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AGENDA ITEM 106

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (*continued*)
(A/5976, A/5986-DC/227)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. KISELEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that if effective measures were not taken in good time, nuclear weapons would soon be in the possession of many nations which did not at present possess them. In a world in which existing stocks of nuclear weapons were already of an order equivalent to 100 tons of convention explosives for every human being on earth, it was in the interest of all peoples to end forever the dangerous growth of new nuclear potential. The lack of an effective treaty on non-proliferation was an obstacle in the way of the negotiations for general and complete disarmament, and increased the risk of a nuclear war. In its resolution of 15 June 1965,^{1/} the Disarmament Commission had warned of the serious consequences which would result from failure to conclude a universal treaty or agreement to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and had recommended that the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should accord special priority to the consideration of the question of a treaty or convention to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons; and the importance of the matter had also been stressed in the Secretary-General's address to the First Committee at the 1355th meeting.

2. The Eighteen-Nation Committee's lengthy discussions at Geneva on the question of non-proliferation had failed to produce any result. While those discussions were going on, the imperialist and colonialist forces had been intensifying their aggressive actions in many regions of the world. As a result, and because of the negative attitude adopted by the Western Powers, the drafting of a mutually acceptable treaty had not yet been possible, as had been noted with regret in the joint memorandum sub-

mitted to the Eighteen-Nation Committee by the eight non-aligned members.^{2/}

3. The Soviet Union was seeking, as it had sought at Geneva, an agreement which would completely rule out the transfer of nuclear weapons or control over them in any form whatsoever. The United States position, on the other hand, permitted the spread of nuclear weapons by leaving a loop-hole for the NATO multilateral force, an extremely dangerous venture aimed at satisfying the nuclear appetites of West German militarist circles. In an article entitled "Nuclear Sharing: NATO and the N + 1 Country",^{3/} Professor Albert Wohlstetter of the University of California stated quite plainly that the planned multilateral force was likely to propagate the very proliferation it was intended to control. In the May 1965 issue of the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* it was stated that Bonn enthusiastically supported the creation of a multilateral force because it would constitute the first step towards West Germany's eventual control of its own nuclear weapons. Mr. Schroeder, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Federal Republic of Germany, had made it clear in a recent interview with the Düsseldorf newspaper *Rheinische Post* that West Germany was interested not only in strategic nuclear planning but also in direct participation in a nuclear weapons system. In the light of that admission, the Netherlands representative's statement that a multilateral nuclear force would increase the number of fingers not on the nuclear trigger but on the safety-catch entirely failed to carry conviction.

4. His Government's criticism of the United States position was not motivated simply by a desire to oppose the United States. The Byelorussian SSR was well aware that that position was a compromise between the ideas of a number of NATO members; but the essential point was that the compromise in question was one which completely ignored the views of other interested parties and reflected chiefly the aggressive intentions of the militaristic West German régime. The United States reservations in respect of the independent use of nuclear weapons under the multilateral force scheme were merely a screen; the fact that the United States position expressed the interests of international monopolies concerned only with imperialism and anti-communism was plain. Even in NATO countries which had supported or were supporting the scheme, realization of the global dangers it would bring was growing.

^{2/} *Ibid.*, document DC/227, annex 1, sect. E.

^{3/} See *The Dispersion of Nuclear Weapons: Strategy and Politics*, edited by R. N. Rosecrance (Columbia University Press, New York, 1964).

^{1/} Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/225.

5. Those who defended the United States position must understand that the USSR, the Byelorussian SSR and other peace-loving countries opposed any plan that would give the West German Bundeswehr access to nuclear weapons, because of the immense danger such a plan would constitute to world peace. Once the West German militarists had gained access to nuclear weapons, their attempts to redraw established European boundaries would throw Europe into turmoil and might start a conflict which would draw the entire world into a third world war.

