



Wednesday, 12 December 1951, at 10.30 a.m.

**Palais de Chaillot, Paris**

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*Chairman :* Mr Finn MOE (Norway).

**Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments (A/1943, A/C.1/667, A/C.1/668/Rev. 1, A/C.1/669 and A/C.1/677) (continued)**

[Item 66]\*

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

[Item 16]\*

CONSIDERATION OF THE DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED BY FRANCE, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES (A/C.1/667) AND AMENDMENTS THERETO

1. Mr. MUNIZ (Brazil), speaking on a point of order, did not challenge the procedure proposed by the Chairman, namely, to examine, paragraph by paragraph, the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/667) and the USSR amendment to it (A/C.1/668/Rev.1). He urged, however, that comments on the memorandum submitted by the President of the General Assembly (A/C.1/677) should not be ruled out of order. The Committee should try to ascertain once and for all whether many of the existing differences were not related to the subtleties of politics and to a fear of making too many concessions to the other side.

2. The CHAIRMAN had never intended to prevent any discussion of the individual points in the memorandum of the President of the General Assembly. He had asked that only the members of Sub-Committee 18 should make general comments on the memorandum and that such comments should be made during the debate on the preamble of the tripartite draft resolution.

3. All three of the documents before the Committee, namely, the three-Power proposal, the USSR amendment and the memorandum submitted by Sub-Committee 18, should be discussed paragraph by paragraph. Possibly the best method of widening the area of agreement was to take one question after another and to avoid a general discussion of all questions at the same time.

4. Mr. VYSHINSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics), felt that the work of the sub-committee had helped to clarify the positions and objectives of each of the four

delegations and had served to remove a number of divergencies, though the latter were of relatively secondary importance. While it would be incorrect to underestimate them, it would be equally incorrect to pass over in silence or to exaggerate the differences that persisted on important issues. What the sub-committee had failed to do should be done perhaps by the commission which was to be established, and on which agreement had been reached in the sub-committee. That would have to be done likewise by the First Committee, by the General Assembly and by the United Nations as a whole. The main task was to overcome and remove divergencies on the most important questions, and in any case to place those questions in the proper perspective.

5. Analyzing section 2 of Part I of the memorandum, Mr. Vyshinsky said that, in endorsing the formula contained in the first paragraph of the preamble of the tripartite draft resolution, the USSR was fully aware of the significance and of the importance of the obligation to lift from the peoples of the world the burden of increasing armaments and the fear of war, and to liberate new energies and resources for positive programmes for reconstruction and development. Delegations which sincerely accepted the obligation and were prepared consistently to enforce it, faced a number of problems in endeavouring to reach that objective. If there were any contradiction between the goal and the means to ensure its fulfilment, it would prove only that the means were unsuitable and that other means must be found.

6. How could the objective be attained? In order to answer that question it was necessary to examine what was happening in the world. The three Governments which had submitted the draft resolution had no foundation for their attempt to deny that they and their allies in the Atlantic "bloc" were conducting a mad and increasing armaments race, and had no foundation for the statement that the USSR and the countries friendly to it were also engaged in that race. The large number of facts and figures accumulated since the beginning of the work of the sub-committee made it clear who must bear the responsibility for the situation which had arisen.

7. The first paragraph of the preamble of the three-Power draft resolution imposed the obligation to adopt effective measures to put an end to the armaments race, to reduce armaments and armed forces, to prohibit the atomic weapon

\*Indicates the item number on the General Assembly agenda.

and to establish international control. The representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and France had demonstrated in the sub-committee that they were trying to avoid an affirmative solution of the problem, and were not prepared to achieve the objectives set forth in the first paragraph of the preamble of their proposal.

8. The foremost problem was the question of the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the establishment of an international control system, and the reduction of armaments. The representative of the United Kingdom had reduced the matter to one point (463rd meeting): simultaneity in the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the establishment of an international control organ. That point was important, but it had more than one aspect. In any case, the USSR proposed, in its amendments to the three-Power text, that the General Assembly should adopt two concurrent decisions in one resolution: the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the establishment of international control, and the preparation of a convention setting forth practical measures to ensure the implementation of the decision of the General Assembly.

9. Moreover, the USSR proposed two measures for the purpose of securing the immediate reduction of armaments and of armed forces. The first measure would be the reduction of armaments and armed forces of the five Powers, the United States, the United Kingdom, France, China and the USSR by one-third within a year from the date of the adoption of the decision. The second would be the convening of a world conference of all States to consider the question of a substantial reduction of armaments and armed forces, and all practical measures for the establishment of international control to ensure the implementation of the prohibition of the atomic weapon. Under the Soviet Union proposals, all three problems would be solved and decided upon simultaneously. Mr. Lloyd had therefore not been objective in his interpretation of the USSR position, and Mr. Vyshinsky was confident that the mistake would be corrected. All the measures proposed in the USSR amendments were organically inextricably linked.

