



Monday, 28 October 1957,
at 10.45 a. m.

NEW YORK

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Chairman: Mr. DJALAL ABDOH (Iran).

AGENDA ITEM 24

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction (A/3630 and Corr.1, A/3657, A/3674/Rev.1, A/3685, A/C.1/793, A/C.1/797, A/C.1/L.174, A/C.1/L.175/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.176/Rev.2, A/C.1/L.177, A/C.1/L.178/Rev.1, A/C.1/L.179 and Corr.1 and Add.1, A/C.1/L.180) (continued):

- (a) Report of the Disarmament Commission;
- (b) Expansion of the membership of the Disarmament Commission and of its Sub-Committee;
- (c) Collective action to inform and enlighten the peoples of the world as to the dangers of the armaments race, and particularly as to the destructive effects of modern weapons;
- (d) Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons

1. Mr. CHARLONE (Uruguay) said that the major responsibility in the complex and delicate matter of disarmament rested with the General Assembly. Under the Charter of the United Nations, the regulation of armaments was a matter within the joint jurisdiction of the Security Council and the Assembly, but the Assembly had the further function of studying and recommending principles of disarmament. That situation was explained by the Charter doctrine concerning the role and the use of force. The Charter permitted the constitutional use of force to ensure respect for international law. Unfortunately, it had not been possible to establish the instrument of constitutional force contemplated in Article 43 and related provisions of the Charter, but the Assembly had safeguarded the

principle when the pressure of events and the inaction or impotence of the Security Council had compelled it to assume the responsibilities deriving from its specific competence in regard to the maintenance of peace.

2. As Franklin D. Roosevelt had said in expounding his doctrine of the four freedoms in an address to the United States Congress on 6 January 1941: "...freedom from fear ... translated into world terms, means a worldwide reduction of armaments to such a point and in such a thorough fashion that no nation will be in a position to commit an act of aggression against any neighbor—anywhere in the world". The idea was an important one; any disarmament plan must wholly eliminate any possibility of aggression.

3. On the other hand, it had to be remembered that the United Nations was not a super State. The Assembly's resolutions did not have binding force. Nevertheless, its recommendations were backed by the force of public opinion, of which the Assembly was the natural organ of expression and to the influence of which the Charter attached the greatest importance.

4. For those reasons, his delegation warmly welcomed the Belgian draft resolution (A/3630/Corr.1), which sought to mobilize public opinion by informing the world of the horrors of the new weapons of mass destruction. Although such an educational programme would, of course, be fully effective only in countries where freedom of information was respected, its impact on world public opinion would be salutary and should not be underestimated.

5. While his delegation would state its detailed views at a later stage on the various draft resolutions before the Committee, he wished to emphasize that in his Government's opinion two facts were fundamental: first, disarmament was a problem of sincerity, the elements of which were indivisible; secondly, the principal goal of disarmament programmes must be to safeguard States against the possibility of surprise attack.

6. As the problem was one of sincerity, conventional disarmament could not be separated from nuclear disarmament organized and regulated in a manner that provided for every stage. The object was not to humanize war but to abolish it. In the final stage of disarmament, armed forces and armaments of the conventional type should not exceed the levels necessary to ensure the security of States.

7. For the same reason, it was hard to see how the insistent demands for the suspension of tests of nuclear weapons could be sincere if they were not accompanied by a willingness to renounce the manufacture of further fissionable materials and to prohibit the use of existing fissionable materials for the manufacture of such weapons. The only purpose of the tests was to measure the destructive power of the new weapons. The tests were an effect, not a cause.

The initial factor in the progress of atomic weapons was the production of fissionable materials. That was the root of the evil.

8. His delegation also believed that it was impossible sincerely to advocate the renunciation of atomic weapons and call for the elimination of such weapons from the armaments of States without offering some guarantee other than the confidence States should place in a promise of good behaviour, particularly when those who did so rejected any control of the production and use of fissionable material on the grounds that the necessary confidence did not exist. The contradiction was puzzling, the more so because the control would be international, devised and organized by the Powers concerned of their own free will.

9. The splitting of the atom had transformed the problem of national security, in fact and in law. Until the Second World War, the illusion had persisted that a State could protect itself against the initial impact of aggression by fortifying its frontiers, at least at strategic points. That had been the purpose of the Maginot Line, for instance. The speed with which both large and small countries had been overrun and occupied had destroyed that conception of security. In the modern world, it was no longer necessary to invade a country in order to annihilate its vital centres and the old formulas of the balance of power were meaningless. Anyone using the new weapons would spread destruction and death throughout the world. Mere formal declaration concerning the renunciation of the use of atomic weapons would serve no purpose in the absence of a police force and court to stop and suppress aggression.

