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Chairman: Mr. Károly CSATORDAY (Hungary).

## AGENDA ITEM 29

Question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (A/5731-DC/209, A/5986-DC/227)

1. The CHAIRMAN invited the Committee to consider the suggestion made by the Ethiopian representative (1388th meeting, para. 11) that agenda item 29, relating to the question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons, should be referred to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and considered by the General Assembly at its twenty-first session. The Ethiopian representative had pointed out that at its current session the First Committee would not be able to devote sufficient time to the matter.

2. Mr. SADI (Jordan) thought that so important an item should perhaps not be postponed. The Committee might at least devote two or three meetings to the subject.

3. Mr. GEBRE-EGZY (Ethiopia) pointed out that the substance of the item had already been decided by the General Assembly in its resolution 1653 (XVI), which contained a declaration on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons; what many delegations had been trying to bring about was an international conference that would embody that prohibition in an international convention. However, since the Assembly had just decided to convene a world disarmament conference, it would be difficult to insist that yet another conference should be held. Delegations which wished to make statements on the substance of the item could do so when the Committee considered agenda item 28 (Question of general and complete dis-

armament: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament).

4. The CHAIRMAN suggested that the Committee should adopt the procedure suggested and that he should send a letter to the President of the General Assembly informing him that the Committee had decided to recommend to the General Assembly that the item should be referred to the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament for further study and that its consideration in the Assembly should be deferred until the twenty-first session.<sup>1/</sup>

*It was so decided.*

## AGENDA ITEM 105

Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa (*continued*) (A/5975, A/C.1/L.346)

### GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

5. Mr. SHALLOUF (Libya) said that the question under discussion had engaged the serious interest of all African leaders for some time. In September 1957, the denuclearization of Africa had been discussed at a meeting held in London to prepare for the first Conference of Independent African States to be held at Accra in 1958. In 1960, France had exploded its first atomic bomb in Algeria. The African heads of diplomatic missions in France had expressed their dissatisfaction at that act carried out on the African continent against the will of its peoples, and after several meetings in Paris attended by representatives of the African countries which maintained diplomatic relations with France at that time, a collective note of protest had been handed to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs. Further pronouncements on the subject had been made by the General Assembly in its resolution 1652 (XVI), by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity at its first regular session, held in July 1964, and by the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in October 1964.

6. The adoption of the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.346), of which Libya was a sponsor, would encourage the idea of unilateral declarations of non-acquisition of nuclear weapons, proposed by Italy.<sup>2/</sup> Both measures would be important advances towards the final goal of general and complete disarmament under effective control.

<sup>1/</sup> Subsequently distributed as document A/6125.

<sup>2/</sup> See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January to December 1965, document DC/227, annex I, sect. D.

7. Mr. WELLS (Jamaica) said that his delegation would support the draft resolution on the denuclearization of Africa, which would be a major step towards the denuclearization of the entire planet. If the proposals to denuclearize both Africa and Latin America met with success, a substantial proportion of the world would have been declared free of nuclear weapons and the terrible dangers they posed. The eventual denuclearization of the whole world outside the actual territory of the nuclear Powers, a goal which those proposals would help to promote, might serve to convince those Powers of the abhorrence and fear which nuclear weapons evoked.

8. The draft resolution was also welcome because it approached the problem of the proliferation of nuclear weapons from a new angle. It was important to explore every means of isolating and restricting the use and deployment of nuclear weapons; if the nuclear threat was approached from a variety of angles, the day might yet dawn when existing weapons and their delivery vehicles could be destroyed. It was only fitting that areas of the world in which the chief concern of Governments was to raise their peoples' standard of living should be free to concentrate on that mammoth task, and not have to devote energy and scarce resources to dealing with the nuclear threat. Lastly, the denuclearization of Africa would permit the Governments of that continent to continue to play a constructive, independent role in world affairs, since they would be spared the need to seek refuge under the nuclear umbrella of any single State and assume the resultant obligations.

