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Chairman: Mr. Ismail FAHMY
(United Arab Republic).

AGENDA ITEM 28

Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons (*continued*):

**(a) Report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation
Committee on Disarmament (A/7072 and Corr.3 and
Add.1-DC/230 and Corr.3 and Add.1, A/7080, A/C.1/
959, 960, 963; A/C.1/L.421/Rev.1 and Add.1-4)**

1. Mr. TURBAY AYALA (Colombia) (*translated from Spanish*): The subject we are now discussing is not an insignificant matter. Among the many subjects which have engaged the attention of the United Nations, that of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has always been of undeniable importance.

2. Ever since science and technology have made it possible to split the atom and mankind has learned that nuclear energy can be released for war purposes, humanity has known no rest. A justifiable feeling of fear has spread throughout the world, and today there is no region of our planet that can be considered sufficiently protected from the risks of a possible nuclear war. The techniques for producing these ghastly weapons of mass destruction have progressed much more rapidly than the adoption of the obviously necessary security measures which have been vainly tried out since the time of the first atomic explosion.

3. Simultaneously with the manufacture of the first nuclear devices, it occurred to everyone that there is a need to adopt defensive measures which might preserve present and future generations from the scourge of an undesirable atomic confrontation. The first to possess that nuclear technology hastened to make the proposal for the immediate prohibition of this type of weapons. However, the course of events did not favour a successful follow-up of that initiative and very soon, as was to be expected, a new nuclear Power emerged. That Power, in turn, did not wait long before it proposed general and complete disarmament.

4. It can be seen from what I have just said that for twenty years the United States and the Soviet Union have alternately reiterated their desire to reach the goal of complete disarmament under international inspection. But,

in spite of their efforts, the fact is that no appreciable progress has been achieved in this field, and before an effective policy of destruction or non-proliferation of nuclear weapons could be adopted three new nuclear Powers had emerged.

5. When there were only two nuclear Powers there was no agreement between them, for in the past they were unable to overcome the difficulties common to those who wield such enormous influence over the destinies of the world. Now that there are five, they are just as unable to all agree on the partial suppression of explosions and the non-proliferation of atomic weapons.

6. My delegation presumes that many of the flaws observed in the draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons that we are now examining in the United Nations¹ derive precisely from the circumstance that two of the nuclear Powers have remained outside the agreement. Only thus can we explain the fact that the policy of non-proliferation applies solely to the non-nuclear-weapon States. Possibly it was thought that, if the nuclear Powers bound by the treaty on non-proliferation were henceforth to renounce the production of nuclear weapons, they would grant an inexplicable and extremely dangerous advantage to the two Powers which have taken no part whatever in preparing the instrument now engaging our attention. The "acceptable balance" between the nuclear and the non-nuclear-weapon States referred to in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX) has been seriously affected by the lack of unity among the five super-Powers.

7. If for any reason a treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons were not to materialize now and new nuclear Powers were to emerge in the immediate future, there is no doubt that the conditions for the adoption of a policy of non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction would deteriorate, and the imbalance between the non-nuclear-weapon and the nuclear States would be increased.

8. We are quite sure we have reached the very moment when it is necessary to adopt measures on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. The opportunity the United Nations has within its grasp must not be missed. If we delay a decision on this matter, it is not unlikely that, before we can again arrive at an agreement, new nuclear Powers will emerge. Should this hypothesis prove correct, we would gain nothing from the fact that the new treaty would be less unsatisfactory than the present one, since the nuclear Powers which would perhaps remain outside the agreement could nullify the provisions of even the most perfect treaty on the subject.

¹ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1967 and 1968*, document DC/230 and Add.1.

9. No one can be unaware that the draft treaty before us has been the outcome of patient study and persistent efforts by the members of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. But we would probably not be exaggerating in saying that it reflects the overcoming of difficulties between the two great Powers which drafted it rather than full agreement between the nuclear and the non-nuclear-weapon States. We do not undervalue the importance of the draft treaty, nor do we underestimate the efforts made by the two great Powers which initiated it. We are simply striving to promote acceptance of valuable suggestions made by the non-nuclear-weapon States, which have a legitimate interest in making the provisions of the treaty more satisfactory.

