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Chairman: Mr. Károly CSATORDAY (Hungary).

AGENDA ITEM 105

Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa (con-
tinued) (A/5975, A/C.1/L.346)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. QUAO (Ghana) reviewed the history of the idea of denuclearization from the Polish Government's proposal for the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in Central Europe in October 1957^{1/}—which unfortunately had not been the subject of constructive negotiations—to the proposals for the denuclearization of Africa and Latin America. He recalled *inter alia*, the initiatives taken in Africa since the nuclear tests carried out by France in the Sahara in spite of the protests of the African States and in total disregard of General Assembly resolution 1379 (XIV): the resolution adopted by the Second Conference of Independent African States, held at Addis Ababa in June 1960; the speech by the President of Ghana to the General Assembly on 23 September 1960^{2/} in which he had said that States possessing nuclear weapons should not have military bases on the African continent; the adoption, as a result of the initiative taken by certain African countries, of General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI) calling on all Member States to respect the African continent as a denuclearized zone; the resolution adopted in May 1963 by the Summit Conference of Independent African States, favouring the end of military occupation of the African continent and the elimination of military bases and nuclear tests in Africa; and, lastly, the adoption of the declaration on the denuclearization of Africa by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its first session, held at Cairo in July 1964, in which the Heads of State and Government declared their readiness to undertake in a treaty to be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations not to manufacture or acquire control of nuclear weapons, and invited the General Assembly to approve that declaration and take the necessary measures to

convene an international conference with a view to concluding such a treaty. In spite of all those resolutions, France had continued to use the Sahara for its nuclear tests. He had given that background in order to place the question and the relevant draft resolution in their true perspective and to underscore the fact that the concept of declaring Africa a nuclear-free zone had for some time received the most careful consideration of the Heads of State and Government of the countries of that continent.

2. The problems involved stemmed from the existence in Africa of foreign military bases and pockets of colonial territories and white minority régimes. It was necessary to eliminate all foreign military bases in order to remove the threat of nuclear weapons being introduced or stored by a foreign Power on African soil; there was also the risk that a colonial Power in Africa which was allied to nuclear Powers might agree to store nuclear weapons in the territories under its domination on the pretext that they were essential to the defence arrangements of that military alliance and the metropolitan Power concerned. That was why the denuclearization of Africa could not be considered in isolation, since any agreement undertaken by the African States could be nullified by the foreign Powers which had military, political and economic interests in Africa. The African States therefore hoped that any international treaty would be respected and supported by all States, nuclear and non-nuclear alike; that objective could be attained through the efforts of the Organization of African Unity, with the assistance of the United Nations.

3. The draft resolution under consideration (A/C.1/L.346) was intended to insulate the African continent from the threat of a nuclear holocaust; since the danger might also emanate from countries outside the continent, it had been considered appropriate to take that factor into account in operative paragraph 5. The draft declaration deserved unanimous support as it again demonstrated the peaceful intentions of States which wished to devote all their energies to their economic, social and cultural development. It was in pursuit of those constructive goals that most of the African States had adopted positive neutralism and non-alignment as the main plank of their foreign policy, and that was why they expected other Powers to respect that policy. The terms of the draft declaration in no way conflicted with the principles of the United Nations Charter and should create no difficulties for States outside the African continent, since it was the declared objective of all to work towards the goal of general and complete disarmament; the text also coincided in part with the Italian proposal for unilateral declarations of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons that was before the Eighteen-Nation

^{1/} See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twelfth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 697th meeting, para. 136.

^{2/} *Ibid.*, Fifteenth Session (part I), *Plenary Meetings*, 869th meeting.

Committee.^{3/} It should be stressed, however, that the declaration on the denuclearization of Africa could only have meaning if it was accepted by all States, especially the nuclear Powers.

