparations for a new world war, and achieving international collaboration with all States which were prepared to participate on a basis of reciprocity, and that the USSR

would continue to be guided by the principles of Lenin and Stalin according to which peaceful and lasting collaboration between the capitalist and the socialist systems was possible.

The war in Korea had increased the danger of a new world war. Its conclusion would certainly facilitate the settlement of other important questions which were still in abeyance, complicating international relations and impeding the stabilization of international peace and security. Among the most important of those questions was the reduction of armaments and armed forces, the prohibition of atomic weapons, and the establishment of international control over the observance of that prohibition. In spite of all the disagreements which those questions had aroused, they must continue to be examined and an attempt must be made to overcome the divergencies, because it was by discussion and argument that the truth would eventually emerge; and the United Nations was the right place for such discussion. Until those problems had been solved, there could be no tranquility, no collaboration and no lasting peace.

30. With regard to the problem of disarmament and the prohibition of atomic weapons, the General Assembly had already recognized, in its resolution 41 (I), the need to arrange for an early general regulation and reduction of armaments and armed forces and to expedite consideration of a draft convention or conventions for the creation of an international system of control and inspection, such conventions to include the prohibition of atomic and all other major weapons adaptable to mass destruction and the control of atomic energy to the extent necessary to ensure its use only for peaceful purposes. That resolution contained an appeal to all the Members of the United Nations to render assistance to the Security Council and the Atomic Energy Commission in order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and collective security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources. Unfortunately none of those provisions had yet been put into practice, although nothing could justify delay in the solution of the problem. There was a tendency among the organs of the United Nations to study it in the abstract. The practical proposals which had been submitted for more than six years had not corresponded to the provisions of the resolution. But the principles of the resolution itself could not give grounds for any objection. That also applied to the resolution that had just been adopted by the General Assembly (424th plenary meeting) entitled: "Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments". That resolution stated that the programme it set forth should be carried out under effective international control in such a way that no State would have cause to fear that its security was endangered. The resolution also stated that the purpose of a system of world-wide disarmament was to prevent war and to release the world's human and economic resources for the purposes of peace. The States which had voted in favour of that resolution had undertaken to base their foreign policy on those principles, and it must be emphasized that any policy based on force was incompatible with those principles. Such a policy could not contribute in any way towards the maintenance of peace and the reduction of armaments or the prohibition of atomic weapons. On the contrary, it would presuppose an ever-increasing supply of armaments and armed forces, the development of aggressive schemes with all their consequences, war psychosis and the aggravation of international tensions, whereas there could be no real peace without a favourable political atmosphere.

31. It should be borne in mind that during the 424th plenary meeting the USSR delegation, desiring to achieve an agreement, had proposed certain amendments (A/L.149) which would have enabled it to vote in favour of the draft resolution recommended by the First Committee and would have facilitated the task of the Disarmament Commission. His delegation could only express its disappointment at the failure of the effort it had made to eliminate the differences which had separated it from the sponsors of the draft resolution. They had feared that the deletion of the reference to resolution 502 (VI) would be the death-knell of that resolution. Such an attitude only proved the worthlessness of that resolution, and that was precisely why the USSR delegation considered that the resolution was not a sufficiently solid foundation for peace. In opposing the USSR amendment the United States representative had adopted an attitude which was hardly likely to favour international collaboration and might almost be termed dangerous. It was obviously impossible to develop complete and co-ordinated plans if from the very outset delegations adopted the attitude that no concession could be admitted, that the text was unchangeable, and that no step could be made either forward or backward.

32. With regard to the reduction of armaments and armed forces, speakers had argued in the Disarmament Commission that it would be impossible even to attempt such a reduction without first creating a favourable atmosphere. It was quite true that there was a link between the reduction of armaments and the state of international tension. On the other hand, it was perfectly clear that measures for the reduction of armaments would in themselves help to lessen the tension, to eliminate suspicion and to create a favourable atmosphere. The United Nations could not simply wait for the atmosphere to improve. On the contrary, to increase armaments, to continue to establish bases, to refuse to prohibit atomic weapons and to go on manufacturing atomic bombs was bound to make the atmosphere worse rather than better.

