

GENERAL
ASSEMBLY

SIXTH SESSION

Official Records



Monday, 26 November 1951, at 10.30 a.m.

Palais de Chaillot, Paris

CONTENTS

	Page
Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943, A/C.1/667 and A/C.1/668) (continued)	27
International control of atomic energy : report of the Committee of Twelve (A/1922) (continued)	27

Chairman: Mr. Finn MOE (Norway).

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943 and A/C.1/667 and A/C.1/668) (continued)

[Item 66]*

International control of atomic energy : report of the Committee of Twelve (A/1922) (continued)

[Item 16]*

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. MOCH (France) said that, in agreement with the United States and United Kingdom representatives, he would reply briefly and provisionally to Mr. Vyshinsky's speech at the previous meeting.

2. In the first part of his speech, the USSR representative had indicted the foreign policy of the authors of the three-Power proposal (A/C.1/667). In the second part he had submitted amendments (A/C.1/668), which could only be answered later, after thorough examination.

3. The indictment called for two comments. In the first place, although the constant repetition of inaccuracies or inaccurately analyzed facts might come to be accepted as truth and then as evidence by certain unilaterally informed people, such a procedure had no chance of success in countries where judgments were freely formed, still less in the United Nations. The second comment followed from the first. Affirmations of that kind could only arouse mistrust on the part of the incredulous. The representative of France expressed the fear that Lenin's policy of "results", used formerly at the trade union level to "accomplish the communist task" by means of militants working in organizations which had remained "reactionary", might be transferred to the international level.

4. It was true that the crux of the matter was to alleviate the burden of armaments, but without jeopardizing freedom of independence. It was essential to have guarantees on that point. Disarmament neither internationally nor impartially, nor effectively controlled might become a tragic delusion for the nations. Confidence must be restored

by a constantly controlled progression from the simple to the complex, from the secondary to the essential, and those concerned must be assured that each disclosure, each reduction of military power did not constitute "a ruse or stratagem".

5. The amendments submitted by the representative of the USSR would be studied from that angle in the next few days. Each amendment would be considered separately and there would be a separate, clear and reasoned reply to each.

6. Disarmament could be carried out only with complete guarantees of sincerity. France was ready to give such guarantees whole-heartedly and gladly on the double basis of complete reciprocity and full effectiveness, in order to serve, without disassociating the two ideals—peace on the one hand, and freedom and independence on the other.

7. Mr. QUEVEDO (Ecuador) said that the small Powers could not remain neutral in the current ideological conflict. They must defend the political doctrine which enabled every nation to achieve social justice in freedom, without sacrificing its faith, its ideals or its interests. Ecuador believed in democracy as a political creed and that the independence and equality of the peoples were the bases of the law of nations.

8. Thus, Ecuador could not be neutral in the ideological conflict. It supported anything that was in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations; it was opposed to anything that was likely to maintain and extend the doctrine or practice of the dictatorship of communist minorities which suppressed the freedom of man.

9. Generally speaking, the West sought to uphold peace and the political doctrines adopted by Ecuador. His delegation was therefore very frequently in agreement with the West. But it opposed and voted against the West whenever its own principles so dictated. That was the line of conduct followed by the Ecuadorean delegation in the General Assembly and the Security Council.

10. Communist expansion by armed force or pressure, not by the will of the inhabitants, of which the aggression in Korea was an example, had alarmed the West and hastened its defensive rearmament. But the lack of balance persisted in favour of the East.

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

11. The eastern group had taken up a generally negative position. It was against the Marshall Plan, against the Schuman Plan and against the North Atlantic Treaty, although their sole aim was the reconstruction of western Europe, its essential peaceful economic integration and its regional defence. Nor did the eastern bloc favour the establishment of a balance of armed forces and conventional arms. It desired, on the other hand, the immediate prohibition of atomic arms and the reduction of conventional arms in equal proportions, which would leave huge areas of the world at the mercy of the eastern bloc. It had also opposed collective action in Korea, although that had been the first practical application of the collective security system. The three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) was a serious effort to arrive at an agreement. As there were certain points common to the USSR argument and that of the three Powers, there was a possible field for negotiation. Yet the difficulties were great.

12. Quoting Article 8 of the League of Nations Covenant, which had made provision for the reduction of armaments and drawn attention to possible objections to the private manufacture of armaments, he recalled the difficulties which the League had encountered and he arrived at the conclusion that an immediate disarmament conference, without preliminary study and negotiation, would probably be unsuccessful.

13. The immediate basic necessity was for the great Powers to consider jointly whether there might be any possibility of carrying on genuine negotiations.