10. With the authority conferred upon us by our firm position as friends of a treaty on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, we would not wish to think that we are confronted by a sacrosanct document which we can only accept or reject out of hand.

11. We are not unaware of the problems which a basic change in the provisions of the treaty might cause the super-Powers, nor are we striving for such a radical change. Moreover, we cannot deny that the brilliant statements of Ambassador Goldberg and Mr. Kuznetsov have impressed us very favourably and enabled us to appreciate the efforts their respective Governments have made to conclude a treaty which, in our opinion, need not be changed in its essentials but need only be supplemented so as to win wider support. Certainly the draft resolution submitted by Finland and twenty-six other Powers [*A/C.1/L.421/Rev.1 and Add.1-4*] will not lack the votes necessary for adoption, but it would obviously help to gain the support of other States as well if the co-Chairmen of the Committee on Disarmament would accept the suggestions made in a constructive spirit in the course of this interesting debate.

12. It should not be forgotten that the resolution which may be approved here does not end the procedure for the adoption of the measures concerning the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but only begins to clear the way for the signature and ratification of the treaty. The number of signatories will obviously depend on whether the treaty harmonizes the positions of the nuclear and the non-nuclear-weapon States in the best possible way. Let us all show such a spirit of understanding that we will not only ensure the adoption of the draft resolution submitted here, but also that the treaty to be adopted will have the full support of the greatest possible number of countries.

13. It is obvious that the treaty establishes a nuclear monopoly in favour of the five super-Powers which had carried out nuclear explosions prior to January 1967. We do not deny that this circumstance grants those States a manifest privilege. However, neither are we unaware that in the pursuit of the goal of prohibiting weapons of mass destruction, the logical first step is to prevent the emergence of new nuclear Powers. Such a limitation is, as we have said, an advantage in favour of the five nuclear super-Powers, but unless some dam is set up, before many years have passed the number of nuclear States may easily have tripled.

14. We understand that the present text of the treaty on non-proliferation does not meet the aspirations of peoples

who want to be adequately protected against the risks of an atomic war. But we do not deny that it has the virtue of avoiding the tremendous international tensions that would inevitably result from the appearance of new nuclear Powers. Moreover, the treaty also aims at avoiding an increase in the already numerous risks of a possible atomic confrontation. Certainly this is not all that mankind hopes for with regard to protection and security in order to forestall the use of weapons of mass destruction, but it does constitute a guarantee that the negative factors will not increase.

15. Naturally, the prohibition of the emergence of new nuclear Powers obliges the five already existing to give the other States the greatest possible assurances against any attack or threat of nuclear aggression. Such adequate assurances are not included, as they should have been, in the draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, and in our view that omission detracts from the merits and attractions of the draft.

16. Of course, we cannot ignore the importance of the draft resolution which the three nuclear States which are permanent members of the Security Council have offered to submit to that organ² to provide the additional assurances which the treaty fails to establish on behalf of the non-nuclear-weapon States. We have no doubt of the firm intention of the United States, the United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to ensure that all the provisions of that resolution will be complied with; but neither are we unaware that two other nuclear Powers are not parties to the treaty, or to the resolution, and that one of them also has the right to exercise the veto in the Security Council.

17. Without wishing to engage in polemics, we must state that it would have been better had the assurances to the non-nuclear-weapon States against any risks of attack or threat of nuclear aggression been incorporated in the text of the treaty. We think we are correct in saying that the provisions of the draft resolution to be submitted to the Security Council could be improved and could also be of a more firm and lasting nature. The non-nuclear-weapon States do not have a persecution complex, but obviously they all aspire to a stable system of adequate and sufficient guarantees against the risks of an attack or threat of nuclear aggression.

18. In a world such as that of the present time, which has been able to erect only the fragile barrier of the balance of terror against the dangers of a general war, it becomes imperative to take rapid and sure action to contain the arms race. We wish to associate ourselves with all those who have expressed their concern at the absence in the draft treaty of provisions obliging States to undertake, within a reasonable length of time, negotiations pertaining to the cessation of nuclear armament and the conclusion of an agreement for general and complete disarmament under strict international control.

