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AGENDA ITEM 95

Question of convening a world disarmament conference
(continued) (A/5992, A/C.1/L.340 and Add.1-3)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. SHEVCHENKO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic) said that the need for preventing a new world war, which would be a nuclear war, was generally recognized; the main lines along which concrete action should be sought were indicated by the titles of the items on the Committee's agenda. The practical steps which could bring about general and complete disarmament, non-proliferation, and the non-utilization and destruction of nuclear weapons were set out in a series of specific proposals submitted by the socialist countries, in particular the Soviet Union, and by the non-aligned countries. It was to be noted, however, that no progress had been made since the conclusion, at Moscow in 1963, of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. One reason for that stagnation was that the means available to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament were not in keeping with the tasks before it. Two great Powers, which had become nuclear Powers, were taking no part in the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. The People's Republic of China was still unable, owing to the completely unjustified position of the United States, to take its lawful place in the United Nations. The Organization's role was thus compromised by the very people who professed to be the champions of United Nations responsibility in disarmament matters.

2. It was therefore entirely proper that a proposal had been made to convene a world disarmament conference in which all States would take part. That idea, which his delegation fully supported, had been advanced by the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in October 1964, and the Disarmament Commission had supported it. Subsequently, the subject, prepared by a group of non-aligned countries, had been submitted to the First Committee (A/C.1/L.340 and Add.1-3) and was now sponsored by forty-two countries.

3. The position taken by certain Western countries, however, gave cause for concern. The United States delegation, for example, had predicted that a disarmament conference would produce no results and would only hinder the deliberations of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. That attitude prompted doubts as to whether the United States really wanted any progress in disarmament talks. The United States preferred negotiations in the Eighteen-Nation Committee. It was obvious, however, that the vast majority of States were dissatisfied with the results of that Committee's work and wished to convene a world disarmament conference, which offered new and broader opportunities for an exchange of views among all the countries of the world. In particular, such a conference would enable the five nuclear Powers to take part in disarmament negotiations.

4. The delegations of some Western countries, including the United States, had stressed the technical difficulties involved in holding a disarmament conference. In his delegation's view, the essential thing was to want such a conference.

5. His delegation wished to emphasize the need to make certain that every country which wished to participate in the conference could do so. The attempts of a number of delegations to give a restrictive interpretation to the words "all countries" showed that they wished to limit the scope of the conference. For example, the representative of one Western country had tried to set prior conditions for the participation of the People's Republic of China. It might be asked, then, whether certain Western Powers really wished to see progress in disarmament negotiations. If they did, they should realize that the participation of representatives of all countries was the most important prerequisite for the success of a disarmament conference.

6. His delegation hoped that at its twentieth session the General Assembly would, in conformity with the proposal of the non-aligned countries, adopt a decision that would help to make possible the convening of a world disarmament conference in which representatives of all countries would take part.

7. Mr. SCHUURMANS (Belgium) said that his country, as was indicated by its vote on the draft resolution submitted in the Disarmament Commission by the non-aligned countries and adopted on 11 June 1965, ^{1/} was not opposed in principle to the holding of a world disarmament conference; it was aware of the advantages afforded by that approach, particularly the opportunity to associate with the deliberations and conclusions of such a conference a number of countries

^{1/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/224.

which, although not Members of the United Nations, were of undeniable political importance. His delegation had therefore been favourably disposed toward the draft resolution embodying the views of those who supported that idea; however, it had to be acknowledged that completely satisfactory answers had not been given to a number of questions which naturally came to mind. For example, how would the organizers be able to ensure that China, Germany, Korea and Viet-Nam were represented in a manner acceptable to all? While no one denied the value of Peking's participation, there was also no question about the need for participation by the Federal Republic of Germany, whose scientists had made a remarkable contribution to nuclear technology; moreover, it would be essential to see that the principle of universality was reflected not only in the sending of invitations but in the actual participation of the nations of the entire world. It would have been preferable, instead of leaving it to the preparatory committee to find a solution to the problem, for the General Assembly itself to indicate the main lines of the committee's terms of reference.

