

United Nations
**GENERAL
ASSEMBLY**

EIGHTEENTH SESSION

Official Records

**FIRST COMMITTEE, 1325th
MEETING**

Monday, 4 November 1963,
at 10.30 a.m.



NEW YORK

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

AGENDA ITEM 26

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (A/5408-DC/207, A/5488-DC/208) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. OKILO (Nigeria) said that the establishment of a direct communications link between Moscow and Washington, the conclusion of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, signed at Moscow on 5 August 1963, and the agreement not to place weapons of mass destruction in outer space represented the first tentative steps towards general and complete disarmament. An effort should now be made to reach agreement on various collateral measures designed to lessen international tension and facilitate agreement on disarmament; he had in mind such measures as a non-aggression pact between the States parties to the North Atlantic Treaty and the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty, an agreement on the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons, and the establishment of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. His delegation, which two years before had joined in sponsoring the resolution declaring Africa a denuclearized zone, was prepared to support similar measures for other areas and hoped that the proposal to denuclearize Latin America would receive serious consideration. His delegation was also in favour of a convention prohibiting the use of nuclear weapons. It felt that such a convention, far from creating a false sense of security, would exert a moral force that would ultimately lead to the elimination of nuclear weapons. The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should also address itself, when it reconvened, to the question of measures to reduce the risk of war through accident, miscalculation or surprise attack; the statement made by the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, Mr. Khrushchev, on 19 July 1963,^{1/} seemed to indicate that there was considerable

^{1/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1963, document DC/208, annex 1, sect. O (ENDC/113).

common ground between the Soviet and the United States on that question. In addition, attention should be given to the recent Soviet proposal concerning measures for freezing and, if possible, reducing military expenditure.

2. With regard to the Eighteen-Nation Committee's paramount task, that of drafting a treaty on general and complete disarmament, the proposal made by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the USSR, Mr. Gromyko, at the seventeenth session of the General Assembly (1127th plenary meeting) that the United States and the Soviet Union should retain in their own territories an agreed and strictly limited number of intercontinental, anti-missile and anti-aircraft (ground-to-air) missiles up to the end of the second stage had represented a first move towards reconciling the opposing positions on the basic aspects of the problem. His delegation welcomed the new proposal made by Mr. Gromyko at the current session of the Assembly (1208th plenary meeting), which, taking account of Western criticisms, provided for the retention of certain delivery vehicles and nuclear warheads until the end of the third stage of disarmament; he was encouraged by the Western Powers' promise to give that proposal full study and trusted that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would take it up as a matter of priority. The proposal made by the United States delegation at Geneva on 14 August 1963 that the United States should transfer 60,000 kilogrammes and the Soviet Union 40,000 kilogrammes of weapons-grade fissionable materials to peaceful uses was a radical idea which could introduce a considerable measure of flexibility into the disarmament effort. He hoped that the two sides would put forward measures for reducing the nuclear arsenals themselves at the earliest possible date. The technical problems cited in the United Kingdom working paper on that subject^{2/} should be given thorough study before the beginning of the disarmament process; he welcomed the willingness expressed by the United States to initiate such studies now rather than in the first stage of disarmament, as provided in its draft treaty.^{3/}

3. His delegation hoped that the First Committee would adopt a draft resolution providing the Eighteen-Nation Committee with clear directives on the various questions before it, for as the President of the United States, Mr. Kennedy, had said in his address to the General Assembly on 20 September 1963 (1209th plenary meeting), it was essential to take advantage of the momentum provided by the partial test ban treaty and set out on the path to a lasting peace.

^{2/} Working paper on the technical possibility of international control of fissile material production, submitted on 31 August 1962 to the Eighteen-Nation Committee by the United Kingdom (ENDC/60, mimeographed).

^{3/} Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January 1961 to December 1962, document DC/203, annex 1, sect. F (ENDC/30 and Corr.1).

