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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA
OF THE THIRTEENTH REGULAR SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED BY THE
UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

THE REDUCTION OF THE MILITARY BUDGETS OF THE USSR, THE UNITED
STATES OF AMERICA, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND FRANCE BY 10-15 PER CENT
AND THE USE OF PART OF THE SAVINGS SO EFFECTED FOR ASSISTANCE
TO THE UNDER-DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Letter dated 18 September 1958 from the Chairman of the delegation
of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, addressed to the
President of the General Assembly

New York, 18 September 1958

The USSR delegation, on the instructions of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, submits the following question for inclusion in the agenda of the thirteenth session of the General Assembly as an item of an important and urgent character:

"The reduction of the military budgets of the USSR, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France by 10-15 per cent and the use of part of the savings so effected for assistance to the under-developed countries".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure, I attach an explanatory memorandum and a draft resolution on this question.

(Signed) A. GROMYKO
Chairman of the Delegation of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The Soviet delegation, on the instructions of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, proposes that the General Assembly should consider, as an item of an urgent and important character, the question of "The reduction of the military budgets of the USSR, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and France by 10-15 per cent and the use of part of the savings so effected for assistance to the under-developed countries".

A decision on this question is a matter of importance and urgency because the ever-increasing military budgets resulting from the continuing arms race are adversely affecting the economy of States and the expansion of trade among States and are a heavy burden on the peoples. The constant rise in military expenditures diverts vast sums of money and manpower resources from the production of goods designed to satisfy the vital needs of the people to the production of war materials.

A reduction in military budgets by the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France would be an important practical step towards halting the arms race and freeing the peoples from the ever-increasing burden of military expenditures. A reduction in the military expenditures of States would also make it possible to channel the savings so effected into developing the peaceful sectors of the economy, raising the level of employment, and enhancing the well-being of the people.

At the same time, a reduction in military expenditures would make it possible to devote part of the savings to the economic development of the under-developed countries. This could greatly assist the under-developed countries in carrying out a broad programme of industrial construction, agricultural reorganization on a modern basis, and the raising of the material and cultural level of their peoples.

A measure such as the reduction of military expenditures would be of particularly great importance today since no agreement has as yet been reached on a broader programme of disarmament and, under these circumstances, the most practical method of solving the disarmament problem is that of gradual, partial measures. Just such a measure is the proposal by the Soviet Union for a reduction in the military budgets of the great Powers, which have the largest armed forces and, consequently, make the largest expenditures for military purposes.

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In submitting this proposal, the Soviet Government is also mindful of the fact that previous discussion of the disarmament problem has made it quite obvious that including the question of the reduction of military budgets in a single package with other disarmament questions makes its rapid solution more difficult. In order to facilitate the reaching of an agreement on this question, the Soviet Government proposes that the question of the reduction of the military budgets of States should be considered as a separate item of the General Assembly agenda and that its consideration should not be made contingent on the taking of other disarmament measures..

The Soviet delegation, on the instructions of the Soviet Government, submits the attached draft resolution for consideration by the General Assembly.

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THE REDUCTION OF THE MILITARY BUDGETS OF STATES BY
10-15 PER CENT AND THE USE OF PART OF THE SAVINGS
SO EFFECTED FOR ASSISTANCE TO THE UNDER-DEVELOPED
COUNTRIES

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Considering that inflated military expenditures, reflecting the continuing armaments race, are disrupting the economies of many States and lowering the level of living of the peoples,

Noting that a reduction in military expenditures, while helping to bring about a slackening of the armaments race and a relaxation of international tension, would at the same time make it possible not only to reduce the burden of taxation but also to allocate substantial sums for assistance to the under-developed countries;

Recommends that the Governments of the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France should assume an undertaking to reduce their military budgets by not less than 10-15 per cent,

Calls on the aforementioned States to allocate for assistance to the under-developed countries a certain part of the funds released through the reduction of military budgets, to be used in carrying out the most urgent projects for the economic and industrial development of the under-developed countries.