14. The Ecuadorean delegation did not propose for the moment to make a detailed analysis of the proposals submitted to the Committee, but merely to offer some general remarks :

(1) The joint draft resolution did not say what was to be done in the case of small States. Ecuador was virtually disarmed and its forces were very much below those of the other States in its geographical area. The Ecuadorean delegation reserved the right to make any comments it might deem necessary when the question of the defence organization of the small Powers arose.

(2) The two groups of States forming the two divisions of the world had both referred to the necessity of entering upon the uphill path of conciliation. If agreement was to be reached, they must adopt an understanding attitude from the outset. An example of a conciliatory gesture would be to admit Italy and Portugal to membership in the United Nations.

(3) A change in the psychological approach was essential if the danger of a new conflict was to be avoided. Any systematic opposition of one "group" to the proposals of the other "group" was open to criticism. At the same time, a spirit of conciliation should never be interpreted as a sign of weakness, nor negotiation as appeasement.

(4) The adoption, by a majority of the Committee, of the three-Power draft resolution or of the Soviet Union draft amendments (A/C.1/668) would not be a real solution of the armaments problem. An agreement between the great Powers which possessed large military forces today was essential as was the concurrence in the methods and basis of that agreement of other great Powers who would undoubtedly have their say at some future time and would inevitably soon be striving to raise large military forces of their own, for example Japan and Germany.

(5) The problem of disarmament and of the limitation of armed forces had given rise to a dilemma which had become apparent in the days of the League of Nations— which of the issues of mutual confidence, moral or real disarmament, should come first? With which would it be best to begin? Although an agreement on the reduction

and control of armaments would certainly lessen political tension, was it probable that any such agreement could be reached at a time of what might be truly described as fatal distrust? The solution seemed to lie in an endeavour to diminish international tension and simultaneously to embark on parallel negotiations for disarmament.

(6) The Ecuadorean delegation believed that the guarantees demanded by the western Powers for a balanced reduction, the verification of armaments and armed forces and the implementation of any agreement that might be reached, were fully justified. Yet, it should be possible to establish between the western countries and the Soviet Union a formula guaranteeing : (a) the disclosure, verification and prohibition of atomic weapons and control of atomic energy ; (b) that those measures would be taken at a time fair and equitable for all concerned ; (c) that the international control organ would be really impartial, and not the instrument of one State or group of States.

15. Finally, as it did not seem that the conclusion of an agreement would be promoted by public discussion among sixty States, the Ecuadorean delegation suggested that the great Powers should as soon as possible enter into direct and informal negotiations, within the framework and under the auspices of the United Nations, with a view to finding a formula acceptable to all. That was not tantamount to advocating secret diplomacy ; it was the most realistic method in the existing circumstances. The time indeed seemed to have come when, in all conscience, as the USSR representative had said, no one should spare his efforts in the defence of peace.

16. Sir Benegal RAU (India) pointed out that no plan of disarmament, whatever its merits, could be successful until agreement had been reached among the major Powers. Indeed, that was recognized in the preamble to the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667), and also in paragraph 7 of the operative part of the draft. What India was mainly interested in, in common probably with every other member of the Committee, was not the adoption of any particular resolution on disarmament, but an actual beginning of disarmament. It was essential, therefore, that any plan of disarmament should be the subject of real agreement.

17. The United States representative had made it clear that there could be no disarmament as long as fighting continued in Korea. The USSR delegation, too, had given priority to the Korean problem. For those reasons, and also because events in Korea seemed at present to have taken a favourable turn, it might appear that the time had come to appoint a group of representatives, elected on a personal basis, to seek a solution to the Korean problem.

18. The three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) and the amendments proposed by the USSR (A/C.1/668) appeared to differ in the order in which the successive operations were envisaged.

19. The USSR amendments proposed as a first step that the General Assembly should declare itself in favour of an unconditional ban on atomic weapons. Next, by a convention to be concluded before 1 February 1952 a control authority would be set up whose main task it would be to inspect atomic installations in the various States. Only then would the five permanent members of the Security Council be called upon to reduce their existing armaments and armed forces.

20. The three-Power draft resolution, on the other hand, provided first for disclosure and verification of information on armaments and armed forces, then for the reduction of armaments by the agreed proportion, then for prohibition of atomic weapons and finally for the creation of safe-

guards. Unless his interpretation was mistaken, therefore, under the three-Power draft resolution the ban on atomic weapons would not precede measures for the reduction of armaments, as in the USSR proposals, but would follow them.

21. Beside those differences of opinion, some common ground could be found between the three-Power draft resolution and the USSR amendments. The Indian delegation believed that the real or apparent differences between the two contending ideas should be eliminated as quickly as possible.

22. Consequently it was suggesting that a sub-committee should be set up to consider the three-Power draft resolution, the USSR amendments and all amendments which might be proposed subsequently.