8. As to the effects that the proposed world disarmament conference might have on the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, Belgium welcomed the General Assembly's recommendation that the Committee should resume its work as soon as possible with a view, *inter alia*, to the early conclusion of an agreement on the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons; the Committee offered the best prospect of success in that regard and also, for example, in extending the partial test ban treaty to include underground testing. The world conference should therefore endeavour to supplement the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee. Any progress made by that Committee would itself create a psychological atmosphere that could not but be beneficial to the conference. The necessary harmonizing of the activities of the Eighteen-Nation Committee and the world conference could be achieved in a simple, practical manner: it would be sufficient to stipulate that the preparatory committee of the conference would be built around a nucleus of representatives of those countries which were now represented in the Eighteen-Nation Committee; the preparatory committee could be enlarged, if necessary, to include certain countries whose participation would be useful and desirable, due regard being had to equitable regional distribution and a reasonable ideological balance.

9. His delegation felt that the First Committee and the General Assembly should assist in finding a solution to certain other problems, such as the agenda, place, duration and financing of the conference. However, those were essentially technical matters which could be left to the preparatory committee; since the draft resolution was intended to give that committee very wide latitude, it would be desirable for the committee, when its work was completed or sufficiently advanced, to report to the General Assembly at its twenty-first session. The Assembly could then examine the results achieved and decide on the measures necessary for the final implementation of the draft resolution now under consideration; that would be an effective way to establish a desirable link between the world conference and the Organization which had inspired it.

10. Those observations did not reflect a sceptical attitude but were, on the contrary, aimed chiefly at emphasizing Belgium's great interest in the problem of disarmament, which was vitally important to the small nations in the literal sense of the term; his delegation would always be prepared to study with the closest attention any measure that could truly help mankind to advance along that road, which was the road of reason and of salvation.

11. Mr. KLUSAK (Czechoslovakia) said that the discussions which had taken place in the Disarmament Commission had shown that the convening of a world disarmament conference was widely supported by States Members of the United Nations. In recent years, much emphasis had been given to the importance of disarmament from both a political and an economic standpoint. Since the founding of the Organization, the problems raised by disarmament had received constant attention in various United Nations organs. Unfortunately, the results of the negotiations were not commensurate with the efforts made. On many occasions, the solution of the problem had met with fierce resistance in Western circles which, for political or economic reasons, had an interest in continuing the arms race and which regarded war as an instrument of foreign policy. The year of aggression in Viet-Nam and the military intervention and similar actions carried out by the United States in various parts of the world clearly illustrated that fact. Armaments were still regarded as an important factor in the economic life of certain Western countries, and the analyses published in the United States Press showed the influence on the country's economy of the increased pace of rearmament necessitated by the war in Viet-Nam.

12. That attitude was the main obstacle to the conclusion of an agreement on disarmament. There were other difficulties as well, however, such as the efforts made by the United States and its supporters to prevent certain States whose political and economic systems did not meet with their approval from participating in the solution of important international problems. Whether it was a question of general and complete disarmament or of partial measures, particularly with regard to nuclear weapons, disarmament must be considered a matter of world-wide concern and it was therefore essential to solve the problem on a global scale. The convening of a world conference would ensure the participation of all States in solving the problem of disarmament. It should be noted that when the Disarmament Commission had adopted the resolution supporting that proposal, no Member State had voted against it. His delegation fully supported the proposal; at the same time, it was aware that the convening of a world disarmament conference alone could not solve all the problems connected with disarmament. The solution did not depend only on the nature of the forum where those problems were discussed. On the other hand, there was no question that the success of the conference would depend on participation by the largest possible number of countries, especially those States which were particularly important from a military standpoint; at the present time, that meant those States which possessed nuclear weapons.

13. The proposed world conference should have the support of all States which were genuinely concerned with an agreement on general and complete disarmament or on partial measures which could help significantly to improve the general world situation.