33. Military alliances also could not help to improve international relations, as public opinion in the Western countries was realizing more and more. It had been stated recently in the French newspaper Le Monde that the policy and strategy of the Atlantic bloc were not those of cold war but of war pure and simple. That policy must be changed, especially since experience had shown that in certain countries, particularly the USSR, a policy based on force or threats could not produce the desired results.

34. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization had no justification whatsoever, since the United Nations existed and had been created precisely in order to unite the strength of the peoples of the world for the maintenance of international peace and security. The Charter stated in its preamble that armed force should not be used, save in the common interest. The common interest did not mean the interest of certain States or certain groups of States. That important provision was designed to prevent certain Member

States from organizing secret groups which other States could not join. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization was just such a group. It was impossible to accept the existence of a State within a State, particularly when its aims were opposed to those of the United Nations. That was why his delegation agreed with that of Poland in considering that participation in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was incompatible with membership in the United Nations. In addition, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization did not take account of the social and political changes which flowed from the inevitable progress of history. Its members were trying in vain to obstruct the implacable march of events, an effort which only led them to internal contradictions and confusion. NATO had met with ever-growing difficulties and, in the four years of its existence, had not been able to accomplish any of the tasks it had set for itself. The cause lay in the laws of history, which must be taken into account, and those who failed to do so would be doomed. NATO was therefore doomed to fail, as even some of its own supporters recognized. The New York Herald Tribune had stated recently that the North Atlantic Treaty Organization was approaching, if not a definite deadlock, at least a dead centre. The ruling circles of the Western countries were themselves adopting an ever more cautious attitude to the measures taken by NATO, which was steadily declining in prestige.

35. The same applied to the European Defence Community, an organization which was unacceptable politically to many Western European countries and impracticable technically for several others. That fact had been illustrated in the articles published recently in France by Professor Lavergne, a professor of the Faculty of Law at the University of Paris, who emphasized that the adoption of the treaty establishing the European Defence Community would put an end to the sovereignty of the signatory States. It was true that some people, like Mr. Spaak, considered that the idea of sovereignty was out of date and should be dropped. But many members of the First Committee would certainly refuse to share such an approach to the concept of sovereignty, a concept which was essential to the very existence of States. The USSR would certainly never accept such an interpretation.

36. Professor Lavergne had also stated that if the treaty for the creation of a European army were ratified, the defence of metropolitan and overseas France would depend almost entirely on a body composed of nine dictators appointed by commissioners, only two of whom would be French. What did the representative of France think of that?

37. As for the Schuman Plan, Professor Lavergne considered it to be the most dangerous weapon against England which had been devised for the past century and a half. The European Coal and Steel Community would in effect constitute a permanent European coalition which would deprive the British iron and steel industry of all its export markets; in fact the establishment of the Community represented nothing less than a declaration of economic war against the United Kingdom. That was something on which the United Kingdom representative to the United Nations should reflect.

38. The establishment of organizations such as NATO and the European Defence Community was incompat-

ible with the work for peace recommended in the Charter. Their aim was to take the place of the United Nations by trying first of all to make it act in a manner contrary to its own interests.

The rearmament of West Germany had raised great hopes among the NATO leaders, and much effort had been expended to encourage the ratification of the appropriate agreement by the Bundestag at Bonn. Even so, the ratification had been voted only by a small majority; the bulk of the population of West Germany had been strongly opposed to it, because many considered the agreement as a new step towards a third world war and as an effort to promote the division of Germany. The New York Times had itself recognized recently that a rearmed and nationalist Germany could produce the spark to set off a war between the capitalist countries. An attempt had been made to justify the militarization of West Germany by claiming that it would be necessary to use German forces for the defence of the West against a threat from the East. That was just a bogy set up by the reactionary circles which were interested in the armaments race. Generalissimo Stalin had stated in 1946, in reply to a question by the Moscow correspondent of the London Sunday Times whether the Soviet policy in Germany might not become a Russian instrument against Western Europe, that any utilization of Germany by the USSR against Western Europe and the United States was quite out of the question, not only because the USSR was bound to the United Kingdom and France by a treaty of mutual assistance against any German aggression, and to the United States by the decisions of the Potsdam Conference, but also because such a utilization would be contrary to the basic national interests of the Soviet Union. Stalin had emphasized that the USSR policy on Germany could be summarized as the demilitarization and democratization of Germany. The USSR was as determined as ever to follow that policy, which it believed would lead to the strengthening of peace in Europe and throughout the world.