4. The full implementation of the proposed declaration would have to be preceded by a period of intensive study and negotiation, to be initiated in the first instance by the Organization of African Unity, as envisaged in operative paragraph 7. He paid a tribute to the valuable work already undertaken by the Latin American States in that field; his delegation was sure that it would be very useful to the African States when they set about initiating studies of their own with regard to the implementation of a denuclearization treaty for Africa. It also hoped that the Secretariat would be prepared to furnish all the technical assistance necessary.

5. Lastly, it was to be hoped that the African States would not be confronted with conditions like those enumerated by the representative of Canada in his statement at the 1356th meeting; the problem should not be further complicated by differences of interpretation motivated by cold-war considerations. On the other hand, the African States, although they did not wish their efforts to be hampered, would welcome any constructive proposal which would help to further their aims.

6. In conclusion, he hoped that the draft resolution would be unanimously adopted; that would be an indication of the co-operation that could be expected from all States in limiting the spread of nuclear weapons through the concept of nuclear-free zones.

7. Mr. FAHMY (United Arab Republic) said that the denuclearization of any region was as important to the world at large as it was to the countries and peoples of that region. It could not therefore be treated in isolation from the circumstances prevailing in the region or in the countries surrounding it; in other words, the denuclearization of Europe, or part of it, would have a direct impact on the denuclearization of Africa and the latter would naturally affect the denuclearization of Europe and Asia. That was why the discussion of the denuclearization of any continent or region, whether in the United Nations or in a regional organization, required serious consideration of all the elements involved. That did not mean that the United Arab Republic was not in favour of the denuclearization of the whole world. On the contrary, it had made abundantly clear on many occasions that it sincerely desired the denuclearization of certain regions as a large number of countries did, but on condition that the countries which took the decision to denuclearize their region did not lose sight of present realities or the course which events might take in and around the region.

8. He recalled that during the eighteenth session of the General Assembly, at the 1341st meeting of the Committee, he had said, in connexion with the denuclearization of Latin America, that the denuclearization of any region must be based on the following principles: first, the denuclearization of any geographical entity, whether on land or on the sea; should

be examined on its merits; secondly, in some regions, denuclearization had to be examined in conjunction with conditions prevailing in other neighbouring areas; thirdly, the denuclearization of any area should be worked out and agreed upon basically by the countries most concerned; fourthly, in order to have political or military effect, any programme of denuclearization should have the solemn support and respect of the nuclear Powers; fifthly, in order to avoid loop-holes in the denuclearization of any area, it was not necessary to have a very elaborate system of physical inspection, since a limited but technically adequate system of verification would be enough; sixthly, any system of verification must respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the States concerned and should therefore be based mainly on resources and personnel recruited from those States; seventhly, a system of verification should not be used as a pretext for interfering in the internal affairs of the countries concerned; lastly, the definition of any area should encompass not only the independent States in that area but all other territories, even if those territories were under the authority of a foreign State.

9. As far as Africa was concerned, moreover, denuclearization could not be carried out unless the following conditions were met: first, all foreign military bases should be dismantled, which entailed an obligation on the part of the foreign Power to relinquish its imperialistic designs and depart from African soil, and an obligation on the part of the African State to rid itself of foreign military bases on its territory; secondly, any programme for the denuclearization of Africa should take into account the foreign military bases on the islands surrounding Africa; thirdly, all racist régimes, whether in the heart of Africa or established on its borders, should be under obligation to cede authority to the original inhabitants or be brought under international guarantees which would not enable them, under any circumstances or pretexts, to nullify an international agreement on the denuclearization of Africa; fourthly, the nuclear Powers should undertake not to extend any assistance, material, scientific or technical, under any disguise, to any racist régime in or around Africa which might assist those régimes to manufacture nuclear weapons clandestinely; lastly, the geographic definition of "Africa" in the context of denuclearization must be clearly established.

10. The solemn declaration adopted at Cairo in July 1964 by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity bore witness to the importance which those statesmen attached to the problem as well as their sense of responsibility. After reading out the most important portions of that declaration, he recalled that it had been unanimously endorsed by the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, which had met at Cairo in October 1964.

