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*Chairman: Mr. C. W. A. SCHURMANN  
(Netherlands).*

## AGENDA ITEM 73

*Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermo-  
nuclear tests (A/5428 and Add.1) (continued)*

### GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. BARNES (Liberia) recalled that at the previous session he had suggested the conclusion of a partial test ban treaty of limited duration, which at that time had appeared to him to be the only advance that could be hoped for. In signing a treaty of unlimited duration, the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom had shown an awareness of their responsibility for the fate of mankind. They were to be commended for their foresight and wisdom, for the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, signed at Moscow on 5 August 1963, had dispelled some of the distrust and antagonism which had poisoned relations between the nuclear Powers. Praise was also due to those taking part in the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, whose painstaking, objective and imaginative efforts had helped to prepare the way for the agreement between the nuclear Powers.

2. Although the treaty was only a first step, it was the most hopeful development that had yet occurred in the long effort to halt the contamination of the atmosphere, curb the proliferation of nuclear weapons and ease the fears and tensions generated by the arms race. The treaty was important not only for its immediate effects but also for the hopes that it engendered. What had already been achieved had in many respects required a much greater effort than would the task that remained to be done.

3. Nevertheless, the results achieved would be dangerously threatened so long as the fourth nuclear Power and potential nuclear Powers had not signed the treaty. Hence, the world deeply regretted France's failure to become a signatory and the attack on the treaty made by the People's Republic of China. Liberia, whose interest in the cessation of nuclear tests was inspired by the motives which must animate all sober men, had signed the partial test ban treaty. He recalled that the Liberian Secretary of State, in his statement in the General Assembly (1217th plenary meeting), had

proposed the adoption of a resolution calling upon all States to accede to the treaty as proof of their common desire to eliminate the nuclear threat.

4. Although the peoples of the world were pleased at what had been accomplished, they would not be fully satisfied until the ultimate objective was achieved: a treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in all environments. So long as underground testing remained lawful, the temptation to resume tests in the other three environments and the possibility of doing so would not have been wholly eliminated. There was even the danger that still deadlier weapons would be developed if the arms race continued underground. It was therefore essential to explore every means of arriving at a comprehensive test ban treaty and to intensify efforts to remove the obstacles to an underground test ban by working out a reasonable compromise on the number of on-site inspections and on guarantees that such inspections would not threaten the security of the States concerned. In spite of the difficulties to be overcome, the Eighteen-Nation Committee could be expected to show the resourcefulness and realism required to work out a basis for agreement between the nuclear Powers, and it was to be hoped that negotiations on the matter would get under way as soon as possible. In that connexion, the suggestion made in the General Assembly (1208th plenary meeting) by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR that a summit meeting of Heads of State should be convened to work out a comprehensive test ban treaty was worthy of consideration. He recalled that the Liberian delegation had made a similar suggestion at the seventeenth session.

5. At the Summit Conference of Independent African States, held at Addis Ababa in May 1963, the Heads of thirty African States had appealed for the cessation of nuclear testing in all environments, and it was difficult to believe that the nuclear Powers would fail to heed that solemn call. The First Committee should take full advantage of the atmosphere of goodwill engendered by the partial test ban treaty and search diligently for the path to peace.

6. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) said that, like the other socialist countries, Bulgaria had always favoured the suspension of all nuclear tests. His delegation therefore welcomed the conclusion of the partial test ban treaty, which had contributed to the relaxation of world tension and which paved the way for renewed efforts of greater scope and effect to approach the main goal: the adoption of a treaty on general and complete disarmament.

7. However, the treaty that had been concluded at Moscow could have lasting consequences only if followed by other disarmament measures and, in particular, supplemented by an agreement on the cessation of underground nuclear tests. Such tests made possible the continuation of the armaments race,

created an atmosphere of general insecurity and gave rise to apprehension lest other States might begin to manufacture nuclear weapons. Nevertheless, the prohibition of underground tests was fraught with difficulties, for the Western Powers claimed that it must be accompanied by a system of on-site inspection. They had previously adopted a similar attitude towards tests in the other three environments. In 1956 the Soviet Union had proposed that an agreement should be concluded immediately, since the necessary controls could be assured by national means, but for many years the Western Powers, basing their position on data supplied by certain scientists who were influenced by the official policy, had opposed such an agreement. Their objections had, however, been proved groundless, as was shown by the conclusion of the recent treaty. It was therefore to be hoped that it would not be necessary to wait so long for those scientists to admit that in the case of underground tests, too, on-site inspections were superfluous.