10. In the course of the eleven years of discussion, the Soviet Union had agreed to certain measures of control which it had initially rejected, just as it had rejected the more effective solution embodied in the United States offer to transfer to the international community ownership of the new sources of energy over which it then had had a monopoly.

11. According to the statements of Mr. Gromyko, the representative of the Soviet Union, in the Assembly (681st plenary meeting) and in the Committee (867th meeting), the Soviet Union agreed to control in the case of the suspension of nuclear weapons testing, so that it was reasonable to hope that it would also agree to inspection and control of such basic operations as the manufacture and use of fissionable materials. If that decisive step could be taken at the twelfth session of the General Assembly the latter would, as the Prime Minister of Canada had said (683rd plenary meeting), go down in history as the "Disarmament Assembly".

12. For those reasons, his delegation would vote for the twenty-four-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.179 and Corr.1 and Add.1). In due course, it would join with other Latin-American delegations in proposing the addition of a provision regarding the allocation of the savings that would be effected at each stage of disarmament. Military expenditure totalled, as the Canadian Prime Minister had pointed out, \$85,000 million a year, but in eleven years of operation the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development had been able to lend the countries in need of its assistance a total of less than \$50,000 million. The Assembly, in resolution 914 (X), had requested the

great Powers who were members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission to consider the possibility of allocating the funds resulting from disarmament to encourage economic development and improve standards of living. The amendment which his and other Latin-American delegations would propose^{1/} would reaffirm that recommendation.

13. Referring to the special responsibility of the Governments of the great Powers at a time when the peoples of the world lived in dread of a new war, he said that sovereignty was an expression of the freedom of the State, which was based upon the freedom of the individual. No State in which the popular will was heeded could desire war. In other words, the best guarantee of security was peace based on democratic institutions. It was true that the United Nations had not been established on that basis, despite the heartfelt desire of most of its Members. Nevertheless it was founded on love of peace, and all States, whatever their institutions or structure, must be prepared to pay the price of peace.

14. Mr. DRAGO (Argentina) said that, before taking part in the debate, his delegation had waited to hear the representatives of the great Powers, for the conclusion of an agreement on the perplexing problem of disarmament depended primarily on them. Nevertheless the use of atomic and thermo-nuclear weapons made every country vulnerable and the views of the small and middle-sized nations should not therefore be ignored.

15. Referring to the boundary dispute which had existed for some years between his country and Chile, he said that at the beginning of the century the dispute had grown more acute and both countries had acquired new cruisers. Armed conflict had appeared imminent, but wisdom had fortunately prevailed over blind emotion and the parties had submitted the dispute to King Edward VII for arbitration. King Edward's award had been accepted and the peaceful settlement had been completed by the signature of an agreement which provided for the sale of the warships under construction for the two countries in Italian and British shipyards and the demilitarization of one Chilean and two Argentine cruisers.^{2/} The agreement was the world's first disarmament agreement and had remained the only one of its kind until the agreements reached at the Washington Naval Conference.^{3/}

16. Argentina could therefore speak of disarmament with some authority, since it had effected its own disarmament over half a century earlier. It had no intention of annexing territory, enslaving other peoples, or enriching itself with the spoils of war. Like all sovereign States, it made provision for its defence and security. The Argentine people regarded force as an instrument in the service of justice, as Pascal had desired and as the Preamble to the Charter prescribed.

17. Much had been written and said on the subject of disarmament, but little had been done. Before the First World War disarmament had been discussed at the

^{1/} Subsequently distributed as document A/C.1/L.181.

^{2/} Agreement between the Argentine Republic and Chile, giving effect to the terms of the Convention of May 28, 1902, for the Limitation of Naval Armaments, signed at Buenos Aires on 9 January 1903.

^{3/} Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armament, signed at Washington on 6 February 1922.

International Peace Conferences, held at The Hague in 1899 and 1907. During the latter conference, an Argentine delegate, commenting on the fact that the military and naval attachés attending the deliberations were wearing civilian clothes, had said that that was all that had been done towards disarmament. The situation had changed little since then, despite two devastating wars in which millions had lost their lives and in which ancient cities had been destroyed with their historic monuments and places of worship.

18. At Geneva, in the days of the League of Nations, the question had been whether disarmament or security should come first. That academic discussion had been brought to an end by the Second World War, begun, it was ironical to recall, in order to defend the liberty of Poland.

19. Since 1946, when the dialogue between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers had begun, the question had been whether disarmament should begin with the suspension of tests of nuclear weapons as an isolated measure as the Soviet Union proposed, or in conjunction with the cessation of the production of fissionable material, the gradual reduction of stocks of such materials and their conversion to peaceful uses, as the Western Powers proposed.

