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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. HAY (Australia) said that Australia had been among the first to sign the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. That demonstrated Australia's strong approval of the treaty. However, Australia's feeling of relief and gratification was tempered by the fact that among those few countries which had not acceded to it were two—Communist China and France—whose intentions on nuclear testing were bound to affect Australia. His delegation would therefore be in favour of including in the draft resolution to be submitted to the Committee an appeal to all countries to accept the obligations of the treaty.

2. The treaty had been generally referred to as the partial test ban treaty. It was in fact partial in two respects: in that it had not been accepted by all, and in that it covered only nuclear testing in three environments. The fact that it had not been universally accepted could not be ignored, for it made the treaty less than fully effective. Testing in the atmosphere by non-signatory Powers could threaten the very existence of the treaty, since the latter gave any one of the parties the right to withdraw if extraordinary events jeopardized its supreme interests. Moreover, even if the treaty was not destroyed, such testing could greatly curtail its beneficial effects, especially as an obstacle to the emergence of further nuclear Powers.

3. Recalling Australia's long-standing policy in that regard, he reminded the Committee that in 1957 his Prime Minister had publicly expressed Australia's opposition to the emergence of further nuclear Powers and that, in consequence, in 1959 his delegation had supported draft resolutions requesting France to refrain from testing and expressing the hope that France would associate itself with any agreement which might be worked out banning nuclear tests under effective control. Consistently with that stand, the Australian Minister for External Affairs had expressed deep regret at France's decision to continue testing even

after the signing of the partial test ban treaty and even though France favoured the treaty's objectives.

4. The attitude taken by Peking placed the latter in a category all its own. The Peking régime not only refused to be bound by the treaty but contemptuously rejected it, describing it as a "fraud" which ran counter to the wishes of the peace-loving peoples. Peking was evidently leaving the way free to its becoming a nuclear Power. That could not but cause concern, especially to the countries of Asia and the Pacific, particularly since Peking claimed the right to take Formosa by force; had reservations about many of its border treaties; had engaged in aggression against the United Nations, Tibet and India; asserted that war was inevitable; and contemplated with apparent equanimity the destruction of half the world. Peking posed a problem even without nuclear weapons; and it was in the interests of all mankind to dissuade it from its intention to become a nuclear Power. A nuclear test carried out by Peking would be a gesture of defiance to the hopes of humanity. His delegation hoped that action by the Committee would cause Peking to reconsider its position.

5. With regard to the other partial aspect of the treaty, its omission of underground tests, it should be recalled that the preamble committed all the signatories to seeking the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. Although that obligation was primarily one affecting the Eighteen-Nation Committee and, in particular, the nuclear Powers, the other signatories also had responsibilities to discharge and suggestions to offer. In that connexion, his delegation wished to make two points. In the first place, while verification was necessary in order to be able to detect a violation of any commitment to halt underground nuclear testing—since no State could rest easy if it thought that others might be secretly conducting underground tests—verification was just as important as a means of determining that underground testing was not taking place. It would be bad enough for any agreement to be abrogated because one party had been detected resuming underground tests, but it would be tragic for such an agreement to be abrogated because a party had mistakenly thought that its terms had been violated. Accordingly, verification was necessary both for proving that infringements had occurred and for disproving false identifications. It had been demonstrated that false identifications could occur. For example, the United States had disclosed that an event detected by the Soviet Union in 1958 had not, as the Soviet Union had thought, been caused by a nuclear explosion. Although there had unquestionably been advances since that time in detection methods for tests in the atmosphere, there was no agreement that national means of detection and identification were sufficient for underground tests; and since there was more than one unidentified underground event each week both in the Soviet Union

and in the United States, mistakes could easily be made.

6. His second point was that it was impossible to return to the idea of a moratorium. Australia had voted for draft resolutions in 1959, and again in 1960, calling on the nuclear Powers to refrain from testing while test ban negotiations were continuing. But in view of the violations of the moratorium in 1961, it was a matter of practical necessity, based on historical experience as well as on his previous point, that work should continue for an agreement banning underground tests under effective verification. National means of verification were insufficient and methods of carrying out international on-site inspection would therefore have to be explored. He was glad to note that, despite its genuine security preoccupations, the Soviet Union earlier in 1963 had again accepted the principle of on-site inspection, having first accepted it in 1958 to 1961, and then rejected it in 1962. However, there was now some doubt as to the present position; and even if the principle was still accepted, much work of reconciliation remained.

