

# United Nations GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SEVENTEENTH SESSION

Official Records



FIRST COMMITTEE, 1267th  
MEETING

Tuesday, 6 November 1962,  
at 10.55 a.m.

NEW YORK

## CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 90:</i>	
<i>Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (continued)</i>	
<i>General debate (continued)</i> . . . . .	119

**Chairman:** Mr. Omar Abdel Hamid ADEEL  
(Sudan).

## AGENDA ITEM 90

**Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (A/5197, A/5200, DC/203, A/C.1/867, A/C.1/871, A/C.1/875, A/C.1/L.312) (continued)**

### GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the problem of disarmament, which had been before the United Nations for over sixteen years, had recently acquired particular urgency and importance. The latest acts of the United States had pushed the world to the brink of a catastrophic nuclear war, and the crisis had been surmounted only thanks to the measures taken by the Soviet Union and by the Head of the Soviet Government. But the emergency had shown how important it was that the disarmament problem should be solved as rapidly as possible.

2. The Soviet draft treaty on general and complete disarmament submitted at Geneva<sup>1/</sup> provided that the first stage of disarmament should comprise the simultaneous elimination of all means of delivery of nuclear weapons and of military bases on foreign soil, the withdrawal of all troops stationed in foreign territory and the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, of the manufacture of such armaments and of military expenditure. Several members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, including the representatives of the non-aligned countries, had recognized the soundness of those proposals, and especially the need to begin the process of disarmament by eliminating the means of delivery of nuclear weapons, since that would remove the greatest danger threatening mankind. Nevertheless, the Western Powers had not only rejected the Soviet proposal, but had failed to make any constructive proposal of their own for the removal of that danger. The Western programme did not provide for the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons; the nuclear threat would thus continue to hang over the world throughout the disarmament process and a

new and dangerous crisis could arise at any moment. In actual fact, the Western Powers wished to retain the possibility of using the nuclear weapons in their possession, and it was that attitude which had constituted the main obstacle to agreement at Geneva.

3. In addition, the USSR draft treaty provided that all military bases on foreign territory should be eliminated during the first stage. Recent events had proved the wisdom of such a measure. But in its own programme the United States deferred the elimination of such bases until the last stage—a fact which, considering that the bases in question were sited around the USSR and the socialist States, in practice excluded all possibility of disarmament. The siting of a very limited number of rocket launching sites in Cuba for purely defensive purposes had sufficed for the United States to impose an illegal blockade and to bring the world to the verge of nuclear war; yet the United States was not prepared to dismantle its own bases until the third stage, the timing of which was not specified in the American programme.

4. He enumerated the other measures proposed for each stage in the Soviet draft treaty, the ultimate objective of which was to achieve in a few years the complete liquidation of the war machine of States. The Soviet plan offered all States complete equality so far as security was concerned. It provided for effective international control over all disarmament measures, from the beginning to the end of the process. The provisions of the Soviet draft treaty were so planned as to make possible immediately agreement on the detailed execution of general and complete disarmament.

5. The United States representative had contended at Geneva that the means of delivery of nuclear weapons could not be eliminated at the first stage because States must retain means of defending themselves if the other side violated the provisions of the treaty. While continuing to maintain that all means of delivery of nuclear weapons should be eliminated at the first stage of the disarmament process, the Soviet Union had—as the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs had stated in the Assembly's general debate (1127th plenary meeting)—agreed to the retention of a specified and strictly limited number of rockets for defensive purposes until the second stage, exclusively in the territory of the signatory States. In any case, the United States fears were unjustified, for even if a State secretly kept a few rockets or bombers, that would not enable it to start a war and still less to be sure of victory. No one would now assert that the United States had won the Second World War by dropping two atomic bombs on two Japanese towns. Furthermore, though in the Soviet draft treaty the elimination and destruction of nuclear weapons of all types was provided for in the second stage, the USSR had often stated clearly its conviction that not only the means of delivery of nuclear weapons, but also those weapons

<sup>1/</sup> Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January 1961 to December 1962, document DC/203, annex 1, sect. C.

themselves, should be eliminated at the first stage. Unfortunately, the Western Powers did not agree.