23. During the general debate¹ he had linked together disarmament and aid to under-developed countries. The first paragraph of the preamble of the three-Power draft resolution seemed to express a similar point of view, and the USSR delegation had not submitted any amendment to it. It might therefore be expected that the idea would meet with no opposition.

24. The Indian delegation was therefore submitting a draft resolution (A/C.1/669), which added to the ideas expressed in the three-Power draft resolution that of the creation of a United Nations fund for reconstruction and development.

25. It was hardly necessary to emphasize that just as the efforts made to divert part of the sums spent on armaments to the peaceful purposes of reconstruction were certainly inspired by humanitarian considerations, so the existence and persistence of social inequalities throughout the world, daily becoming more evident, were a threat to world peace.

26. Mr. AL-JAMALI (Iraq) thought that the three-Power proposals (A/C.1/667) were a serious attempt to reduce armaments by reducing international tension. His delegation could also support the USSR representative's conclusions about the prohibition of the atomic bomb and the general reduction of armaments.

27. Yet the significance of Mr. Vyshinsky's speech lay in the fact that it was a true picture of the state of tension prevailing between east and west, the eastern and western blocs. Obviously the western Powers would reply to the USSR's accusations by counter accusations. The two groups of States feared and distrusted each other. The "cold war" had begun between the two blocs, and an armaments race had ensued. The vicious circle could be broken by disarmament, but to be effective, disarmament must be universal and global. The three-Power draft resolution, however acceptable, would remain ineffective unless it was accepted by the USSR. What was required was the possibility of agreement between the USSR and the three great western Powers.

28. It was with that purpose that the Iraqi delegation, together with those of Pakistan and Syria, was submitting a draft resolution (A/C.1/670) calling for the formation of a sub-committee, consisting of a representative of each of the four great Powers and the President of the General Assembly, for the purpose of preparing a draft resolution on disarmament during the current session of the General Assembly.

29. The Iraqi delegation believed that the following points should be taken into account in any disarmament Programme :

(1) The coexistence of the economic and social systems of the East and West was possible. No attempt to sabotage those systems should be made, if it was desired to relax world tension. That principle was fundamental to psychological disarmament, and that was a prerequisite for any physical disarmament ;

(2) The United Nations should set up a supreme authority capable of checking aggression from any quarter ;

(3) All obstacles to taking a census of, and inspecting, arms factories should be removed. Confidence could only be established if inspection were free, objective and universal ;

(4) A formula should be worked out to enable every country to ensure its legitimate defence. The formula should take account of the geographical and strategical position of each State, the size of its territory, the density of its population and various other technical factors ;

(5) The use of atomic bombs and the aerial bombardment of civilian populations should be classed as genocide, and outlawed, as the use of asphyxiating gas and bacteriological warfare had been ;

(6) All individual centres of international tension, such as Palestine, Morocco, Germany, Austria and Korea, should be dealt with in accordance with the Principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

(7) Funds saved by disarmament should be used to raise the standard of living of people in the under-developed countries.

30. The Iraqi delegation thought that the consideration of the problem afforded an opportunity to relax international tension. An agreement between the four Powers, though difficult, could be reached. He enjoined moderation on the USSR representative ; it was not essential to adopt the criterion of a one-third reduction. On the other hand, he asked the representatives of the three western Powers not always to insist on using formulae which proceeded from the simple to the complex in their disarmament proposals. Once a minimum of confidence had been established, and the principle of census and verification had been accepted, a beginning should be made by prohibiting the most dangerous weapons, with a view to allaying fear and mistrust as quickly as possible.

31. He appealed to the representatives of the four great Powers to meet together and reach an agreement on disarmament.

32. Mr. DIHIGO (Cuba) remarked that the small Powers were not responsible for the present condition of international distrust because they were not in a position to bring about a world war. That was why many delegations thought that it was for the great Powers to make decisive statements on disarmament and hoped that the statements would be moderate.

33. That, however, in no way absolved the small States of the duty to express their views. They were part of the international community and would be potential victims in case of a world conflict.

34. While it was true, as some representatives had pointed out, that the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) did not deal with the causes of the present international tension but rather with its effects, a reduction in armaments would nevertheless mark a relaxation of international tension.

35. The three western Powers on the one hand and the USSR on the other were agreed as to the need to reduce armaments. They differed, however, on the method. The USSR proposed that a beginning should be made with the prohibition of atomic weapons, while the western Powers advocated reduction of the least secret and least

¹ See Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixth Session, Plenary Meetings, 344th meeting.

important weapons first, leaving the more destructive weapons to be dealt with later. The latter method seemed the more practical.

