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Chairman: Mr. Leopoldo BENITES (Ecuador).

AGENDA ITEM 97

Renunciation by States of actions hampering the conclusion of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (*continued*) (A/6398, A/C.1/L.368/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-4)

GENERAL DEBATE (*continued*)

1. Mr. MWEMBA (Zambia) said he was seriously concerned at the slow progress made towards the adoption of positive measures of disarmament. He also noted with concern the increase in the number of States which were acquiring or capable of acquiring nuclear weapons, and the continued testing of nuclear weapons, both underground and in the atmosphere.

2. For many years the United Nations had concentrated on the question of the spread of the knowledge required for the manufacture of nuclear weapons, and complete nuclear disarmament had therefore occupied a relatively unimportant place in its work. Proliferation of nuclear weapons, in the strict sense of the word, referred only to their spread, and not to the destruction of stockpiles or their elimination by nuclear Powers. If those Powers really wished to demonstrate the sincerity of their desire to reduce the threat of a nuclear war, they would stop developing their nuclear power. So long as some Powers continued to carry out tests and to increase their stockpiles, nothing would stop non-nuclear Powers from wanting to acquire the same capability.

3. It would be futile to imagine that a treaty on non-proliferation would be respected by the People's Republic of China so long as that country was excluded from the United Nations. The longer its isolation continued, the more difficult it would be to bring it within the family of nations. The history of Hitler's Germany should serve as a lesson. The People's Republic of China would feel justified in increasing its stockpiles of nuclear weapons in order to safeguard its own existence. The result of that would be that the original nuclear Powers would hold on to their nuclear weapons in order to ensure their own survival. His delegation therefore could not understand how it was possible to talk of a treaty on non-proliferation binding on Member

States, and at the same time refuse admission to one of the most densely populated countries of the world, which now had nuclear capability. In its view, the People's Republic of China should be admitted to the United Nations; it should take part in the Committee's deliberations and should agree, within the United Nations, with the rest of the world that it would not make nuclear weapons available to non-nuclear countries.

4. The question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was of special significance to Zambia, which was seriously concerned about the activities of racist régimes in southern Africa. Nuclear weapons might be used against new African countries which were opposed to fascism. As the Soviet representative had said at the 1431st meeting, South Africa, helped by the Federal Republic of Germany, was preparing to create its own nuclear potential. It was also constructing a complete military air base on the border between Zambia and South West Africa. To help a country which would prefer the world to be populated by one master race to obtain nuclear capability was a crime against humanity, which the perpetrators would deeply regret in the future.

5. He was gratified to note the desire of the USSR and the United States to reach an agreement. The problems still hampering the conclusion of such an agreement were far from insurmountable; in fact, all that was required was goodwill on the part of the two great Powers and their allies. Non-nuclear Powers supported the efforts to conclude an agreement; however, it should be pointed out that the dissemination and exchange of scientific knowledge must not be confused with the proliferation of nuclear weapons. The use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes must be shared by all States for the good of mankind.

6. His delegation, like many others, believed that the question of the creation of nuclear-free zones in various parts of the world must be treated with the seriousness it deserved. It was encouraged by the statement made by the United Kingdom representative on that subject; it hoped that the United Kingdom Government and its allies would refrain from aiding South Africa in its machinations to acquire nuclear capability for use against the defenceless States of Africa, and it was its ardent desire that Africa should remain a nuclear-free zone.

7. Though his delegation doubted that a treaty on non-proliferation alone would suffice to bring peace and security to the world, it nevertheless approved of the measures now being taken. It fully supported the draft resolution submitted by the non-aligned States under agenda item 26 (A/C.1/L.371) and it believed that the Soviet draft resolution (A/L.368/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-4) expressed a genuine desire

on the part of the super-Powers to narrow the gap in regard to the spread of nuclear weapons while negotiations were going on for a treaty on non-proliferation. The danger of the spread of nuclear weapons while negotiations were going on was real, as the example of the People's Republic of China and France showed. If the trend was not checked at once, other States would join the nuclear club. It was therefore necessary to move with deliberate speed towards concluding a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and eventually to the liquidation of all existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons as well as the means of their delivery.