6. So far as conventional armaments were concerned, the Soviet Union had accepted the United States proposals at Geneva as to the procedure to be followed for the reduction of such armaments, although the Soviet plan provided for their more rapid elimination. It had also taken into account the views of the Western Powers on measures to reduce the danger of accidental war; the Soviet draft treaty included measures prohibiting large-scale troop movements and military manoeuvres, providing for the exchange of military missions between States and establishing regular liaison among Heads of Governments and with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The importance of those measures could not but be recognized in the light of recent international events.

7. The text of a draft treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control that had been submitted by the USSR to the General Assembly early in the current session (A/C.1/867) thus contained many provisions which had been included out of a desire to enable agreement to be reached as soon as possible. As a further example, with regard to armed forces the Western Powers had stated that they were unwilling to accept for the first stage so drastic a reduction as that provided for in previous Soviet drafts, including the draft treaty put forward at Geneva, under which the armed forces of the USSR and the United States would be reduced to 1.7 million men. The USSR had now moved to meet the position of the Western Powers by increasing the figure to 1.9 million men (A/C.1/867). In addition, the Soviet Union had agreed to increase the time required for the achievement of general and complete disarmament from four to five years, although it favoured a more rapid process of implementation of the programme.

8. Turning to the question of control, he said that the Soviet draft treaty provided for 100 per cent control over the elimination of the means of delivery of nuclear weapons from the first stage of the process of general and complete disarmament. He recalled that in 1960, at the fifteenth session of the General Assembly (900th plenary meeting), the Head of the Soviet Government had told the General Assembly that the USSR was prepared to accept any Western proposal on control provided that the Western Powers accepted the Soviet proposals on general and complete disarmament. The Soviet Union had stood by that offer, but the Western Powers had never taken it up. In point of fact, they were trying to obtain control without disarmament. If their proposals were carried out, armaments would be controlled but the war-making capacity of States would be left intact. The real aim of the Western Powers seemed to be to reach an agreement which would enable them to gather military intelligence. The most recent United States proposals on control—the selective zonal inspection plan—indicated no change in the United States attitude towards disarmament; they merely recognized the well-known fact that to assess a State's defensive capacity it was not necessary to inspect every square kilometre of its territory. The selective inspection of 30 per cent of its territory, as proposed by the United States, would be more than sufficient to obtain the necessary military information. If that system were adopted, the intelligence services of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization would select precisely the zones of Soviet territory which were of interest to them, and would

have collected all the pertinent data long before the completion of the first stage of disarmament. During that period, under the Western plan, the United States and its allies would have retained at least 70 per cent of their nuclear striking capacity, all their military bases on foreign soil and their stockpiles of nuclear bombs. The USSR, on the other hand, based its position on the principle that control measures should correspond closely to disarmament measures. In other words, it was in favour of effective international control over disarmament measures, but was opposed as before to control without disarmament, or "arms control".

9. He was convinced that the General Assembly would once again express the will of the peoples of the world to achieve general and complete disarmament as rapidly as possible. In his opinion, the Committee's task was to give those who were participating in the disarmament negotiations positive directives as to the measures to be agreed on first of all; and the most important of those measures was to free the world from the threat of thermo-nuclear war. The Soviet delegation would spare no effort to persuade the General Assembly to adopt a practical and constructive decision which would help the participants in the negotiations at Geneva to break the present deadlock and to conclude a treaty on general and complete disarmament as rapidly as possible. The Governments of all countries should show, not in words but in deeds, that they had learnt the lesson of recent events. If other States showed the same sincere desire as that evinced by the Soviet Union during the recent crisis to save the world from a nuclear conflagration, there could be no doubt that the ultimate goal of a world without arms and without war could be achieved.

10. Mr. ZOPPI (Italy), emphasizing the great importance of the disarmament problem, said that the universal awareness of the dangers inherent in the arms race was in itself a first step towards a solution. The Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs had indicated in the Assembly's general debate (1136th plenary meeting) the principles which had guided the Italian delegation in the Geneva negotiations. His country's delegation had hoped that it would at least be possible to reach some measure of agreement on basic principles; but despite the goodwill shown by the Western Powers and the assistance afforded by the eight non-aligned countries, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had made relatively little progress. Nevertheless, the Geneva talks had helped to clarify positions and differences of opinion. They had also shown the importance of having the co-operation of the eight non-aligned countries, which had not only taken an active part in seeking compromise formulas but had also given expression to the anxious and increasingly insistent demand of world public opinion for an early agreement on disarmament.

