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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>Agenda item 95:</i>	
<i>Question of convening a world disarmament conference (concluded)</i>	
<i>Consideration of draft resolutions (concluded).</i>	161
<i>Order of discussion of agenda items (continued)</i>	164

Chairman: Mr. Károly CSATORDAY (Hungary).

AGENDA ITEM 95

Question of convening a world disarmament conference
(concluded) (A/5992, A/C.1/L.340/Rev.1)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (concluded) (A/C.1/L.340/REV.1)

1. The CHAIRMAN said the Saudi Arabian representative had informed him that he would not press for a vote on his amendments (A/C.1/L.344/Rev.1).

2. Mr. GOLDBERG (United States of America) said that the United States had already demonstrated its desire to achieve early progress in arms limitation and reduction, particularly in the nuclear field, by submitting a series of specific, concrete and practical proposals. Those proposals were now before the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, and nothing should be allowed to delay or interrupt the process of negotiations at Geneva; he noted that the sponsors of the draft resolution before the Committee (A/C.1/L.340/Rev.1) took the same view. The United States maintained its reservations concerning the utility of a world disarmament conference convened in the present circumstances; but it also noted that, as the Algerian representative had pointed out, the draft resolution before the Committee constituted a decision only in principle to convene a conference; the actual decision would remain to be taken in the light of the results of the consultations and preparations called for in the resolution. He thanked the sponsors for having added a new operative paragraph 3 which ensured that all countries would be kept informed of the results achieved by the preparatory committee; that went a long way toward meeting his delegation's concerns.

3. Turning to the consultations called for in operative paragraph 2, he said the reasons why the sponsors had formulated the paragraph in question in very general terms were understandable; nevertheless, operative paragraph 2 dealt with a most important matter, since a conference of the kind proposed

would have to be carefully prepared if it was to have a reasonable chance of producing the constructive results which all desired. The United States was certain that many Governments shared its view that any decision as to participation in the proposed world conference must be reserved until the preparatory committee's recommendations on the agenda, timing and finances of the conference and on participation and similar questions were available for consideration. As a number of speakers had pointed out, the preparatory committee would also have to decide what was meant by the clause "to which all countries would be invited"; clearly, all Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies would have to be invited, but it remained to be decided what other countries would be invited.

4. So far as concerned the preparations required for the conference, the United States had been struck by the common sense underlying the amendments submitted by the Saudi Arabian representative, and particularly by the essential point in his suggestions—that a small group should be asked to explore whether there was in fact a constructive basis for a world disarmament conference. That suggestion deserved careful consideration. He therefore wished to inform the Committee that the United States would be willing to participate in a small, initial group to explore areas of agreement on disarmament questions as a preliminary step in preparations for convening a world disarmament conference. However, there would be difficulties in establishing a group along the lines suggested by the Saudi Arabian representative, not the least of which was the fact that one of the participants he had proposed had stated that it would not be prepared to meet with that particular group. The United States believed that it would be essential to add a few other countries to such a group; those countries might include several States which had major peaceful nuclear programmes, and others which had played leading roles in developing the idea of a world disarmament conference. The results of an initial discussion in such a group would be helpful to the preparatory committee which was to be established pursuant to the draft resolution before the Committee. However, in view of the sponsors' apparent desire to avoid incorporating in the draft resolution details which might prejudice the realization of its objective, it would perhaps be best not to amend it along those lines; the question of an initial exploratory group could be dealt with in the course of the consultations called for by the draft resolution. While the United States delegation wished to express its appreciation to the representative of Saudi Arabia for his valuable suggestions, it understood his reasons for not pressing his amendments to a vote.

5. In conclusion, he reiterated that his Government's reservations regarding a world disarmament conference were not based on an unwillingness to participate in meaningful talks with anyone which could advance the cause of peace and disarmament; the United States simply insisted that such a conference should be carefully prepared, and its decision as to participation in the world disarmament conference would be made in the light of the preparations. Since the revised draft resolution met the major concerns of the United States and the sponsors had stated their intention to insist on careful and thorough preparations, his delegation would vote for it.

6. In reply to a question from Mr. BURNS (Canada), Mr. VELLODI (Secretary of the Committee) said that the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.340/Rev.1 had no financial implications within the meaning of rule 154 of the rules of procedure.

7. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) said that he would vote for the draft resolution; however, it was his understanding that the "appropriate steps" referred to in operative paragraph 2 included the steps necessary for assembling the technical information which the disarmament conference should have at its disposal.