11. The readiness of the African States not to manufacture or possess nuclear weapons, in accordance with that declaration, was clearly evident from draft resolution A/C.1/L.346, of which the United Arab Republic was a sponsor. Operative paragraphs 5 and 6 of the draft made it clear that the obligations emanating from that pledge were of a universal

^{3/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/227, sect. D.

character and that was why the sponsors of the draft had called upon all States—and that implied in particular the racist régimes of Africa—to abide by them.

12. On the adoption of the draft resolution, studies for the denuclearization of Africa would be undertaken by the Organization of African Unity, through which the project would be carried out at all stages, with the assistance made available to it by the Secretary-General of the United Nations at its request.

13. The African States were grateful to the Latin American countries for the lead they had taken in promoting denuclearization, and it would certainly be helpful if the Organization of African Unity could receive from the Organization of American States periodic reports and information on the progress made in that field by the Latin American countries.

14. The United Arab Republic, for its part, was ready to do everything in its power to achieve the goal Africa had set itself.

15. Mr. FARAH (Somalia) explained his Government's views on the aims and objectives of the draft resolution and the ways in which it could be carried out. It would be entirely wrong to regard the denuclearization of Africa as an insignificant measure which might serve only to distract attention from the main aims of a general agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; on the contrary, the establishment of denuclearized zones in various areas of the world exclusive of those occupied by the great Powers would be a valuable step towards the goals of a treaty on non-proliferation, the general prohibition of nuclear weapons, and, eventually, general disarmament. The draft resolution, by the very fact that it called upon all States to respect the continent of Africa as a nuclear-free zone, made a definite contribution to the objectives of the proposed treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

16. The prospects for keeping Africa and the surrounding islands a nuclear-free zone were improved by the fact that the continent was virtually free from the power struggle between the two major blocs: all African States pursued a policy of non-alignment, and there was almost united opposition to the presence or establishment of foreign military bases on the continent of Africa. That policy clearly showed that the denuclearization of Africa would not upset the global balance of power; however, in the opinion of his delegation the creation of a nuclear-free zone should not be conditional upon preserving the balance of armaments, but should have as its sole aim the improvement of the prospects for peace.

17. The treaty on the denuclearization of Africa should cover the entire African continent and the surrounding islands, and should be open to acceptance by all States exercising sovereignty over, or having responsibility for, territory in the region. All Africa should be embraced; there should be no "pockets" left over in which some European Power could build a nuclear base or carry out nuclear tests. The essence of the proposed treaty should be an undertaking by the signatories not to import, acquire, manufacture or use nuclear weapons or fissionable materials—with the exception of fissionable materials for peaceful purposes—and not to allow the stationing or testing of

such weapons or materials on African territory by any State, entity or person whatsoever.

18. The distinction made between fissionable materials designed for military purposes and those designed for peaceful purposes was deliberate; the African States should be permitted to import and use materials for peaceful purposes so that they could profit by the advances of twentieth century technology. That being so, however, account had to be taken of the fact that in the early stages of manufacture it was not easy to determine whether fissionable materials could or could not be converted to military use; certain minimum control techniques would therefore have to be envisaged. States could report annually on materials imported, manufactured or held, and on the uses to which they were being put, making a declaration that none of the material was being used for purposes other than peaceful ones. Another technique would be to carry out periodical inspections in countries possessing stocks of fissionable materials, either annually or on a complaint of non-observance made by another State. It was doubtful whether a very elaborate inspection process would be necessary, for the number of countries in Africa likely to be using fissionable materials would be small for many years to come; it might well be that the inspections could be entrusted to teams from the secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Indeed, there would in any event be advantage in ensuring that nuclear reactors in Africa conformed to the IAEA safety standards. Not the least of the advantages of introducing an inspection system would be that it would give an international authority practical experience in the operation of such a system; that might well help to assuage the fears of States which saw in inspection a possible form of espionage, or of States which doubted the feasibility of effective, impartial inspection.

