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

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.1/875, A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1, A/C.1/L.317) (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. JAKOBSEN (Denmark) said that the problem of general and complete disarmament could be solved only by patient work and a realistic appraisal of existing possibilities. The small Powers could not take decisions, but they had a role to play and Denmark was aware of its responsibilities in that connexion.
2. The Eighteen-Nation Committee seemed to be the right kind of instrument for exploring all the possibilities and working out viable and realistic agreements on disarmament. His delegation considered it important to concentrate first on such questions as halting nuclear tests, preventing war from breaking out by accident or miscalculation and exploring the technical and political prospects for verifying disarmament measures.
3. Several delegations had already said that the countries concerned should send their representatives back to Geneva and resume negotiations as a matter of urgency. His delegation shared that view and considered that the Assembly should not hold up the negotiations by lengthy debate. It therefore supported the draft resolution submitted by the United Arab Republic (A/C.1/L.317).
4. In his statement in the Assembly's general debate (1132nd plenary meeting), the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs had drawn attention to the question of the dissemination of nuclear weapons. Other representatives had also emphasized the danger attendant upon the introduction of atomic weapons in new areas. His delegation therefore supported the draft resolution submitted by Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Ecuador (A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1), under which the territory of Latin America would be considered a denuclearized zone.

5. The previous week, the First Committee had made a valuable contribution to the important task of stopping nuclear tests by adopting a draft resolution calling for the immediate cessation of all tests, under control. The text finally adopted by the Committee had been the result of co-operation between many delegations, and the Canadian delegation deserved a special tribute for its tireless work. It was to be hoped that the next few months would see some progress made in preventing the dissemination of nuclear weapons and in halting nuclear tests. That would be a most useful piece of work, though there would, of course, still be a major task to perform in concluding an agreement on general and complete disarmament.

6. Mr. HAJEK (Czechoslovakia) said that, although the work of the Eighteen-Nation Committee had some positive features, it had achieved no practical results so far as general and complete disarmament was concerned. The deadlock reached in the negotiations was due mainly to disagreement between the parties about the very nature of the disarmament process. Whereas the Soviet Union proposed that drastic measures should be taken at the very beginning to improve the international situation, to strengthen peace and to ensure that the disarmament process would be irreversible, the United States wanted to postpone the adoption of such measures until the last stage of disarmament, which was deferred to such a distant future that there was no guarantee that it would ever be reached.

7. The recent Cuban crisis, provoked by the aggressive attitude of the United States, emphasized the need for general and complete disarmament, which would not materialize unless measures were taken at the outset to make nuclear war an impossibility. The Soviet draft treaty^{1/} provided for precisely such measures. The Western Powers had claimed that it was impossible to eliminate the means of delivery of nuclear weapons and to dismantle foreign military bases in the first stage because the time allowed would be too short for the institution of the necessary control. That argument was not very convincing, for the United States proposal^{2/} was that the first stage should comprise a 30 per cent reduction in all armaments and verification of the remaining armaments—which would require even more elaborate control. Moreover the Western proposal was unacceptable because, far from eliminating the danger of a nuclear war, it would merely intensify that danger by giving a potential aggressor the prerequisites for the preparation of a surprise attack. Since the United States had several thousand delivery vehicles for nuclear weapons, a 30 per cent reduction would scarcely affect its capacity to launch such an attack. To make allowance for the position of the Western Powers, the Soviet Union had proposed (A/C.1/867) that the countries concerned should retain

^{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.

a limited number of missiles pending the destruction of all nuclear weapons in the second stage. That concession should create new prospects for agreement. However, the Western Powers had raised objections designed to detract from the significance of the Soviet proposal. In the circumstances, further negotiations were unlikely to yield positive results unless all countries were prepared to show understanding and to make concessions.