36. The present international situation was characterized by mutual distrust and preparation for war. Confidence must therefore be restored, and that could only be done by stages. The draft resolution submitted by the three western Powers provided for that.

37. Furthermore, individual freedom, which was threatened by insecurity and international distrust, could be preserved only in an atmosphere of confidence such as the three-Power resolution proposed to establish. It was for those reasons that the Cuban delegation supported the resolution in principle.

38. Sir Mohammad ZAFRULLA KHAN (Pakistan) observed that, instead of contributing to the harmonious development of mankind, human knowledge was too often used to perfect instruments of destruction. The horror of that fact was the reason for both the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) and the USSR amendments (A/C.1/668).

39. It was not the first time that an international body had had draft resolutions on disarmament before it. The League of Nations had dealt with the matter already, and, since 1945, the United Nations had established the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments. A disarmament commission and a new world disarmament conference were now being proposed. The resolutions and proposals were ineffectual, however, because there was a contradiction between the declared purposes of men and their actual behaviour.

40. The time seemed to have come when those who held the power of decision should make a common effort to remove the obstacles keeping them apart. The problem they would have to resolve was surrounded by an atmosphere of fear and doubt. It was certainly not an easy problem but it would have to be solved.

41. The delegations of Iraq, Syria and Pakistan were therefore submitting a draft resolution (A/C.1/670) advocating the establishment of a sub-committee consisting of representatives of the four great Powers under the chairmanship of the President of the General Assembly. The President had been proposed as chairman of the sub-committee because of the gravity of the situation and the importance of the problem. If a procedural difficulty was involved, however, the draft resolution could be amended so that the First Committee recommended the establishment of the sub-committee to the General Assembly.

42. The Pakistan delegation hoped the draft resolution would be accepted unanimously. It implored the great Powers to attempt to reach an agreement which would serve mankind. Without such an agreement, all the resolutions that could be adopted would be of no use unless, perhaps, for purposes of propaganda. The world was close to the abyss. Men could save it only if they adhered to right principles, acted in accordance with those principles and persevered in their determination to make them universally acceptable.

43. Faris EL-KHOURY Bey (Syria) remarked that the purpose of the draft resolution submitted jointly by his delegation and the delegations of Iraq and Pakistan (A/C.1/670) was to establish a sub-committee consisting of representatives of the four great Powers and the President of the General Assembly with instructions to prepare a single draft resolution.

44. The representative of Syria wondered whether, if no such resolution were adopted, there would be any point in going on debating and preparing draft resolutions that would merely remain dead letters. Since 1946, dozens of resolutions on disarmament had been adopted by overwhelming majorities, but it had not been possible to apply them because of the disagreement between the great Powers. If the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) were adopted by a large majority, that would not be enough to induce the three great western Powers to give information on their atomic armaments. Without an agreement between the four great Powers, it was impossible to make progress with disarmament.

45. At the fifth session of the General Assembly, the delegations of Syria and Iraq had appealed to the great Powers to meet and attempt to disperse the atmosphere of international distrust.² The appeal had been unanimously adopted, but had been unavailing. The request should again be presented to the great Powers at the sixth session of the General Assembly.

46. Some said that the great Powers had met before for the purpose of regulating armaments, without success. It should, however, be noted that on the basic points the differences between the draft resolution submitted by the three western Powers and the USSR amendments were not irreconcilable. If the four Powers would display moderation, they should be able to reach agreement and thus render an immense service to mankind.

47. With regard to the reduction of armaments and armed forces, it must be pointed out that the USSR proposal for the uniform reduction of the armaments of the great Powers by one-third seemed rather unrealistic. It was to be hoped that the USSR representative would abandon that point of view and adopt the criterion of the minimum forces necessary to the security of each State.

48. In any event, the representative of Syria implored the representatives of the four great Powers to make every effort to reach an agreement.

49. The CHAIRMAN remarked that the draft resolution submitted by Iraq, Pakistan and Syria (A/C.1/670) was a motion for adjournment of the debate and, according to the rules of procedure, should be put to the vote immediately. The motion for adjournment was, however, linked with a proposal for the establishment of a sub-committee.

50. He therefore suggested that the Committee should continue the general debate and that the new draft resolution should be voted on first as soon as the general discussion was over.

51. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) supported the Chairman's suggestion, and pointed out that, while the great Powers bore the main responsibility in the matter of disarmament, all the States represented should express their views, for war would affect all nations. The First Committee could not renounce its responsibility for issuing directions on behalf of the General Assembly.

52. Sir Mohammad ZAFRULLA KHAN (Pakistan) and Faris EL-KHOURY Bey (Syria) expressed their complete agreement with the Chairman.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

² See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifth Session, Annexes*, agenda item 68, document A/C.1/585/Rev. 2.