14. A world disarmament conference could, however, accomplish its purpose only if the States which were not represented in the United Nations or its agencies took part. During the preparatory stage, it was essential not to impose prior conditions which would prevent States from participating in the conference. While the debate on convening the conference continued and during the period of preparation, the actual situation within the United Nations and throughout the world must be borne in mind. The fact that the idea of convening the conference had arisen outside the United Nations was a result of the abnormal situation created within the Organization by the discriminatory policy of the United States and of those Governments which, under the influence of the United States, opposed the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. In order to ensure that no difficulties arose even during the preparations for the conference, it was essential that it should not be held under United Nations auspices but should take place outside the framework of the Organization. That did not mean, however, that the United Nations should play no part at all.

15. Some States had expressed fear that the convening of a disarmament conference outside the framework of the United Nations might have the effect of weakening the prestige and authority of the Organization. It should be noted that that fear had been expressed primarily by those States which continued to oppose representation for the People's Republic of China. The States in question were not in the least concerned about the effect their position might have on the prestige and authority of the United Nations and on the Organization's ability to solve present-day international problems.

16. The preparations for the conference should be entrusted to a widely representative committee, as provided in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.340 and Add.1-3). It was intolerable that an effort should be made in the United Nations to limit the composition of the preparatory committee; its composition and terms of reference should be determined by consultations among all States. If the General Assembly attempted to prejudice the work of the preparatory committee in any way, it might embarrass those States which were not represented in the United Nations and prevent them from participating in the conference itself. Furthermore, if the proposal of certain delegations was accepted and the conference was kept within a specific context on the basis of earlier negotiations conducted under United Nations auspices, it would remain within the confines of the fruitless discussions held in the past. That would be seriously prejudicial to the main task of the conference, which was to solve disarmament problems on a global scale, taking account of the positions of all the participating States. Lastly, with regard to the date of the disarmament conference, his delegation felt that

every effort should be made to convene it as soon as possible, i.e. some time during 1966.

17. The General Assembly should endeavour to prepare realistic, reasonable recommendations concerning the convening of and preparations for a world disarmament conference; in the opinion of his delegation, the draft resolution before the First Committee answered that purpose and should be adopted.

18. Mr. NJOROGI (Kenya) said that the problem of disarmament was sufficiently complex to be approached from several angles; that was why the efforts of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, the First Committee and the proposed world disarmament conference were complementary and could perhaps be harmonized in order to facilitate the conclusion of a permanent agreement.

19. With regard to the draft resolution, of which Kenya was a sponsor, the preamble summarized the overriding aims and principles which were basic to international peace and security. Operative paragraph 1, even though it reflected the preoccupations of the non-aligned countries which had met at Cairo in 1964, concerned all countries, and that was why provision was made for "all countries" to be invited. It should be emphasized, in that connexion, that it would not be possible to achieve satisfactory results without the support and participation of the five nuclear Powers; what was more, there must be unanimous agreement among them. In order to accomplish that, it was important to be clear about the purpose of the proposed conference, which was to explore in complete sincerity the best means of guaranteeing the security of mankind for all time. Kenya therefore appealed to the five nuclear Powers to participate in the work of the conference and to examine the problem of disarmament outside the context of the political and ideological conflict which divided the present-day world; if they were to succeed, the negotiations must deal essentially with what was problem of world security.

20. When the First Committee or the proposed preparatory committee began to study the question of participation in the conference, they should not let themselves be guided by the regrettable vote in the General Assembly concerning the People's Republic of China and attempt to exclude that country from the conference. Although it was also possible that other nuclear Powers whose nuclear programmes were unfinished would decline the invitation, Kenya felt that their participation was essential, notwithstanding their nuclear programmes. The sponsors of the draft resolution simply asked the General Assembly to endorse the idea of convening a world disarmament conference. The details concerning the conference would be worked out by the proposed preparatory committee; hence, what was important was to adopt a decision on the principle of convening the conference.

21. Mention should also be made of another category of countries—countries situated in strategic areas which might have the ambition to possess or control, either in their own right or jointly, nuclear weapons accumulated within the framework of military alliances. There were also the divided nations. Their participation in the conference might open the way to

negotiations leading to a solution of the problems which resulted from their present status.