4. Mr. Víctor Andrés BELAUNDE (Peru) said that the time had come to draw up an objective balance sheet of the disarmament problem. Over the years the United Nations had strengthened its position in three ways. The powers of the General Assembly implicit in the text of the Charter had been emphasized and asserted; the principle of universality, which entitled the United Nations to represent the conscience of mankind in all major problems, especially that of disarmament, had been indicated; and a dynamic interpretation of the Charter had enabled the Organization to survive the crises of Korea, Suez, the Congo and Cuba. While no major progress had been made towards general disarmament, agreement had been achieved on a number of collateral measures, measures which were important not only because they provided solutions for individual aspects of the disarmament problem but because in conjunction they could help to create an atmosphere favourable to the relaxation of tension and to the spirit of understanding required for disarmament negotiations.

5. The transfer of fissionable materials from military to peaceful uses, if it could be agreed on by the great Powers, would be a praiseworthy measure, which could do much to remedy the harm done by the emphasis placed on the use of science for the destruction rather than the benefit of mankind. Encouraging also had been the suggestions made by both sides for measures to prevent surprise attacks or the clandestine organization of aggression. The most important advance made, clearly, had been the conclusion of the partial text ban treaty; but enthusiasm on that score must be tempered until the treaty was extended to cover all types of nuclear tests. Lastly, there had been General Assembly resolution 1884 (XVIII) and the United States and Soviet statements designed to prevent the spread of the arms race to outer space. Those statements should be given specific expression in a treaty providing the indispensable guarantee of inspection.

6. The advance of science had created weapons of unimaginable power and incalculable implications; yet it was essential that disarmament measures, while effective, should not endanger collective security, for however unobjectionable a utopian disarmament scheme might be in theory, it could cause greater dangers if put into practice than the arms race itself. While any disturbance of the nuclear balance of forces would be serious even in present conditions, it would be much more serious if it took place during the disarmament process; the world would then be exposed to the very danger it was trying to avoid.

7. He reviewed briefly the history of the disarmament negotiations in the United Nations and the events which had culminated in the decision to set up the Eighteen-Nation Committee, which included, besides representatives of the NATO and Warsaw Treaty Powers, direct representatives of the General Assembly. Thanks to that decision, the Eighteen-Nation Committee was a body of guaranteed impartiality which represented all mankind in the cause of disarmament.

8. The Soviet delegation had proposed a meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee at the level of Heads of States. If there were any points on which useful discussions might be held or, *a fortiori*, agreements might be reached at the Committee's next series of meetings, there was no reason why the member countries should not be represented by their Heads of State, assisted by their delegations and the necessary

experts. That, however, would in no way alter the fact that in accordance with the letter and spirit of the Assembly's resolutions their duty would be to act as the moral and legal representatives of the General Assembly.

9. There were still a number of stumbling-blocks to be overcome by the members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee acting on behalf of the General Assembly. First, a decision had to be taken on the nature of the control body, the point of time at which it should be set up and its relations with the Security Council; if the control body was to be subject to the veto that existed in the Security Council, its functioning might be paralyzed. That was a problem in which the parties must adjust their own interests to the principles of justice and the needs of all mankind.

10. Another problem was the extent of control. Control must cover more than the mere verification of the weapons to be destroyed; it must also be applied to weapons retained, unless every country's inventory of its own weapons was to be accepted without challenge or investigation. It might be asserted that that was a matter of mutual trust; but trust must be inspired by specific and practical action, by a policy of opening doors and laying cards on the table. The control system would be not merely a means of carrying out the disarmament treaty but an integral element of the treaty itself; and as such it must not be restricted.