10. The Governments of the United States, the United Kingdom and France regarded the USSR proposals as a trap, contending that a decision on the unconditional prohibition of atomic weapons taken before the putting into operation of international control would be an empty promise. It was impossible to minimize such a General Assembly decision, however, particularly if it were adopted unanimously. The USSR unequivocally declared that if such a decision were taken, it would consider itself fully bound by it, even if there were no sanctions that might be applied in cases of non-compliance, violation or evasion.

11. Even assuming adoption of the three-Power point of view, what system of international control would there be? It would be the Baruch plan, from which the three Governments did not wish to depart, in spite of their protestation that they were prepared to consider any other plan which was a better one. The defects of the Baruch plan had been repeatedly indicated and were recognized even by some who had previously defended it. Thus the *The Times* of London, on 1 December 1951, had termed the plan utopian and had admitted that in practice it would be as impossible or as difficult for the United States to accept it as it would be for the Soviet Union. That was a good estimate of the realism and practicability of the proposals.

12. The Baruch plan contained the so-called system of stages, which was designed to maintain the supposed advantage of the United States in the production of atomic weapons. That system would spell postponement of the

prohibition of atomic weapons to the very last stage, or in other words, forever. The only reason given for the opposition of the three Governments to the immediate prohibition of the atomic weapon amounted to fear lest any State should violate or fail to comply with the decision. Fear was a bad counsellor, however. The USSR did not propose that anyone should believe mere words and considered it essential to establish strict international control. Such control must be international, rather than take the form contemplated by the Baruch plan, which in practice would involve the use of United States personnel.

13. It was true, as Mr. Lloyd had noted, that there would have to be some interval between the prohibition of the atomic weapon and the establishment of international control. Mr. Baruch himself had recognized that fact on 14 June 1946,<sup>1</sup> declaring that only after the system of control over atomic energy had been brought into operation would the production of the atomic bomb cease. Assuming that the convention for the prohibition of the atomic bomb would be signed and ratified, the first consequence would be the obligation of all ratifying States forthwith to cease production of atomic weapons and to use those already made for civilian purposes alone. Under the Baruch plan, however, the convention would still not be operative, even after ratification, until the control organ came into operation. In the absence of a guarantee that the control organ would be put into operation and time limits set, the whole convention and the prohibition of atomic weapons would be blocked.

14. As had been pointed out, the Baruch plan called for a control organ which would follow the policy of the United States alone. Objective and disinterested persons who had analyzed the plan had unanimously reached the conclusion that it was designed to prevent the prohibition of atomic weapons. That conclusion was confirmed by Mr. Acheson's letter of 1946,<sup>2</sup> to which reference had already been made, which made it clear that the United States might fail to agree to prohibit the atomic weapon even if the plan were implemented, should it be considered that such prohibition was not in the interests of the United States.

15. In view of the circumstances, how could it be contended that the Baruch plan was realistic and that the USSR proposal for the prohibition of atomic weapons and for practical measures to be taken was illusory and unreal? Clearly, the formula contained in Mr. Acheson's letter concealed any number of reservations and qualifications.

16. The USSR proposed a clear and unambiguous solution: to prohibit the atomic weapon. Two countries had that weapon, the United States and the USSR. The USSR obligated itself to be bound by the prohibition. Others preferred the United States plan because they were convinced that it would never lead to the prohibition of the atomic bomb and because they needed time to accumulate stockpiles of that frightful weapon. The USSR could also increase its stockpile, but it did not wish to do so because it had no aggressive plans or designs against anyone.

17. Declaring that the approach to the question of the prohibition and control of the atomic weapon adopted by the three Powers was erroneous, Mr. Vyshinsky stated that a way to break out of the vicious circle which it created was to be found only in a General Assembly declaration

<sup>1</sup>See *Official Records of the Atomic Energy Commission, First Year*, No. 1, p. 4.

<sup>2</sup>See *A Report on the International Control of Atomic Energy*, Washington, D.C., March 16, 1946, pp. VII-X.



unconditionally banning the atomic weapon and setting up a twelve-Power commission. That commission would supersede the previous ones and would draw up a convention containing measures to ensure the implementation of the prohibition. Refusal to adopt such a proposal amounted to a refusal to get out of the artificially created deadlock which had persisted for five years.

18. The sub-committee's work had revealed that Mr. Lloyd's explanation that adoption of the three-Power draft resolution would represent a clear declaration in favour of the unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon and strict international control constituted such a refusal.

19. Mr. Vyshinsky declared that it was erroneous to state that a decision to prohibit the atomic weapon before the international control had begun to operate would represent a trap. Any false information could not fail to be disproved and any State attempting to evade the decision would thus be covered with endless shame.