22. It would appear that some of the reservations which had been expressed might be dispelled if it was agreed to establish the preparatory committee referred to in operative paragraph 2. Those reservations, which were not altogether unfounded, concerned preliminary or procedural questions, rather than the main issue; they could provide guidance for the preparatory committee, which must, after all, be given terms of reference. In its present form, the draft resolution took differing views into account; the preparatory committee, which would be widely representative in character, would have to submit its reports and recommendations to the various Governments for study. It would be an error to regard the proposed conference as nothing more than an instrument of propaganda or to prejudge at the present stage any results which it might achieve; Kenya hoped that it would strengthen the cause of peace and that it would give the various countries time to reflect and to organize. The draft resolution could help to crystallize ideas and plans. For its part, Kenya supported the draft resolution with the amendments that had been submitted (A/C.1/L.344), and would not oppose any new amendments that improved the text.

23. Mr. FUENTEALBA (Chile) said that, as his delegation had already indicated at the last series of meetings of the Disarmament Commission, his Government was strongly in favour of a world disarmament conference to which all countries would be invited. After reviewing the efforts which the United Nations had made since its establishment to bring about disarmament, he paid a tribute to the Eighteen-Nation Committee for the clarifications it had provided on questions relating to general and complete disarmament and for its attempts to devise collateral measures which would facilitate agreement on the basic problem and reduce international tension. Since 1963, however, the progress made by the Committee had been slower, and there had been no further developments in the attempt to reconcile the United States and USSR proposals on general and complete disarmament. The collateral measures which had been agreed upon had not been followed by agreement on the complete prohibition of nuclear tests or the destruction of certain weapons, or by any other measures which would represent real progress. Nevertheless, the Eighteen-Nation Committee was still an extremely valuable body in which the super-Powers could continue their dialogue with the impartial collaboration of the eight non-aligned countries, whose efforts at conciliation deserved a very sincere tribute. It was also probably the best forum for discussing technical details, which were often the most difficult aspect of disarmament measures.

24. For that reason, his country had never regarded a world disarmament conference as a step designed to paralyse or diminish the importance of the Eighteen-Nation Committee; it was rather a further manifestation of the universal desire for disarmament and should not prevent continuation of the work in Geneva. In such a conference, it would also be possible to secure the participation of a great nuclear Power which was a decisive factor in maintaining world

peace, as well as peace and security in Asia. Other countries which were important in the military sense but were not Members of the United Nations should also be invited to participate in the conference; and that was a point whose importance should not be underestimated. His country sincerely believed that the participation of all countries in a disarmament conference could not possibly give grounds for anxiety in any quarter, and should not be construed as implying any alteration in the present legal or diplomatic status of certain States or Governments in relation to others.

25. Although his delegation supported the idea of a conference, it was not allowing itself to indulge in any undue optimism, since it realized that serious obstacles would have to be overcome in preparing adequately for the conference and ensuring participation by all States. The world conference would not be a panacea, but United Nations approval of the convening of such a conference would be wise and constructive, since it would be a step on the road to truly general disarmament. His delegation would therefore vote in favour of convening a world disarmament conference. Some concern had been expressed about the text of the draft resolution, but its lack of clarity seemed to be due to a desire not to create at the outset any obstacles which might make it more difficult for States not Members of the United Nations to attend. Accordingly, his delegation would support only those amendments which were in keeping with the purpose of the draft resolution.

26. Mr. TARABANOV (Bulgaria) recalled that attention had been focused on the problem of disarmament for some time. The efforts made by the non-aligned countries to achieve some progress towards disarmament had culminated in the adoption by the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in October 1964, of a proposal for convening a world disarmament conference. Sincere efforts had been made over the years in the United Nations itself, in both the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission, in the Eighteen-Nation Committee and, in the more remote past, in various other committees; but the results achieved were still disappointing. From time to time, it had just been possible to create a favourable atmosphere for negotiations; and, in such an atmosphere, the partial test ban treaty had been concluded and the great Powers had made a declaration undertaking not to place nuclear weapons in orbit—a declaration welcomed by the General Assembly in resolution 1884 (XVIII).

