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REGULATION, LIMITATION AND BALANCED REDUCTION OF ALL ARMED FORCES
AND ALL ARMAMENTS: REPORT OF THE DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (TREATY) ON THE REDUCTION
OF ARMAMENTS AND THE PROHIBITION OF ATOMIC, HYDROGEN AND OTHER
WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Report of the First Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Oscar THORSING (Sweden)

1. By resolution 715 (VIII) of 28 November 1953 the General Assembly requested the Disarmament Commission to report to it and to the Security Council not later than 1 September 1954. The fourth report of the Disarmament Commission was duly submitted to the General Assembly (A/2685) and to the Security Council (S/3276).
2. At its 476th plenary meeting on 24 September 1954, the General Assembly decided to include the report of the Disarmament Commission in the agenda of its ninth session under the title "Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments: report of the Disarmament Commission". At the same meeting the General Assembly referred the item to the First Committee for consideration and report.
3. On 30 September 1954, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics requested the inclusion of an additional item in the agenda of the ninth regular session, entitled "Conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction", and forwarded a draft resolution on the item (A/2742 and Corr.1). An explanatory memorandum was distributed as document A/2742/Add.1. At the

492nd plenary meeting on 6 October 1954, the General Assembly decided to include the item in the agenda of the ninth session and referred it to the First Committee for consideration and report.

4. At its 684th meeting on 8 October, the First Committee decided that the two items should be considered concurrently.

5. The First Committee considered the items at its 685th to 702nd meetings held between 11 and 27 October.

6. At the 685th meeting, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/750) whereby the General Assembly would instruct the Disarmament Commission to prepare for confirmation by the Security Council a draft international convention providing for the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction and their elimination from the armaments of States, a substantial reduction in armaments and the establishment of international control over the implementation of these decisions on the basis of the French and United Kingdom proposals of 11 June 1954.

The draft resolution further provided that the convention should contain the following basic provisions:

1. The following measures to be taken simultaneously:

(a) In six months or one year, States should reduce their armaments and armed forces (from the 31 December 1953 strength) and budgetary appropriations for military requirements (from the 1953 amount) by 50 per cent of agreed levels.

(b) To supervise the reduction, a temporary international control commission should be established under the Security Council with the right to require States to provide the necessary information on the measures taken by them to reduce armaments and armed forces. The commission should take the necessary steps to supervise the fulfilment by States of the obligations assumed by them in connexion with the reduction of armaments, armed forces and appropriations for military requirements. States should periodically supply the commission at established intervals with information concerning the implementation of the measures provided for in the convention.

2. On completion of the measures referred to in paragraph 1, the following measures should be taken simultaneously:

(a) In six months or one year, States should reduce their armaments, armed forces and budgetary appropriations for military requirements by the remaining 50 per cent of the agreed levels.

(b) A complete prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction should be carried into effect, the production of such weapons should be discontinued and they should be entirely eliminated from the armaments of States; all existing atomic materials should be used only for peaceful purposes.

These measures were to be completed not later than the measures taken for the reduction of armaments and armed forces referred to in paragraph 2 (a), and the production of atomic and hydrogen weapons should cease immediately, as soon as a start was made with the reduction of armaments, armed forces and appropriations for military requirements in respect of the remaining 50 per cent of the agreed standards.

(c) States should institute a standing international organ for the supervision of the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction, the discontinuance of the production of these weapons and their elimination from the armaments of States and the reduction of armaments, armed forces and appropriations for military requirements. This international organ should have full powers of supervision, including the power of inspection on a continuing basis to the extent necessary to ensure implementation of the convention by all States.

The draft resolution further provided that the Disarmament Commission should be instructed to study and submit recommendations on the proposal concerning the prohibition of the "use of nuclear weapons except in defence against aggression" in the Franco-British memorandum of 11 June 1954.

7. At the 688th meeting, the Philippines submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/751) whereby the First Committee would decide to create a Working Group, composed of the members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, to try to reach agreement on any or some aspects of the various disarmament proposals, and to report back by 15 November 1954. At the 700th meeting, the Philippines withdrew this draft resolution.