19. We find a source of satisfaction in the circumstance that the treaty does not establish for the super-Powers, besides the monopoly of nuclear energy for military

² *Ibid.*, annex II.

purposes, a monopoly over that same energy for peaceful purposes. Fortunately, the treaty provides for free access by all States to the sources of nuclear energy for the purposes of economic development. We all know that, if we were to proceed on a discriminatory basis in this field, we would be creating a deep gulf between nations and opening the door to a nuclear colonialism which would be far more dangerous than all other forms of bondage.

20. The economic development of all States will depend to a great extent on the legal system that will be set up for the administration of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. We would have many misgivings about binding ourselves by a treaty that would be vague and unclear on the recognition of the right of all countries to have free access to that extraordinary resource which technology has placed within man's reach. This is a matter on which no guarantee is excessive and on which it is imperative to dispel even the slightest doubt.

21. We believe that the convening of the Conference of Non-Nuclear-Weapon States thus acquires great importance. Its usefulness will not depend on postponement of the decision on the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons until after that conference. Its work can and should be directed towards studying the measures supplementary to the treaty which can lead to agreements between all the contracting parties.

22. When we sponsored resolution 2346 (XXII), which first set the revised twenty-second regular session of the General Assembly as the date for consideration of the treaty on non-proliferation, and afterwards the date of the conference of the non-nuclear-weapon States, we did so in the conviction that this sequence would afford those countries wide opportunities for action. It is a conference which promises to produce most fruitful results for, in the light of the articles of the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to be finally adopted, a better evaluation can be made of the additional measures which must be established to develop free access, exchange and multi-lateral co-operation for peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

23. We do not wish to take any part in the controversy now under way as to whether the draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is "a lesser evil" or merely "an inadequate good". It seems to us more practical, rather than to engage in subtleties, to consider it from an objective standpoint as a necessary step on the road, not actually towards the remote goal of general and complete disarmament under international inspection, but towards that of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in its twofold aspect: the vertical aspect, aimed at freezing the production of nuclear weapons by the States which possess them at present, and the horizontal one relating to the prohibition of those weapons by the States not yet possessing them.

24. The draft treaty before us, as one of its articles states, in no way affects the right of any group of States to conclude regional treaties to ensure the total absence of nuclear weapons in their respective territories. This non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, which has been termed "horizontal", was precisely the aim of the Treaty concluded at Tlatelolco, Mexico, in February 1967, signed by

the States of Latin America which participated in its preparation [*see A/C.1/946*].

25. For the States of our geographic region, that Treaty constitutes the means appropriate to our needs and characteristics, for eliminating nuclear weapons from the Latin American area. However, its effectiveness depends to a large extent on the nuclear Powers' respect for that international instrument. For this reason, the second of the Additional Protocols of the Treaty calls on the nuclear Powers to assume the obligation to contribute fully to the implementation, in so far as it devolves upon them, of the provision concerning the denuclearization of Latin America for military purposes.

26. We were gratified to see that two of the nuclear Powers have already subscribed to that provision, and we hope that the rest will do so as soon as they have concluded the studies they are making of all the aspects of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. We are not making our acceptance of an agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons contingent upon the signature of that second Protocol by all the nuclear Powers sponsoring the draft we have before us. However, we believe it would be appropriate, on this new occasion when the United Nations are dealing with questions concerning nuclear disarmament and the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, to indicate the satisfaction it would give us if the nuclear Powers, particularly those which are now most interested in the treaty on the non-proliferation of this kind of weapons, would collaborate in ensuring the effectiveness of all the provisions of the Latin American Treaty on denuclearization for military purposes.

27. As a signatory of the Moscow Treaty on the prohibition of nuclear tests in the atmosphere, outer space and under water; the Treaty on the utilization of outer space for peaceful purposes; and the Treaty on the military denuclearization of Latin America, my country reiterates its peace-loving tradition and repeats anew its will to co-operate in the great cause of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and in all subsequent steps towards general and complete disarmament under international inspection.

28. The CHAIRMAN: Before calling on the next speaker, I wish to inform the Committee that the Yemen Arab Republic has become the twenty-eighth country to co-sponsor the draft resolution in document A/C.1/L.421/Rev.1 and Add.1-4.