6. Twice in the twentieth century German militarist aggression had inflicted immense loss of life and material destruction on the Byelorussian people and other freedom-loving peoples. It must be remembered that Hitler too had preached anti-communism, a barbarous, reactionary and imperialistic doctrine inspired by a blind fanaticism and bestial hatred unprecedented in history. The steps leading up to the Second World War had included many violations of international agreements designed to prevent the rebuilding of the German war machine. Today the Western Powers had already made a number of concessions which had enabled the West German revanchists to re-establish their military potential; and as Professor Etzioni of Columbia University had said, even though the present talk was of a multi-lateral nuclear force with United States participation, the end would be a European nuclear force which would in fact be a West German nuclear force with a few small countries joining in as camouflage. A further consideration was that the transfer of nuclear weapons or control over nuclear weapons to the West German militarists would raise an insurmountable obstacle to the reunification of Germany on a free and democratic basis.

7. In the present age of atomic and hydrogen weapons, any proposal concerned with world security must be judged primarily from the standpoint of whether it removed, or at least reduced, the danger of thermo-nuclear war. From that point of view, the United States position was indefensible: in the United Nations the Western Powers spoke of the urgent need for concluding a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but within the military councils of NATO they were promoting the spread of such weapons by the establishment of a new nuclear force which would include West Germany and other non-nuclear States. To explain that contradiction they advanced the far-fetched argument that the question of a multilateral NATO nuclear force was an internal affair for NATO alone. His delegation wished to state most emphatically that any attempt to exclude NATO from the provisions of a treaty on non-proliferation would rob the treaty of all significance. If the Western Powers really wanted a treaty on non-proliferation, they must give up all ideas of exceptions or exclusions, as the Soviet Union and other peace-loving countries had done.

8. Fortunately, the First Committee had before it the USSR draft treaty (A/5976), which was free from the defects that made the United States proposal^{4/} unacceptable to his delegation. In the first place, the draft

treaty submitted by the Soviet Union completely barred the further proliferation of nuclear weapons. Secondly, instead of treating non-proliferation as an end in itself it aimed at the early liquidation of all types of nuclear weapons and the achievement of general and complete disarmament under strict international control, and was thus in keeping with the principle stated in the joint memorandum of the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. Thirdly, it was based on the principle of the equal responsibility of all five nuclear Powers—the Powers on which the Charter of the United Nations imposed special responsibilities for the preservation of world peace.

9. The USSR representative's analysis of the Soviet draft treaty had made it unmistakably clear that his country's goal was to strengthen world peace and the security of both nuclear and non-nuclear States. A further objective of the Soviet draft treaty was that after the conclusion of a treaty, while further important peace measures were being worked out, no non-nuclear Power should have any unilateral advantage over the others, so that no Power could frustrate the new measures taken in the interest of all mankind.

10. The Canadian representative's attempted explanation, at the 1356th meeting, of the difference between the Soviet and United States approaches to non-proliferation had been very one-sided—which was not surprising in view of the fact that Canada was one of the co-sponsors of the United States position. In the Byelorussian delegation's view, the difference was not what the Canadian representative had suggested, but rather the fact that the United States position was at variance with the objective in view, since it would permit the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The USSR proposal alone would eliminate all possible loop-holes for such proliferation and therefore make a real, rather than imaginary, contribution to the security of all States.

11. His delegation could not agree with the Peruvian representative's "all or nothing" approach to the question of a treaty on non-proliferation. What was important was not to speak eloquently of lofty objectives but to seek practical methods of achieving them; and from that point of view there could be no better guarantees than those which strengthened international security—the objective pursued in the USSR draft treaty. The adoption of the USSR proposal would not only prevent the development of nuclear capability in many countries and thereby slow down the arms race; it would, above all, bring mankind considerably closer to general and complete disarmament and make possible the adoption of new security measures. The world must either move forward towards peace or slide towards the abyss of a destructive war; it could not stand still while events marched on. There was no justification for saying that a treaty on non-proliferation would simply strengthen the nuclear monopoly of the five great Powers; the existence of five nuclear Powers, each of which had special responsibilities under the United Nations Charter for the maintenance of international peace and security, was an inescapable fact.

12. The advance towards peace must begin with first steps; and such a first step was the objective pursued in the draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear

^{4/} Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/227, annex 1, sect. A.

weapons proposed by the Soviet Union, which had repeatedly demonstrated its vigorous support for the larger goal of the elimination of all nuclear armaments and the destruction of all nuclear potential—a goal which formed the core of the Soviet Union's programme for general and complete disarmament.