11. Present world tension stemmed from a series of unsolved political and economic problems. One consequence of that tension was the arms race, which in turn created further tension. Simultaneous efforts should therefore be made both to achieve disarmament and to conclude international agreements that would reduce tension, since progress in either of those areas would automatically have a beneficial effect in the other. The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament could contribute to the achievement of that objective, but it could also degenerate into an arena of the cold war and thus increase ten-

sion. Two plans had been submitted to the Conference: on the one hand, a progressive, balanced, reasonable plan which made provision for essential safeguards, and on the other hand, a set of drastic measures unaccompanied by controls and apparently conceived for propaganda purposes. The Soviet plan was contrary to the principles already established with regard to the progressive achievement of disarmament and the necessity of control. Its unreasonableness had become so obvious during the Geneva talks that the Soviet Union had felt compelled to trim its sails and recognize to some extent the validity of the principle of progressive disarmament which had been supported by the West from the outset. It was to be hoped that the Soviet Union would further modify its position and would fully accept the principle of a progressive reduction of all armaments, so that agreement could be reached on the matter.

12. The Soviet position on controls was extremely rigid. In point of fact, the Soviet Union was refusing to accept any genuine controls, for it was utopian to try to maintain control over the destruction of armaments without first having determined the initial volume of such armaments and without maintaining control over possible secret production. On that point, too, Soviet intransigence was making it impossible to reach agreement. By taking that position, the Soviet Union was creating the impression that it was unwilling to carry out all the agreed disarmament measures, for a country with nothing to hide had no reason to evade controls. It was to be hoped that the Soviet Union would agree to modify its position in that regard in order to dispel the suspicions aroused by its attitude and make it possible to conclude an agreement. Control was the key to the problem, for without it there could be no worth-while agreement on disarmament.

13. Disarmament alone was not sufficient. Provision must also be made for the establishment of a juridical order such as would ensure peaceful and undisturbed co-operation between peoples. That problem had scarcely been touched upon at Geneva, but it was a vital one and must be dealt with.

14. Despite all difficulties, his delegation would not give way to feelings of pessimism. It had confidence in the moral influence of world public opinion, and felt certain that the Soviet Union could not indefinitely disregard the growing fears of imperilled mankind. Inspired by that hope, it resolved anew to explore all possible avenues of negotiation at Geneva so that a fair and reasonable disarmament agreement could at last be achieved.

15. Mr. DEAN (United States of America) said that the Cuban crisis had made disarmament negotiations a more urgent matter than ever. Future negotiations would obviously be affected by the results achieved in removing the threat to peace represented by the Soviet missiles and other offensive weapons in Cuba. It was astonishing that the Soviet representative should have boasted that his Government had averted a nuclear war by agreeing to remove from Cuba the very weapons which it had itself placed there. In his letter of 28 October 1962 to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, the President of the United States had emphasized the need to eliminate that threat and to press forward with efforts to solve the disarmament problem.

16. One year earlier the General Assembly had in its resolution 1722 (XVI), unanimously approved the

establishment of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. That Committee had proved to be a useful forum. Its six months of negotiation had provided an opportunity for constructive exchanges of views and a thorough exploration of the problem, and the eight new members had participated in a serious, responsible manner. The Committee had recessed until 12 November so that its members could take part in the work of the seventeenth session of the General Assembly. In view of the important role which the Assembly was playing in the field of disarmament, it was now the duty of those who had taken part in the Geneva negotiations to explain what they had done and what they hoped to do.