29. Mr. CHANG (China): This Committee has before it the report of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament³ and the draft treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. This is an event of great historical significance. The draft treaty marks the climax of many years of persistent effort and patient negotiation. It reflects the views of many Governments, nuclear and non-nuclear, committed and uncommitted. It is a document that touches upon the national interests of all Members of the United Nations.

30. I have listened to the debate with profound attention. I think I am not far wrong in believing that the draft treaty

³ *Ibid.*, document DC/230 and Add.1.

has the general support of a substantial number of the members of this Committee. In saying this I am not unaware of the fact that the draft treaty does not meet the wishes and aspirations of us all. While no one questions the intent and spirit of the draft treaty, there are those who entertain serious doubts on certain specific provisions. Admittedly, this is not as ideal a draft as some of us would have wished, but it is generally conceded that this is probably as good an instrument as it was possible to negotiate in the light of the harsh realities of the present-day world.

31. The draft treaty has been most frequently, as well as most severely, criticized for its failure to take into full consideration all the conditions laid down in General Assembly resolution 2028 (XX). It is said, for example, that it does not, as required by that resolution, "embody an acceptable balance of mutual responsibilities and obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear Powers". To the extent that the draft treaty does limit the freedom of action of the non-nuclear States and freezes the existing monopolistic positions of the nuclear Powers, the criticism of course is justified. Some of the scientifically and technologically advanced non-nuclear States cannot but feel that they are being asked to accept the worst part of the bargain. They therefore do not relish the prospect of being relegated, possibly in perpetuity, to a position of inferiority. Nor do they accept with alacrity the permanent hegemony of the existing nuclear States. National security, international prestige and influence in world politics—these are matters on which they, no less than the nuclear Powers, place a high premium.

32. It seems to my delegation, however, that the very idea of non-proliferation implies sacrifices and self-denial on the part of the non-nuclear Powers. The acknowledged purpose of this draft treaty is to bar the non-nuclear States from membership in what has sometimes been referred to as the "Nuclear Club". It is precisely because of the existence of a number of non-nuclear States with capabilities to manufacture nuclear weapons that the conclusion of a non-proliferation treaty has become today a matter of extreme urgency. There are also other States which have been acquiring the technical capabilities. Unless conscious steps are taken either to remove the incentives or to control the means, the number of States possessing nuclear weapons may, according to expert opinion, be doubled in a decade and doubled again or tripled by the end of the century.

33. That is the grim state of affairs with which the draft treaty must concern itself. There is no question but that with the increase in the number of nuclear States, the chances of accidental wars will also be increased. Thus "horizontal" proliferation presents a far more serious and pressing problem than "vertical" proliferation.

34. Therefore, as Mr. Jimenez of the Philippines has pointed out:

"since the first resolution of the General Assembly sounding the call for the prevention of the spread of nuclear weapons, the objective has been to bar an increase in the number of nuclear-weapon Powers. In other words, all the efforts and negotiations... were centred on preventing 'horizontal' proliferation, or, as some others would say, the proliferation of nuclear-weapon States."
[1566th meeting, para. 72.]

35. It is gratifying to note, however, that, as far as can be ascertained, none of the non-nuclear States with the capabilities for manufacturing nuclear weapons have shown any irrepressible desire to alter their present status. Canada, which has the capability to become a very important nuclear Power, has deliberately chosen to forgo the option. The same may be said of Japan, the Federal Republic of Germany, Italy and a number of other States. In spite of the clamour of a group of influential politicians who favour the development of nuclear weapons, the Government of India has not entered the nuclear-weapon field. The restraint that the Governments of those countries has shown is, of course, highly commendable; but it may be doubted whether this state of affairs can long last without some form of international agreement on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons.

36. My delegation, in common with other delegations, would have wished that the nuclear States sponsoring the present draft treaty had committed themselves, in precise and unambiguous terms, to total or even partial nuclear disarmament. Had they done so, the draft treaty would have met with a far more enthusiastic reception. Yet, as it is, there is nothing in the draft treaty to prevent them from carrying out a programme of nuclear disarmament. Let it be remembered that the dangerous arms race of our time is the symptom of a disease rather than the disease itself. It is suspicion, mistrust and fear that have made nations devote a disproportionate share of their national resources to military expenditure. The non-proliferation treaty will not by itself cure this disease. It could, however, help build up, by slow degrees, the kind of mutual confidence indispensable to arms control and disarmament. It is at least a move in the right direction and, as such, should be encouraged. If we are indeed interested in helping the three major nuclear Powers move towards the ultimate goal of general and complete disarmament, we can do no better than lend our support to the non-proliferation treaty.