9. Mr. TSARAPKIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that his Government had consistently advocated the establishment of denuclearized zones in various parts of the world as an effective way of limiting the areas in which nuclear weapons could be stockpiled and used and thereby reducing the threat of nuclear war and limiting the scope of the armaments race. It supported proposals to create denuclearized zones in central Europe, northern Europe, the Balkans, Africa, the Indian Ocean and the Near and Middle East; and it had itself proposed an agreement to make the Mediterranean region a denuclearized zone. It believed that obligations relating to the establishment of denuclearized zones could be assumed not only by groups of States covering entire continents or major geographical areas but by smaller groups and even individual States as well; and it was prepared to respect the status of any denuclearized zones which might be established, provided that a similar undertaking was given by the other nuclear Powers.

10. The United States, on the other hand, seemed to favour the denuclearization of areas which were sparsely inhabited or not inhabited at all, but was opposed to the denuclearization of densely populated areas. For instance, it had agreed to the denuclearization of Antarctica, which was indeed a commendable achievement—though Antarctica was only inhabited by a few dozen scientists and technicians, who lived there for short periods at a time—and it had also expressed some enthusiasm for a proposal to denuclearize the moon, which was not inhabited at all. But it had resolutely opposed the very idea of denuclearizing Africa, on the ground that in the absence of enforce-

ment measures an agreement to denuclearize that continent would remain a dead letter and would give the African peoples only the illusion of security; and it had even more obstinately opposed suggestions to establish denuclearized zones in central Europe, northern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean area, which were inhabited by more than 200 million Europeans. Instead of removing the nuclear threat from Europe, the United States had transformed that region into an atomic powder barrel; the United States Secretary of Defense had recently announced that there were now more than 5,000 United States nuclear warheads in Europe and that there would soon be 6,000. All those nuclear warheads were clearly designed for use against the European peoples and the socialist countries, though there was not a single nuclear warhead on the American continent that threatened the security of the United States. The greater number of nuclear bombs concentrated in a sensitive area where two immense military groupings stood face to face, the greater the danger of catastrophe. One fatal error would be enough to sow death among tens of millions of Europeans; it was therefore more essential than ever to create denuclearized zones in central Europe, northern Europe, the Balkans and the Mediterranean, if the European peoples were to be saved from nuclear catastrophe.

11. The Soviet Union had supported General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI), in which all Member States had been called upon to respect the continent of Africa as a denuclearized zone. The idea of creating a denuclearized zone in Africa had been further developed at the Summit Conference of Independent African States, held at Addis Ababa in May 1963; and at the first session of the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity, held in July 1964, a declaration had been adopted proclaiming Africa a denuclearized zone. The Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in October 1964, had affirmed that the declaration regarding the denuclearization of Africa assisted in consolidating international peace and security and lessening international tensions; and the fact that the African States had raised the question again at the General Assembly's current session showed that they were genuinely anxious to make further progress towards the denuclearization of Africa.

12. His own country fully understood and supported the African countries' legitimate aspirations; it noted with satisfaction the statements made by the representatives of Nigeria, the United Republic of Tanzania, Ghana and the United Arab Republic; and it fully supported the position of the African countries which had stated that their purpose in declaring Africa a denuclearized zone had been to remove the African continent from the sphere of conflict between the nuclear Powers. The Soviet Union had always stressed that the creation of denuclearized zones implied the elimination of foreign military bases which could be used for storing nuclear weapons. If Africa were denuclearized, all foreign military bases on African soil would of course have to be removed; otherwise, there would be no certainty that all States were respecting the status of the denuclearized zone. The USSR delegation agreed entirely with the represen-

tatives of African countries who had stated that a decision by the General Assembly on the denuclearization of Africa should be regarded as a first step towards solving the basic problem of banning nuclear weapons altogether. A legal instrument solemnizing the decision to make Africa a denuclearized zone should be drawn up as soon as possible; the draft resolution before the First Committee was undoubtedly a step in the right direction.

13. Mr. SIDI BABA (Morocco), speaking as one of the sponsors of the draft resolution, said that the African countries' proposal for a limited solution to the problem of nuclear weapon testing and the proliferation of nuclear weapons was based not on motives of self-interest or on prejudices of any kind, but solely on the general principles to which the African States adhered in the discharge of their international responsibilities.

14. In 1959, the obvious preparations which were then being made by a major European Power to carry out atomic tests on African soil had brought home to the African peoples more clearly than ever the significance of disarmament problems in general and the importance of creating denuclearized zones throughout the world, not only as a means of protecting considerable parts of the globe from the evil effects of the armaments race but also in order to facilitate the search for ways of achieving general and complete disarmament as soon as possible. At that time his country had energetically, though dispassionately, drawn attention to the dangers involved for the African peoples most directly concerned; and opposition to nuclear testing was now a permanent feature of its foreign policy, which was based on the principles of international law and the United Nations Charter and on the desire to consolidate peace and stability throughout the world.