20. It must be noted that though there was no convention on prohibition of the atomic weapons in existence, the latter had not been used in the military operations launched as a result of the policy of certain States possessing the bomb, despite the fact that some madmen were encouraging its use. If the considerations responsible for the failure to use it were not moral in nature, they were, at least, dictated by common sense, caution and dread of the irreparable consequences for the country which used the bomb first. Considerations of that nature had prevented utilization of toxic gases during the Second World War even by those not legally bound by the Hague Convention which had prohibited the use of those gases. Why were those facts overlooked, and why was there opposition to the obvious duty of the Assembly? Why was there a pretext that a decision by the General Assembly prohibiting atomic weapons and establishing strict international control might be used by various governments for deceitful purposes?

21. Mr. Lloyd's attempt to represent the USSR plan as contemplating three stages had been without foundation; the United Kingdom representative had been illogical in regarding stages as necessary when contemplated by the three-Power proposal, but objectionable where the USSR plan was concerned. The USSR plan did not contemplate any stages which by their nature subjected the transition from one task or problem to another to a number of prerequisites and previous conditions. The passage from one stage to another under the Baruch plan would not be a natural one, but would be made dependent on the discretion and arbitrary decision of those in control of the control organ.

22. There was no doubt but that there were divergent views as to the method to be adopted to solve the problem at issue and as regards the attainment of general objectives. The so-called common objectives, however, did not coincide. A lot of work remained to be done and the USSR delegation was not unhopful that the objectives would indeed become common during the future patient work in dealing with the difficult problem involved. Mr. Vyshinsky reiterated that a General Assembly decision providing for an unconditional prohibition of the atomic weapon would not be empty words and would not be a misleading statement because it would have to meet the profound aspirations of millions of human beings. It could, must and would serve to remove, or at least to relax, tension to international relations. It would consequently serve the cause of peace, being directed against the instigators of a new war.

23. Turning to the question of conventional armaments, Mr. Vyshinsky said that the Soviet Union proposal that the

permanent members of the Security Council should reduce their armaments and armed forces by one-third within one year had been rejected by the three Powers. He could not accept their argument that such a reduction would fail to contribute to peace unless the existing and resulting strengths of the five Powers were accurately known.

24. The three Powers offered instead a system of levels the principles of which they had been unable to indicate. The Secretary of State of the United States had made an unsuccessful attempt and had referred to the use of such criteria as area and population (447th meeting). However, he had also referred to the necessity for ceilings of which the effect would be that the armed forces of a Power would no longer correspond either to its size nor to its population. As had been admitted at the conference of Deputy Foreign Ministers, such a system might lead not to a reduction but in some cases to an actual increase in armaments.

25. The three Powers claimed that the present size of armed forces should be known so that it might serve as a basis for reduction; in that way the resulting size would be known and reductions could be verified. The Soviet Union position was that if agreement could be reached upon a reduction by one-third, all data on all armaments and armed forces would be put at the disposal of those participating in the agreement. The details were to be found in point 7 of the USSR amendment. That procedure would provide the data which the three Powers demanded and would obviate the present need to rely upon dubious information derived from dubious sources.

26. The remaining argument of the three Powers was that the reduction by one-third would fail to lead to a balanced situation and would maintain an alleged supremacy on the part of the Soviet Union in the field of conventional armaments and armed forces. However, if, as they admitted, their information was unverified, they had no real grounds for their argument. In any event, the theory of balance was not a valid one as the lessons of history clearly showed. For example, the Washington naval agreement attempted to bring about a balance, particularly in the Far East. However, it was in that area that the greatest instability and imbalance resulted. The effect of the agreement was to consolidate Japanese dominance. There was in addition the problem of balancing the requirements of a naval Power, like the United Kingdom, with those of a land Power like the Soviet Union. It was practically impossible to compare field divisions with bomber squadrons or cruisers with submarines or, for that matter, jet aircraft with propeller driven aircraft. An attempt to follow the theory of balance would ignore the lessons of history and in particular of the League of Nations. The Soviet Union repudiated any such course.

27. The President of the General Assembly noted in his memorandum that the discussions in the sub-committee appeared to assume that the idea of a world conference was a matter of common ground but that there were some divergencies with regard to the method and time of convening the conference. Those divergencies existed and went beyond questions of method. The Soviet Union proposed that the General Assembly should decide that the conference should convene within a given time limit. In addition, it was proposed that the Security Council should do the necessary preparatory work and present draft proposals. That was a clear and unambiguous approach to the question of a conference. The three Powers, on the other hand, would make a declaration in favour of the conference but would established no time limits. Rather, they advocated leaving the matter to the discretion of the new commission whenever it might decide that parts of its plan were ready for submission

to a conference. The three-Power plan did not provide any practical measures and was a reflection of their lack of interest in the early reduction of armaments.