27. But the problem of general and complete disarmament remained unsolved; and that regrettable situation had prompted efforts to seek new ways of dealing with it and to mobilize the good will of all countries, whether they were Members of the United Nations or not, since disarmament could not be general and complete without universal participation. Such a step was indeed essential, since the General Assembly had once again denied the People's Republic of China its legitimate seat in the United Nations; the question of convening a world disarmament conference with the participation of the People's Republic of China and other non-member States had therefore assumed

even greater importance. The Assembly's decision confirmed his delegation's view that the United States was continuing its policy of discrimination against one of the five great Powers possessing nuclear weapons. But no one could deny that as long as the People's Republic of China was not seated in the United Nations and France was not participating in the Geneva disarmament negotiations, no decision on general and complete disarmament—however useful it might be—could be binding for those countries.

28. It was high time that the politicians of certain countries came to see the world as it was, and not as they wanted it to be. It would be altogether unrealistic to hold discussions on general and complete disarmament without the participation of countries whose role was of incontestable importance in international relations and the maintenance of peace. Admittedly, no delegation had yet directly opposed the convening of a world disarmament conference; but some countries had expressed reservations and imposed conditions, probably because they did not wish to attend a conference with countries which were not Members of the Organization. Some countries had asked, for instance, whether the conference was really necessary, whether it would be an obstacle to the Geneva negotiations, whether it might not lead to a deterioration in the international climate, who was going to organize and finance it, which countries would be invited to attend it, what its agenda would be, and other questions of that kind. He would not go so far as to assume that those questions were merely a tactical device adopted by delegations which were opposed to the conference. His own delegation, for its part, believed that a world disarmament conference was not only useful, but indispensable. The United Nations would have nothing to lose thereby, and mankind would have everything to gain. There was no reason why preparations for a world conference should slow down or obstruct disarmament negotiations which were taking place elsewhere; on the contrary, they might give the existing negotiations a new impetus.

29. The agenda for the conference, and its rules of procedure, were not matters which the First Committee should consider at the present stage. Those problems would, ordinarily, be settled by the participants themselves. If the Committee tried to solve them in advance, non-member countries participating in the conference would be faced with a fait accompli. It would be enough for States Members of the United Nations to support the idea of a world conference and to declare their readiness to participate in it and bring with them all the experience they had gained in discussing disarmament problems. A preparatory committee would appear to be the most suitable body for organizing the conference.

30. Some representatives had expressed concern about the conference being convened outside the framework of the United Nations; he considered that it was not the prestige of the United Nations that mattered, but the fact that the conference would help to solve the disarmament problem, stop the armaments race and reduce international tension.

31. His delegation therefore supported the idea of convening a world disarmament conference and would

do everything in its power to ensure the success of a project which was in the interests of the United Nations and of mankind as a whole.

32. Mr. IDZUMBUIR (Democratic Republic of the Congo) said that his delegation had always believed that certain Powers had a special responsibility in the search for peace and that, since disarmament was a goal which would strengthen peace, there were some Powers which had a special responsibility to bear in view of the weapons of destruction they had accumulated. His country had already expressed its views, and its reservations, on the subject of a world disarmament conference; he wished merely to repeat that the conference should be adequately prepared in order to guarantee its success. That no doubt was the task of the proposed preparatory committee.

33. At the beginning of the debate (1374th meeting) his delegation had listened with interest to the statement by the Nigerian representative, the Netherlands representative's analysis of certain preliminary issues and the suggestions made by the representative of Saudi Arabia. Like the Nigerian representative, he believed that the main obstacle to progress in disarmament was a lack of political will on the part of the main Powers concerned. The preparatory committee should therefore do its utmost to see that such a will existed, and it should report to all the Powers concerned within a definite period. He was glad that a formal amendment had now been submitted (A/C.1/L.344) to take into account in a practical way the necessary balance between the interests of all States in the field of disarmament and the special responsibility of certain States. The suggestion to invite the major nuclear Powers to meet during the next nine months could be regarded as a test of the political will of those Powers to make progress towards disarmament; and that was an indispensable condition for the success of a world conference.