8. Mr. PATIÑO (Colombia) said he wished to repeat the remark he had previously made to the effect that in the last preambular paragraph the words "Taking note of" would have been preferable to "Reaffirming".

9. The CHAIRMAN put the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.340/Rev.1) to the vote.

A vote was taken by roll-call.

Peru, having been drawn by lot by the Chairman, was called upon to vote first.

In favour: Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Rwanda, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Spain, Sudan, Sweden, Syria, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Arab Republic, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, United States of America, Uruguay, Venezuela, Yemen, Yugoslavia, Zambia, Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bolivia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burma, Burundi, Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Canada, Central African Republic, Ceylon, Chile, Colombia, Congo (Brazzaville), Congo (Democratic Republic of the), Costa Rica, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechoslovakia, Dahomey, Denmark, Ethiopia, Finland, Ghana, Greece, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iran, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Ivory Coast, Jamaica, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Lebanon, Liberia, Libya, Luxembourg, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Malta, Mauritania, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan.

Against: None.

Abstaining: France.

The draft resolution was adopted by 91 votes to none, with 1 abstention.

10. Mr. ESCHAUZIER (Netherlands), referring to the explanations offered in the course of the debate by

several of the sponsors of the draft resolution with a view to clarifying a number of problems of general interest and some specific questions to which the Netherlands attached great importance, and noting, in addition, that a reasonable measure of agreement on certain broad principles and procedures seemed to have been reached in the Committee, said that the Netherlands delegation, while adhering to the views it had expressed on some specific problems which remained unsolved, had been able to vote in favour of the draft resolution which had just been adopted with near unanimity. However, he wished to place on record that the Netherlands fully reserved its position as to any concrete proposals which might be put forward in the course of the consultations mentioned in operative paragraph 2 of the draft resolution and as to any steps which might be proposed at a later stage by the preparatory committee, in accordance with operative paragraph 3, with a view to convening a world disarmament conference.

11. Mr. BURNS (Canada) expressed his delegation's appreciation to the principal sponsors of the draft resolution, who had worked untiringly to produce a draft which had obtained practically unanimous support. Canada had voted in favour of the draft and in doing so had given its support to the principle of convening a conference at which the nations of the world, both Members of the United Nations and non-members, would have an opportunity to exchange views and express their opinions on the all-important question of disarmament. It had done so even though it believed, as he had indicated in a previous statement (1356th meeting), that there were a number of practical problems which would have to be resolved. The eventual decision by Canada, and, he supposed, by many other States, as to participation in the conference would depend on the resolution of those problems. But his delegation had been encouraged by the widespread recognition on the part of the sponsors of the draft resolution and others that the concern which it had expressed was legitimate and was designed not to obstruct the holding of the conference but to ensure that it would be properly organized so that useful results could be achieved. In that connexion, he referred to the statement made at the 1379th meeting by the representative of Algeria when formally introducing the revised text of the draft resolution.

12. At the 1377th meeting, the Byelorussian representative had suggested that the Western countries did not want a conference at all and were doing everything in their power to delay its convening by laying down unacceptable conditions in advance. However, the Western nations had just voted in favour of the principle of convening a world disarmament conference: no conditions had been laid down, but suggestions had been made as to what matters of organization the preparatory committee should deal with. The Byelorussian representative would, he was sure, appreciate that if the conference was to be successful it must be properly organized. That was true of any large conference. For example, a preparatory group had been required to meet for more than a year to ensure the proper organization of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development that had been held at Geneva in 1964. In view of the many com-

plicated questions which would have to be resolved, his delegation had supported the proposal that a preparatory committee should go into all aspects of the problem. That idea had been explained by many representatives, including the representative of the United Arab Republic (1377th meeting).

13. His delegation thought that the preparatory committee should satisfy three conditions. Firstly, if it was to work effectively it should be relatively small, with an upper limit of twenty-five members; secondly, it should be representative of those countries whose attendance at the conference was essential because of their military power or for other reasons; thirdly, it should also include those countries whose practical experience in disarmament negotiations would enable them to help in finding satisfactory answers to the questions to be resolved.

14. He wished to express appreciation also to the representative of Saudi Arabia for the proposals he had made, which had contributed greatly to the debate and on which the Canadian delegation shared the views expressed by the United States representative.