7. To sum up, his delegation welcomed the Moscow treaty, hoped that urgent negotiations would continue in order to bring underground tests within its scope, under effective verification, and hoped further that its obligations would be accepted universally, particularly by those countries which aspired to develop their own nuclear capacity. His delegation would support any draft resolution which furthered those aims.

8. Mr. PALAMARCHUK (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) recalled that the danger to humanity of nuclear tests had always been stressed by the socialist countries not only in the United Nations but also in the International Atomic Energy Agency and the World Health Organization, even at a time when certain States were underestimating those dangers at international meetings. As far back as the eleventh session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union had appealed to States which were testing nuclear weapons to stop the tests immediately. In 1958, the USSR and Czechoslovakia had proposed the inclusion in the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation of a paragraph indicating that available physical and biological evidence made it plain that uncontrolled sources of radiation, i.e. experimental nuclear and thermo-nuclear explosions, must be eliminated.^{1/} Although those proposals had been rejected, they showed that the socialist States had always persisted in their efforts to have nuclear testing ended.

9. The long struggle of the peace-loving forces had at last achieved one positive result: the signing at Moscow on 5 August 1963 of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. The Government of the Ukrainian SSR had acceded to that treaty and regarded it as a success for the peace policy of the socialist States. The event had relaxed the atmosphere and had brought about a change in the conditions under which the Assembly was examining the question of nuclear tests. The main problem—that of atmospheric pollution—had already been resolved, provided, of course, that France abandoned its nuclear plans, which might well endanger the life and health of the peoples living on the periphery of the Sahara and in the Pacific area.

10. The Ukrainian delegation shared the wish that the task should be completed by the banning of underground tests. The Moscow negotiations had shown that where there was goodwill, agreement was always possible. The provisions of the treaty could be extended to cover underground tests, if the Western Powers gave up their demands with regard to inspection. It was well known in qualified scientific and political circles that a ban on underground tests could be controlled through the national means of detection already available to States. It was therefore unnecessary to carry out any international inspection; in any case, the USSR had stated that it would not accept such inspection. Nevertheless, certain delegations had appealed to the nuclear Powers to reach agreement on a particular number of on-site inspections and had put forward suggestions concerning the details of international control; any discussion of such proposals was purely academic and only likely to cause confusion. Sooner or later the question of banning underground tests would be settled positively. Using the Moscow treaty as a basis, other measures would be taken, as the Soviet Union had proposed, which would little by little free humanity from the threat of war.

11. The treaty could not, of course, stop the nuclear arms race or prevent the dissemination of nuclear weapons. In that connexion, he could not agree with the optimistic conclusions regarding the intentions of the Federal Republic of Germany advanced by the representative of Canada (1313th meeting). Even if the Government of that country had signed the treaty with the intention of not producing its own nuclear weapons, it could perfectly well obtain such weapons through the North Atlantic Treaty Organization or through its co-operation with France. Given the state of mind of revanchist circles in Germany, that was a real danger.

12. In conclusion, the Ukrainian SSR was ready to make its contribution to a solution of the disarmament problem and of the other urgent international problems relating to world peace and security.

13. Mr. ZULOAGA (Venezuela) paid tribute to India, to the African nations that had taken part in the Summit Conference of Independent African States at Addis Ababa in May 1963, and to the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, for the part they had played in the international effort to end nuclear testing. The partial test ban treaty, which his Government had signed, represented a great step forward. Nevertheless, the problem of underground nuclear testing still remained, and active steps must be taken to find a solution to it, since any step backward would make the situation even worse than it had been before the treaty was concluded.

14. The nuclear Powers which were still carrying out underground tests obviously intended to perfect their means of destruction, and it was to be feared that one of them might consider that the progress made by the others was endangering its security and invoked article IV to denounce the treaty. It was therefore essential to create a climate of mutual confidence, which was the prerequisite for any progress towards the elimination of nuclear tests and towards general and complete disarmament. The differences of view between the two camps regarding underground tests were of both a political and a technical nature. The question of inspection was still the main obstacle to an agreement in that field. However,

^{1/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Thirteenth Session, Supplement No. 17, chap. VII, para. 54, footnote.

the adoption of General Assembly resolution 1884 (XVIII), relating to the prohibition of weapons of mass destruction in outer space, was encouraging in that it implied a certain measure of mutual confidence, since objects placed in orbit were not subject to prior inspection at the launching sites.

15. In conclusion, his delegation would support any draft resolution calling on the Eighteen-Nation Committee to find a solution to the problem of underground testing as quickly as possible.

The meeting rose at 11.15 a.m.