11. Turning to the problem of an international force, he said that in the light of past experience there seemed little hope of agreement being reached on the reduction of national armed forces to the minimum required for defence and for use under Article 43 of the United Nations Charter. Up to the present, no success had been achieved in the organization of an international force. He was not proposing a revision of the Charter in that regard; it must be borne in mind, however, that there already existed in the United Nations a body of precedent consisting of decisions taken to remedy defects or omissions in the Charter and to settle cases to which no Article of the Charter could be applied. The very life of the United Nations had hinged on such a dynamic interpretation of the Charter. That body of decisions should be turned to account so that an international force could be set up without waiting for conflicts to arise. Such a force, under effective international direction, would not only help to settle conflicts but also prevent their ever arising.

12. While the Eighteen-Nation Committee had the responsibility of dealing with those specific problems of disarmament, the duty of the General Assembly was to create an atmosphere favourable to their solution. It should stimulate economic relations and, above all, cultural relations among the peoples. The peoples of the world must develop common concepts of law, sociology and education; and the conscience of mankind must remain vigilant, rising above all human quarrels and private or national interests.

13. Mr. MALITZA (Romania) said that there was increasing awareness that the stockpiling of nuclear weapons increased the probability of their ultimately being used, though nuclear war could not serve as an instrument for achieving policy objectives or settling international issues. It was also appreciated that the tremendous waste of resources resulting from the arms race was intolerable in a world in which two-fifths of the adult population was illiterate and half was undernourished. The United Nations had played an active role in promoting recognition of the fact that,

far from having adverse economic effects, disarmament would encourage economic and social development; there had recently been indications that even countries which had previously regarded the arms race as economically bearable were now finding it an increasingly intolerable burden. The smaller countries were making an increasing effort to contribute to the creation of a better atmosphere by removing various parts of the world from the area of potential nuclear conflict; noteworthy in that connexion were the Antarctic Treaty, General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI) on the denuclearization of Africa, and the proposals for the denuclearization of Latin America, Asia and the Pacific, and various parts of Europe. It was unfortunate, however, that attempts had been made to lay down conditions for denuclearization which would tend to hamper the process of establishing such zones. His delegation also welcomed the recent agreement to bar nuclear weapons from outer space.

14. The failure of the Eighteen-Nation Committee to achieve concrete results in drafting a treaty on general and complete disarmament was attributable to the Western Powers' reluctance to meet half-way the proposals made by the Soviet Union and the socialist countries. Romania, which was a member of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, felt that the draft treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict international control submitted by the Soviet Union^{4/} provided a sound basis for agreement; at the same time, his Government was prepared to consider any other constructive proposals. The Soviet proposal that the USSR and the United States should retain limited contingents of intercontinental, anti-missile and anti-aircraft missiles in their own territories until the end of the third stage of disarmament represented a significant effort to meet the security requirements of the Western countries. The Western draft treaty on general and complete disarmament would not eliminate weapons of mass destruction and free the world from the danger of nuclear war, since, while it provided for the liquidation of national nuclear armaments, it did not rule out the possibility of an international force equipped with nuclear weapons. It also provided that military bases in foreign territory should be maintained until the last stage of disarmament, although those bases were an integral part of the arms race and were a cause of tension and distrust.

15. Although it worked constantly for the achievement of general and complete disarmament, his Government was also in favour of partial or regional measures designed to lessen tension, create an atmosphere of trust and thus facilitate agreement on disarmament. As early as 1957, it had proposed that the Balkan region should be transformed into a zone of understanding and co-operation from which atomic weapons and missile bases were banned. It also favoured such measures as a non-aggression pact between the NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries and the reduction or freezing of military budgets. Since new ways must be found to close the gap between the opposing positions, his delegation supported the Soviet proposal that a conference of the States members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, with representation at the highest level, should be convened early in 1964 to discuss the problems of general and complete disarmament together with collateral measures for lessening tension. In view of the need to avoid any action that might be prejudicial to

the new atmosphere of confidence, it was surprising that attempts were being made to disseminate nuclear weapons more widely through such instrumentalities as a multilateral force.

16. His delegation would do everything possible to promote constructive action in the field of disarmament and the relaxation of international tension.

