

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

FIFTEENTH SESSION

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Chairman: Mr. Karel KURKA (Czechoslovakia).

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/4680, A/4704, A/C.1/828, 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.1-3, A/C.1/L.255/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-5, A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2, A/C.1/L.260/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.264/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/C.1/L.267) (*concluded*)

Report of the Disarmament Commission (A/4463, A/4500, A/4680, A/C.1/L.250, A/C.1/L.251, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.255/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-5, A/C.1/L.259 and Add.1-2, A/C.1/L.260/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.267) (*concluded*)

Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/4414, A/4680, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3, A/C.1/L.260/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.267) (*concluded*)

Prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons (A/4434, A/4680, A/C.1/L.252/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3, A/C.1/L.260/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.267) (*concluded*)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (*concluded*)

1. The CHAIRMAN recalled that at its 1136th meeting the Committee had decided to defer further consideration of disarmament in order to allow delegations time for preliminary consultations. Those consultations having now been completed, he invited the Committee to resume its consideration of the question.

2. Mr. GROMYKO (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said the USSR Government believed that the problem of general and complete disarmament was one which called for urgent action. However, the United States Government had expressed the desire for a temporary postponement of discussion on the question in

view of the fact that it was not at present ready to enter into negotiations; and accordingly the USSR Government had decided not to press for further discussion at the Assembly's current session. An understanding had been reached between the two Governments to continue their exchange of opinions on questions relating to disarmament during June and July 1961, to resume negotiations in an appropriate body whose composition was to be agreed upon, and to inform the General Assembly at its sixteenth session of the progress made.

3. He hoped that the draft resolution submitted jointly by the USSR and the United States (A/C.1/L.267) would be approved unanimously by the General Assembly.

4. Mr. STEVENSON (United States of America) said that the United States was eager to resume negotiations on disarmament at an early date and under conditions which would produce results, not further disappointments. It had undertaken an intensive study of its disarmament policies in the light of developing political, scientific and technical trends, and was pressing that study to completion. The United States Government would be ready for what it hoped would be fruitful negotiations by the end of July. In the meantime, exchanges of views between the States concerned on questions relating to disarmament, and to the resumption of negotiations in an appropriate body whose composition was to be agreed upon, would continue during June and July. An understanding had been reached between the United States and the Soviet Union to inform the General Assembly at its sixteenth session of the progress made.

5. The draft resolution submitted jointly by the United States and the Soviet Union (A/C.1/L.267) provided that the General Assembly should decide to take up at its sixteenth session the problem of disarmament and all pending proposals relating to it. The United States hoped that the draft resolution would receive unanimous support.

6. Mr. NESBITT (Canada) said that Canada regarded the conclusions reached as a result of recent consultations as a significant step forward. It particularly welcomed the United States representative's statement that his country would be ready to resume detailed negotiations on disarmament in July 1961. He hoped that continued consultations between the two Powers principally concerned would result in full agreement on a satisfactory form for the negotiations and on the basic principles by which the latter should be guided. Such agreement was the essential foundation for productive negotiations which could lead to an effective programme of disarmament.

7. Canada also regarded as highly significant the fact that the United States and Soviet representatives had recognized the fundamental interest of the United Nations in the question of disarmament, which was

* Resumed from the 1135th meeting.

implicit in their agreement to inform the General Assembly at its sixteenth session of the progress made in the negotiations. It was confident that once negotiations were under way the negotiating body would give due consideration to appropriate means for establishing a continuing relationship between the parties and the entire membership of the United Nations. It was important to create some procedure whereby States which were not parties to the negotiations could be associated with them; and Canada had worked very hard at the first part of the fifteenth session to achieve that objective. Moreover, the need for a link between the negotiating parties and the United Nations had been recognized in the statement on disarmament unanimously endorsed by the Commonwealth Prime Ministers at their meeting in London in March 1961. In the view of the Canadian delegation, the Disarmament Commission, far from interfering in the process of direct negotiation between the parties primarily responsible for reaching agreement, could play a useful role. It could assist the negotiators by considering their progress reports and by transmitting to them the views of Member States on disarmament, where appropriate. He therefore hoped that the negotiating body would give careful consideration to the establishment of satisfactory means of communication with the Disarmament Commission. Indeed, after there had been some opportunity to assess the requirements arising out of the resumed negotiations, it might be desirable to examine again the feasibility of establishing further machinery for the effective consideration of views expressed in the Disarmament Commission.

8. Canada fully supported the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.267), and hoped that it would be unanimously adopted.

9. Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) said that the operative paragraph of the draft resolution provided that the Assembly should take up at its sixteenth session "all pending proposals relating to" the problem of disarmament. He wished to point out that the ten-Power draft resolution submitted during the first part of the fifteenth session (A/C.1/L.254 and Add.1-3), of which Ethiopia was a sponsor, did not relate to disarmament as such. He therefore wished to reserve the position of his delegation in that specific respect.

10. Mr. ADEEL (Sudan) said that, subject to the same reservation as that made by the representative of Ethiopia, the Sudan would support the draft resolution.

11. The CHAIRMAN put to the vote the draft resolution submitted by the United States and the Soviet Union (A/C.1/L.267).

The draft resolution was adopted unanimously.

12. Mr. WACHUKU (Nigeria) said the fact that the resolution had been sponsored by the two major Powers should not be taken to mean that the smaller Powers had lost interest in the question of disarmament. He reserved the right of his delegation to have its say on the subject.

13. Mr. BERARD (France), explaining his vote on the draft resolution, said that throughout the disarmament negotiations France had consistently defended a number of principles which it regarded as fundamental. It had always considered that technical measures of disarmament must go hand in hand with the restoration of mutual confidence, and that negotiations should be informed with a spirit of understanding and a real desire to reach agreement. Consequently, the French delegation applauded the efforts which had been made by a number of delegations to narrow the gap between the opposing positions.

14. While the French delegation agreed that the success of negotiations would depend partly on the choice of suitable procedural machinery, it questioned whether the ideas some delegations had in mind would promote rapid agreement. There already existed an appropriate body in which negotiations could be resumed—the Ten-Nation Committee, which had been established by agreement between its principal members. That body was fully qualified to deal with questions of disarmament and to work out the constructive proposals which would be necessary before the problem could be solved. France therefore hoped that negotiations would shortly be resumed.

15. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that with the adoption of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.267), the Committee had completed its consideration of disarmament at the fifteenth session. On the Committee's behalf, he expressed the hope that the forthcoming negotiations would be fruitful.

16. At its next meeting, the Committee would have to elect a new Rapporteur, the present Rapporteur being unable to attend the resumed session.

The meeting rose at 3.40 p.m.