34. But the efforts made by the nuclear Powers should not be confined to nuclear weapons only; they should cover conventional offensive weapons as well. In that connexion, his delegation entirely shared the views expressed by the delegation of Somalia. Nuclear weapons were indeed a serious threat to international security, but their very destructive capacity acted as a brake on their utilization; conventional offensive weapons, on the other hand, were still spreading destruction and had become the instruments of ideological or political imperialism which certain States were using in order to support armed rebellion against the legitimately established authorities of certain countries.

35. His delegation hoped that due attention would be given to that aspect of the problem and for the time being it wished merely to say once again that a world disarmament conference should be carefully prepared, and that it should be convened only if all the conditions necessary to ensure complete success were fulfilled.

36. Mr. AL-RASHID (Kuwait) said that although his delegation had not participated previously in the debates, his country shared with all peace-loving countries an earnest desire to contribute towards the goal of disarmament and thereby to save mankind from the disaster of a war, whether nuclear or non-nuclear.

However, it should not be forgotten that disarmament was impossible so long as justice did not prevail throughout the world, for oppressed peoples were not likely to place disarmament very high in their order of priorities. The removal of the causes of international tension should be sought with as much zeal as was expended in the search for an agreement on disarmament. The stability of the world and, consequently, its determination to disarm, were also dependent on economic equilibrium and the elimination of hunger and poverty. The adoption by the First Committee at its 1373rd meeting of a draft resolution on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was admittedly a commendable achievement but it was merely a first step towards the elimination of all fissionable materials from military use. Moreover, an end should also be sought to the dissemination of conventional weapons. The ultimate objective was complete disarmament, both nuclear and conventional.

37. The Disarmament Commission had adopted a resolution on 11 June 1965 approving the proposal put forward by the non-aligned countries in October 1964 for a world disarmament conference to which all countries would be invited. As far back as 1955, the non-aligned countries meeting at Bandung, at the African-Asian Conference, had voiced a call for disarmament. It was regrettable to note that man's efforts to achieve universal disarmament, which had first found expression at The Hague Conference of 1899, had never really been successful. On the contrary, since that time two world wars had taken place, to say nothing of many other armed conflicts.

38. The United Nations had been endeavouring, through its various agencies, to solve the problem of disarmament since 1946. It was deplorable that the great Powers, while recognizing that disarmament was a vital issue for the nations of the world, were using disarmament negotiations for propaganda purposes instead of making constructive proposals. His delegation was convinced of the necessity of achieving universal disarmament; it considered therefore that a world disarmament conference should be convened. It believed, moreover, that no nuclear Power should be excluded from such a conference, and that participation in it should not be restricted to the Members of the United Nations.

39. The necessary link between the world-wide objective of disarmament and the Organization's interest in the matter was provided in the preamble to the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.340 and Add.1-3), of which Kuwait was a sponsor. Such a conference would provide a complementary approach to the already considerable efforts of the United Nations and would not conflict with them, as some feared. In calling in operative paragraph 2 for the establishment of a widely representative preparatory committee to organize the conference, the sponsors had wished that committee to have full latitude to carry out the painstaking negotiations required to solve the many problems involved in convening such a conference. However, they believed that the stakes were too high to allow any organizational or political difficulties to stand in the way of the efforts to strengthen universal peace and security. There should be no dismay at the long record of failure of previous disarmament attempts, since the future of mankind itself was at stake.

40. Mr. CHIMIDDORJ (Mongolia) said that only general and complete disarmament could save succeeding generations from the scourge of war. His delegation welcomed the initiative taken by the non-aligned countries and attached the greatest importance to the convening of a world disarmament conference in which all nations of the world would participate. The need for such a conference was dictated by the fact that disarmament negotiations had so far not had the desired results. Moreover, there was no reason to hope that the Eighteen-Nation Committee would find a speedy solution to the question of general and complete disarmament if the Western Powers in that Committee maintained their present position. It was clear that for any progress to be made in disarmament, there must be active and direct participation by all States. A world disarmament conference would make it possible to bring the various points of view closer together and would have a favourable effect on future negotiations.