15. At the General Assembly's sixteenth session, the African countries' interest in the idea of denuclearized zones had been reflected in the submission of a draft resolution on the subject, which had later been adopted as resolution 1652 (XVI). The discussion on that draft resolution had shown that there was a considerable measure of sympathy and understanding among the non-nuclear Powers, and some of the nuclear Powers as well, for the African peoples' effort to transform their continent into a denuclearized zone.

16. Since the adoption of resolution 1652 (XVI), the armaments race had been intensified and the dangers of the proliferation of nuclear weapons had increased; but at the same time, as the experiment undertaken in that field by the countries of Latin America showed, the idea of creating denuclearized zones in various parts of the world had attracted increasing interest and almost unanimous approval. The independent African States had raised the question of the denuclearization of Africa at various levels and on different occasions. The Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity had declared at their first ordinary session, in July 1964, that they were prepared to renounce the manufacture and control of nuclear weapons in an international agreement concluded under United Nations auspices; and now the African States had decided to place the issue before the General Assembly once again, with a view to

reinforcing the efforts which the United Nations had already made.

17. As the African continent was relatively unaffected by problems of the cold war or delicate issues of strategy and the balance of power, it might offer an excellent testing-ground for the idea of denuclearization and might serve as an example for the rest of the world.

18. It would thus be seen that the draft resolution was not the subjective expression of a special viewpoint, but a well-considered attempt to start a process which might banish the threat of nuclear destruction from the whole world for ever. If that attempt was successful, Africa would be proud to have combined its ancient and traditional wisdom with that of other continents in realizing the common dream of all mankind. The African States had declared, both individually and collectively, that they were unreservedly ready to co-operate in that endeavour; and he hoped that other States—particularly those whose possession of, or ability to manufacture, nuclear weapons had given them special responsibilities—would also constructively participate in the effort to transform Africa into a nuclear-free continent.

19. Mr. NJOROGI (Kenya) said that the introduction of nuclear weapons into Africa would have dangerous effects throughout the continent and beyond, particularly if the South African, Portuguese and Rhodesian régimes were to acquire possession or a share in the control of such weapons. The racist Government of South Africa would not hesitate to exterminate Africans in order to consolidate its supremacy; with its uranium deposits and its fairly advanced technology, South Africa was a potential nuclear Power and might be expected, if it ever possessed nuclear weapons, to be even more belligerent and a greater threat to international peace and security than it was today. Portugal, like other NATO members, must be suspected of desiring a share in nuclear weapons; the Government of Kenya supported the liberation of Angola and Mozambique from Portuguese occupation and would be opposed to their conversion into NATO nuclear bases. If the appeal for the denuclearization of Africa was not heeded, African States might themselves be compelled to seek to possess or share nuclear weapons.

20. Africa had been associated with nuclear weapons development in the past, although without its consent. The uranium used to produce the first United States bomb had originated in Katanga and, more recently, atomic tests carried out by the French Government in the Sahara had aroused widespread indignation throughout the continent. He suggested that any African country which produced materials for nuclear production should seek an understanding with the buying country that such materials would not be used for the manufacture of nuclear weapons.

21. Although the draft resolution spoke of the continent of Africa, it should be understood that the proposed nuclear-free zone would include the islands surrounding Africa as well. The draft resolution was in keeping with previously expressed desires for the creation of nuclear-free zones in Latin America,

Scandinavia, the Mediterranean and central Europe and with decisions taken by the General Assembly and the First Committee on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, on a world disarmament conference and on the suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests. It was to be hoped that an international treaty guaranteeing the security of Africa against nuclear weapons could be concluded under the auspices of the United Nations at some future date.

22. Mr. PANNI (Pakistan) welcomed the initiative taken by the African States sponsoring the draft resolution on the denuclearization of Africa, which was a logical development of General Assembly resolution 1652 (XVI). Its adoption would constitute a significant step towards the goal of non-proliferation and general disarmament; furthermore, it would free present and future African generations from the dangers involved in the testing or use of atomic weapons and, most important, would enable Africa to remain outside the arena of nuclear power politics.