8. The existence of military bases on foreign soil was one of the main sources of international tension, as recent events had proved, and the abolition of such bases would also do much to avert the danger of a nuclear war. For that reason the socialist countries could not consent to the adoption of measures affecting missiles if the United States kept bases in many countries, including some which bordered on the socialist countries themselves. The Western Powers had asserted that the liquidation of bases would give the socialist countries the advantage by leaving Western Europe at the mercy of the socialist armed forces, which were considered to be superior in terms of conventional weapons. Yet the United States Secretary of Defense had himself admitted that the armed forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization countries were superior to those of the Warsaw Treaty countries in that respect, and it was obvious that, in terms of population and industrial potential, the two groups of countries were approximately equal in strength. Moreover, if the Western Powers were really disturbed by the alleged superiority of the socialist countries, they could propose a more drastic reduction of armed forces in the first stage. In practice, however, the USSR had proposed that the level of armed forces should be reduced in the first stage to 1.7 million men; the United States proposal had been 2.1 million. It was only under pressure and in a spirit of compromise that the USSR had agreed to a higher level—namely, 1.9 million men. The fact was that only a potential aggressor stood to lose by the elimination of nuclear delivery vehicles and of bases on foreign soil, and it was obvious that the United States bases were not defensive but aggressive in character. If that were not so, the United States would not have refused to give up its base at Guantanamo, which was not only an affront and a provocation to the Cuban people but a threat to international peace.

9. The Western Powers had also created difficulties with regard to control. They maintained that the Soviet Union refused any effective control of disarmament. In fact, the Soviet draft provided for a very strict control of the disarmament measures proposed in it. On the other hand, the socialist countries could not accept the control of armaments as recommended by the Western Powers because it was contrary to paragraph 6 of the agreed principles for disarmament negotiations (A/4879), according to which the nature and extent of the control should depend upon the requirements for verification of the disarmament measures carried out at each stage. Further, although the Western Powers had attempted to minimize the arguments presented by the Soviet Union with regard to the dangers of spying, the socialist countries had every reason to believe that the United States was seeking to obtain information that had no connexion with disarmament. As evidence of that it was sufficient to mention the U-2 flights and the launching of satellites that were intended to photograph the territories of the socialist countries. Those intentions had also been confirmed by the declarations of various official persons in the United States, in

particular the Secretary of Defense. In reality the main obstacle to an agreement on disarmament was the fact that the United States had concentrated the whole of its policy on nuclear power which it did not wish to give up. So long as that country did not succeed in ridding itself of that obsession the negotiations for general and complete disarmament would have little chance of succeeding.

10. Though the achievement of progress towards general and complete disarmament would represent a major contribution to the efforts to eliminate the danger of a nuclear war, it would be wrong to neglect positive measures that might help to mitigate that danger and to improve the international situation. For that reason the Czechoslovak delegation had always been in favour of establishing atom-free zones. It thought that the draft resolution submitted by Bolivia, Brazil, Chile and Ecuador (A/C.1/L.312/Rev.1 and Rev.1/Add.1) by which Latin America would be considered a denuclearized zone, was worthy of serious consideration and it reserved the right to submit detailed comments on that matter later. But it was of the opinion that consideration should be given also to the establishment of similar zones in other parts of the world. For that reason it would be advisable to give renewed consideration to the Rapacki plan, as the representative of Ceylon had suggested (1269th meeting). It would in particular be most advisable to establish a denuclearized zone in Central Europe so as to reduce tension and the danger of a nuclear war in that region. Further, it was desirable that the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament should take up the question of preventing the distribution of nuclear weapons and the conclusion of a treaty of non-aggression between the parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The General Assembly should therefore submit recommendations to that effect and invite the Eighteen-Nation Committee to concentrate on a solution of the question of general and complete disarmament and, in considering that subject, to seek a solution that would permit of the immediate elimination of any danger of a nuclear war.

11. The General Assembly had an important part to play in the disarmament negotiations. It should not content itself with a purely formal examination of the reports of the Eighteen-Nation Committee and a recommendation that negotiations be continued, without itself adopting a position. If it was to find a way out of the deadlock in which it found itself, the Eighteen-Nation Committee would need a fresh impetus and that should be provided by the General Assembly. Contrary to what the United States representative had said, negotiations had not just begun; they had continued for three years without any appreciable result. It was to be feared therefore that without a positive recommendation from the Assembly, the Eighteen-Nation Committee would be unable to submit more encouraging results at the next session. The General Assembly should give the Eighteen-Nation Committee instructions that would allow it to neutralize effectively the destructive power of the nuclear arsenal and to liquidate all the military bases in foreign territory so as to eliminate the danger of a thermo-nuclear war, from the very first stage of general and complete disarmament.