17. Mr. RIFA'I (Jordan) said that in view of the Eighteen-Nation Committee's decision to reconvene as soon as the General Assembly had completed its consideration of the questions of nuclear testing and disarmament, the First Committee was faced with the task of reviewing the work of that body and deciding whether anything needed to be done to strengthen its terms of reference, increase its size or raise its level of representation. In that connexion, his delegation felt that the convening of a conference of the States members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee at the highest level in 1964, as suggested by the Soviet Union, would give that Committee a new impetus and would show the world that leading statesmen gave the highest priority to disarmament. The Assembly should not, however, attempt to saddle the Eighteen-Nation Committee with a set of rigid instructions, but should simply urge it to bear in mind the proposals which had been made during the current session.

18. As the United States representative, Mr. Stelle, who had been an active participant in the Geneva negotiations, had pointed out at a recent meeting of the First Committee (1320th meeting), disarmament talks were entering a new phase characterized by the emergence of areas of agreement. It was most gratifying that the Geneva negotiations seemed likely to resume in a more favourable atmosphere, thanks to the greater flexibility displayed by the United States and the Soviet Union, flexibility which had been evident in the encouraging statements made to the General Assembly by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs on 19 September 1963 (1208th plenary meeting) and by the President of the United States on the following day (1209th plenary meeting).

19. The interest being shown at the current session in collateral disarmament measures was a particularly encouraging development. Three measures of that kind had already been achieved with the agreement on the establishment of a direct communications line between Washington and Moscow, the conclusion of the partial nuclear test ban treaty, and the agreement reached between the United States and the Soviet Union, and subsequently ratified by General Assembly resolution 1884 (XVIII), not to station weapons of mass destruction in outer space. Although such measures did not amount to actual disarmament they should not be regarded as ineffective, for in the last analysis, agreement on collateral measures helped to make possible the reduction of armaments by easing international tension and making the expansion of weapons stockpiles unnecessary.

20. No useful purpose would be served if the First Committee were to embark on an analysis of the proposals made in the Eighteen-Nation Committee; that was properly the task of the experts at Geneva. He wished, however, to comment on one point, the question of nuclear-free zones. His country, which was situated in one of the most sensitive regions of the world, was very much attracted to the idea of such zones; his delegation therefore whole-heartedly supported the proposal to declare Latin America a denuclearized

^{4/} Official Records of the General Assembly, Seventeenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 90, document A/C.1/867.

area and would sympathetically consider any similar proposals relating to other regions, including its own.

21. In that context, he wished to stress that Jordan, which occupied a central position in the Arab East, had an armistice line 650 kilometres in length along its borders and was itself involved in a major international problem. It felt strongly that progress towards general and complete disarmament should go hand in hand with progress towards the solution of pending international problems in accordance with the rules of equity.

22. He had noticed that for some time past there had been a tendency to deprecate agreements reached outside the United Nations. What mattered, however, was not where an agreement was reached but whether it was a genuine agreement made in the interests of the world as a whole. Moreover, the United Nations frequently provided the initial impetus necessary to bring together seemingly irreconcilable viewpoints; the partial test ban treaty was a case in point. It nevertheless remained true that representatives should act so as to uphold at all times the authority, prestige and effectiveness of the Organization.

23. Mr. PACHACHI (Iraq) said that thanks to the real, if unspectacular, progress made in the previous year, the question of disarmament, which had been on the agenda since 1946, was at last being discussed against a background of achievement and hope. The current situation, however, provided no grounds for over-optimism; the armaments stalemate persisted, the problem of disarmament seemed to be as intractable as ever, and the arms race, with its attendant perils and its vast unremunerative expenditures, still continued. Although it had achieved more than its predecessors, the Eighteen-Nation Committee still faced a formidable task. The eight non-aligned countries represented in it had not been able to submit new proposals leading to an acceptable solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament, but had instead preferred to seek out common ground for agreement with a view to reconciling the differences between the two major blocs. Although that course appeared wise, progress had been very slow.