23. The denuclearization of any region depended on four essential conditions. The signatories to the treaty should undertake, first, not to manufacture, test or use nuclear weapons; secondly, not to acquire the use, or control over the use, of nuclear weapons; thirdly, not to call in nuclear Powers to provide a "nuclear umbrella" when in fact no danger of nuclear attack existed; fourthly, not to use or be in a position to use for weapons production the technical and scientific assistance furnished for the peaceful use of atomic power. While the first three conditions were incorporated in operative paragraphs 4, 5 and 6, he was not sure that the draft declaration provided sufficient safeguards against the diversion of nuclear technology and equipment from peaceful uses to the production of arms; however, he was confident that such safeguards could and would be provided under operative paragraphs 7 and 9.

24. The Pakistan delegation would support the draft declaration, and hoped that the good example of Latin American and African denuclearization would be followed by nations in other regions of the world.

25. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) said that his delegation fully supported the effort to make Africa a denuclearized zone, which represented the first attempt to keep a whole inhabited continent free from nuclear weapons. For the first time a regional grouping, the Organization of African Unity, had been considering the disarmament issue; and the convening of another Accra Assembly, which had been recommended at the meeting of the Organization of African Unity held at Accra in October 1965, would be a useful step. The three African members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee had given constructive leadership to the non-aligned countries in that Committee and had also made an effective contribution to the work of the Disarmament Commission and the First Committee.

26. The denuclearization of Africa would reduce tension, help to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, lessen the threat of nuclear war and limit the extent of any nuclear war which did break out, strengthen the security of small States within the denuclearized zone and pave the way to general and complete disarmament. It could also set an example to other continents.

If efforts to keep Africa free from nuclear weapons met with difficulties because of fear of adjoining countries or continents with the capability of developing such weapons, the neighbouring area of the Eastern Mediterranean could perhaps also be made a nuclear-free zone. Cyprus, for its part, would never allow any nuclear weapons to be placed or stored in its territory under any circumstances. Cyprus also looked forward to the success of the efforts to denuclearize Latin America; the experience acquired by that continent might be useful in the task of denuclearizing Africa.

27. Mr. BURNS (Canada) said that at the 1356th meeting of the Committee he had mentioned some of the principles which, in his Government's view, should be taken into account in establishing nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world. A distinction should be made between denuclearization proposals for areas, such as Europe, in which nuclear weapons were part of the existing balance of military force, and other areas such as Latin America and Africa, where nuclear weapons did not exist. Some of the questions raised with regard to principles for the creation of nuclear-free zones had been answered in the highly informative statement of the Mexican representative (1369th meeting) outlining the progress achieved by the Preparatory Commission for the Denuclearization of Latin America. It seemed necessary to recognize that if certain States in a region refused to participate in creating a denuclearized zone, then either the limits of the zone would have to be so defined as to exclude those States or else the States favouring such a zone would have to decide that they could not bind themselves to remain nuclear-free indefinitely unless all their neighbours remained nuclear-free as well. If an African nuclear-free zone was so defined as to include the territory of all the African States which decided to adhere to the eventual treaty, there appeared to be no reason why such a zone should not be recognized and respected by the nuclear Powers.

28. Arrangements for a nuclear-free zone should provide for verifying that the commitments undertaken were carried out. The Mexican representative had referred, in connexion with the denuclearization of Latin America, to a set of preliminary draft articles on a system of verification, inspection and control (A/5985) based mainly on the revised safeguards system of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The Canadian delegation believed that a verification system generally conforming to the provisions of those draft articles would be appropriate and adequate to the purpose of the proposed treaty on African denuclearization; he had been glad to note the indications in the Somali and United Arab Republic statements that African countries were anxious to develop a sound approach to the problem of verification.

29. His delegation, like a number of others, believed that certain phrases in the draft resolution ought to be modified, and it was his understanding that consideration was being given to revising the parts of the text concerned. The debate had shown that the question how African denuclearization should be achieved was being studied by the African nations in

the careful and constructive way which was essential to the success of the project.

The revised version (A/C.1/L.346/Rev.1) would be circulated shortly.

30. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the fact that the draft resolution had been revised by the sponsors.

The meeting rose at 5.5 p.m.