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**Chairman: Mr. Mario AMADEO (Argentina).**

## AGENDA ITEMS 73 AND 72

**Continuation of suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests and obligations of States to refrain from their renewal (A/4801 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.283/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.288) (*continued*)**

**The urgent need for a treaty to ban nuclear weapons tests under effective international control (A/4799, A/C.1/L.280, A/C.1/L.288) (*continued*)**

1. Sir Michael WRIGHT (United Kingdom) said that the present series of nuclear explosions, which was subjecting the world to steadily increasing radiation hazards, demonstrated the need for a treaty banning all nuclear tests for all time. It was understandable that, in the present circumstances, there should be a tendency to rely on appeals to the nuclear Powers to refrain from further testing on a voluntary basis. The objection to that approach was, first of all, that it had already been tried and had failed, and, secondly, that only effective international controls could ensure that nuclear tests were not being carried out.

2. It was reassuring to note the widespread recognition that nuclear testing could be successfully halted only on the basis of a formal agreement embodying effective international control. He had been pleased to hear the Indian representative's denial, at a recent meeting, that his delegation favoured merely the uncontrolled suspension of testing. He recalled that in the memorandum accompanying its request for the inclusion in the agenda of the item relating to the suspension of tests (A/4801/Add.1), which had been submitted prior to the Soviet Union's resumption of testing, the Indian delegation had asserted that any State which resumed testing would become primarily responsible for the deterioration of the world situation and had urged renewed efforts to reach agreement on a treaty banning tests.

3. The recent Belgrade Conference of Non-Aligned Countries had also called for the early conclusion of a test-ban agreement and for a new moratorium on testing. Shortly afterward, the Soviet Union had rejected the United Kingdom-United States offer of a moratorium

on nuclear tests in the atmosphere, controlled only by national stations.

4. The Soviet Union's unilateral violation of the voluntary, uncontrolled moratorium after three years—in violation of General Assembly resolutions and in breach of faith with its partners in negotiation—showed that only a formal treaty obligation, with an adequate system of international control, could offer reasonable hope for compliance with a ban on nuclear testing. Throughout the three years of negotiation at Geneva, the United Kingdom had sought unswervingly to bring about the conclusion of such a treaty. Of the twenty-four articles and three annexes in the draft treaty under consideration at Geneva, agreement had been reached by the spring of 1961 on the preamble, seventeen articles and two annexes. The remaining sections consisted of compromise proposals submitted by the United States and the United Kingdom with a view to meeting Soviet objections; and even those sections were open to negotiation. The United Kingdom was prepared to sign the treaty at any time or to conduct further negotiations.

5. The records of the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests had been made available each month to Governments and to the general public. The United Kingdom had sought throughout the negotiations to avoid all recrimination, and had appealed to the Soviet Union to deal with the treaty as a matter divorced from the cold war. He renewed that appeal now, and called upon all countries to exert their influence in favour of the conclusion of a worldwide treaty under international control.

6. As long ago as 1946, the United States had offered to transfer all its atomic energy plants to an international agency capable of maintaining a fully effective control system. The Soviet Union, desiring to retain complete national sovereignty over nuclear weapons, had rejected the plan. Had it accepted the United States offer, no nuclear testing would be under way today.

7. During the current session of the General Assembly, the Soviet representative had on various occasions suggested that only pressure by the Soviet Union had brought about the start of negotiations on a test-ban treaty. In fact, however, the Foreign Secretary of the United Kingdom had submitted to the Subcommittee of the Disarmament Commission on 2 July 1957 a proposal by the Western delegations that a group of experts should meet at an early date to work out a system of control over the suspension of nuclear tests.<sup>1/</sup> Mr. Khrushchev had not accepted that proposal until May 1958. In July and August 1958, the experts had met, and had reached agreement on the general lines of a system of technical controls. The Geneva Conference on the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons

<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1957, document DC/112, annex 11.

Tests, which had begun in October 1958, had been voted full support at three successive sessions of the General Assembly. Although it had not, strictly speaking, been a United Nations conference, it had been meant to be the agent of the Organization; the present Secretary of the First Committee had attended it as an observer on the Secretary-General's behalf and had played a helpful role in resolving differences between the two sides.