20. A choice had to be made. The risks the Soviet proposal would entail for the free world had been plainly described by the representatives of the United States (866th meeting), the United Kingdom (869th meeting) and the Netherlands (875th meeting) and by the representative of France (877th meeting), in his able statement.

21. There had been talk of the imperialist plans of the Western Powers. The accusation was wholly unwarranted. The Western Powers had proved not by words but by deeds their desire to live in peace as long as they were left in peace, but they obviously could not disarm at the expense of their security or alter the logical sequence of the stages in the programme for the reduction of armaments.

22. The twenty-four-Power draft resolution, of which Argentina was a co-sponsor, was based on the premise that the security of all must be guaranteed and must furnish the basis of a settlement that both sides could accept. The lack of confidence made control essential, for, as the Peruvian representative, Mr. Belaúnde, had rightly said (868th meeting), confidence could not be created by proclamation.

23. It was the Soviet Union's opposition to inspection and control that made it so difficult to reach agreement on a matter that vitally affected world peace. It was evident that no nation wanted war, for the appalling sufferings caused by the Second World War were fresh in the minds of all. But aggressor Governments did not consult their peoples; they mobilized armies, and the Governments of the countries attacked mobilized forces in their turn in order to defend their territory. The three or four lines of a general mobilization order could send millions of people to their death, as had happened in 1914 and 1939.

24. Nevertheless, despite the present disagreement, his delegation would not give up hope. The encouraging statement by the representative of the United States had provided the words of hope to which the French representative had referred. It was to be hoped that the old revolutionary slogan, "Workers of the world,

unite!" would not give place to a new slogan: "Workers of the world, destroy one another!" It was to be hoped that the very scale of an atomic catastrophe would give food for thought to those who could unleash it. The world must have faith in the principles of justice and humanity and in Providence.

25. Mr. EBAN (Israel) said that, since the end of the London meetings of the Sub-Committee more had been done to explain and justify the failure of the negotiations than to pursue success. A comprehensive disarmament agreement had never come within clear view at the London discussions, but limited areas of agreement had seemed to be emerging in the main fields of discussion. The prospect had brightened as the discussion had become more concrete and technical. A limited agreement, based on common impulse of self-preservation, had appeared possible.

26. The causes of the deadlock in the talks must be sought in the world political tension. Heavy competitive armament was not the cause but the result of international tension and mistrust.

27. It should not be forgotten that disarmament was not in itself always equivalent to peace and security. The Second World War had been caused not only by the rearmament of Nazi Germany but also by the disarmed state of its victims. Disarmament became a function of peace only when it was reciprocal, regulated, controlled and meticulously safeguarded in all the details of its mutual application. In that domain above all others the mere word was nothing; the concrete implementation was everything.

28. It was therefore vital that the Sub-Committee renew its labours. Experience had shown that the daily struggle with the specifics of the problem could bring the parties together. At the same time, it would be a mistake to overestimate what could be accomplished unless there was some break in global and regional tensions. Limited steps were more appropriate to the situation than ambitious over-all projects. The need was not for broad declarations of purpose, but for practical agreements subject to the necessary control and scrutiny and capable of expansion in the measure that confidence grew out of successful experience in limited disarmament projects.

29. The scientific revolution accomplished by the discoveries of nuclear physics endowed the debate with a special depth and pathos. Until science was harnessed to morality and law, each new advance in natural power would be greeted by mankind with more anxiety than exhilaration. The launching of the first artificial earth satellite had been no exception to that rule.

30. In the circumstances, it was more urgent than ever to subdue the newly discovered sources of power to a régime of universal law. Tenacity was essential; it was true that there was little immediate sign of progress towards agreement, but so long as the nuclear Powers were engaged in discussion under the influence of world opinion, there was at least a chance of reaching an agreement. Finally, from the strictly objective point of view, an agreement had become necessary. No geographic factor now offered security to any nation in the event of general war. To believe in the ultimate possibility of a disarmament agreement no longer required confidence in anyone's good faith; it was necessary only to believe that all Powers had an equal passion for survival.

31. At the Conference of the Heads of Government of the four great Powers held at Geneva in 1955, it had seemed that the great Powers believed that no one of them desired an atomic war. Now one of the great Powers had asserted its belief that the others were pursuing an atomic arms race for the purpose of eventual aggression and war. Some representatives seeking a motive for that accusation found it in the desire for profit. But it was hard to see how an atomic holocaust which devastated the planet, poisoned its atmosphere and decimated its population could produce a financial boon amidst the flaming rubble of the Western stock markets. It was a desperately serious fact that that was what the delegations of the Soviet Union and the Byelorussian SSR had said about the motives of the United States. On the other hand, the Western Powers, indeed the majority of the United Nations, had often attested that they did not regard the policies of the Soviet Union with complete confidence.

