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MEETING**

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Chairman: Mr. Omar Abdel Hamid ADEEL
(Sudan).

AGENDA ITEM 77

The urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (A/5141 and Add.1, A/C.1/873, A/C.1/874, A/C.1/L.310 and Add.1-4, A/C.1/L.311) (concluded)

CONSIDERATION OF DRAFT RESOLUTIONS (concluded)

1. The CHAIRMAN called for explanations of votes on the two draft resolutions adopted at the previous meeting.
2. Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) said that the position taken by the Soviet delegation on the draft resolutions had been determined by its desire to end all nuclear tests without exception as quickly as possible. His delegation had accordingly voted against the draft resolution submitted by the United States and the United Kingdom (A/C.1/L.311), which merely reiterated the views of the Western Powers, although it had already proved impossible to reach agreement on that basis. Less than half the members of the Committee had voted for the proposal, which indicated that the appeals made by neutral States for its withdrawal without a vote had been fully justified. It was clear to the majority that the adoption of such a resolution would not help to bring about an agreement on the immediate cessation of all tests.
3. As far as the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.310 and Add.1-4) was concerned, the Soviet Union had been obliged to abstain in the vote on the resolution as a whole, although it had voted for its main operative provisions. The reason for its abstention had been the inclusion of the fourth Canadian amendment in document A/C.1/L.313/Rev.2, as further amended by the United Kingdom and the United States (A/C.1/L.316/Rev.1), which had seriously impaired the value of the draft resolution as a means of bringing about the ending of all tests. Nevertheless, the Soviet Union attached great weight to the adoption,

by a large majority, of operative paragraph 2, asking for tests to be ended immediately and in any case not later than 1 January 1963. The voting on operative paragraph 2 had shown clearly which States really wanted to end all tests, including those carried out underground, and which did not: apart from the United States and the United Kingdom, only a few members of Western military blocs flouted the wishes of the peoples of all countries by voting against it. The Soviet delegation also attached great importance to the adoption of operative paragraph 3, endorsing the eight-nation memorandum as a basis for negotiation. The Committee's debates had shown that the overwhelming majority of States regarded the memorandum as a sound basis for an agreement, and the Soviet Union had indicated its willingness to accept it as such. Not one member of the Committee, indeed, had ventured to vote against the description of the joint memorandum in the tenth preambular paragraph as "a sound, adequate and fair basis for the conduct of negotiations"; but a group of delegations—again made up for the most part of the United States, the United Kingdom and their allies—had abstained, thus showing that they did not accept that position. In the Soviet Union's opinion, the resolution could have been more definite in its approval of the memorandum as a basis for negotiations. The present operative paragraph 5 had certain defects in that respect, and thus did not exclude the possibility of attempts to retard a final decision to end all tests. The Soviet delegation had voted against operative paragraph 6, the Canadian amendment as amended by the United Kingdom and the United States, because it left the question of a final test ban vague and would enable the opponents of such a ban to evade agreement. The fact that paragraph 6 left a loophole open for the continuance of tests had also determined the Soviet attitude to paragraph 1 and to the resolution as a whole. To condemn all tests while allowing a resumption of underground tests was illogical; but still worse was the fact that if one side carried out underground tests and the other was compelled as a result to respond by taking measures to safeguard its security, it would be the latter which would be placed in the dock of world opinion.

4. The Soviet delegation had also abstained on the fifth, sixth and seventh preambular paragraphs, since they either referred to or were connected with resolutions which it had opposed in the past. It had abstained on the eighth preambular paragraph because it contained a vague reference to basic agreement on the control of tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water instead of stating clearly that national means of detection were adequate for such control. The Soviet Union was opposed to such obscurities and omissions, which played into the hands of those who were opposed to the final prohibition of all tests. It would continue its efforts to bring about an immediate agreement to end nuclear weapon tests in all environments.

5. Sir James PLIMSOLL (Australia) said that his delegation's votes on individual paragraphs in the draft resolutions had to be viewed within the context of its general approach to the question of testing. The Australian Government wanted all nuclear weapon tests in all environments to cease throughout the world. If the resolution had called on the great Powers to reach agreement rapidly on a way of ending the tests, Australia would have been glad to vote for it. But it was not realistic to call on each nuclear Power to cease testing irrespective of what the other nuclear Powers did, since that would amount to an uninspected moratorium. There had been an uninspected moratorium in the recent past, proclaimed by the three nuclear Powers and supported by the General Assembly; but it had been broken by the Soviet Union. If the Soviet Union had not resumed testing on that occasion, there might still be no nuclear tests going on anywhere in the world. It was because it had done so that the Western Powers were forced to assume the position they did and to seek some more reliable method than a moratorium. One such method would be to end tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water immediately—given the fact that national and international means of detection and identification existed for tests in those environments—while the two sides tried to reach agreement on underground tests. The answer to the problem of underground testing seemed to depend on agreement being reached between the nuclear Powers on adequate means of inspection and verification.