8. Broadly speaking, the aim of the Geneva Conference had been to take the first practical step in the field of internationally agreed disarmament under internationally operated control. The Conference had represented the longest and most sustained effort yet made in the field of disarmament negotiations, and had come closer to success than any previous effort. It had proved beyond any question that a workable test-ban treaty could be concluded.

9. His delegation was convinced that a test-ban treaty was urgently needed and should not be held up pending disarmament agreements or political settlements. An adequately controlled treaty would not only halt testing and the production of increasingly frightful weapons; it would also constitute a first practical step towards controlled disarmament and initiate the process of building confidence among nations and lessening the danger of war.

10. By the spring of 1961, it had been agreed at Geneva that the three major nuclear Powers should sign a treaty banning nuclear tests under effective international control. The Soviet Union had begun by insisting that the treaty be concluded between the United States, the United Kingdom and the USSR alone, with no provision for the adherence of other countries, on which the United States and the United Kingdom insisted. But there was agreement that if the three Powers signed such a treaty, and with the support of the United Nations joined in urging all other countries to adhere to it, it was inconceivable that any country could hold out against world opinion as expressed in that manner.

11. By the date he had referred to, virtually all the difficulties recently cited by the Indian representative had been overcome. The Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom had agreed on the establishment of an international control system embracing: a control commission of eleven members, four of whom would be from Western countries, four from Communist countries and three from uncommitted countries; a single administrator, who would have five deputies; permanent control posts, each with about thirty technicians, situated in the territory of parties to the treaty, and teams of experts which would make inspection visits to strictly limited areas where seismic instruments indicated that a suspicious event might have taken place.

12. The major points of disagreement had, in essence, narrowed down to only two: the number of annual inspection visits, and the nationality of the six or eight experts making up the inspection teams and of the heads of the permanent control posts. The Soviet Union had proposed that there should be three annual inspections in the territory of each of the original parties, while the United States and the United Kingdom had at first proposed twenty inspections and, subsequently, a sliding scale of from twelve to twenty. The Soviet Union had asked that the captain and half of any team inspecting Soviet territory should be Soviet citizens, while the United States and the United Kingdom, in

order to avoid self-inspection, had proposed that the captain and half of any team inspecting the territory of either of the two sides should be from the other side and that the other half of the team should be from neutral countries. Although both sides had agreed that one-third of the staff of control posts should consist of nationals of Western countries, one-third of nationals of Communist countries and one-third of nationals of neutral countries, the Soviet Union had insisted that all posts situated in the USSR should be headed by a Soviet citizen.

13. In March 1961, the Soviet Union had repudiated its earlier assent to a single administrator and had called for a triumvirate, each member of which would have the right to veto any administrative act of the control organization. The United States and the United Kingdom had refused to agree, but had proposed that if any party to the treaty wished to make a complaint against the administrator or request his dismissal, the matter should be decided by the control commission by majority vote, a procedure which would give the members from uncommitted countries the deciding voice in the event of disagreement between the Western and Communist States.

14. Since all the preliminary work of a technical, scientific and legal nature had already been done, a treaty could be signed at an early date if the three main points just referred to were settled.

15. He wished, in particular, to draw the Committee's attention to the role which the Western negotiators proposed to give to the uncommitted countries in the control organization. It had been agreed that except in the appointment of the administrator and in budgetary matters—two exceptions insisted upon by the Soviet Union—the control commission should take decisions by majority vote, which would place the members from uncommitted countries in the pivotal position already described. It had also been agreed that one-third of the staff of control posts should be from uncommitted countries. Under the Western proposals, moreover, the uncommitted countries would provide half of the members of inspection teams, and the administrator would be open to dismissal by a majority vote of the control commission. His Government believed that, since the question of nuclear testing affected the security of the entire world, it was proper that the uncommitted countries should be given an influential role. There participation in a world-wide control system was the surest guarantee that the latter would never be abused by the great Powers and would never be used for purposes of espionage.