8. At the 688th meeting Canada submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/752) whereby the General Assembly would, inter alia,

1. Conclude that a further effort should be made to reach agreement on comprehensive and co-ordinated proposals to be embodied in a draft international disarmament convention providing for (a) the regulation, limitation and major balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; (b) the total prohibition of the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction of every type, together with the conversion of existing stocks of nuclear weapons for peaceful purposes; (c) the establishment of effective international control, through a control organ with rights, powers and functions adequate to guarantee the effective observance of the agreed regulations, limitations and reductions and the prohibition of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction and to ensure the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only;

The whole programme to be such that no State would have cause to fear that its security was endangered;

2. Request the Disarmament Commission to seek an acceptable solution of the disarmament problem taking into account the Anglo-French proposals of 11 June 1954 (DC/SC.1/10), as well as other proposals;

3. Suggest that the Disarmament Commission reconvene its Sub-Committee;

4. Request the Disarmament Commission to report as soon as sufficient progress had been made.

At the same meeting the representative of Canada appealed to the representatives of France, the USSR, the United Kingdom and the United States of America to co-sponsor the Canadian draft resolution. The representatives of France, the United Kingdom and the United States agreed at that meeting to co-sponsor the Canadian draft resolution, and on 14 October, the draft resolution (A/C.1/752/Rev.1) was circulated under the joint sponsorship of Canada, France, the United Kingdom and the United States.

9. At the 697th meeting, the representative of the USSR agreed to co-sponsor a revised draft resolution incorporating several amendments which had been agreed with the other four sponsors. At the same meeting the representative of Canada introduced, on behalf of Canada, France, The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States, a revised joint draft resolution (A/C.1/752/Rev.2) containing the following modifications in the operative part:

1. Paragraph 1 (a) to read: "The regulation, limitation and major reduction of all armed forces and all conventional armaments;"

2. Paragraph 1 (c) to read: "The establishment of effective international control, through a control organ with rights, powers and functions adequate to guarantee the effective observance of the agreed reductions of all armaments and armed forces and the prohibition of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and to ensure the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only;"

3. Paragraph 2 to read: "Requests the Disarmament Commission to seek an acceptable solution of the disarmament problem, taking into account the various proposals referred to in the preamble of this resolution and any other proposals within the Commission's terms of reference;"

10. At the 699th meeting, India submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.100) whereby the General Assembly would, inter alia,

1. Recommend to the Disarmament Commission that it take into consideration as part of the "other proposals" provided for in resolution A/C.1/752/Rev.2:

(a) The study of ways and means of establishing an "armament truce" pending agreement on a disarmament convention;

(b) Procedures for effective co-operation with and the ascertainment of the views of States not members of the Disarmament Commission;

(c) The discussions and suggestions on disarmament in the General Assembly;

(d) The determination of the factors which should govern the equitable reductions and levels of armed forces and conventional armaments in respect both of their quantum and character; and

2. Decide that the ninth session of the General Assembly should stand recessed on 10 December 1954, to be reconvened by the President as appropriate.

At the 701st meeting, the representative of India withdrew paragraph 2 of the Indian draft resolution and accepted the referral of the revised draft resolution (A/C.1/L.100/Rev.1) to the Disarmament Commission.

11. At the 699th meeting, Australia submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.101) whereby the General Assembly would recommend to the Disarmament Commission that it request the Secretariat as soon as practicable to prepare a working paper for the Commission and for circulation to all the Members of the United Nations for their information, giving a descriptive and factual presentation of the present positions of the great Powers on various aspects of the disarmament problem. At the 700th meeting, the representative of the Philippines agreed to co-sponsor the Australian draft resolution. At the 701st and 702nd meetings, the co-sponsors accepted a suggestion by the representative of Syria and withdrew the words "descriptive and". At the 702nd meeting they accepted a suggestion by the representative of Peru and replaced the word "factual" by "documentary". The Australian-Philippine revised draft resolution was circulated as document A/C.1/L.101/Rev.1.

12. At the 701st meeting, the representative of Canada introduced, on behalf of Canada, France, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the United Kingdom and the United States, a joint draft resolution (A/C.1/L.102) whereby the General Assembly would refer to the Disarmament Commission for appropriate consideration, the Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.100/Rev.1) and would decide to transmit to the Disarmament Commission the records of the meetings of the First Committee at which the Indian draft resolution was discussed.

13. At the 702nd meeting, El Salvador submitted amendments (A/C.1/L.103) to the five-Power joint draft resolution (A/C.1/L.102) which, at the same meeting were revised in the form of a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.103/Rev.1) whereby the General Assembly would:

1. Refer to the Disarmament Commission the Australian-Philippine draft resolution (A/C.1/L.101/Rev.1); and

2. Decide to transmit to the Disarmament Commission the records of the meetings of the First Committee on items 20 and 68 of the agenda.