28. The divergencies between the Soviet Union on the one hand and the three Powers on the other, arose out of their respective policies regarding the prohibition of atomic weapons, the establishment of international control and the reduction of armaments and armed forces. The removal of those divergencies would be of great significance for the abatement of international tension. Some important decisions had been reached in the sub-committee. Though they might deal with secondary matters, they were important if they served to reduce the disagreements, for they might lead to the removal of others.

29. A particularly important decision was that relating to the unification of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Commission for Conventional Armaments and the method of procedure of the new commission. The question of voting had been clarified and Mr. Vyshinsky believed that an understanding had been reached. Those matters were dealt with in the memorandum and did not require further emphasis.

30. The important objective was to put an end to the armaments race which was absorbing resources and energies which could be utilized for raising the living standards of millions of people. The primary task before the United Nations was to achieve the prohibition of atomic weapons, the establishment of international control and the reduction of all armaments and armed forces. It should persevere in those matters and seize every opportunity to solve those problems and strengthen international peace.

31. Mr. MOCH (France), replying to certain points raised by the representative of the Soviet Union, stated that the repetition of inaccuracies did not convert them to facts. The representative of the Soviet Union had made further reference to the letter sent by Mr. Acheson in March 1946, transmitting a report on atomic energy control. Mr. Moch drew attention to the record of the 447th meeting of the First Committee in which the United States Secretary of State had quoted from that letter to show that the plan would require the United States to discontinue the manufacture of atomic weapons after an international agreement had been reached. Mr. Moch saw no value in reverting to a controversy which could be regarded as settled.

32. Their discussions unfortunately were dominated by distrust and that distrust derived from the political and military activities of the Soviet Union. That distrust might even be increased by the present Soviet Union attitude on basic principles which had been maintained unchanged in Sub-Committee 18. The Soviet Union was attempting to put an end to the superiority of the three Powers in one field of armaments and to maintain its own superiority in the other. That was the meaning of the demand for the immediate prohibition of the atomic weapon.

33. The treatment of the subject of simultaneity showed that the Soviet Union representative was confusing the taking of decisions with actual achievements. Under the Soviet Union plan only the decisions would be taken together and while there would be immediate prohibition, the establishment of control would take place only after a transitional period.

34. A further contradiction in the Soviet Union position was to be found in Mr. Vyshinsky's assertions, on the one

hand, that it would be easy to agree upon control by 1 February 1952 and, on the other, that the three Powers would postpone prohibition indefinitely under their plan by failing to agree on control. The attitude of the three Powers was that a certain amount of time was required to reach agreement; that neither could it be achieved at once, nor should it be postponed indefinitely.

35. The intention of the three Powers in connexion with the control organ was that it should be genuinely international. No other conception was possible for the United Nations regardless of the assertions of the Soviet Union representative.

36. Mr. Vyshinsky had made reference to the United Nations plan for the international control of atomic energy which he insisted on calling the "Baruch plan" and which he described as unacceptable. It would be more useful for the Soviet Union to put forward constructive proposals for an effective plan. The three Powers were prepared to examine other plans which might offer a better solution. However, atomic energy required unusual guarantees in its control system, particularly in view of the similarity of the production processes for peaceful and military purposes.

37. The contention of the Soviet Union that the three Power position amounted to a refusal to prohibit atomic weapons was invalid. The choice lay with the Soviet Union; either there would be no prohibition or there would be prohibition after the establishment of control.

38. The other principal feature of the Soviet Union proposal was the reduction by one-third of the armaments and armed forces of the great Powers. Mr. Moch said that such a course would lead to the maintenance or increase of the existing superiority of the Soviet Union in that field. The reply of the Soviet Union was that the figures quoted by the three Powers were wrong and that they could discover the correct ones by accepting such a plan of reduction. However, the general strength of the Soviet Union in terms of divisions was well known together with the comparative strength of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in Europe. A reduction by one-third would only increase the existing disequilibrium. Moreover, the Soviet Union proposals along those lines had been rejected at three previous sessions of the General Assembly. The statement of the Soviet Union representative that their figures were inaccurate only confirmed the contention of the three Powers that verified data was an indispensable and prior step in any plan.

39. It was necessary to decide in principle whether atomic weapons should be prohibited immediately or only after the establishment of control and whether armaments would be reduced by one-third or according to some other plan. The General Assembly had previously taken decisions in these matters and should reaffirm them.

40. The three Powers were prepared to amend their text in order to avoid difficulties of principle and allow further progress. Mr. Moch agreed with the Soviet Union representative that the proposed commission should try to solve those questions with which the sub-committee had been unable to deal. Mr. Moch also agreed that much work was necessary if they were to arrive at common objectives.

41. The three Powers were pursuing the organization of peace. However, France well knew that independence and liberty were also essential and must be defended.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.