19. An agreement for the denuclearization of Africa might usefully be accompanied, in an annex, by a declaration, based on the ideas in the draft unilateral declaration of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons proposed by Italy, to which non-African States too, could subscribe and by which they would undertake not to supply nuclear materials or military technical knowledge to any African State in order to assist it in violating the terms of the main agreement. It was to be hoped that when a satisfactory treaty had been drawn up all States, and particularly the nuclear Powers, would give their full co-operation in the effective realization of the peaceful aims which had inspired the draft resolution. However, even if any of the nuclear Powers refused to recognize such an agreement, their attitude would not in any way impair the effectiveness of the decision of the African States to maintain Africa as a denuclearized zone; all the independent African States were today fully determined to resist any pressures which would compromise their position on that vital aspect of world peace and security.

20. Somalia, like all the sponsors of the draft resolution, had been encouraged by the initiative which had been taken in the matter by Poland as far back as 1957, and by the efforts which were being made by the countries of Latin America. The Somali delegation hoped that the General Assembly would adopt the

African draft resolution with the same unanimity with which it had supported the Latin American draft resolution at the eighteenth session. The advantages were clear: the denuclearization of Africa would provide an effective means of preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and would be yet another step towards the goal of general disarmament; it would help to remove the fear of nuclear involvement from the minds of the African peoples and permit them to devote their resources to developing their countries; and lastly, such a measure, backed by 250 million Africans, could only be regarded as a positive contribution to the maintenance of international peace.

21. Mr. OTEMA ALLIMADI (Uganda) said that the Committee should examine the draft resolution, of which his country was a sponsor, in the light of the present situation in Africa.

22. There was a general tendency to believe that the African nations had not yet reached a stage at which they could manufacture nuclear weapons. That was probably not entirely true. There were some States in Africa which, if they had so desired, could have manufactured nuclear weapons. The fact that they had not done so was due to their deference to international public opinion and their desire not to add to existing international tension.

23. A second possibility was that nuclear weapons would be imported into Africa in order to perpetuate by force one of the obnoxious racist régimes whose number seemed to be increasing. As Lord Caradon had said, the racial situation in Africa today was dangerous and explosive. Should an explosion occur—and he prayed that it would not—then it was to be hoped that it would not take the form of a nuclear confrontation. He was not intending to raise a false alarm, but to express anxiety over a situation which appeared to be getting worse, in a continent which had so long endured the shackles of colonialism and whose only crime had been the kindness and patience of its people.

24. A third possibility was the testing of foreign nuclear weapons on African soil, or in African territorial waters or air space. That had in fact happened in the Sahara some years ago. False claims had been made to the effect that one or another part of Africa was a no man's land. His delegation dismissed such claims as ideas of the kind which usurpers always entertained in order to deceive their own consciences. It was incontestable that any testing of nuclear weapons in Africa, whether in desert areas or in areas which were sparsely occupied, would affect the continent tremendously; that was precisely why the African countries had condemned the French tests in the Sahara. But fortunately the Africans were reluctant to dwell on the grievances of the past; it was for the present and future security of their continent that they were concerned.

25. At their Cairo conference in July 1964 the African Heads of State had agreed that Africa should be a nuclear-free zone. They were not interested in the struggles of cold-war politics and nuclear blackmail; what they were interested in was the development of their countries and the fight against ignorance, disease and poverty. If anyone were to introduce nuclear weapons into Africa, that would seriously and unjustly

interfere with the goals the Africans were aiming at. They had noted with dismay how valuable resources were being expended in some countries in the mad nuclear race, while every day millions of underprivileged people went hungry and millions more died for lack of adequate medical services. It was only just, therefore, that everything possible should be done to ensure that African States were not compelled to acquire nuclear weapons or to import such weapons into the continent. That would be in the interest neither of peace nor of the African peoples themselves.