8. Sir James PLIMSOLL (Australia) said it was easy to see the problems arising in connexion with the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but not so easy to see any new solutions. The immediate, but only partial, objective was to avoid the emergence of new nuclear Powers, since the more countries there were with nuclear weapons the more difficult it would be to prevent wars and to prevent the threat of war from being used. If a State found that its neighbours or its possible enemies were acquiring nuclear weapons, it might feel tempted or obliged to acquire nuclear weapons of its own. Furthermore, in the present circumstances, countries which were not manufacturing nuclear weapons, which had undertaken not to manufacture any and did not hold any, should be able to accept international obligations more easily than Powers nuclearized in the military field. It would also be easier to ensure observance of those obligations by non-nuclear Powers. Consequently, the fewer the nuclear Powers, the greater would be the possibility of preventing the growth of nuclear power. Furthermore, the cost of manufacturing and maintaining nuclear weapons and the means of delivering them—not to mention the sustained research that was required—in money and in resources and skilled manpower, which could be put to better use, was prohibitive. And underlying all those reasons for preventing the further dissemination of nuclear weapons there was the apprehension caused by the increase in the number of nuclear Powers.

9. Sound though the reasons for preventing proliferation were, the formulation of an agreement to which all countries could adhere was a very complicated task, since the attitudes of the countries in different parts of the world depended on many individual factors such as geography, the size of the country, whether or not it was party to an alliance, etc. All those factors affected the sort of obligations or restrictions that they were able or willing to accept. To take geography, for example: a country which enjoyed domestic stability and was remote from the areas of conflict of the great Powers was in a very different position from one which had reason to fear attack from outside or from within. If nuclear-free zones were to be established, all the countries in the region, and the areas adjacent to the region, must participate; there must be effective inspection and control throughout the region and adjacent areas from which a threat might come, and the arrangements for a nuclear-free zone would have to be of a sort that did not fundamentally upset the existing strategic balance. Unfortunately, not all regions of the world were in the happy position where those conditions could be

satisfied. Some countries had to live in proximity to a powerful, potentially aggressive neighbour, as was the case of south and south-east Asia and the western Pacific, which lived in the shadow of mainland China.

10. Secondly, a country's ability and willingness to enter into an agreement on non-proliferation was affected by its size, a consideration which affected its interests, possibilities and preoccupations. Its approach might depend on whether a country saw itself as capable of playing an independent role or whether it saw its future as being determined entirely by forces around it.

11. Thirdly, a country's position might vary depending on whether or not it was party to an alliance. For countries which were parties to an alliance, a formula could be found which would take into account in the treaty on non-proliferation the legitimate security and interests of all concerned, without thereby interfering with defence arrangements within the alliance or defeating the object of the treaty. In that connexion, he agreed with the statement made by the representative of Japan on the subject (1434th meeting, para. 17). The position of countries which were not parties to any alliance was different. Such countries naturally asked themselves how they were to obtain from the nuclear Powers assurances which would not compromise their non-aligned position.

12. Certain other practical problems were common to the non-aligned and the aligned countries. No one knew whether the forces necessary to give effect to a guarantee would in fact be used and, if so, under what conditions; nor whether the main nuclear Powers would remain united and agree to common action or action by one of their number if the time came when they were asked to give effect to a guarantee. Such questions could not be answered in the Committee. In some cases, faith would be necessary; in others, it would be a matter of letting things take their course and of solving problems as they arose. It was therefore clear that, although a treaty on non-proliferation was a common objective, its form would have to take account of the different approaches and individual interests of the various countries. The problem of safeguards, which posed both technical and other questions, should also be taken into account in the drafting of the treaty. It was to be hoped that when the nuclear Powers were on the point of reaching final agreement regarding a treaty, they would consult interested non-nuclear States on such matters.