8. Certain delegations had proposed that conferences of scientists should be organized in order to convince the Western Powers that on-site inspections were unnecessary. However, such scientific meetings could not yield fruitful results if one of the parties approached the negotiations with a preconceived point of view—as had been the case at the 1958 Conference of Experts.<sup>1/</sup> Indeed, the Western Governments had had to change their policy before an agreement on a test ban could be signed. What was still lacking was a political decision by the Western Powers to put an end to underground tests.

9. Fortunately, the discussions which had taken place in the United States Senate, and the scientific data quoted and some of the opinions expressed by responsible representatives of the United States Government, offered prospects of a change in the rigid position adopted by the United States delegation both at Geneva and in the First Committee. His delegation therefore hoped that, following the adoption by the First Committee of a resolution on the subject and with the help of the Eighteen-Nation Committee's continued efforts, a final agreement could be reached on the cessation of all nuclear tests. In order to achieve that objective, it might be necessary to hold a summit conference of the leaders of the countries represented on the Eighteen-Nation Committee.

10. Mr. OKILO (Nigeria) said his delegation had agreed that the item under discussion should be given priority because of the importance of ending one of the most dangerous and wasteful types of international competition, and because the prospects for a satisfactory discussion were more favourable than they had been at the previous session. Like most other delegations, it attributed that improvement to the signing of the partial test ban treaty. It shared the general feeling of pleasure and relief at the event, and regretted that certain countries had not yet acceded to the treaty.

11. Advantage ought to be taken without delay of the opportunity afforded by that first sign of positive goodwill on the part of the countries which had signed the treaty. Ever since the end of the Second World War, agreement on the complete prohibition of nuclear testing and on general and complete disarmament had

been hampered by scientific problems and by the difficulties resulting from the absence of mutual confidence between the nations. Hitherto, while the world had appeared to be making progress in the development of detection techniques, there had been no apparent improvement in mutual confidence. The treaty opened the way to progress in that direction, which was why it was so important to encourage any movements likely to develop the new spirit of goodwill which had become manifest.

12. The resolution calling upon all States to refrain from stationing in outer space any objects carrying nuclear weapons or any other weapons of mass destruction, which had recently been adopted unanimously (General Assembly resolution 1884 (XVIII)), was a further demonstration of the desire of almost all nations to help build a peaceful world. Those countries which were responsible for the negotiations on nuclear testing should be urged to proceed as soon as possible to the consideration of a comprehensive test ban treaty and of the other collateral questions with the same sincere desire to widen the area of agreement. Such was the spirit of the draft resolution which the Nigerian and other delegations would be submitting shortly in the hope that it would be supported by all members of the Committee.

13. Mr. DATCU (Romania) referred to the importance which the question of a nuclear test ban had acquired in the eyes of the world and within the United Nations because of the danger of radio-active fall-out to the health of future generations, and because of the need to eliminate the nuclear danger. The Romanian Government had contributed actively, at the United Nations and at the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, to the efforts made to solve that problem. It had been one of the first to sign the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, seeing in it an expression of the policy of peaceful coexistence, a proof that international issues could be resolved through negotiation, and hope that it would pave the way to an underground test ban.

14. The successful conclusion of the treaty showed not only that priority must be given to the problem of eliminating the danger of nuclear war, but also that the time was particularly propitious for doing so. Both the treaty and the agreement banning the placing in orbit of all objects carrying nuclear weapons were likely to bring closer together and reconcile the positions of the nuclear Powers and of all States on ways and means of achieving general and complete disarmament. Every effort must be made to outlaw nuclear weapons, to prohibit their manufacture and use, and to liquidate existing stocks of them. By ending the arms race, and above all the nuclear arms race, a substantial contribution would be made to the cause of general and complete disarmament.