17. The first Committee had before it two interim reports of the Eighteen-Nation Committee (DC/203 and A/5200-DC/205). The negotiations had actually just begun, and the first concern of all must be to return to Geneva and resume the talks so that the Eighteen-Nation Committee could make real progress. Two draft treaties had been placed before the Committee, which was trying to bring them together in a single treaty. He did not intend to enter into the details of the two drafts, but wished merely to reply to the statement by the Soviet representative that the United States treaty did not provide for the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. The United States proposals in that regard would be found in its outline of basic provisions of a draft treaty (A/C.1/875), where it was provided that in stage III of disarmament the parties would eliminate "all nuclear weapons remaining at their disposal" and that the international disarmament organization "would provide assurance that no nuclear weapons remained at the disposal of the parties".

18. While he was reluctant to stress the differences between the two sides, since the present debate in the First Committee was merely a pause before the resumption of negotiations, any report on the progress of the Geneva talks must necessarily take note of the differing positions of the United States and the Soviet Union. The problem of overcoming those differences was an extremely serious one to which continued efforts must be devoted.

19. Briefly enumerating the issues now being negotiated, he noted that the United States had proposed for the first stage of disarmament a 30 per cent reduction, under effective control, of all armaments, both conventional and nuclear; such a reduction should be possible, since it would not upset the military balance of power. The Soviet draft treaty called for the elimination, during the first stage, of all means of delivering nuclear weapons, including ships, aircraft and missiles, and of all foreign military bases. That would force the United States to terminate all its alliances, and in view of the Soviet Union's geographical position and its preponderance in conventional weapons would give the latter country a great advantage; the Soviet programme was actually a plan to disarm the free world.

20. The Soviet Union also refused to agree to arrangements for determining whether agreed levels of armaments and armed forces were being exceeded. The maintenance of control over any agreement reached on disarmament was the second major issue in the disarmament negotiations. In the view of his delegation, no disarmament programme could be put into effect unless agreement had been reached on an effective system of verification. In an effort to advance the negotiations, the United States had made a constructive new proposal, based on modern techniques

of mathematical sampling and providing for the inspection of selected zones. As disarmament proceeded, additional zones would be opened to inspection, and in the last stage the entire territory of a country would be subject to inspection. Because of the fundamental difference in their types of society, one free and the other closed, the Soviet Union was less interested in verification than was the United States. Most of the military information which the Soviet Union needed was available to it in the United States, whereas in the Soviet Union such information constituted a state secret.

21. The third problem to be resolved was the pacific settlement of disputes and the preservation of peace. General and complete disarmament in a peaceful world was inextricably tied to the application of effective peace-keeping measures, including an international peace force as provided in stage II of the United States plan (A/C.1/875). Full disarmament could not come until there was a change in existing international practices and institutions: The Soviet plan ignored the need for such changes. However, if the third and vital stage of disarmament was to be completed, a new international law would have to be built up; redoubled efforts must therefore be made to strengthen the United Nations in its various peace-keeping roles—in mediation, in conciliation, in observation and in defence against aggression. One useful instrument for the development and codification of international law was the International Law Commission, which was fully representative of all regions of the world and of all major systems of law. It could help in solving the problem of disarmament. However, the Commission seemed to have inadequate resources for performing such an important task, and it would have to be provided with means of accelerating its work.

22. He described the measures advocated by his Government for the first stage. It proposed a 30 per cent reduction in all major types of armaments and an immediate reduction in armed forces to 2.1 million men for the United States and the Soviet Union; it proposed that the production of any kind of fissionable material for nuclear weapons should be halted and that a certain amount of fissionable material should be transferred to peaceful purposes; and it proposed a ban on placing weapons of mass destruction into orbit, as well as a reduction in military expenditures. The United States had also urged (a) public notification of all major military movements and manoeuvres; (b) the establishment of observation posts in major ports and railway centres, to report on concentrations and movements of troops; (c) the exchange of military missions to improve communications between States or groups of States; (d) the establishment of rapid communications between Governments; and (e) the establishment of an international commission on the reduction of the risks of war. That commission would examine additional ways to minimize the risks of war by miscalculation or failure of communications. The disarmament plan of the Soviet Union contained similar ideas, and the major Powers should rapidly put into effect such measures, which could help to prevent a nuclear war while a programme of arms reduction was prepared. All of those things could be done during the first three years of a disarmament programme. The second and third stages of disarmament could then follow, with even more drastic cuts in major armaments. At the end of those three stages, mankind would have arrived at general and complete disarmament in a peaceful world. The stated objectives of

both the United States and the Soviet plans were much the same. Thus, the problem was to develop an agreed procedure by which the common goal could be achieved. In that connexion, the proposal made by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs at the 1127th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, to which the Soviet representative had just referred, was encouraging. However, the exact meaning of the proposal must be known. So far, the question at issue had been whether reductions of armaments should be quantitative or qualitative. As long as that question remained unresolved, it would be difficult to move forward.