15. In conclusion, it was essential to ensure that the soundings and preparations for a world disarmament conference should not interfere with the negotiations which might be taking place elsewhere in bodies such as the General Assembly or the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. The world disarmament conference, to be truly useful, should supplement rather than supersede existing arrangements for considering disarmament problems. It could not, for example, carry on the detailed consideration of specific problems, which was only possible in a more restricted body such as the Eighteen-Nation Committee. It had been a matter of satisfaction to his delegation to find that most other delegations agreed, as was apparent from the statements made, in particular, by the representatives of Yugoslavia (1380th meeting) and the United Arab Republic.

16. Mr. BONDOC (Philippines) said that his delegation was in favour of the principle of convening a world disarmament conference but that, in voting for the Disarmament Commission resolution of 11 June 1965,^{1/} it had reserved its position regarding the detailed organization that would be necessary to ensure the success of the proposed conference. While commending the sponsors of the draft resolution that had just been adopted for their unflagging efforts to find new means of achieving disarmament, he regretted that no proper clarification had been given of the operative part. Consequently, although it had voted in favour of the draft resolution, his delegation found it necessary to reserve its position with regard to participation in the conference until the recommendations of the preparatory committee were available for study.

17. Mr. OTEMA ALLIMADI (Uganda) regretted that he had been absent when the vote on the draft resolution had been taken and said that his delegation would have voted in favour of the draft, of which it was a sponsor.

18. Mr. FUENTES IBÁÑEZ (Bolivia) said that after listening to the views of the various delegations which had spoken in the debate and taking into account the fact that the draft resolution on the convening of a world disarmament conference expressly reaffirmed the resolution adopted by the Disarmament Commission on 11 June 1965 and was therefore completely in accord with the disarmament efforts of the United Nations, his delegation had voted in favour of the draft resolution. It hoped that the preparatory committee would spare no efforts to put forward in good time recommendations which would make it possible to carry out such a vast undertaking and ensure its effectiveness.

19. Mr. CARUANA (Malta) said that although his delegation had voted for the draft resolution, it thought that operative paragraph 2 did not take sufficiently into account the fact that the principal nuclear Powers must assume the major role in disarmament; if they did not, progress was not possible, as the representative of Malta and many other representatives of small and medium-sized States had emphasized at the meetings of the Disarmament Commission held earlier in 1965. Nevertheless his delegation had voted for the draft resolution in order to maintain unanimity on such an important proposal.

20. Mr. GRANADO (Trinidad and Tobago) said that as one of the sponsors of the draft resolution just adopted his delegation had been mindful of the need to create the climate necessary to persuade all countries of the urgency of and the necessity for holding a world disarmament conference. He was satisfied that all countries with some influence in the sphere of international relations would prove to the entire world the sincerity of their advocacy and their votes. He expected that all countries, especially the Members of the United Nations, would spare no effort to ensure that the resolution just adopted would become a practical reality.

21. Mr. VIZCAINO LEAL (Guatemala) said that his delegation and those of Ecuador, El Salvador, Honduras and Nicaragua, which had been unable to take part in the vote, would have voted in favour of the draft resolution.

22. Mr. BOYD (Panama) associated himself with that statement.

23. The CHAIRMAN said that the General Assembly had discussed many aspects of general and complete disarmament, including various collateral measures. Nevertheless, the convening of a world disarmament conference was an entirely new item on the General Assembly's agenda as a result of the recommendation formulated by the Disarmament Commission on the basis of the Declaration of the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned-Countries. It was yet another attempt to stabilize peace in the world and it might perhaps succeed in concentrating all genuine disarmament projects and give the concrete measures considered so far a general worldwide scope. Without wishing to minimize the significance of the measures undertaken by the General Assembly and other organs, the Committee could not ignore their limitations, which were caused by the fact that the United Nations was not a universal

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

Organization. The draft resolution just adopted opened up new avenues for disarmament talks in which all interested States, great or small, nuclear or non-nuclear, could participate. That clearly indicated the recognition by all of the need to contribute effectively to the solution of the most pressing issue of the day—general and complete disarmament. On behalf of the First Committee, he expressed the hope that the preparatory committee that would be set up would successfully accomplish its task of convening a world disarmament conference.

Order of discussion of agenda items (continued)*
(A/C.1/896 and Add.1, A/C.1/900)

24. The CHAIRMAN said that a number of delegations had asked that the Committee should postpone the

*Resumed from the 1354th meeting.

discussion of the item which it had decided to take up next, agenda item 105 (Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa), and should take up instead agenda item 30 (Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament).

It was so decided.

25. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the list of speakers in the general debate on agenda item 30 should be closed at noon the following day.

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 11.40 a.m.