12. Mr. ATHAR (Pakistan) stressed the responsibility of the great Powers, and in particular the United States and the Soviet Union, with regard to general and complete disarmament. If those two

Powers were to arrive at an agreement, that would facilitate the solution of other outstanding problems between other countries. The danger was still great; though in Laos and Cuba the threat had been averted, a new crisis might arise at any moment in some other part of the world. It was therefore essential to come to an agreement on disarmament.

13. The destruction of existing armaments would not amount to true disarmament. It was necessary to forbid the production of new weapons. Such a result could be achieved only in an atmosphere of trust and security, for the prevalent climate of distrust was one of the main obstacles to the conclusion of an agreement. The social and economic consequences of disarmament might also constitute an obstacle; it was not clear how disarmament could be achieved without a thorough study of its economic and social consequences.

14. It was no longer possible to think of war as a solution to present-day problems, for everyone knew that it could only end in general destruction and annihilation. Conditions therefore appeared favourable for disarmament and all that had to be discovered was some means of bringing it about.

15. Two plans for disarmament had been submitted, one by the United States and the other by the Soviet Union. During the preceding year those two Powers had succeeded in bringing their positions closer to each other. Unhappily the great Powers thought that they had plenty of time to negotiate. But the Cuban crisis had shown that time was pressing. The rapprochement between the Powers had been possible only because existing conditions made a compromise essential. Circumstances appeared particularly propitious because colonialism, which had been at the origin of the most destructive wars known to mankind, was disappearing and the world had at its disposal an organization responsible for ensuring peace. The United Nations should profit from that favourable situation and endeavour to facilitate an agreement between the great Powers. The recent intervention of the Secretary-General was of the greatest importance not only because it had made it possible to avoid a nuclear war but also because it had led to a certain measure of disarmament in one small area of the world by the agreement for the removal of certain missiles from Cuba. Such measures could be extended to far wider areas. In the opinion of the Pakistan delegation, the Secretary-General, whose initiative at the time of the Cuban crisis had been so successful, should intervene personally in the disarmament negotiations.

16. It was obvious that the Geneva negotiations had not been satisfactory in spite of the efforts made by the parties concerned. The United States representative had announced that negotiations would probably be resumed at Geneva on 19 November. There had been talk of meeting in New York. The Pakistan delegation regretted that that suggestion had not been adopted, not only for technical reasons but also because if it had been decided to hold the meetings in New York that would have demonstrated the extent to which all nations were concerned in the question of disarmament. Moreover, the Secretary-General would have had an opportunity to intervene.

17. He suggested the following procedure. Firstly, the Secretary-General could perhaps play a more positive and direct part in the disarmament discussions, in particular with respect to the questions of inspection and verification. Secondly, the deliberations

of the Eighteen-Nation Committee at Geneva should bear not only on the reduction of armaments but also on the means of controlling the production of new weapons. Finally, that Committee might study the possibility of concluding agreements on nuclear-free zones in certain regions where those measures could be applied immediately, without waiting for a final agreement on disarmament.

Mr. Enckell (Finland), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

18. Mr. BUDO (Albania) regretted that the international situation had not developed in accordance with the peaceful desires of the peoples of the world. Not only had no real progress been made as regards general and complete disarmament, but the Western Powers were attached more obstinately than ever to their policy of force and were feverishly pursuing the armaments race and preparing for nuclear war. The acts of aggression of the United States against Cuba had recently brought the world nearer than ever to the brink of disaster. During the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament at Geneva, the United States and its allies had again shown by their deliberately negative attitude towards the proposals of the Soviet Union that they did not desire general and complete disarmament, and above all that they were categorically opposed to the prohibition and liquidation of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons. It was evidently the purpose of the United States to keep its weapons of mass destruction, to continue improving them and to increase its stockpile so as to make certain of its military supremacy over the Soviet Union and to be able, by means of a nuclear war, to subjugate the socialist countries and other countries devoted to the ideals of peace and freedom. That aim was confirmed by the American plan of fundamental strategy and by the recent declaration of President Kennedy according to which the Government of the United States would in specified circumstances take the initiative of launching a nuclear war.

19. The Western Powers continued, as in the past, to use the negotiations for their own purpose, namely, to mislead world opinion with respect to their real intentions and to give themselves sufficient time to make ready for war. The representatives of those countries had resorted to the same dilatory tactics as before: each time the Soviet Union came nearer to their position they raised new objections and made new conditions.