16. His delegation had been astonished to hear the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union assert in the General Assembly (1016th plenary meeting) that the United States and the United Kingdom had never agreed to the complete discontinuance of all nuclear tests. The only tests not covered by the Western draft treaty were underground tests with a seismic magnitude of less than 4.75, which could not be reliably detected with existing equipment. The Soviet Union had accepted that threshold, and had itself proposed that the problem should be dealt with by declaring a moratorium on that category of explosions. The Western Powers had suggested that the moratorium should last for three years, during which time joint research would be conducted on control over underground tests below the agreed threshold, and that at the end of the three years the control commission should recommend by majority vote whether the tests in question

should also be banned by the treaty itself. On 28 August 1961, the United States representative at Geneva had gone further, stating that the United States was ready to negotiate for the immediate lowering or even elimination of the threshold, provided that the Soviet Union agreed to changes in the control system which proportionately improved the means of detection.

17. The Soviet representative's attention should also be drawn to the fact that the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States (A/C.1/L.280) described the objective of the proposed treaty as "the cessation of all nuclear weapons tests in all environments".

18. The Soviet representative had stated at the 1168th meeting that there was no practical basis for discussing the question of nuclear tests separately from that of general and complete disarmament. Yet Mr. Khrushchev himself had asserted that the surest way to sabotage the suspension of testing was to link it with the question of general and complete disarmament. The two cases involved different problems and control procedures; moreover, agreement on the cessation of nuclear testing could only serve to facilitate agreement on disarmament. The real obstacle to the early conclusion of a test-ban treaty was the unwillingness of the Soviet Union to accept an international control system in which the small and uncommitted countries would participate and, in many respects, have a decisive voice. If the Soviet Union matched the goodwill displayed by the Western Powers, and remaining points of disagreement could easily be settled. It was essential that the Soviet Union should cease to employ the methods of power politics in the present atomic world.

19. His delegation hoped that the Committee would endorse the principles contained in the United States-United Kingdom draft resolution, so that the authority of the General Assembly would be thrown behind the early conclusion of a treaty banning nuclear tests under effective international control.

20. Mr. HAEKKERUP (Denmark) recalled that a few days previously the Soviet Union had announced its decision to explode a 50-megaton bomb in the atmosphere before the end of October. For years, the peoples of the world had feared the uncontrollable hazards of radio-active fall-out from nuclear test explosions. Their fears had been expressed by the representatives of many countries, including his own, in the general debate that had just concluded in the Assembly. The Soviet announcement had greatly increased the concern felt by the Danish people, and his delegation, together with those of Canada, Iceland, Japan, Norway and Sweden, was therefore submitting a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.288)<sup>2/</sup> whose sole aim was to appeal to the Soviet Union to refrain from carrying out the proposed explosion. It was designed to avoid a lengthy debate, so that the Committee could take action on the matter immediately, without prejudice to its forthcoming discussions.

21. The test in question would be the biggest explosion of the atomic age, and would mean a rise in fall-out by an amount comparable to that of the aggregate fall-out from all the previous tests in the current series. It had been said that the Soviet Union had felt compelled to undertake the series in order to enable it to

protect itself from aggression by hostile Powers. Whether or not such fears were justified, the explosion of the 50-megaton bomb would serve no scientific or defensive purpose. The Soviet Union already had the power to use the most destructive atomic weapons if it wished; furthermore, the achievements of Soviet space technology were known to the whole world. There was therefore no good reason for the explosion. The dangers to present and future generations resulting from increased contamination of the atmosphere were beyond doubt. The six Powers had taken the initiative in submitting the draft resolution because the regions in the neighbourhood of the Arctic Circle would be those most exposed to the immediate fall-out; but the risk affected the whole of mankind.

22. In that spirit, the sponsors requested that their draft resolution should be given absolute priority.

23. Mr. OKAZAKI (Japan) said that while his delegation intended to speak at a later stage on the general aspects of the items under discussion, it felt compelled to intervene in connexion with the emergency situation referred to by the representative of Denmark. The Japanese people had been extremely concerned when the Soviet Union, which had repeatedly asserted that it would never be the first to resume nuclear weapons tests, had embarked on its current series of tests. That concern had reached the point of outrage when the Soviet Union had announced its intention to explode a 50-megaton hydrogen bomb.

