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SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF ITEMS FOR THE AGENDA OF THE
FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY:
ITEM PROPOSED BY IRELAND

THE PREVENTION OF THE WIDER DISSEMINATION
OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Letter dated 15 August 1960 from the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., of Ireland
to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

New York, 15 August 1960

The prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons

On the instructions of the Government of Ireland I have the honour to request that a supplementary item should be placed on the agenda of the fifteenth session of the General Assembly entitled: "The prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons". It will be recalled that the Government of Ireland requested the inscription of a similar item at the last session of the General Assembly.

..... I enclose herewith an Explanatory Memorandum regarding the proposed item in accordance with rules 14 and 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

(Signed) Eamonn L. KENNEDY
Chargé d'Affaires, a.i.

Explanatory Memorandum

1. In the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth regular sessions of the General Assembly the Irish delegation drew attention to the dangers to world peace involved in the spread of nuclear weapons and to the urgent need for international agreement which would ensure that the existing nuclear Powers would remain the sole possessors of such weapons.
2. At the thirteenth session the Chairman of the Irish delegation, Mr. Frank Aiken, Minister for External Affairs, submitted for the First Committee's consideration a draft resolution which in its operative part proposed the establishment of an Ad Hoc Committee to study the question and make appropriate recommendations to the fourteenth session. He expressed the view that measures to prevent the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons could not await a comprehensive disarmament settlement, since many years would have to elapse before any such settlement could be achieved. Indeed the failure to check the dissemination of nuclear weapons during the long period of general disarmament negotiations might in itself render these negotiations fruitless.
3. Mr. Aiken asked for a separate vote on a preambulatory paragraph of the draft resolution, which would have the General Assembly recognize the dangers inherent in the further dissemination of nuclear weapons. The result of the vote was 37 in favour, none against, with 44 abstentions. Mr. Aiken expressed his satisfaction that the recognition of the danger of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons was unopposed and he withdrew the draft resolution as a whole, indicating that he did not wish to insist on any particular method of dealing with the generally acknowledged danger.
4. During the fourteenth session the question of the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons was inscribed as a separate item on the Assembly's agenda at the request of Ireland. After debating the item, the General Assembly adopted the following resolution on 20 November 1959, by 70 votes to none, with 12 abstentions:

"The General Assembly,

"Recognizing that the danger now exists that an increase in the number of States possessing nuclear weapons may occur, aggravating international tension and the difficulty of maintaining world peace and

thus rendering more difficult the attainment of general disarmament agreement,

"Convinced therefore that consideration of this danger is appropriate within the framework of deliberations on disarmament,

"Noting the resolution of the United Nations Disarmament Commission of 10 September 1959,

"Desiring to bring to the attention of the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee its conviction that consideration should be given to this problem,

"1. Suggests that the Ten-Nation Disarmament Committee, in the course of its deliberations, should consider appropriate means whereby this danger may be averted, including the feasibility of an international agreement, subject to inspection and control, whereby the Powers producing nuclear weapons would refrain from handing over the control of such weapons to any nation not possessing them and whereby the Powers not possessing such weapons would refrain from manufacturing them;

"2. Invites the Committee to include the results of its deliberations on these matters in its report to the Disarmament Commission."

5. In the light of subsequent developments, the Irish Government believes that the General Assembly will wish to consider further this important and urgent question at its fifteenth regular session and, to this end, Ireland requests that the item, "The prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons" be placed upon the provisional agenda of the fifteenth session.