37. This brings me to the question of security assurances. Having renounced the right to defend themselves by nuclear armament, the non-nuclear States are entitled to know what the nuclear Powers would do in the event that they—the non-nuclear States—should be victims of nuclear aggression or threatened with such aggression. On this question my delegation fully shares the misgivings and apprehensions voiced by a number of previous speakers. The credibility of the system of security assurances proposed by the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom has been called in question. Under this system, the Security Council is supposed to take effective and immediate action to meet nuclear challenges from whatever quarter. The record of the Security Council in regard to the suppression of aggression has not been reassuring. We are, however, fully alive to the political significance of this proposal. This, we believe, is the first time that the three major nuclear Powers have been united on a matter of such crucial importance. That they are so united is, in the words of Ambassador Goldberg, "a political fact of the first order". Mr. Goldberg continued:

"It means that they consider that their respective vital national interests demand that there shall be no nuclear aggression, and no threat of nuclear aggression, from any quarter; and that those countries that forgo nuclear weapons by adhering to the non-proliferation treaty

should not thereby feel any loss of security.” [1568th meeting, para. 42.]

38. Mr. Goldberg’s pronouncement, let us hope, reflects the true sentiments not only of the Government of the United States but also of those of the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom.

39. To ask for watertight security assurances is one thing. To insist that the three major nuclear Powers sponsoring the present treaty must forthwith carry out total or at least partial nuclear disarmament is quite another. The two may even be contradictory. My delegation is all for nuclear disarmament and urges the three nuclear Powers to embark, as soon as possible, on a programme of nuclear disarmament to the extent consistent with their obligations to counter nuclear aggression.

40. The promotion of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy forms another important objective of the draft treaty. The spirit of co-operation finds expression in article IV, which reaffirms the inalienable right of all States to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination, as well as to participate in the fullest possible exchange of scientific and technological information. The only restriction on the non-nuclear-weapon countries is the prohibition of nationally-conducted nuclear explosions for engineering and other civil purposes. My delegation finds this prohibition not unreasonable, since, at the present stage of nuclear knowledge, explosions for peaceful purposes and explosions for military purposes are well-nigh indistinguishable. The day may come when the advance of nuclear knowledge, as the representative of Japan has observed, will make such a distinction possible, and then

“it is only logical to believe that the restrictions concerning nuclear explosive devices contained in the draft treaty will no longer be applicable”. [1565th meeting, para. 83.]

41. My delegation has always supported the principle of preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. In view of the urgency of the task, we think that the Assembly would do well to give the draft treaty its early approval. Whether the treaty is meeting the purposes for which it was designed only time will tell. Article VIII, paragraph 3, of the draft treaty provides:

“Five years after the entry into force of this Treaty, a conference of Parties to the Treaty shall be held . . . to review the operation of this Treaty with a view to assuring that the purposes of the Preamble and the provisions of the Treaty are being realized.”

When that time comes the true worth of the treaty will undoubtedly be re-evaluated and reappraised in the light of its actual operation.

42. I now turn to a question to which frequent references have been made in the course of the present debate. I have in mind the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons in relation to the Communist régime on the mainland of China.

43. The non-proliferation of nuclear weapons is in full accord with the spirit and traditions of the people of China.

The Chinese people are peace-loving. They want to live in peace and harmony both among themselves and with their neighbours. They abhor war and violence. On the other hand, the Communist régime under the leadership of Mao Tse-tung regards war as “the highest form of struggle for resolving contradictions . . . between classes, nations, States or political groups”. According to them, only by violence and bloodshed can the world be reshaped in accordance with their specifications. They are therefore opposed to arms control and disarmament which they have referred to as an “illusion”. They spurn the treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons just as, a few years ago, they spurned the partial ban on nuclear tests. Their policy objectives, essentially aggressive and expansionist, are just as antithetical to the peace-loving culture and heritage of the Chinese people as they are to the goals of peace and security for which the world community has been striving.