24. His country knew from experience the horror of atomic war. More than 200,000 Japanese had been killed by the bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, and even now, sixteen years later, several hundred persons suspected of suffering from diseases due to the after-effects of radiation were admitted to hospitals every year, and nearly 100 persons died every year from such diseases. When the United States had carried out a hydrogen bomb test in the Pacific region in March 1954, the radio operator of a Japanese fishing vessel had died as a result of the fall-out produced. Even the Soviet Government had stated, in its announcement on the resumption of tests, that the harmful effects of thermo-nuclear weapons tests were well known to the Soviet Union. Despite its promise that every measure would be taken to minimize those effects, abnormally high radio-active fall-out had been detected in Japan since the resumption of testing. The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation had said in its first comprehensive report (A/3838) that contamination of the environment by nuclear explosions involved new and largely unknown hazards to present and future populations. Japan was particularly exposed to the radio-activity resulting from the Soviet tests because of its geographical position; the fall-out reached Japan in a matter of days, with undiminished strength.

25. But the matter was one of concern not only to Japan and the other sponsors of the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288. The effects of the explosions would affect all peoples of the world, and even their descendants. It was for those reasons that Japan had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution. The introduction of that proposal was not intended to detract from the importance of the other draft resolutions before the Committee. His delegation was second to none in its enthusiasm for a suspension of nuclear weapons tests and in its recognition of the necessity for a treaty to ban such tests under international control. The adoption of the draft resolution would not

<sup>2/</sup> The provisional version of document A/C.1/L.288 which was circulated at the 1173rd meeting listed only the six original sponsors of the draft resolution (Canada, Denmark, Iceland, Japan, Norway and Sweden).

prejudice the discussion of the other draft resolutions; indeed, it would give added strength to any appeal for a suspension of tests. Furthermore, any such appeal would lose much of its moral force if the General Assembly failed to take action on the emergency which had arisen. His delegation therefore associated itself with the Danish delegation's request for absolute priority for the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288.

26. Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India), speaking on a point of order, said that his delegation was opposed to giving priority to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288. The Soviet Government had stated as early as 30 August 1961 that the Soviet Union had worked out designs for a series of super-bombs of over 20 megatons, and Mr. Khrushchev had said on or about 15 October that his country intended to explode a 50-megaton bomb. It was precisely because of such statements that his delegation had been urging that priority should be given to the question of a ban on all nuclear tests. After two weeks of debate, the Committee had decided to give priority to agenda item 73, submitted by the Indian delegation. It would be unjust, therefore, to grant priority to a draft resolution which had only just been submitted.

27. The CHAIRMAN pointed out that under the rules of procedure a representative speaking on a point of order could not deal with the substance of the matter under discussion. The representative of India would have an opportunity to comment on the substantive aspects of the question in due course.

28. Mr. IQBAL (Pakistan) said that his delegation fully supported the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288 and wished to be added to the list of sponsors. Although areas near the Arctic Circle would be especially exposed to fall-out from the proposed Soviet explosion, the latter would also affect adversely the health and welfare of the whole world. He was in favour of the proposal to give that draft resolution absolute priority.

29. Mr. GREEN (Canada), speaking in support of the draft resolution of which his delegation was a sponsor, pointed out that it was not in competition with the Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.283/Rev.1). Indeed, Canada intended to vote for that draft. However, the emergency created by Mr. Khrushchev's announcement that the Soviet Union would explode a 50-megaton hydrogen bomb within a few weeks or days—or even hours—demanded immediate United Nations action. It was the greatest challenge the Organization had ever faced; if it failed to deal with a problem of that magnitude, there seemed little use in its attempting to resolve lesser issues.

30. The General Assembly and the peoples of the world had from the outset expressed concern regarding the effects of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests. Even before the latest Soviet announcement, the breakdown of the three-year moratorium had led to the introduction by Member States, including India, of draft resolutions calling upon the Powers concerned to stop testing. The appalling answer to the alarm and anxiety which had been voiced in the Assembly was to take the form of a nuclear explosion which, added to the previous tests carried out in the current Soviet series, would result in a fall-out yield equal to two-thirds of that from all tests carried out by all nations between the years 1945 and 1958. It was a gesture of defiance of the wishes of all peoples and of contempt for United Nations resolutions.