23. The great Powers had a special responsibility because they had the most weapons. However, each region of the world had its own disarmament problem, and States in many regions of the world could negotiate arms control agreements among themselves. The United States would welcome and respect such regional arrangements, provided that they had been arrived at freely by all the parties concerned. In that respect, it welcomed the initiative of the Brazilian representative looking towards such arrangements in Latin America and Africa. In an area where nuclear weapons were not deployed, an agreement which would ensure keeping them out, including arrangements for verification, could be a most important contribution to the over-all efforts to prevent the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons.

24. The United States believed that agreement on the broadest possible scale should be reached and put into effect as soon as possible. Its programme called for the total elimination of national capacity to make international war and for the creation of an international disarmament organization within the framework of the United Nations. It pledged its full support to the task of achieving general and complete disarmament in a peaceful world.

25. Mr. AIKEN (Ireland) recalled that at each of the past three sessions the General Assembly had adopted resolutions on the prevention of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons, and that both the United States and the Soviet Union had given that problem high priority in their recent proposals for disarmament. There was therefore little need for a further resolution on that subject. There was urgent need, however, for the conclusion of an agreement which would stop the spread of nuclear weapons to additional States; that had been emphasized by recent events and by the natural reaction of the States of the American continent to the threatened spread of nuclear weapons in their area, which found effective expression in the draft resolution submitted by Brazil (A/C.1/L.312).

26. One reason why measures had not yet been taken to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons was that no one fully appreciated the danger. The acquisition of nuclear weapons and delivery systems by a State might even be considered an act of war by neighbouring countries, with violent and dangerous consequences. In the existing tense state of the world situation it was of vital importance that the nuclear Powers should refrain from upsetting the balance by spreading nuclear weapons to further countries. It was therefore to be hoped that without waiting for the conclusion of the negotiations at Geneva they would agree at once not to give nuclear weapons or the knowledge of making them to other countries. He felt sure that once such an agreement had been arrived at, the non-nuclear Powers would agree not to manufacture or acquire

such weapons and to accept international inspection of their territories as a guarantee of their good faith.

27. His delegation appealed to the nuclear Powers to deal with the problem of the spread of nuclear weapons separately and urgently. Moreover, it would be useful if they would encourage groups of non-nuclear nations in suitable areas to pledge themselves not to attack each other, to settle their disputes peacefully, not to make or acquire nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction—such as large tank formations, heavy bombing planes or missiles—and to accept international inspection to ensure that all were keeping their pledge faithfully. The security of the nations of such a group should be guaranteed through the United Nations with the support of the great Powers, and the United Nations should undertake to carry out the requisite inspection. Since it was difficult to persuade a nuclear Power, particularly one with a closed system, to accept international inspection, his delegation believed that in the existing state of tension between the great Powers, disarmament should be approached on a regional basis which confined inspection to the territories of non-nuclear Powers. The proposed regional agreements would be an important

step on the road to disarmament and the establishment of world law. Admittedly, it was difficult to isolate a single State and persuade it to accept international inspection while others were subject to no such procedure. But if that State had concluded with its neighbours a regional disarmament agreement providing for international inspection of all States in the group, inspection would no longer involve any loss of prestige to that State and should be welcomed by it.

28. There were several potentially explosive geographical regions which, by accepting limited arms agreements, could become areas of peace and law. It was vital to check the danger of the spread of nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction into those areas before it was too late. He therefore appealed to the nuclear Powers to conclude without delay an agreement which would prevent the further spread of nuclear weapons and to support the organization of areas of law and limited arms agreements wherever a group of nations could be found willing to accept the obligations involved, and particularly in regions where mutual fear and tension threatened to bring about the disaster of war.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.