14. At the 702nd meeting, the Committee proceeded to vote. The Committee agreed without objection to vote first on the five-Power joint draft resolution (A/C.1/752/Rev.2). A motion by the representative of India that the second five-Power joint draft resolution (A/C.1/L.102) should be given priority in the voting over the Indian draft resolution was approved by the Committee without objection. A motion by the representative of El Salvador that his country's draft resolution should be given priority in the voting over the Australian-Philippine draft resolution was adopted by 36 votes to 15, with 6 abstentions.

The five-Power joint draft resolution (A/C.1/752/Rev.2) was approved unanimously.

The second five-Power joint draft resolution (A/C.1/L.102) was approved by 58 votes to one, with no abstentions.

The draft resolution of El Salvador (A/C.1/L.103/Rev.1) was put to the vote paragraph by paragraph with the following results:

Paragraph 1 was adopted by a roll-call vote of 24 to 23, with 11 abstentions.

In favour: Argentina, Brazil, Burma, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iran, Israel, Lebanon, Mexico, Nicaragua, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, Yemen and Yugoslavia.

Against: Australia, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, China, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Ethiopia, Iceland, Iraq, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Sweden, Syria, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of South Africa, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uruguay.

Abstaining: Afghanistan, Belgium, Cuba, India, Indonesia, Liberia, Luxembourg, Pakistan, Panama, Peru and Thailand.

Paragraph 2 was adopted by a roll-call vote of 55 to none, with 3 abstentions.

In favour: Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Burma, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Czechoslovakia, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Ethiopia, France, Greece, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Lebanon, Liberia, Luxembourg, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of South Africa, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen and Yugoslavia.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 47 votes to none, with 8 abstentions.

With the agreement of the respective sponsors, the draft resolutions of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (A/C.1/750), India (A/C.1/L.100/Rev.1) and Australia and the Philippines (A/C.1/L.101/Rev.1) were not put to the vote. 15. The First Committee therefore recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following resolutions:

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CONCLUSION OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (TREATY) ON THE REDUCTION
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WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

A.

The General Assembly,

Reaffirming the responsibility of the United Nations for seeking a solution of the disarmament problem,

Conscious that the continuing development of armaments increases the urgency of the need for such a solution,

Having considered the fourth report of the Disarmament Commission of 29 July 1954 (DC/53 and DC/55) and the documents annexed thereto, and the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/750) concerning the conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction,

1. Concludes that a further effort should be made to reach agreement on comprehensive and co-ordinated proposals to be embodied in a draft international disarmament convention providing for:

(a) The regulation, limitation and major reduction of all armed forces and all conventional armaments;

(b) The total prohibition of the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons and weapons of mass destruction of every type, together with the conversion of existing stocks of nuclear weapons for peaceful purposes;

(c) The establishment of effective international control, through a control organ with rights, powers and functions adequate to guarantee the effective observance of the agreed reductions of all armaments and armed forces and the prohibition of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, and to ensure the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes only;

The whole programme to be such that no State would have cause to fear that its security was endangered;

2. Requests the Disarmament Commission to seek an acceptable solution of the disarmament problem, taking into account the various proposals referred to in the preamble of the present resolution and any other proposals within the Commission's terms of reference;

3. Suggests that the Disarmament Commission reconvene the Subcommittee established in accordance with paragraphs 6 and 7 of General Assembly resolution 715 (VIII) of 28 November 1953;

4. Requests the Disarmament Commission to report to the Security Council and to the General Assembly as soon as sufficient progress has been made.

B.

The General Assembly

1. Refers to the Disarmament Commission for appropriate consideration the draft resolution of India contained in document A/C.1/L.100/Rev.1;

2. Decides also to transmit to the Disarmament Commission for its information the records of the meetings of the First Committee at which this draft resolution was discussed.

C.

The General Assembly

1. Refers to the Disarmament Commission for its consideration the joint draft resolution submitted by Australia and the Philippines contained in document A/C.1/L.101/Rev.1;

2. Decides to transmit to the Disarmament Commission for its information the records of the meetings of the First Committee at which items 20 and 68 of the agenda of the ninth session of the General Assembly were considered.