24. While the draft treaties on general and complete disarmament submitted by the Soviet Union and the United States had points in common, they were still far apart both in substance and in detail. Their similarities and differences had been ably summed up by the Canadian and Indian representatives. In that connexion, however, the Soviet Union's willingness, recently announced by its Foreign Minister, to consent to the retention of a limited number of nuclear missiles throughout the disarmament process, and the offer made by the United States to transfer 60 metric tons of fissionable material to peaceful uses, as against 40 tons on the part of the Soviet Union, were to be welcomed as narrowing the area of difference.

25. He was confident that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would comply with the First Committee's request to resume its efforts to bring about a comprehensive test ban, without which no real progress would be possible in other fields of disarmament.

26. In the field of collateral disarmament measures, to which the non-aligned nations at Geneva had paid particular attention as a means of reducing tension and promoting confidence, many steps could be foreseen in addition to the three that had already been taken. The General Assembly had already appealed

to all States to prevent the further dissemination of nuclear weapons, and the time had come to conclude a treaty on that subject. A closely related aspect was the creation of denuclearized zones; on that point his delegation agreed that to be effective such arrangements must be accompanied by adequate safeguards and guarantees and be backed by the unanimous consent of the countries concerned. There was some indication that the work done on the problem of eliminating the danger of war by surprise attack or miscalculation might soon bear fruit in the shape of an agreement on the establishment of control posts in the territories of the two major Powers; that would be a significant milestone on the way to total disarmament. Lastly, the question of providing for independent international enforcement machinery, a task which the United Nations alone was in a position to undertake, should be seriously considered in any future negotiations.

27. His delegation considered that the Soviet proposal for a meeting of the Eighteen-Nation Committee at the highest level in 1964 would provide a much needed stimulus to further progress in disarmament. It was confident that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would approach its future tasks with the same determination and sense of responsibility as it had shown in the past.

28. Mr. CHOW (China) paid tribute to the Eighteen-Nation Committee, which, though it could not be expected to perform miracles, had done much valuable groundwork, and expressed his satisfaction at the more constructive character of the First Committee's current deliberations, which showed that Member States were becoming increasingly aware of the potentially disastrous consequences of the arms race. With respect to the future programme of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, his delegation believed that a realistic system of priorities should be followed. The Committee should work for the conclusion of separate agreements on individual items; the adoption of collateral measures would do more to create the necessary climate of confidence and security than the study of an all-embracing disarmament convention.

29. The Eighteen-Nation Committee was burdened with a heavy agenda, which already included the banning of underground tests and might appropriately also include such topics as measures to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, the transfer of nuclear material to peaceful uses, the prevention of surprise attacks, and the question of the establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping force. It should not be overburdened by adding problems which were even more complex and probably insoluble, such as that of a non-aggression pact between the NATO and the Warsaw Treaty Powers—which in any event was nothing but an attempt to perpetuate the division of Germany.

30. His delegation felt that until the Eighteen-Nation Committee had completed its preparatory work there would be no point in holding a summit disarmament conference, let alone a conference on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons, a subject which could only be considered in conjunction with that of the balanced reduction of conventional armaments.

31. His delegation agreed with previous speakers that the question of the creation of denuclearized zones was primarily one to be decided by the countries directly involved. A factor which such countries should take into account in coming to their decision was the menace of indirect aggression through infiltration and

subversion, of which there were many examples in the Caribbean, in Asia and elsewhere.

32. Certain speakers had expressed concern about the Chinese communist régime's military power, and others had suggested that no disarmament agreement could succeed without its participation. His delegation

believed that the strength of that régime had been overrated and its weaknesses underestimated. Furthermore, a régime that could describe the nuclear test ban treaty as an act of capitulation and a fraud was not a worthy partner in disarmament negotiations.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.