15. The agreement reached at Moscow should therefore be followed by other constructive steps likely to facilitate a subsequent agreement on disarmament. A realistic step-by-step approach would be necessary, both at the United Nations and in the Eighteen-Nation Committee, to overcome the obstacles which still lay on the road leading to the prevention of war; and for that purpose States would have to show a firm will to reach agreement. Romania would support wholeheartedly any draft resolution likely to facilitate an agreement and to encourage the efforts of all countries to find a happy solution to the present problem.

<sup>1/</sup> Conference of Experts to Study the Possibility of Detecting Violations of a Possible Agreement on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests, held at Geneva from 1 July to 21 August 1958.

16. Mr. ALLIMADI (Uganda) welcomed the recent improvement in the international situation, which was due largely to the conclusion of the partial test ban treaty, of which Uganda was a signatory. The decision of the United States and the Soviet Union not to station in outer space any objects carrying nuclear weapons or other weapons of mass destruction was also a matter for rejoicing.

17. The Ugandan delegation considered that no effort must be spared to consolidate peace and to reach general and complete disarmament. For that reason it believed that the People's Republic of China should be represented at the United Nations, so that it could participate in discussion of the disarmament problem. For the same reason his delegation felt that France should heed the will of mankind and accede to the partial test ban treaty. Indeed, there was an urgent need to suspend all nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests, since it was absurd to accumulate nuclear weapons when there were already more than enough to destroy the whole planet. He therefore hoped that the great Powers would heed the Soviet Union's proposal to convene a summit conference of the States members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee to discuss general and complete disarmament. In any case the Ugandan delegation would support any draft resolution which called for a total ban on all forms of nuclear tests.

18. Mr. HAJEK (Czechoslovakia) noted that the problem of prohibiting nuclear testing had reached a new phase with the conclusion of the Moscow treaty, which Czechoslovakia, one of the first countries to sign, had just ratified. It had been said that that treaty, though important, was only a first step. That was true in the wider sense, since it called for steps to reinforce the international "détente" and to strengthen the new confidence between States, and also in the narrower and immediate sense that it opened the way to an agreement on a general ban. To stop at the present stage would be dangerous for future relations among States and might even endanger what had already been achieved.

19. Two problems now arose: that of ensuring universal observance of the provisions of the Moscow treaty, and that of extending its validity to underground tests. Concerning the first, it was regrettable

that a Member State should have openly declared its intention to continue nuclear testing in the atmosphere. That position weakened the impact of the treaty and might have serious consequences, since it helped to poison the atmosphere, both literally and metaphorically. Yet all the peoples of the world wished the first break-through to be widened quickly, thereby echoing the aspirations expressed on several occasions by the draftsmen of the treaty themselves.

20. The second problem must be solved, or the arms race might be resumed and mankind exposed afresh to the harmful effects of fall-out. An appeal should therefore be made to all States to cease underground testing and quickly seek ways of concluding an agreement for that purpose. In the opinion of the Czechoslovak delegation, there was no serious impediment to such a solution. The history of the problem and the conclusions of scientists showed the validity of that position. The need for effective control should not prevent the conclusion of an agreement, for such control could be provided by the means already available to the countries concerned. Recent negotiations had shown that the question of on-site inspections was a sort of fetish inherited from the past. Scientific studies conducted in the Western countries themselves showed convincingly that the progress of science and technology had made it obsolete. That some Powers continued to press for it was due to political, not scientific or technical, reasons; that conclusion had been borne out by the Geneva talks, the opinions of scientists in many countries, and even the documents produced before the United States Senate in the spring of 1963. He hoped that that fetish of the cold war, together with all others still existing, would go the way of the increasing number which had already been discarded and leave the way open for the solution—a political decision to put an end to the nuclear arms race.

21. The Czechoslovak delegation held that the problem of underground testing could be solved without delay if the parties showed realism, goodwill and the desire to arrive at an agreement on a mutually acceptable basis.

The meeting rose at 11.45 a.m.