44. Chinese Communist nuclear capabilities have often been grossly exaggerated. Peiping’s seeming success in the nuclear-weapon field has in large measure been due to the very substantial technological and material assistance given by the Soviet Union during the 1950’s. Moscow may well now regret this generosity. Had there been a non-proliferation treaty at that time, the Soviet Union might have been prevented from rendering such assistance, and the world would have been spared a dangerous source of nuclear threat and blackmail.

45. Peiping’s nascent nuclear capabilities, not yet operational by a long shot, have undoubtedly had an unsettling effect on the whole of Asia, particularly on countries such as India and others. The reactions there seem to have developed mainly out of fear of the military threat implicit in the nuclear tests conducted by the Communist régime in China. No wonder the representative of India, in his statement on 14 May [1567th meeting] regarded the Chinese Communist nuclear tests as a “matter of deep concern”. But we were unable to follow his logic when he said that this concern

“... only further emphasizes the urgency of an early and effective implementation of measures of nuclear disarmament” [Ibid., para. 124].

46. My delegation has never wavered in its support of nuclear disarmament. But we fail to see how the peace and security of the world could be enhanced if the two major nuclear Powers—the Soviet Union and the United States—would forthwith dismantle their bombs, liquidate their stockpiles and eliminate from their arsenals all nuclear weapons and the means of their delivery. We can be reasonably sure that these Powers would not themselves heedlessly plunge into a nuclear war. That would mean mutual annihilation. It is no secret, however, that it is this balance of terror that has kept the world out of a general war in these tension-ridden, crisis-ridden and fear-ridden times. We favour gradual and balanced disarmament. We believe that all-out nuclear disarmament on the part of these powerful nuclear Powers at the present stage of world development would not bring peace and security to the world; it would only encourage such an unconscionably aggressive régime as that of Peiping to make use of its embryonic nuclear capabilities to blackmail its neighbours, knowing that there would not be any nuclear Power in the

world strong enough to counter the threat. My delegation therefore supports the views expressed by the representative of Australia, Ambassador Shaw, when he said on 17 May in this Committee that he was opposed to

“... any additional measures that the Committee might agree to urge upon the nuclear-weapon States sponsoring the treaty” [1570th meeting, para. 30]

thus exposing his country and its neighbours in Asia and in the Pacific area to Peiping's nuclear threat.

47. My delegation profoundly regrets that considerable misunderstanding and misconceptions still persist with regard to the nature of the Communist régime in China. There are those in our midst who continue to labour under the illusion that the seating of the Peiping régime in this House would somehow induce it to be a party to the treaty and thus bring it under the restraint of the treaty. Nothing could be further from the truth. The fact is that Chinese Communist opposition to arms control and disarmament is rooted in their ideology. According to this ideology there can be no arms control and no disarmament before Communism—presumably Peiping's own brand of Communism—has triumphed all over the globe. As to Peiping's views on the question of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, its mouthpiece in this Assembly, the representative of Albania, has already favoured us with a lengthy exposition. Let there be no more illusions on this score.

48. Mr. RAKOTOMALALA (Madagascar) (*translated from French*): I should like first of all to dwell for a moment on some points which may not seem to be directly related to the question before us but which, I believe, will contribute to an understanding of the remarks which the delegation of Madagascar wishes to make to the Committee.

49. It has been said many times that to introduce general and controlled disarmament would be a better way to safeguard world security than to continue the frantic race for more and more terrifying weapons. Nevertheless, after many attempts, it has been tacitly concluded that to persevere in settling the disarmament problem in one go is somewhat like trying to square the circle. It was agreed that it was much better to trim the tree before cutting it down. In order to do this, the preparations were made for a process consisting of multiple stages. Rightly or wrongly, the majority of nations has accepted the principle of achieving general disarmament by degrees. It goes without saying that no one would risk making a move which he might think threatened his already unstable security.

50. As far as the delegation of Madagascar is concerned, we have decided to join with other nations on this course which promises to be long and hazardous. We feel convinced that so long as the States whose superiority in armaments imposes greater responsibilities upon them continues to show good-will, and so long as they do not confuse the highest interests of peoples everywhere with immediate, national interests, which may seem attractive but are bound eventually to prove ephemeral, we can hope that on some far-off day we shall at last pass the final stage and achieve the ultimate goal. It is with this conviction and with this goal in mind that the Government of Madagascar has, like a great many others, subscribed to the notion of

the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as a step towards general, complete and controlled disarmament.