41. His delegation considered that the disarmament conference should not be held under United Nations auspices and that all countries, whether Members of the United Nations or not, should be invited to it. It was necessary to ensure the participation of the five great Powers—including the People's Republic of China—which were permanent members of the Security Council and which possessed nuclear weapons. Moreover, the conference should be convened as soon as possible and in that connexion he supported the proposal made by the Soviet Union and a number of other countries.

42. The tendency of certain speakers to be pessimistic already about the idea of a world disarmament conference, and to put forward prior conditions regarding the participants in such a conference was merely a manifestation of a policy of hindering the rapid achievement of general and complete disarmament.

43. His country was ready to co-operate with all countries to ensure successful preparations for and the holding of a world disarmament conference.

44. Mr. SOSA RODRIGUEZ (Venezuela) said that his country had always given its whole-hearted support to the idea of general and complete disarmament under effective international control, since that was the only really certain way of ensuring peace in the world. General and complete disarmament would not only rid the world of the frightful threat of a nuclear war but would also release enormous resources which could be used to improve economic and social conditions in the developing countries and thus bridge the gulf separating them from the industrialized countries. That was why his country had immediately welcomed the idea of convening a world disarmament conference. Venezuela had participated as an observer in the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries at Cairo in 1964; and, in the Disarmament Commission, in June 1965, it had enthusiastically voted for the proposal relating to the world conference.

45. There was no doubt that very commendable efforts had been made to achieve general and complete disarmament, but, apart from the 1963 treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in three environments and General Assembly resolution 1884 (XVIII), calling on all

States to refrain from placing in orbit weapons of mass destruction, the results were disappointing. It was thus an excellent idea to attempt to break the established pattern and place the problem of disarmament in the political arena by convening a world conference to which several States which, for various reasons, did not take part in discussions in the United Nations would be invited.

46. His delegation accordingly supported the idea of convening a world disarmament conference, but it was obliged to enter certain reservations regarding the text of the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.340 and Add.1-3). Operative paragraph 2 was too vague, since it did not specify how the proposed preparatory committee would be constituted, when the preparatory stage would be completed and the organizational phase proper begin, or which body would decide when the committee was finally to be established. He proposed to submit some amendments to improve the text; however, even if, for technical or political reasons, they were not accepted, Venezuela would support the draft resolution. He also wished to emphasize that all States, whatever their political ideologies or their special circumstances, should be invited to the conference. Furthermore, the work of the world conference should in no way hinder or paralyse that of the Eighteen-Nation Committee or the Disarmament Commission. On the contrary, far from being conflicting, those efforts should complement each other.

47. His delegation fully supported the draft resolution, subject to the minor reservations which he had expressed. It might find it necessary to speak again at a later stage on the amendments in document A/C.1/L.344.

48. Mr. MATSUI (Japan) said that his delegation's position on the question of convening a world disarmament conference had already been clearly stated. Mr.

Shiina, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, had said in the General Assembly on 28 September (1339th plenary meeting) that Japan supported, in principle, the convening of such a conference; he had said that adequate preparatory work was needed, and that the Assembly should, at the current session, give careful consideration to such points as the categories of countries to be invited, the date of convening such a conference, and the items to which special priority should be given.

49. With regard to the draft resolution before the Committee, Japan considered that the conference should be arranged so that all countries of the world could take part. The words "all countries" included all the nuclear Powers, all countries which had potential nuclear capabilities and all countries, large and small, with conventional arms. With reference to operative paragraph 2, he wished to ask the sponsors who or what agency was to be responsible for conducting the necessary consultations with all countries for the purpose of establishing a widely representative preparatory committee.

50. His delegation wished to emphasize that the preparations for and convening of a world disarmament conference should in no way slow down the efforts made towards disarmament within the United Nations and in the Eighteen-Nation Committee.

51. In the course of the consultations on the convening of a disarmament conference, in which his country took a keen interest, Japan would be prepared to express its views on various points, including the relationship between the proposed conference and the United Nations, the categories of countries to be invited and the agenda items to which special priority should be given.

The meeting rose at 6 p.m.