13. Other problems, however, such as that of separating military and non-military nuclear capacity and potential, could not really be settled in a treaty. Knowledge and research neither could nor should be limited—a point which had already been made by the representative of India (1436th meeting) and the representative of Brazil (1437th meeting). Even if it were desirable, it would not be possible to isolate scientific thought or technical progress. Any progress in the field of peaceful research could inevitably be adapted for military ends. Nor could scientists, philosophers and thinkers in the developing countries or in non-nuclear countries be expected to cut themselves off from the highest and most developed thinking on nuclear matters which was taking place elsewhere in the world. Of course, the draft treaties which had

been submitted would, if adopted, eliminate some of the dangers inherent in such a state of affairs, but they would not be capable of providing final security.

14. There had been a natural emphasis upon the obligation not to acquire nuclear weapons which the non-nuclear nations were being asked to assume, but it had also been said that the nuclear Powers themselves should submit to controls and to limitation of their own weapons. Such a view was perhaps logical but should not be pressed to a point where the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation might be jeopardized or delayed. All countries had an interest in halting the proliferation of nuclear weapons as quickly as possible, and the non-nuclear Powers should not regard the treaty solely as a renunciation on their part of a right or a privilege. Any country holding out against a treaty on non-proliferation which had gained the adherence of the principal nuclear and non-nuclear Powers concerned would be making a grave decision.

15. It would be wrong, however, to underestimate the difficulties in the way of a non-nuclear Power forswearing nuclear weapons for all time. That was why both the United States and the Soviet draft treaties contained provisions enabling a party to the treaty to withdraw. The first difficulty was that the treaty would probably be signed by only three of the nuclear Powers—the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom—all of which had already indicated their willingness to sign it. He hoped that France too would accede, even if it did not become a party to the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water. However, it would be optimistic to expect Communist China, which was not a party to the test ban treaty to accede at an early date to a treaty on non-proliferation. If, while the Soviet Union, the United States and the United Kingdom were making progress in the control of nuclear weapons and co-operating to prevent their dissemination, other countries were developing their nuclear potential, refusing to accept international obligations and adopting a threatening attitude, then the situation would have to be reviewed.

16. The second difficulty was the status to be accorded to a country possessing nuclear weapons. It would be wrong to think that in order to enjoy special status a country must acquire nuclear weapons: on the contrary, steps should be taken to see that the acquisition of nuclear weapons conferred no special status. It was, of course, well known that certain countries had a special position in certain respects—the permanent members of the Security Council, for example—but a situation should not be allowed to develop in which, as a matter of convention, the possession of nuclear weapons conferred special status upon a country. That was unlikely to happen in Europe, where there were three nuclear Powers; but in Asia or in the western Pacific there was only one Power which had embarked on the manufacture of nuclear weapons, and the countries of the region would not accept a situation in which that Power was recognized as the spokesman of the region or of Asia simply because it had not accepted the general objective of limiting the profusion of nuclear strength.

17. A third difficulty for the non-nuclear Powers was the pressure of public opinion, which made itself felt in certain countries situated next to a powerful country possessing nuclear weapons and in a position to resort to threats, not necessarily nuclear threats, but threats backed by nuclear power.

18. He had mentioned all those difficulties, not in order to provide any country with reasons for not acceding to a treaty on non-proliferation, but in order to show that, while such a treaty must be an immediate objective, it could provide only a partial and provisional solution. Consequently, every effort must be made to enlarge the area of common ground upon nuclear matters and to reach agreements on disarmament generally. Nuclear and conventional disarmament must go hand in hand. Everything he had said argued in favour of the early conclusion of agreements on disarmament and for that purpose good use could be made of the breathing-space which a treaty on non-proliferation would provide.