6. Some representatives believed that the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution could be interpreted in a way consistent with the approach he had outlined; but the Australian delegation considered it dangerous to vote for an important resolution on which there was a considerable difference of interpretation. For example, at least one of the sponsors had said that operative paragraph 2 should be regarded as subject to the succeeding paragraphs, whereas other sponsors had said that it was valid even in isolation. The United States representative had given one interpretation of parts of the resolution and the Soviet representative another. In the event, all four countries possessing nuclear weapons had abstained on the draft resolution. The Australian delegation too had abstained, both for the substantive reasons he had given and because of the ambiguity of the text; but it continued to hope that a comprehensive agreement would be reached quickly in the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament.

7. Mr. ROSSIDES (Cyprus) said that his delegation had voted for the Canadian amendments because their effect was to bring the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution up to date by taking account of the agreement existing between the two sides regarding tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, and of the differences between them concerning underground tests. It had voted for the sub-amendment submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States because it added a necessary provision regarding the international verification of underground tests.

8. His delegation had abstained in the vote on the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States because the adoption of the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution in its amended form together with the deletion of operative paragraph 2 of the two-Power draft resolution had deprived the latter of any purpose. There was nothing in its preambular part which was not contained in the thirty-seven-

Power draft resolution. In its operative part, the first paragraph provided for the international verification of tests in all environments, whereas it was already agreed that such verification was not necessary in three environments. That had previously been taken account of in operative paragraph 2, but that paragraph had been deleted. All the other provisions of the two-Power draft resolution were covered by the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution except for operative paragraph 5, requesting the Secretary-General to bring to the attention of the Eighteen-Nation Committee the records of the seventeenth session of the General Assembly relating to the suspension of nuclear testing. It was certainly true that the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution should have contained a provision to that effect, but the fact that it did not was not sufficient ground for adopting another draft resolution. It had been said that one argument in favour of the two-Power draft resolution was that the thirty-seven-Power text referred specifically to a single part of General Assembly resolution 1649 (XVI) and was therefore limited in its application. If it had been wished to refer to resolution 1659 (XVI) as a whole, however, an appropriate amendment could have been put forward. On the other hand, the first part of resolution 1649 (XVI) called for effective control of all nuclear weapon tests, and was thus out of date. For all those reasons, his delegation had been unable to support the draft resolution of the United Kingdom and the United States.

9. Mr. LALI (India), explaining his delegation's vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States, said that the sponsors of the draft resolution had modified their position in several respects at the request of his delegation; the changes had been reflected in the revised amendment submitted by the same two Powers to the revised Canadian amendments and in the deletion of operative paragraph 2 of their draft resolution. In addition, his delegation had agreed with the Iraqi representative that the two-Power draft resolution could be interpreted in such a way as not to conflict with the thirty-seven-Power draft. Indeed, it was the latter resolution that provided clear directives for the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament; the two-Power draft resolution stated the position much more briefly. He expressed his pleasure at the wide support received by the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution.

10. Mr. COULIBALY (Mali) said that his delegation had voted against the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States because it had felt that the adoption of two resolutions on such a complex problem would merely cause confusion and make a solution more difficult. It had also felt that, since the sponsors of the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution had agreed to all the proposed amendments, including the sub-amendment of the United Kingdom and the United States, the final text of the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution had represented a compromise effort and should therefore have been adopted to the exclusion of any other. He wished to emphasize that his delegation's vote against the two-Power draft resolution had been prompted solely by those considerations.

11. Mr. MALHOTRA (Nepal) said that his delegation had abstained from the vote on the sub-amendment submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States because in its view the revised Canadian amendments had taken account of both the Soviet and Western points

of view. His delegation would have voted for the fourth Canadian amendment without that sub-amendment.

12. His delegation had abstained from the vote on the draft resolution submitted by the United Kingdom and the United States in the belief that its adoption, following the adoption of the thirty-seven-Power draft resolution would have served no useful purpose.