20. The main stumbling-block in disarmament negotiations had for years past been the question of control. The Western Powers desired control over armaments—in other words, control without disarmament. What they really wanted was to secure for themselves an opportunity to spy in the socialist countries for the military information their strategy required. It was obvious that no State which cared about its security would consent to open its doors to imperialist espionage in that fashion. Indeed, any such measure would run counter to the purpose of disarmament and would directly serve the designs of the warmongers.

21. No progress could be made in disarmament negotiations so long as the United States persisted in the bellicose policy it had adopted at the end of the Second World War. Since that time it had established the aggressive military blocs of NATO, CENTO and SEATO, ringed the socialist countries with a vast network of military bases, rearmed West Germany and engaged in aggressive activities on all continents, thus

creating several breeding-grounds for war which were a constant threat to the peace and security of peoples. Recent events in the Caribbean should serve as a warning to all peace-loving States which prized their freedom and independence.

22. The obstructionist policy of the United States on the disarmament problem was also shown by its dogged opposition to the restoration of the lawful rights of the People's Republic of China in the United Nations. The solution of such a problem as general and complete disarmament was inconceivable without the participation of that great nation, which represented a quarter of the world's population. Moreover, the Government of the People's Republic of China had clearly stated that it would recognize no international agreement in which it had not officially participated.

23. The Government of the People's Republic of Albania was doing everything in its power to serve the great cause of preserving and strengthening peace. It would continue to give its full support to the Soviet Union's proposals on general and complete disarmament and to the draft treaty submitted by that country at Geneva. It was resolved to play its part in the efforts being made to achieve general and complete disarmament, to end all nuclear weapon tests once and for all, to prohibit the production of such weapons and to liquidate all existing stocks. It was in favour of specific measures calculated to reduce international tension and to strengthen peace, such as the establishment of denuclearized zones in Europe, Africa, the Pacific and Latin America. The Albanian Government itself had made proposals for the conversion of the Balkan and Adriatic area into a peace zone from which nuclear weapons and means of delivery would be excluded.

24. It was to be hoped that the General Assembly, realizing the gravity of the existing international situation and the urgency of the disarmament question, would adopt tangible and specific provisions clearly indicating to the countries participating in the Geneva negotiations what important measures they should take up first in order to contribute effectively to the preparation of the treaty on general and complete disarmament.

Mr. Adeel (Sudan) resumed the Chair.

25. Mr. KURAL (Turkey) observed that the United Nations, which had already made great progress, especially in the economic and social fields, might see all its work come to nothing if it failed to achieve general and complete disarmament. The weapons now available to either side were so advanced and effective as to have set up between them a sort of balance which, some contended, had helped to keep the peace. A balance which relied on weapons, however, was a dangerous one. It was only through disarmament and the restoration of mutual trust throughout the world that peace could be truly guaranteed. Disarmament would not only make collective security a permanency but would also mean that the fabulous sums currently spent on defence could be used to promote economic and social development and to raise levels of living.

26. Countries which, like Turkey, had joined defensive alliances had done so only in obedience to the imperative need to safeguard their security and independence; and although they keenly desired disarmament, they also wished their security to remain assured at every stage in the disarmament process. Indeed, that legitimate anxiety had been expressed in the joint statement of agreed principles for disarma-

ment negotiations submitted by the United States and the USSR at the previous session of the Assembly (A/4879).

27. The two sides had drawn closer together, and that was a welcome development. There were still basic differences between the two points of view, however, for example with regard to the correlation of nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament measures. In his own view, a reasonable balance must be maintained at every stage between all the forces ranged on either side. Nuclear weapons were the more formidable, it was true; but, as the Australian representative had lately pointed out (1268th meeting), the destructive force of conventional weapons should not be underestimated. Such weapons were still terribly effective, especially when used against small countries.

28. Moreover it should not be forgotten that each of the two opposing defence systems was based on a number of different strategic data. More specifically, the countries which made up the military alliances were not equal in resources or capacities and in order to maintain the balance each alliance should be treated as a coherent whole. Hence it would be wrong to take one or more countries out of those alliances and disarm them separately. That would place some of the separately treated countries in a particularly dangerous position and would upset the general balance of power. Therefore each country should be considered only as one among all the others, and in the context of general and complete disarmament. Indeed, that principle was included in the joint statement, which recognized that disarmament measures should be balanced so that at no stage could any State or group of States gain military advantage, and that security must be ensured equally for all. Consequently Turkey could not subscribe to the idea of establishing a denuclearized zone in Central Europe, as some delegations had again suggested, regardless of the disparity prevailing among the countries in that area with respect to conventional weapons, means of communication and capacity to act quickly. To take certain weapons away from certain States under piecemeal arrangements in the absence of general disarmament would mean upsetting the balance of power by placing the States first disarmed in a position of inferiority and hence in danger.