51. Before going any further, it might be appropriate to speak briefly about the notion of proliferation itself as we see it. I hasten to reassure you: I have no intention of giving the word a unilateral interpretation, for after all its meaning is agreed upon by many delegations which have participated in the discussion and which have expressed themselves on the subject. In my delegation's opinion, the term “proliferation” has two distinct connotations which are of considerable importance when dealing with nuclear weapons. The first has to do with dissemination or transfer; the second with multiplication. In figurative terms, they have been called respectively “horizontal proliferation” and “vertical proliferation”.

52. I wanted to make these remarks so that the attitude of my delegation towards the draft treaty might be better understood.

53. First, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the draft treaty—as has already been said several times—represents substantial progress, a source of hope, when we consider the length of the negotiations which preceded it and the various kinds of obstacles its sponsors have had to overcome in an international climate which was far from peaceful.

54. On the face of it, the draft treaty appears to meet the hopes which were expressed at earlier discussions on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. There is no need for me to point out its merits. Its sponsors, and other delegations, have done so on more than one occasion.

55. Speaking in this debate after some sixty other speakers, the delegation of Madagascar has no intention of taking a magnifying glass to this treaty, even though it might be natural and fitting to do so given the importance of what is at stake. We shall confine ourselves to bringing out certain points we feel to be important, if not essential. Let me add that my delegation was certainly not expecting a perfect text which might satisfy every Member of this vast Assembly, being as it is, the work of a limited group. I shall therefore discuss the draft treaty on the basis of the considerations I spoke of at the very beginning of my statement, and with a full awareness of reality.

56. First of all, my delegation would like to mention that it does not quite understand why the third preambular paragraph speaks of “proliferation” and in the next paragraph the phrase “wider dissemination” is used. This might appear to be a minor or semantic detail, but in the light of the observations which have been made on the meaning of non-proliferation, some explanations from the sponsors would certainly be helpful.

57. Operative articles I and II define the respective obligations of nuclear and non-nuclear States. In the simplest terms, the former undertake not to transfer nuclear weapons to the latter, which undertake not to accept or to manufacture them. The notion is an appealing and a praiseworthy one. While it may discourage a greater dissemination of nuclear weapons to the countries which do not now possess any, it will have surely strengthened the

nuclear weapons monopoly, with all its dangerous consequences.

58. We have also noticed that in an effort to allay the fears of those who are rightly concerned about the consolidation of nuclear monopoly, article VI contains an appeal to the parties' good faith, urging them to continue negotiations on further disarmament measures. In other words, this article hints at the disappearance of the nuclear monopoly. This is not the moment to attempt to define good faith and to look for it in the every-day facts of international life where, unfortunately, we find that sober facts are stronger than the best intentions.

59. This provision is not very reassuring and its scope even seems somewhat illusory. My delegation has no wish to link the solution of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons to other disarmament measures. We are simply trying to guard against being drawn into a situation which would result in legalizing an already unfortunate state of affairs that is a source of uneasiness in relations among States. We are aware of how difficult it is to improve such a situation at the present time, but we are still convinced that much firmer commitments can be made.

60. We are seriously concerned by article III, for although, in an effort to meet the demands of our time, the United Nations Charter established greater prerogatives for certain States, prerogatives which are still valid today, is this inequality, which Article 2 of the Charter seeks to rectify, going to be reflected in every international instrument we draw up? Whereas all the national nuclear activities of a large number of States will be subjected to the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a small group of States will not be supervised at all, or else they will act as the sole judges in determining what they want to submit to the Agency. No further proof of the discriminatory nature of the provision is needed. We wonder why we should have to encumber ourselves with outmoded ideas.

61. Now I should like to take up a point which has been the subject of lengthy comment, namely the non-nuclear States' security guarantees against nuclear attack or the threat of such an attack. The delegation of Madagascar is well aware of the complexity of the problem. Under present conditions and in the foreseeable future it is hard to imagine a system of guarantees capable of completely protecting non-nuclear States from nuclear threats without at the same time creating even more dangerous situations.