32. At first sight it might appear that the absence of confidence ruled out any hope of successful negotiation, but if confidence existed, there would be little need for negotiation at all.

33. In certain areas it should be possible to relax tensions at once. One nuclear Power had reminded many countries during the past year that it could destroy them with relative ease. That was a reality of which the small countries were well aware. Nothing would be lost by any State if the habit of rocket-rattling were ended, and if the ethics of the Charter were restored in the diplomacy and even the propaganda of all nations.

34. The great Powers could also prevent the growth of international tension regionally. Since the end of the 1955 Geneva Conference the countries of the Middle East had been receiving a flood of new arms. Israel appealed to the great Powers for an end to the practice of sending surplus weapons to an area of tension. It was pathetic to contrast the resources expended by Middle Eastern States, and by the great Powers in their relations with the Middle East, on an arms race, with the meagre resources available for economic and social progress. The proposal made by his delegation at the eleventh session (829th meeting) for the regulation of armaments in the Middle East by an agreement between all the States of the region and all the States supplying arms merited earnest consideration.

35. The various proposals could roughly be divided into two categories. There was the "declaratory" approach inviting trust in affirmations and simple promises, and there was the empirical approach which held that an agreement was of value only to the degree that it could be controlled. His delegation believed that the second approach alone offered any chance of progress.

36. In that respect, no argument could be based on the fact that even Hitler did not violate the ban on gas and bacterial warfare. But that restraint had resulted only from fear of retaliation. In those areas where it had felt free from retribution, that régime had abjured every international declaration and committed millions of people to hideous murder. It had been suggested that nuclear weapons should be outlawed and declared "illegal" with the implied corollary that now nuclear devices for the massacre of human life were "legal". The effect of such a selective ban would be not disarmament or peace, but simply the award of world

domination to whichever Power possessed superiority in conventional weapons. Nor could the proposal be justified on moral grounds: the legality of an act of violence had nothing to do with the character of the weapon. While not disputing the primacy of the nuclear question, his delegation urged that more consideration should be given to the extreme vulnerability of the small nations as a result of the accumulation of conventional weapons.

37. The more one contemplated the factor of mistrust, the more the solution appeared to reside in the question of control. The objection to the four-Power London proposals (DC/113, annex 5), was that control was impossible because there was no confidence. But those who took that view went on to say that it was possible to rely on mere declarations, to dismantle alliances and bases, surrender defensive weapons and abandon retaliatory power without confidence. Confidence was not a prior condition of control; control was the remedy for temporary lack of confidence.

38. The suspension of nuclear tests should have a central place in any disarmament project. In a discussion where opinion was divided as to the danger of such tests, it was natural to be guided by the more cautious alternative. Suspension of such tests was in fact provided for in each of the proposals before the Sub-Committee. The question was whether it should be linked to the problem of nuclear weapons as a whole.

39. The Committee would be acting in an astonishing manner if it recommended the abolition of nuclear tests and did nothing to prevent the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Yet that seemed to be the effect of certain proposals. Everyone would welcome an agreement on the suspension of tests, but it would be pointless unless at the same time steps were taken to end the manufacture and accumulation of nuclear as well as conventional weapons.

40. His delegation supported the Belgian draft resolution which sought to give world public opinion a truer understanding of the problems of disarmament and believed that sympathetic consideration should be given to the Indian draft resolution for the establishment of a scientific commission to supervise agreed suspensions of tests (A/C.1/L.176/Rev.2). His delegation was not convinced that there would be any advantage in changing the procedure or the composition of the Disarmament Committee or the Sub-Committee, but reserved its final judgement on that point.

41. The centre of the discussion seemed to lie in the twenty-four-Power draft resolution, the adoption of which would be a first step towards disarmament and would have a profound effect on the course of international relations.

42. The principal objections to the draft resolution related to the problem of inspection and control. The four Powers had proposed no controls to others that they would not accept for themselves. Perhaps a discussion of that question might help to dispel certain anxieties.

43. At the same time there was great significance in a statement of the Canadian Secretary of State for External Affairs that the twenty-four-Power draft resolution should not be regarded as "the last word." It would be fruitful if the draft could be so worded by its sponsors as to make it clear that the Assembly

was not dictating an agreement which the Sub-Committee must pursue rigidly within the framework of the suggested six points. Israel supported the twenty-four-Power draft resolution on that understanding.

44. The Committee's chief service to the cause of disarmament would not be in the text of its resolutions

but in the ardour and conviction with which the great majority of nations could impress the Powers possessing atomic weapons with a sense of their urgent and vast responsibilities.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.