29. On another controversial question, that of control, it seemed to him essential that each side should have an assurance that the other side would live up to its undertakings, and should know both what weapons were being destroyed and what weapons were being retained. The institution of an effective system of international control would do much to dispel dangerous uncertainties and hence to establish the necessary mutual confidence. In addition, a careful study should be made of the prospects for establishing a "peace force" to be placed at the disposal of the United Nations. Even in a world disarmed, disputes between States might still arise and would have to be prevented from degenerating into war.

30. From the progress already made at the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament and the efforts which the two principal parties, on the one hand, and the eight uncommitted countries, on the other, were making to reconcile the different views, there was reason to hope that the negotiations would yield positive results.

31. Mr. C. M. CHANG (China) felt that, so long as the causes underlying international conflicts were not removed, general and complete disarmament would remain a very remote ideal. The major efforts expended at Geneva had not been a waste of time, it was true, for they had served to focus attention on the problems that still lay ahead. His delegation was convinced that gradual, partial and balanced disarmament could be achieved and that the chances for success in that direction were better today than they had ever been before. The nature of war had changed so radically that it was no longer profitable to pursue political objectives by military means. Total war had become too destructive, and its day was over; armaments were useful chiefly as a deterrent. The dynamic character of military technology was such that the major military Powers were forced constantly to develop new or improved weapons systems in order to better their positions or at least to maintain the balance. Yet there was always the possibility that one side might achieve a technical break-through and thus put the other side in a position of inferiority. That was a nerve-racking process and could not go on indefinitely. In the second place, the need to develop new or improved weapons systems laid a crushing financial burden on the nuclear Powers, and they might conceivably conclude that their interests would be better served if mutual deterrence could be maintained at lower levels of expenditure.

32. For those reasons his delegation was convinced that the Western Powers and the Soviet Union, for all their differences and distrust, would ultimately agree on a viable deterrent system through agreed standards, limitations and safeguards. The first step was always the hardest and, once it had been taken, other steps would naturally follow. By slow degrees mutual confidence might be built up, and general and complete disarmament might ensue. In the light of those considerations, the United States plan providing for a 30 per cent cut both in vehicles for the delivery of nuclear weapons and in conventional armaments in the first stage seemed realistic and practical. The Soviet plan, on the other hand, called in the very first stage for the simultaneous elimination of all means of

delivery of nuclear weapons and military bases as well as the withdrawal of all troops from foreign soil, and its effect would be to leave Europe at the mercy of the Soviet Union. The USSR Government must be aware that that prospect was unacceptable to the United States and its allies. Therefore the Soviet plan must be regarded, not as a serious proposal for disarmament, but only as a propaganda move to put the Western Powers on the defensive and force them to make far-reaching concessions.

33. The positions of the two sides differed sharply on the question of international control, the primary purpose of which was to ensure the faithful implementation of disarmament agreements so as to prevent evasions, violations and surprise attacks. The development of modern weapons of mass destruction had made control absolutely imperative. It was a matter of the survival or the annihilation of whole populations. In those circumstances, no State would enter into a disarmament agreement unless it felt sure that its security was adequately safeguarded, that its relative military position was not jeopardized, and that the other parties to the agreement would comply with their obligations. Admittedly, effective inspection was more vital for the Western Powers than for the Soviet Union. However, if the latter was genuinely interested in general and complete disarmament, it should have no objection to the new United States proposal for zonal inspection. It was difficult to understand why the Soviet Government should be so fearful of espionage. Certainly the secrecy with which that Government surrounded all its actions—including, just lately, the installation in Cuba of launching-pads for missiles capable of carrying atomic warheads—was not calculated to inspire confidence.

34. The political, military and technical issues involved in disarmament were tremendous and could not be resolved in a few years. However, there were genuine chances of success in partial disarmament today, and that was the objective at which the Eighteen-Nation Committee should aim on resuming its work at Geneva.

The meeting rose at 1 p.m.