19. Other aspects of arms control and disarmament on which there should be early attempts to make progress included a comprehensive test ban agreement. Australia had been associated with a Swedish initiative to bring about international co-operation in seismic detection. There was also the United States proposal for a cut-off in the production of fissile material for weapons purposes. Such proposals might have limited immediate impact but would represent a step in the right direction and could in the longer term have important stabilizing effects.

20. Other suggestions deserved to be followed up as soon as possible. Technical development combined with growing political understanding between the nuclear States which were parties to the treaty might open the way to effective action. Co-operation and understanding between the United States and the Soviet Union would contribute greatly to security and disarmament; everything possible should therefore be done to promote political co-operation, to ease tensions and to eliminate situations that were likely causes of conflict.

21. To sum up, the immediate objective was a treaty on non-proliferation. Such a treaty was not an end in itself, but it would help to gain time which must be used in order to achieve progress in the control of nuclear weapons, in nuclear disarmament and in disarmament generally. The non-nuclear Powers should persuade the nuclear Powers to undertake further obligations towards them, but the Australian delegation did not think that the acceptance by the nuclear Powers of such obligations should, at the present stage, be made a condition precedent to a treaty. A treaty was the immediate and urgent objective and nothing other than the securing of adequate terms in the treaty itself should stand in the way of its conclusion. While asking the nuclear Powers to maintain consultations with the interested non-nuclear Powers, his delegation thought that the best forum for practical progress continued to be the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. It was there that progress was most likely to be achieved. The steps which it would take immediately following the conclusion of an agreement would be at least as important as the conclusion of the treaty itself.

22. Mr. JOUEJATI (Syria) said that the survival of mankind depended on finding a satisfactory solution to the problems of disarmament. The prevention of proliferation, whether horizontal or vertical, was one of the most important of those problems. Mankind's understandable anxiety over proliferation and the danger of a nuclear conflagration, which had been expressed by the Japanese representative among others, gave reason to hope that tangible results could be achieved in the matter of non-proliferation. General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX), the debates in the Eighteen-Nation Committee and the progress made by the representatives of the USSR and the United States, however slight, were positive steps in the direction of an agreement on non-proliferation. What element essential to a solution of the problem was lacking? Assuredly it was the element of universality. In fact, three prerequisites for universality had not yet been satisfied: the participation of the two other nuclear Powers in the negotiations, total control by the International Atomic Energy Agency over all nuclear reactors used for peaceful purposes, and a serious dialogue with the non-nuclear States. Unless those elements were present, no agreement would be of more than limited value in terms of time or geographical application. Goodwill and sincere intentions were essential to a solution of the problems involved; if they truly existed, the other two nuclear Powers could be persuaded to participate in the effort to reach an agreement on non-proliferation. Since that was so, however, it was wrong to wage war near the borders of the People's Republic of China, to threaten it with nuclear destruction and violate its air space, and to deprive it of its rightful place in the United Nations. Such acts were reminiscent of the era of colonial expansion, particularly in that densely populated area. It was also wrong to promote the resurgence on the European scene of the revanchist militarist circles which had brought disaster to the entire world. Proliferation through alliances was a major obstacle to any agreement.

23. The question of goodwill and sincere intentions also arose in connexion with the peaceful uses of atomic energy. Control by IAEA was desirable, and IAEA safeguards with regard to the use of plutonium for military purposes would help to allay legitimate fears. Yet, how could those fears be overcome if international control was rejected on the pretext that national sovereignty would be violated? Israel, for example, refused to permit any international inspection of its nuclear reactor and prevented IAEA from performing its proper function in that regard. South Africa was developing its nuclear potential with the assistance of the United States. Representatives of the United States had, it was true, given assurances that that potential was being developed exclusively for peaceful purposes; however, it was not known whether there had been any international verification of those assertions.

24. The proposals made by Poland and Czechoslovakia were designed to deal with those problems and deserved unanimous support. It was encouraging to note in that connexion that the Scandinavian countries and Japan were prepared to co-operate fully with IAEA.