26. For those reasons it should be easy for agreement to be reached on a firm and unequivocal resolution on the denuclearization of Africa. The draft resolution before the Committee met those requirements; the delegation of Uganda therefore called for its unanimous adoption.

27. Mr. Bohdan LEWANDOWSKI (Poland) said that only the destruction of the means of nuclear warfare could restore normal relationships between States and free mankind from terror. Before that goal could be attained, it was necessary to reach some limited agreements which would prevent the present situation from becoming even more complicated. It was urgent to contain the armaments race and to check its expansion. That was the main purpose of the so-called partial or collateral measures of disarmament.

28. It was therefore a matter of satisfaction to his Government that the General Assembly had succeeded in adopting resolution 2028 (XX) urging all States to take the necessary steps for the early conclusion of a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons which would have no loopholes that might permit nuclear or non-nuclear Powers to cause proliferation of such weapons.

29. That resolution stated that the treaty envisaged should not affect the right of any group of States to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories. Regional denuclearization agreements would therefore not only be consistent with a world-wide treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, but would ensure its application and reinforce its effectiveness.

30. His Government understood denuclearization to mean, first, the prohibition of preparations for the production, and the actual production, of any kind of nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles for them in the territories of States included in the nuclear-free zone; secondly, the banning from the area of the zone of all nuclear weapons and nuclear launching devices; thirdly, the establishment of strict international control and inspection to ensure the effectiveness of those measures; fourthly, an undertaking by the nuclear-Powers to refrain from any steps which might violate the status of the zone, and not to use nuclear weapons against the zone.

31. Those principles had been embodied in the plan relating to Poland, Czechoslovakia, the German Democratic Republic and the Federal Republic of Germany which the Polish Government had put forward eight years earlier. They were certainly applicable to any group of non-nuclear States determined to establish denuclearized zones, whether in Latin America, in Africa or in any other region. A number of countries had hailed that Polish idea as a means of preventing

the dispersion of nuclear weapons, strengthening the security of nations, reducing the risk of a general conflagration, removing hotbeds of international tension and facilitating the peaceful solution of political problems. But it had also been met with reluctance, if not hostility, by those who considered any proposal advanced by a socialist country as nothing but a subterfuge. With the passage of time, however, the idea had taken root and was becoming ever more popular with an increasing number of nations.

32. States had the right to immunize themselves against any form of nuclear disease. Their sovereign will to ban nuclear weapons from their territories must be respected and it was the duty of the United Nations to assist them in concluding agreements for that purpose. The fact that each region had its own peculiarities and special requirements had to be taken into account in framing the obligations of the parties to a denuclearization treaty and the methods of implementation and control. For example, in a region still free from nuclear weapons, denuclearization consisted in preventing the installation and manufacture of such weapons. In a region where nuclear weapons had already been installed, the establishment of a denuclearized zone also involved the removal of those weapons from the area. Obviously, the latter task was more difficult than the former. However, complexity was no excuse for renunciation, especially in serious and urgent cases.

33. Such was the case with Europe, where two military groupings confronted each other and stockpiles of weapons of mass destruction had reached terrifying proportions. Only a few days before, it had been reported that the arsenal of more than 5,000 nuclear warheads currently stored in Western Europe would be increased by 20 per cent during the next six months. The Eastern European countries, on which all those weapons were trained, were being asked to accept at their face value the assurance that a combination of physical and electronic checks prevented unauthorized use of the warheads, some of which were already mounted on West German weapons. But who could guarantee that such a complicated control mechanism would never fail? Was it really possible to have an absolute and foolproof control over thousands of nuclear warheads deployed over thousands of square miles and accessible to thousands of people? The breakdown of the power system in the United States only a few weeks earlier had proved that what should never have happened did happen, despite the array of most sophisticated mechanical and electronic checks and devices. The failure of the electrical system had plunged some 30 million people into darkness for a few hours. A failure in a nuclear weapon control system would plunge hundreds of millions of people into oblivion for ever. Not only man could err. Computers could err too. The greater the saturation of arms the greater the probability of error, not to speak of miscalculation or outright provocation.