62. Of course the combined power of two or more nuclear States could in many respects be a considerable dissuasive factor vis-à-vis another nuclear State with warlike designs or aggressive impulses. However, we must bear in mind the long-term effect of such a provision in the sense that it entails the danger of making the non-nuclear countries increasingly and totally dependent on the Powers which are better equipped militarily. We feel that this cannot help but create other more dangerous tensions.

63. In any case, nuclear attacks or threats can come only from the nuclear countries whose protection some are seeking. Even if some of them were to agree to guarantee to defend us non-nuclear countries, we cannot rule out the

"laissez-faire" assumption. For the Powers that might have agreed to help us would realize that it was in their interest to limit the conflict and to avoid any atomic attack or counter-attack which would mean a total conflagration on our planet.

64. This is one aspect of the problem. On the other hand, it would be just as grave a matter to leave the non-nuclear countries completely defenceless or without some adequate guarantee of protection.

65. It is in this context that we intend to evaluate the draft resolution the three Powers have submitted to the Security Council.⁴ We are not pre-judging the importance of the statements the various sponsors will make and which they have outlined to us here. For the moment, we will confine ourselves to the draft resolution, in the hope that some clarifications will be made later.

66. Many delegations have mentioned the inappropriateness of the word "aggression" in the draft, since the actual definition or scope of that term has not yet been generally agreed upon. There is no need for me to dwell on the matter, since we share their opinion. Nor is there any need for me to dwell on the possibility of a veto that would paralyse the Security Council, since that matter has already been considered at length.

67. Without wanting to appear pessimistic, I should like to draw attention to the fact that there will never be a warning before nuclear weapons are used. We are therefore justified in wondering about the meaning and the precise scope of the draft resolution provisions which stipulate, *inter alia*, that the permanent nuclear-weapons members of the Security Council shall take immediate action. The devastating power of nuclear weapons is horrifying. In a few minutes our cities will have been reduced to dust, our populations decimated. When will the Security Council take action? Without wanting to be cynical, would this not be a case of calling in the doctor after the patient has died?

68. After a thorough analysis of this draft and of the draft resolution, the delegation of Madagascar has concluded that both could be improved.

69. The effect of the draft treaty will be to disarm those who are not armed. This is like Gribouille, jumping into the water because he was afraid of the rain. Existing nuclear arsenals will continue to grow and so will the feeling of insecurity of the international community.

70. Many delegations have expressed appreciation of the part played by non-nuclear countries in trying to achieve disarmament. Like all peoples, they have a deep desire to live in peace, but so long as weapons of mass destruction have not disappeared from the earth, they are entitled to adequate guarantees for their security and for the development of nuclear energy for civilian and peaceful purposes.

71. Several proposals and suggestions have been put forward both at Geneva and New York. It would not be appropriate for us to take the initiative in formulating others. Perhaps the Committee will, in its wisdom, find a

⁴ *Ibid.*, annex II.

way to combine the various suggestions to regroup them and present them in a clearer form for consideration at the twenty-third session of the General Assembly.

72. My delegation would like to emphasize that it has greatly appreciated the concern the sponsors of the draft treaty have shown to ensure and promote freer access to nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. This is one of the draft's positive aspects. However, we feel that the non-nuclear Powers which have the means to do so have the inherent right to acquire nuclear raw materials and, if need be, to go as far as the production of fissionable materials for civilian and peaceful purposes, under adequate and flexible control due respect being shown for the complete sovereignty of States.

73. The desire to examine the important document now before us in a better perspective and with more time which

many delegations, including my own, have expressed must not be interpreted as a disagreement on substance, or even as hesitancy regarding the methods of approach decided on by the Eighteen-Nation Committee after such long and careful deliberations. We for our part wish to pay tribute to the high quality of its accomplishment and to express our conviction that in order to achieve disarmament, the supreme goal towards which we are all striving, we must proceed step by step. In congratulating the Committee on its efforts, my delegation also wishes to express its appreciation for the high ideals which have inspired the great nuclear Powers in their search for peace—the United States and the Soviet Union, along with the United Kingdom—and its hope that the same determination will inspire them in other areas. Mankind will thereby breathe more freely.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.