31. Immediately upon learning of the Soviet intention to explode a 50-megaton bomb, Canada had sought to deliver a note of protest to the Soviet Government. However, the Soviet Embassy had refused to accept the note, on the ground that the proposed detonation was purely a domestic matter of the Soviet Union. Surely, no one could seriously argue that an explosion which would fill the atmosphere with radio-active dust was a purely internal matter. The very fact that the United Nations had been dealing with the question of the cessation of nuclear tests for years, and that protests against tests had been made all over the world, showed that the question was not one solely of domestic concern; fall-out knew no national boundaries. Indeed the Soviet people themselves would undoubtedly welcome a reversal of the decision to explode a 50-megaton bomb, for the effects of such an explosion would endanger their health as well as that of all peoples. If the Soviet Union refused to heed the protests of its neighbours—and Canada was one such neighbour—they had no alternative but to seek to bring to bear through the United Nations the moral force of world public opinion. He could not believe that the Soviet Union would remain insensitive to a General Assembly appeal to desist from the announced test.

32. For those reasons, Canada had joined in sponsoring the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288, and urged that it should be given absolute priority.

33. Mr. CHAKRAVARTY (India), conceding that the draft resolution just introduced was not in conflict with the Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.283/Rev.1), pointed out that the latter was the more comprehensive, in that it would call for a ban on all kinds of test explosions by all nations capable of conducting them. Moreover, if it was true, as some representatives had contended, that the Indian proposal would not bind any Power, then surely a similar moral appeal made to a single Power would be less effective still; and if the weight of world public opinion would deter the Soviet Union from carrying out its tests, why should it not be brought to bear on all the nuclear Powers? The sponsors of the draft resolution just introduced should recognize that their proposal covered only part of the more comprehensive Indian text; they should therefore press for the adoption of the latter as a matter of urgency and priority.

34. Mr. ORTIZ MARTIN (Costa Rica) said that he was speaking on behalf of all mankind in appealing to the Committee to adopt the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288 as a matter of priority.

35. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) said that his delegation was prepared to support any action aimed at stopping nuclear tests by any Power. However, the most immediate threat at the moment arose from the announced intention of the Soviet Union to explode a 50-megaton bomb before the end of the current month. The danger was therefore imminent, and action to avert it should be taken without delay. It was a danger of greater urgency than that inherent in the United States declaration that it reserved the right to make preparations to resume testing, a matter with which the Committee would have to deal in the context of its debate on a moratorium and a test-ban treaty. In the circumstances, Cyprus strongly supported the appeal (A/C.1/L.288) to the Soviet Union to refrain from carrying out its intention. If that appeal was heeded, a significant advance would have been made towards greater understanding between nations, and the universal alarm concerning the effects of nuclear testing would have been to some extent allayed.

36. Mr. DIALLO Telli (Guinea) declared that Guinea was a non-aligned country and was categorically opposed to all nuclear tests, by any nation whatsoever. It had opposed and continued to oppose the French tests in the Sahara; it had opposed the Soviet resumption of testing on 1 September; and it had opposed the United States resumption of tests shortly thereafter. While it was profoundly disturbed by the Soviet Union's announcement that it proposed to explode a 50-megaton bomb, it was also alarmed by the United States declaration that it was prepared to resume testing in the atmosphere unless a test-ban treaty was signed at an early date. However, he noted that six out of the seven sponsors—Pakistan having asked to join the sponsors—of the draft resolution appealing to the Soviet Union to refrain from carrying out its test (A/C.1/L.288) were members of military blocs, and that the proposal

could therefore undeniably be described as a bloc proposal. Guinea did not wish to be associated in a cold-war manoeuvre. The problem of nuclear testing concerned all peoples, and it had been adequately and objectively dealt with in the Indian draft resolution (A/C.1/L.283/Rev.1). Consequently, the Committee should give that draft resolution priority, which would not prevent it from having a full debate on the first item on its agenda.

37. If the Committee should decide to give priority to the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.288, Guinea would not participate in the vote; and its non-participation should be interpreted as an appeal to all four nuclear Powers for an unconditional ban on all tests.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.