

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SIXTH SESSION

Official Records



FIRST COMMITTEE 448th

MEETING

Tuesday, 20 November 1951, at 10.30 a.m.

Palais de Chaillot, Paris

CONTENTS

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943 and A/C.1/667) (continued).....	} 11
International control of atomic energy : report of the Committee of Twelve (A/1922) (continued)	

Chairman: Mr. Finn MOE (Norway).

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Carlos Blanco (Cuba), the Vice-Chairman, presided.

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943 and A/C.1/667) (continued)

[Item 66]*

International control of atomic energy : report of the Committee of Twelve (A/1922) (continued)

[Item 16]*

GENERAL DEBATE (continued)

1. Mr. DE PIMENTEL BRANDAO (Brazil) stated that the political meaning of the statement made by the representative of the United States at the previous meeting was of the greatest significance since the regulation, limitation and reduction of armaments and armed forces was a question which affected all nations. There was no point in discussing whether the armaments race was the cause or the consequence of world tension. The facts were that the energies of mankind had been diverted from constructive endeavour to the production of weapons and the economies of all nations were retarded. Rather than investigate the causes for that situation they should be gratified at the opportunity of finding a way out of the crisis. The proposals submitted by France, the United Kingdom and the United States (A/C.1/667) should be received with a sense of relief.

2. Although most Members of the United Nations had neither large armies nor secret weapons, they all had an equal interest in the acceptance of the plan. Since three of the great Powers had sponsored the present proposals for the regulation, limitation and reduction of armed forces, the answer to the problem lay with the Soviet Union. A disarmament system was unthinkable without that country. The western world had many differences of views from those held by the USSR but their present intention was clearly the avoidance of a new war which could destroy all ways of life. The western world and the Soviet Union had to reach an agreement before it was too late to evade the

destruction of both. This agreement could be accepted without suspicion by the Soviet delegation.

3. Without entering into an analysis of the three-Power proposals, it should be noted that many of the points contained therein coincided with proposals made by the Soviet Union at the present session or at earlier ones. For example, the Soviet Union had often insisted that atomic weapons and conventional armaments should be dealt with together, and that was provided for in the three-Power proposal. In other respects also a conciliatory spirit had been shown and the joint draft resolution went a long way to meet the views of the Soviet Union.

4. It was the fervent hope of the Brazilian delegation that the leaders of the USSR would be wise and realistic enough to seize the opportunity.

5. Mr. BELAUNDE (Peru) said that although the question of disarmament was one which mainly concerned the great Powers since their agreement was essential, it was fitting for others to express their hopes. The three-Power proposals represented a serious attempt to meet the views of the Soviet Union. A rather similar approach had appeared in the vocabulary of the second statement made by the USSR representative in the general debate.¹ It seemed that the two positions were drawing closer and that it would be possible to have a dialogue rather than parallel monologues.

6. Both groups of nations were agreed that a disarmament conference was required as soon as possible. The three-Power proposal urged that the conference be organized by a disarmament commission which would conduct the necessary preparatory and technical work. The Soviet Union should accept the sincerity and the efficiency of that proposal.

7. The Soviet Union representatives had claimed that the western Powers wished to defer the prohibition of atomic weapons indefinitely but the United States representative had shown clearly how the present proposals of the three Powers, and indeed their previous policies, would lead

* Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

¹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixth Session, Plenary Meetings*, 348th meeting.

inevitably to the prohibition of atomic weapons. The opposing attitudes in this regard had been understandable in the past, for one approach would have resulted in the superiority of the Soviet Union in conventional armaments while the opposite approach would have led to the superiority of the western Powers in atomic weapons. The three-Power proposal would integrate the procedures for both atomic weapons and conventional armaments and thus give guarantees to all.

8. The representative of the Soviet Union had expressed the fear that the proposal for control by stages would mean that the western Powers would prevent matters from proceeding beyond the first stage and conceal information on their most secret armaments. That this was no longer the case was clear from the statement of the United States representative when he said that there should be disclosures relating to atomic energy at the outset. That change in the United States policy was of the utmost importance since it disposed of the arguments previously put forward by the Soviet Union. If provision were made for the transition from one stage to another the Soviet Union could not doubt the sincerity of the three Powers.

9. The proposals of the Soviet Union (A/1962) dealt with the submission of military information and its verification and the three-Power proposals referred to disclosures and verification. In the matter of inspection, recourse could not be taken to the principle of sovereignty. Sovereignty was not absolute but was related to the demands of the moral and juridical world order within which it functioned.

10. Two elements contributed to peace : the will to peace and the balance of power. The latter should not be despised, because for long it was effective in maintaining peace. To achieve a balance either the armaments on one side could be increased or all armaments could be reduced to a suitable level. The suggestion of reduction by one-third would leave the present relationship and fail to achieve a balance.

11. It was to be hoped that agreement could be reached on the questions of disclosure and verification, for there was nothing in the procedures of verification that would derogate from national dignity. If in addition to verification there could also be agreement upon safeguards, a long step forward would be taken.

12. Mr. Belaúnde appealed to the representative of the Soviet Union in the name of humanity to take advantage of the occasion and return an answer to the representative of the United States which would save peace and the civilization of the world.

13. Mr. BELLEGARDE (Haiti) supported the tripartite draft resolution. He added that the adoption of that draft resolution would constitute a great step forward towards the pacification of the world, but the underlying causes of the existing international tension would remain.

14. The mere signing of a convention for the reduction of armaments would not, in itself, achieve peace and establish confidence among nations, because international covenants had been signed in the past but had been, nevertheless, torn to pieces. Moreover, the small nations would require to be assured of their independence and of their territorial sovereignty, because even after armaments had been reduced, the great Powers would still be very powerful as compared with their small neighbours. They would need to have a system of collective security so strongly organized that all the nations of the world would stand up for the rights of the smaller ones in case the latter were attacked. The paramount needs were confidence and trust and collective security.

15. A great step forward would have been taken if agreement were achieved among the great Powers to reduce armaments, which in turn would reduce the existing tension among them, and would remove the great burden of armaments from the people of the world. If the great Powers were in economic and financial difficulties, all countries would suffer.

16. In conclusion, Mr. Bellegarde said that the small countries were anxious to see peace established among the great Powers, but in addition they needed the assurance of being able to live in security within their own countries without civil war which was an essential principle of the class struggle. All these problems were inextricably connected.

17. Mr. MEYKADEH (Iran) welcomed the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) on the regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of armaments and, in particular, atomic weapons. These proposals were a source of optimism for mankind, and he hoped that all governments would contribute to the fulfilment of their noble and humanitarian aim. Small countries like Iran, which had neither the desire nor the capacity to manufacture the atomic or hydrogen bomb, hoped for the elimination of these infernal arms.

18. In conclusion, Mr. Meykadeh expressed the hope that the great Powers would unite in their efforts towards peace and that they would put the use of atomic energy at the service of mankind.

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.