40. It was pertinent to ask how those who had voted for resolution 502 (VI) had carried out their duty to relieve the peoples of the world from the burden of armaments and free them from the threat of war. There could be no doubt that the resolution had had no influence whatsoever on the foreign or internal policy of the governments which had voted for it. On the contrary, the United States, the United Kingdom, France and other Western countries continued to increase their armaments and armed forces, to expand their military bases and to establish new ones. For example, the military budget of the United States for the financial year beginning on 1 July 1953 represented 73 per cent of the total budget. The same situation prevailed in the United Kingdom and France, which, together with Greece and Turkey, were now spending approximately 11,000 million dollars a year on their programmes. At the beginning of 1953 the armies of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization had amounted to nearly 6 million men. Considerable sums had been used to develop atomic weapons, especially in the United States. Such measures were not in the least likely to strengthen mutual confidence among the nations. All those military programmes were creating an atmosphere most harmful to confidence. It was therefore essential to insist on the cessation of

those measures, which were likely to unleash a new world war.

They were also a burden on the economy of the participating States, and especially affected the standard of living of the masses of the people. In the United States, for example, taxes in 1952-1953 were twelve times higher than they had been in 1938. In France taxes were 2.6 times higher, and in the United Kingdom they had doubled. Unemployment was growing, standards of living were constantly falling, and budgetary deficits were increasing. The Chancellor of the Exchequer of the United Kingdom had recently stated that rearmament was forcing the Government to apply severe restrictions to non-military production and consumption. It was well known, however, that exports of industrial goods played an extremely important part in the economy of that country. Mr. Eden had said in the House of Commons on 3 February that one of the factors preventing the investment of capital in the United Kingdom was the fact that its taxes were among the highest in the world. He had explained that situation by the armaments race which the country had been obliged to undertake. As well known a person as Mr. Lovett had admitted that taxes in the United States also were extremely heavy and that the military recruitment programme would call for unprecedented sacrifices from American citizens. The position in other countries was still more serious. Approximately twothirds of the total budgets of the European members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization were devoted to rearmament, thus giving rise to an extremely difficult economic situation.

42. The Preliminary Report on the World Social Situation (E/CN.5/267/Rev.1), prepared by the

Secretariat of the United Nations, was very interesting. It stated that one-half of the population of the world could not meet its most elementary needs and was a constant prey to disease and malnutrition. The countries concerned were certainly not the USSR and countries friendly to it. Mr. Vyshinsky said he had drawn attention to the report in order that members of the Committee should fully understand the reasons for the submission of the Polish draft resolution. It was essential to show the repercussions of the activities of States members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization on the standards of living of needy peoples. The problem was closely connected with the existence of prejudices by which part of the world population was made a victim while certain classes were privileged. Of course, any progressive measures taken in the interests of the masses entailed disadvantages for the privileged. That was inevitable, however, if a healthy policy based on the well-being of the majority, a really democratic policy, was to be established.

43. Attempts had been made to justify the vast expenditures on military programmes by stating that such programmes were necessary in order to avert threats from the peoples' democracies. Those arguments, which were already thirty-five years old and had been advanced since the establishment of the USSR, were pure fiction, not believed even by those who hawked them about. The New York *Herald Tribune* itself had written recently that many people did not regard the Soviet Union as a real danger.

44. He would continue his statement at the next meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.15 p.m.