34. That explained the Polish Government's pre-occupation with European security, which constituted an essential and most sensitive element of international peace and security, and its proposals for setting up a nuclear-free zone or at least freezing nuclear armaments in central Europe.

35. It had been argued by some that the elimination of nuclear weapons from the territories of non-nuclear States in which they had already been placed might upset the balance. That argument was untenable. As a result of the advances in weapons, and in particular in view of the development of long-range rockets, the territorial deployment of weapons had lost its previous significance. The strategic balance between the two most powerful groupings would be ensured by the nuclear potential remaining at their disposal outside the area of non-nuclear States. It was not necessary to place weapons in the territories which they were to protect.

36. The objections of those who opposed the establishment of a nuclear-free zone in central Europe had, of course, nothing to do with requirements of balance. They were purely political in nature and emanated mainly from the Federal Republic of Germany which sought to obtain nuclear weapons and strengthen its position within the Western alliance, so as to be able to persist in its refusal to recognize the inviolability of the frontiers established as a result of the last war and to press its demands for the annexation of the German Democratic Republic. Such a development was fraught with dangers to all. On the other hand, the implementation of the Polish proposals would create the foundations for a system of security in Europe.

37. Certain concrete agreements in the field of denuclearization had already been reached, such as those on Antarctica and outer space. The countries of Latin America had been making meritorious efforts to elaborate a treaty which would keep their continent free from nuclear weapons and their launching devices, and the work was well advanced. His delegation also welcomed the initiative of the African countries aimed at transforming their continent into a nuclear-free zone. It was clear from their letter to the Secretary-General (A/5975) and from the draft resolution before the Committee and the statements that their representatives had already made, that their intention was to pursue the decision taken at the sixteenth session of the General Assembly. Their next step would appear to be to convert their declarations into an internationally binding agreement and, of course, to perform that difficult task themselves. However, in setting up a denuclearized zone, they had a right to demand from all other States, especially the nuclear Powers, respect for the commitments freely entered into and a guarantee of the inviolability of the zone.

38. Judging by the draft resolution under discussion, the African States wished to exclude from the future treaty any loop-holes which could render its provisions invalid. It was common knowledge that the peoples of Africa were now experiencing a confrontation the outcome of which might be decisive for their future. A small minority of settlers, possessing great material wealth and the support of powerful allies, were bent on keeping and eventually enlarging their colonial oppression over a large part of Africa. In pursuance of that diabolical goal, they would not hesitate to use all means now at their disposal or those which might be supplied to them from outside. Who knew where their madness might lead them? Genocide, the mass

destruction of human beings whom they considered inferior, was part of the infamous history of their rule, even though practiced hitherto by so-called conventional means. There were reports in the Press of experiments with modern technologies, including nuclear experiments, conducted overtly and covertly by the adherents of a master-race ideology. Such reports were alarming not only to the peoples of Africa but to the entire world. The denuclearization of that continent, strictly observed and respected by all, was therefore of great importance and the highest priority.

39. Mr. GARCIA ROBLES (Mexico) wished to propose a number of drafting changes in operative paragraph 5

of draft resolution A/C.1/L.346. The word "using" served no purpose since its effect was merely to repeat the appeal already made in operative paragraph 4, so that it could perhaps be eliminated from the enumeration in paragraph 5. Furthermore, the use of the word "acquiring" was unclear, since if there were no weapons on the continent of Africa it was difficult to see how a State could acquire any from an African State. If what was meant was that no African State, whether or not a party to the proposed agreement, should acquire nuclear weapons, the words "all States" were not appropriate, since they meant all States in the world.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.