13. Those who assumed that the signing of a non-proliferation treaty could safely be postponed were taking a dangerous position. The Soviet Union was prepared to sign such a treaty at once; the United States, however, was not, and it had suggested that the First Committee should entrust the drafting of the treaty, without even having reached agreement on its main provisions, to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. The United States was not really seeking a solution; it was afraid to discuss the problem in a large forum because very few nations were likely to support its efforts to retain a free hand for the establishment of the multilateral nuclear force.

14. His delegation appealed to those non-aligned countries which had suggested in the course of the First Committee's debates that non-proliferation measures should be combined with other steps in other fields to work together for the signing of a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in order not to complicate still further the struggle for a goal whose achievement was already difficult enough. The Committee should concentrate its attention on the preparation of a suitable treaty, on the basis of the acceptable draft submitted by the Soviet Union.

15. Mr. SADEK (Syria) said that the key to the solution of the problem under discussion was in the hands of the nuclear Powers. If a total ban was imposed on the use of nuclear weapons the further spread of such weapons would automatically be halted. Syria, which was opposed to the proliferation of nuclear weapons in any form, believed that an agreement on the subject should be drafted in clear and unambiguous terms; there should be no etymological or legal subtleties open to differing interpretations which might serve as a pretext for breaches of the agreement's provisions. The Syrian delegation considered that the draft treaty submitted by the Soviet Union (A/5976) would, at the present stage of the Committee's deliberations, be a most suitable starting-point.

16. In the Middle East, a clear danger of nuclear proliferation had made its appearance. Despite an inspection carried out by United States engineers, and agreed to only as a result of United States pressure, suspicions persisted in connexion with the Dimona reactor in Israel. The New York Times had reported on 14 March 1965 that the Dimona reactor was of a type particularly suited to the production of plutonium; with its capacity of 24,000 thermal kilowatts, it was capable of producing annually enough plutonium for two relatively small atomic weapons. But Israel refused to allow any further inspections even by engineers from a friendly country, let alone by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Mr. Benites (Ecuador), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

17. Mr. HSUEH (China) said that the First Committee had been wise to give priority to the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, although it would have been more logical to consider all the items on disarmament together. Ever since the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 1665 (XVI), the question of preventing the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons had received continuous attention in the General Assembly, the Disarmament Commission and the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. The latest report of the Eighteen-Nation Committee (A/5986-DC/227) contained valuable documents submitted by its members on various aspects of the subject.

18. Even though a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons might not be ratified by all countries, its conclusion, like that of the 1963 Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, would have a beneficial effect on the progress of disarmament and would unite peace-loving forces in a continued effort to reduce the risk of nuclear war. However, there were a number of related questions which should also be considered when a treaty on non-proliferation was being negotiated and concluded.

19. In the first place, the nuclear threat would continue to exist unless all the nuclear States stopped producing nuclear weapons and began to liquidate their nuclear stockpiles. While the national prestige should never be measured by the possession of weapons but by the promotion of the well-being of people and by the contribution to the cause of peace and justice, the sense of insecurity, particularly among the non-nuclear States, could not be dispelled by a treaty on non-proliferation or even by an undertaking on the part of the nuclear States never to use nuclear weapons for attack. Urgent consideration should therefore be given to what the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee had called "tangible steps to halt the nuclear arms race and to limit, reduce and eliminate the stocks of nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery".^{5/}

20. A second related question was that of the nuclear test ban. The partial test ban treaty of 1963 had been a positive achievement in the process of disarmament. Since they would be unable to develop nuclear weapons by underground tests alone, the non-nuclear States which had signed the treaty had thus given an undertaking not to build bombs. It was incumbent upon the nuclear States to reach an early agreement on the extension of the ban to cover tests in all environments, and thus halt the nuclear arms race. The conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation would then be easier and more meaningful.

21. The third related question—the protection of non-nuclear States against nuclear attacks or blackmail—did not concern the Federal Republic of Germany alone. In any event, a NATO multilateral nuclear force, far from being an obstacle to the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation, could provide Europe with protection against nuclear attack that did not involve the dissemination of nuclear weapons. However, the situation of non-nuclear States was even more

^{5/} *Ibid.*, sect. E.

serious in other parts of the world. In Asia, irresponsible madmen were bent on developing nuclear weapons against the will of the people. If no arrangements were made to meet the desire of the non-nuclear States for adequate defence, it would become increasingly difficult to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In that connexion, a tribute should be paid to the determination of the Indian leaders to resist pressure to make India a nuclear Power. The case of the Federal Republic of Germany suggested that even alignment did not provide adequate protection. Consequently, if the purpose of non-proliferation was to be achieved, firm arrangements should be made to provide protection in the case of nuclear attack or blackmail.