25. As the representatives of the United Arab Republic and Pakistan had noted, the dialogue had actually been confined to the super-Powers. Yet the non-nuclear Powers could not be excluded from developments which affected all mankind.

26. The aspirations of the non-nuclear States in that regard had been formulated at the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at Cairo in 1964, and in the joint memorandum of 19 August 1966 submitted by the eight non-aligned members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee.^{1/} The non-nuclear Powers had so far been unanimous in welcoming the Soviet Union's initiative in submitting a draft resolution to the First Committee. They also wished to see underground tests banned and nuclear stockpiles reduced; in other words, they wanted to see real progress made. As the Brazilian representative had said, the non-aligned countries regarded the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation as part of a programme aimed at taking a first and important step towards general and complete disarmament. There again, goodwill and sincere intentions were of paramount importance.

27. Mr. CHIMIDDORJ (Mongolia) said that all countries now recognized that the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons was an urgent one and that it should not and could not be made the subject of lengthy negotiations. Yet it was to be noted with regret that the Eighteen-Nation Committee had been unable to achieve any results in the sphere of disarmament. That failure was attributable to the positions taken by the United States and other Western Powers, which, while professing to be in favour of disarmament, rejected the constructive proposals of the Soviet Union and other socialist and peace-loving States. No one could deny that the colonial war being waged by the United States in South Viet-Nam and its aggression against the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam had greatly aggravated the international situation and adversely affected the climate of negotiations. Those positions and those actions had increased the danger of the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The banning of underground nuclear tests had not yet been achieved, and the plans for establishing an Atlantic or multilateral nuclear force within NATO had not been discarded. Finally, nuclear explosions in the atmosphere were continuing despite the conclusion of the Treaty banning nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, signed at Moscow in 1963.

28. As many representatives had said, a solution to the problem of proliferation brooked no delay. It should not be forgotten that the conventional arms race had led to two wars which had affected the entire world. Hence, it might well be asked what would happen if a nuclear war broke out.

29. As in the past, the efforts of the socialist countries and the other peace-loving States to halt the arms race and normalize the international situation had met with opposition from the militarists and revanchists of the Federal Republic of Germany, which was rearming with the direct assistance of the United States and certain other members of NATO.

^{1/} See Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1966, document DC/228, annex I, sect. P.

The ruling circles in Bonn were not only seeking access to nuclear weapons but also planning to manufacture their own nuclear weapons and use them to change the map of Europe and seize neighbouring territories. That was why the Government of the Federal Republic rejected the constructive proposals of the German Democratic Republic that both German States should renounce nuclear weapons and the emplacement of such weapons in German territory. In its statement addressed to the General Assembly on 16 September,^{2/} the Government of the German Democratic Republic had again shown that it was prepared to make every effort to achieve general disarmament. His delegation, like many others, felt that the militarists and revanchists of the Federal Republic of Germany should be denied access to nuclear weapons.

30. Like the other socialist States, Mongolia was pursuing a policy aimed at easing international tension and guaranteeing the peace and security of peoples. It felt that all possible steps should be taken to apply partial disarmament measures, including the establishment of denuclearized zones, the prohibition of any testing or use of nuclear weapons, and the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation. His delegation had therefore fully supported the new initiative taken by the Soviet Union and had joined the sponsors of the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.368/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1-4). It should be noted in that connexion that many other States, including the United States, had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

31. If the General Assembly could, at its twenty-first session, help to speed agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, that would have a favourable effect on the negotiations concerning general and complete disarmament and give the peoples of the world greater confidence in the United Nations.

32. Mr. WELLS (Jamaica) said that, as the eight non-aligned countries had pointed out in their memorandum of 19 August 1966, one of the main obstacles to the conclusion of a treaty on non-proliferation was the lack of agreement on arrangements governing the control, use and deployment of nuclear armaments within alliances. Another problem emphasized by the eight non-aligned countries was the language of the treaty. It was important that the provisions should be worded in such a way as to admit of only one interpretation. The treaty should clearly impose on all non-nuclear parties an obligation not to permit the emplacement of nuclear weapons in their territory, regardless of whether they entered into a military alliance with a nuclear Power now or in the future. Needless to say, the treaty should also expressly prohibit any non-nuclear Power in whose territory there were already nuclear weapons from owning, controlling or using those weapons.

