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REQUEST FOR THE INCLUSION OF AN ADDITIONAL ITEM IN THE AGENDA
OF THE TWELFTH REGULAR SESSION: ITEM PROPOSED BY THE UNION
OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

DISCONTINUANCE UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF
TESTS OF ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN WEAPONS

Letter dated 20 September 1957 from the Chairman of the
delegation of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,
addressed to the President of the General Assembly

New York, 20 September 1957

The Delegation of the USSR, on instructions from the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, requests the inclusion of the following item in the agenda of the twelfth session of the General Assembly as a matter of importance and urgency: "Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons".

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure I am attaching an explanatory memorandum and the relevant draft resolution.

(Signed) A. GROMYKO
Chairman of the delegation of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The Soviet delegation, on the instructions of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, proposes that the General Assembly should consider as a matter of importance and urgency the item "Discontinuance under international control of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons".

The serious danger which already threatens mankind in connexion with atomic radiation and which will become even more serious tomorrow unless test explosions of atomic and hydrogen bombs are halted makes it imperative that this matter should be considered without delay.

Hundreds and thousands of scientists in various countries, including the foremost scientific authorities, of world renown, are expressing the deep conviction that, in the interests both of the present and of succeeding generations, tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons should be discontinued forthwith.

Throughout the world a broad, popular movement has been developing for the immediate prohibition of nuclear weapons testing. People of all continents and countries, holding the most divergent political views and religious convictions, are taking part in that movement. Members of Government and parliamentary circles in a number of countries are also among its adherents. Resolutions calling for the discontinuance of atomic tests have been adopted by the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Parliaments of India, Yugoslavia, Japan, Indonesia and other States.

The Soviet Government considers that the United Nations, in conformity with its lofty aims and humanitarian mission, should help to bring about a positive solution of this all-important problem. The General Assembly cannot ignore the unanimous appeal of the peoples.

The successful solution of the proposed question would have positive and far-reaching results for the peoples of all countries and the present international situation as a whole.

Firstly, the discontinuance of tests of nuclear weapons would prevent any further extension of the dangerous process of atomic radiation, which is already very far advanced.

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Secondly, the discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons would constitute a definite obstacle to the further development of those weapons, would prevent the evolution of new and even more destructive types of such weapons and would serve to slow down the atomic armaments race.

Thirdly, the conclusion of an agreement to discontinue tests of thermo-nuclear weapons or even to suspend them temporarily would be a first step towards the complete prohibition of weapons of mass destruction. There can be no doubt that if such a step were taken it would have a most beneficial effect on the entire international situation, would contribute to the establishment of the necessary confidence among States and would create more favourable opportunities for the settlement of other important problems, including that of a substantial reduction of armaments.

The following considerations, which are by no means unimportant, should also be borne in mind. Only three Powers possess thermo-nuclear weapons at the present time. They are the United States of America, the United Kingdom and the Soviet Union. For that reason an agreement on the discontinuance of tests of such weapons, which depends entirely on the good-will of the three States, would be, relatively speaking, far easier to achieve than a multilateral agreement concluded among a large number of States. Finally, control of the practical implementation of the proposed agreement would be very simple, for at the present stage of scientific development control of the discontinuance of tests raises no technical nor organization difficulties.

In view of the foregoing considerations, the Soviet Government considers it essential to detach the question of discontinuing atomic and hydrogen weapons tests from the disarmament programme as a whole and to settle it forthwith as a separate issue, without linking it to agreement on other aspects of disarmament.

The Soviet delegation, on the instructions of the Government of the USSR, submits the attached draft resolution for the General Assembly's consideration.

DISCONTINUANCE UNDER INTERNATIONAL CONTROL OF TESTS
OF ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN WEAPONS

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics: draft resolution

The General Assembly,

Taking into account the deep concern felt by all the peoples of the world at continued tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons,

Considering that the discontinuance of tests of nuclear weapons would be an important practical first step towards the complete prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons and would constitute an obstacle to the development and production of new and even more destructive types of such weapons of mass destruction,

Noting that the continued testing of weapons of such types constitutes a threat to human life and health,

Bearing in mind that the discontinuance of tests of nuclear weapons would remove that threat, would be in accordance with the desires of all the peoples of the world and would further the humanitarian aims of the United Nations,

Calls on those Governments which carry out tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons to conclude an agreement forthwith on the discontinuance of tests of such weapons, on the basis of the following provisions:

1. Tests shall be discontinued for a period of two or three years as from 1 January 1958;
2. An international commission, which shall report to the Security Council and the General Assembly, shall be set up to supervise the fulfilment by States of their obligation to discontinue tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons;
3. Under the direction of the aforesaid international commission control posts shall be established, on a basis of reciprocity in the territory of the USSR, the United States of America, the United Kingdom and its possessions and in the Pacific Ocean area, including Australia,

Calls upon other States to accede to the agreement on the discontinuance of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons.