22. The solution to such complex and difficult questions could be found only through careful and detailed study and patient negotiations. Such work could best be done in a small expert body such as the Eighteen-Nation Committee, which would be helped by the views expressed in the First Committee. His delegation hoped that the Eighteen-Nation Committee, which had made encouraging progress, would resume its work as soon as possible.

23. Mr. PARDO (Malta) expressed regret that it had not yet been possible to reach agreement on an adequate treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In the present situation, in which the danger of nuclear proliferation was certainly not remote, the goal should not be merely a nuclear freeze during which the non-nuclear Powers entrusted the protection of their vital interests to the nuclear States for an indefinite period of time. The non-nuclear Powers, particularly those with nuclear weapons capability, needed to be assured that the objective of the nuclear States was to abolish the nuclear club within a measurable period of time, and not merely to freeze its membership. Any initiative by the nuclear Powers making it clear that they not only had the same general objective as the non-nuclear Powers but were willing to take immediate steps towards that objective would be of immense significance.

24. In the hope of facilitating such an initiative, the Prime Minister of Malta had suggested, in his speech in the Assembly's general debate (1359th plenary meeting), that it might be useful to distinguish between the concepts of proliferation and dissemination. The term "proliferation" might be used exclusively to denote the acquisition, through independent development or otherwise, of nuclear weapons by a previously non-nuclear Power or entity; "dissemination" could be defined as the creation by a nuclear Power of a new nuclear entity or Power, either by the direct or indirect transfer of weapons or technology or by the granting of ownership, control or independent use of nuclear weapons to a hitherto non-nuclear Power or entity. That distinction would recognize that nuclear States held the key to the solution of the problem and would make it possible to envisage progress on the

question in two stages: a treaty on non-dissemination and a treaty on non-proliferation.

25. A treaty on non-dissemination, formulated in such a way as not to contravene the agreed principles for disarmament negotiations ^{6/} endorsed by the General Assembly in resolution 1722 (XVI), would bind the nuclear Powers exclusively and could be concluded as soon as they resolved their differences. Those differences might be more easily resolved if a treaty on non-dissemination were accompanied by constructive measures such as those proposed by the United States representative in his speech in the Assembly's general debate (1334th plenary meeting), involving the actual destruction of nuclear weapons, the transfer to peaceful uses of substantial quantities of weapons-grade U-235, and significant reductions in the number of strategic nuclear weapon delivery vehicles. Such measures might temporarily relieve pressure for participation in the control of nuclear weapons and give time for further progress towards the goal of nuclear disarmament.

26. Time would be needed before agreement could be reached on a treaty on non-dissemination and on limited measures of nuclear disarmament. Therein lay the value of the draft unilateral declaration of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons submitted by Italy. ^{7/} A short, controlled nuclear moratorium was the most valuable contribution that the non-nuclear Powers, particularly those which had achieved nuclear weapons capability, could make to the discussions between the nuclear Powers. It would also give time to consider what further measures would be required for a treaty on non-proliferation.

27. Such a treaty would be of limited value if it did not include all nuclear and potential nuclear States. It seemed probable that a more detailed exchange of views between nuclear and non-nuclear States on that question would be required than had so far taken place.

28. It was imperative that all militarily significant States should accede to the partial test ban treaty. Delay in doing so might seriously endanger any progress achieved in controlling the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The extension of that treaty to cover underground tests was also of the greatest importance, since a comprehensive test ban would significantly limit the further development of nuclear weapons.

29. The Government of Malta had noted with interest the reference made by the United States representative at the 1355th meeting to the problem of ensuring the security of nations which forswore nuclear weapons, and was studying the complex issues involved in that problem.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.

^{6/} See Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixteenth Session, Annexes, agenda item 19, document A/4879.

^{7/} Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/227, annex 1, sect. D.