AGENDA ITEM 90

Question of general and complete disarmament: report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament (A/5197, A/5200, DC/203, A/C.1/867, A/C.1/871, A/C.1/L.312)

GENERAL DEBATE

13. Mr. HASSAN (United Arab Republic) said that the eight non-aligned participants in the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, of which the United Arab Republic was one, had sought at Geneva to help bridge the gulf between the two opposing blocs, while at the same time maintaining an attitude of impartiality and detachment. The new draft treaties on general and complete disarmament put forward by the Soviet Union and the United States had been the most comprehensive ever presented on the subject. At the beginning of the Conference, however, the original drafts had appeared to be widely divergent, since the Soviet draft^{1/} had called for the elimination of all vehicles capable of delivering nuclear weapons at the first stage of disarmament, and the elimination of nuclear weapons at the second stage, whereas the United States draft^{2/} had provided for the maintenance of a nuclear deterrent until the very last stage. During the first three months of exploratory talks at Geneva, ending with a recess on 15 June 1962, non-aligned delegations as well as members of the two blocs had asked searching questions designed to clarify various points in the two draft treaties. Several non-aligned delegations, including that of the United Arab Republic, had suggested that the nuclear Powers should take advantage of the recess to reconsider their positions in the light of the comments and criticisms that had been made. They had also suggested that since the two drafts reflected different theoretical approaches, it would be more constructive to consider them in terms of their over-all effects than to go on examining their contrasting provisions for each successive stage of the disarmament process.

14. When the Conference had reconvened, agreement had been reached on a new method of work, namely, the selection of a list of twelve substantive subjects connected with the first stage of disarmament for detailed discussion. That had imparted a new sense of discipline and orderliness to the Committee's deliberations and had served to clarify the positions of the two parties. Perhaps the greatest single achievement of the second round of the Geneva talks had been its

demonstration of both sides' receptiveness to constructive criticism; both the United States and the Soviet Union had made modifications in their respective projects bringing the two sides closer to agreement. He wished to point out in that connexion that the practice of holding brief agreed periods of recess during the negotiations had proved beneficial in allowing time for study and readjustment, and should be continued.

15. Although disarmament negotiations would inevitably be long and arduous, it had become clear from the most recent Geneva talks that at least from the technical standpoint it should be possible to devise some disarmament scheme satisfactory to both parties. He welcomed the latest modification of the Soviet position announced by the Soviet Minister for Foreign Affairs to the General Assembly, which seemed to reduce somewhat the disagreement between the two sides with regard to the respective advantages and disadvantages of a nuclear disarmament strategy and a conventional one.

16. A number of other major differences, both technical and political, remained to be resolved. While disarmament would have to be carried on in a world full of political problems which would not completely disappear even in a disarmed world, some reduction of long outstanding political problems would certainly create a more favourable atmosphere for the conduct of disarmament negotiations. Recognizing that fact, the Eighteen-Nation Committee had set up a Committee of the Whole for the consideration of "collateral measures" aimed at lessening international tension, consolidating confidence among States and facilitating general and complete disarmament. Most of the second round of the Eighteen-Nation Committee's talks had been devoted to the cessation of nuclear weapon tests, as a logical first step. His delegation hoped, however, that when it reconvened the Committee would also pay equal attention to the other "collateral" problems. It might perhaps be possible to implement some collateral measures of that kind by means of a "package" agreement between the two sides rather than by treating them individually.

17. Although the disarmament problem was a complex one which could be solved only by negotiation and mutual understanding on the basis of agreed principles and procedures, it had rightly been recognized in General Assembly resolution 1722 (XVI) that the Assembly had responsibilities, under the Charter of the United Nations, for disarmament, and that all States had a deep interest in disarmament negotiations. His delegation would welcome any decision by the Assembly at its seventeenth session to take note of the reports of the Eighteen-Nation Committee, to urge the continuance of negotiations and to request the submission of a progress report to the Assembly within a reasonable time. It had become abundantly clear, particularly since the recent threat of nuclear war over Cuba, that disarmament was a necessity.

18. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to document A/C.1/871, containing a letter dated 3 October 1962 from the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission to the Secretary-General, which was relevant to the item under discussion.

The meeting rose at 4.30 p.m.

^{1/} Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for January 1961 to December 1962, document DC/203, annex 1, sect. C.

^{2/} Ibid., sect. F.