33. If those two principles were not scrupulously observed, the countries of Europe and North America

might some day be bristling with nuclear weapons, despite their accession to the treaty, while the rest of the world, with one exception, would consist entirely of non-nuclear States.

34. Even if the world community could do nothing more than prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons into new areas, it would have accomplished something remarkable by halting proliferation at a stage when nuclear armaments were in the hands of only the five great Powers which held a special position under the United Nations Charter.

35. It should not be thought, however, that an agreement along the lines of those proposed by the United States and the USSR would not represent a greater sacrifice for the non-nuclear than for the nuclear States. In the form in which it was now proposed, the treaty would permit the existing nuclear States to continue stockpiling nuclear weapons, so that nuclear power would be polarized to the disadvantage of the non-nuclear States and the world in general. Moreover, it was not at all clear that the treaty would contain an undertaking by the nuclear States not to use nuclear and thermonuclear weapons against non-nuclear States. With regard to another item which had been on the Committee's agenda for many years, there had been a striking lack of progress because it was felt by some that a solemnly agreed prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons would not constitute a dependable guarantee. The dilemma was therefore very real. The present proposals did not call for guarantees regarding the use of nuclear weapons, and even if such guarantees could be inserted, it was clear in advance that some of those who would be giving the guarantees were inclined to doubt their value.

36. Nevertheless, his delegation urged the nuclear Powers, as it had at the last session, to give the firmest, most complete and most solemn guarantees to the non-nuclear States. There should be no difficulty in offering such guarantees, particularly to those non-nuclear States which, like Jamaica, had no military alliances with nuclear States. In considering that matter, the nuclear Powers would be wise to bear in mind that while the majority of non-nuclear States were not at present able to manufacture nuclear weapons, any one of them could receive and deploy such weapons in its territory.

37. Lastly, his delegation shared the concern of other delegations about the means by which non-nuclear States would in the future be permitted to utilize nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes. The act of renunciation which those States were now contemplating should prompt the nuclear States to renounce their exclusive nuclear rights. If, in order to promote its development, a non-nuclear State should wish to undertake a major project which could be carried out only by means of a nuclear explosion, it should be encouraged to turn to an international agency rather than to one of the nuclear Powers. In a few years, technological advances would unquestionably make it possible to apply nuclear energy to development. It should not be too difficult to give a new or existing international agency the know-how and authority to make those advances available to the non-nuclear countries, particularly the developing countries.

^{2/} Statement of the Government of the German Democratic Republic of 16 September 1966, transmitted to the President of the General Assembly by a letter dated 17 October 1966 from the Permanent Representative of Hungary to the United Nations, and circulated to Member States under cover of a note by the Secretariat dated 26 October 1966.

38. The non-nuclear States were well aware that by acceding to a treaty on non-proliferation they would be agreeing to the perpetuation of the present imbalance, but the dangers of proliferation were so great that they had no alternative. They must therefore work for the early conclusion of a clearly worded treaty with firm guarantees and a declaration by which the nuclear Powers undertook to begin their own denuclearization.

Organization of work

39. The CHAIRMAN announced that the Committee would very shortly begin its consideration of agenda

item 26 (Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament), concerning which two draft resolutions (A/C.1/L.371 and Corr.1 and Add.1-3 and A/C.1/L.372) were before the Committee. Since forty-five speakers had already made statements on the subject of non-proliferation during the discussion of agenda item 97, it would be desirable for the representatives who spoke on item 26 to confine themselves to consideration of the two draft resolutions, on the understanding that any speaker could, if he wished, refer at the same time to the other agenda items relating to disarmament.

The meeting rose at 5.5 p.m.