



Monday, 21 January 1957,
at 3 p.m.

New York

CONTENTS

Page

Agenda item 22:

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction: report of the Disarmament Commission (*continued*)..... 63

Chairman: Mr. Victor A. BELAUNDE (Peru).

AGENDA ITEM 22

Regulation, limitation and balanced reduction of all armed forces and all armaments; conclusion of an international convention (treaty) on the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic, hydrogen and other weapons of mass destruction: report of the Disarmament Commission (A/3366, A/3470, A/C.1/783, A/C.1/784, A/C.1/L.160, A/C.1/L.161, A/C.1/L.162) (*continued*)

1. Mr. PEARSON (Canada) noted that international tension was the main reason why agreement on the major steps of a substantial disarmament programme was still far off. But the destructive power of nuclear weapons was providing a special incentive to make progress. The debates over the past few years had ensured that the major Powers had maintained contact and that world public opinion had been kept fully aware of the problem. Unfortunately, any particular agreement on disarmament had often been followed by the emergence of the problem in different terms. Mr. Moch, the representative of France, who had made such an outstanding contribution in the field, had uttered repeated warnings that the time was coming when it would become virtually impossible to devise a control system adequate to allow a safeguarded prohibition of atomic weapons. That point had been reached, and there was no return to the possibility of accounting for past production of nuclear weapons or of bringing them under international control.

2. On certain fundamentally important matters of principle, however, the position of the major Powers was now less opposed. The Soviet Union no longer called for the unconditional preliminary banning of nuclear weapons, but recognized that measures of nuclear disarmament must be related to measures of conventional disarmament. Furthermore, there had been a lessening of the differences of view as to the levels of the armed forces of the great Powers. On the crucial matter of adequate and effective inspection and control there was general agreement that the international control organization should have representatives established in the territory of the States concerned before disarmament actually began and that those control officials should remain in place throughout the duration of such

a disarmament agreement. In its latest proposals (A/3366), the Soviet Union had also apparently accepted the principle of aerial inspection, although with certain limitations.

3. There now seemed to be a more realistic approach to disarmament, and there had been considerably less tendency to advance proposals such as the unconditional banning of the bomb, recognized as quite unacceptable even by their advocates and put forward for purposes having little to do with disarmament. It was also increasingly recognized that disarmament measures must not weaken the defensive position of one country in relation to another: Governments must take very seriously their primary duty to defend their own people.

4. The statement made by the United States representative at the 821st meeting had been moderately worded, business-like and hopeful: it was only a broad outline and a basis for discussion, but the Canadian delegation thought that it was a step forward. The representative of the USSR, on the other hand, had devoted nearly half of the statement he had made at the same meeting to an attack on the policies of certain Governments, in terms which made the intentions of his own Government doubtful. That portion of the USSR statement which had referred to disarmament had been based on the latest proposals of the Soviet Union, made at a time when the attention of the world was focused on the crushing of Hungarian patriots by the Soviet Union. The Canadian delegation was prepared to give careful and objective consideration to the latest Soviet proposals. While he welcomed the new Soviet position on aerial inspection, the particular limited application of the system proposed might involve some difficulties, including the implication of the continued division of Germany. Furthermore, the proposals included the complete prohibition of nuclear weapons, although it was admitted that it was not technically possible to devise any adequate system for inspecting such a prohibition. That was surprising, coming from a Power which was continually attacking the good faith of the Western Powers.

5. The statement made at the 822nd meeting by the United Kingdom representative, which was a reaffirmation of the Franco-British plan (DC/83, annex 2) had opened the door to an agreement on measures of partial disarmament as a first step towards the start of disarmament.

6. The representative of Yugoslavia had reiterated (823rd meeting) his Government's views that such initial measures as were now feasible should be implemented: that view had considerable merit. While disarmament could not be dissociated from other political problems, large-scale armaments were themselves an important source of international tension and a start towards disarmament, however limited, might have a salutary effect on the international situation generally and on the prospects of further disarmament.

7. A group of Powers, including Canada, was preparing a joint draft resolution based on the idea that disarmament could not be imposed by a majority, however impressive, and hence it would provide merely for renewed negotiations in the established bodies of the United Nations concerned with disarmament. It would embrace all the proposals made since the tenth session of the General Assembly, and there would be a report by the Sub-Committee to the Disarmament Commission, which would then report back to the General Assembly. The unanimous adoption of that text would be the best possible basis on which to continue an effort which had become ever more urgent.

8. With reference to the effects of atomic radiation and in particular to the possible consequences of nuclear test explosions, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway had proposed at the 598th plenary meeting of the General Assembly, the establishment of some system of United Nations registration of nuclear test explosions. The representative of Japan had also referred to that subject in the First Committee (823rd meeting), while the representative of the United Kingdom had suggested that the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission should investigate the possibility of reaching agreement on the limitation of test explosions (822nd meeting, para. 17). Finally, the Soviet Union had proposed the prohibition of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons (A/3366).

9. As the Canadian delegation had suggested in its statement on 5 December 1956 (609th plenary meeting), it might not be realistic to propose an immediate ban on all such tests, but scientific evidence warranted that the United Nations should give serious consideration to the whole question. The Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation established by the United Nations could be a source of objective conclusions which could aid in avoiding possible harmful decisions. In the first place, reliable and accurate information on the effects of such tests must be secured, and in the second, reasonable satisfaction must be given to the defence needs of States in a dangerously divided world.

10. In its statement at the 609th plenary meeting, the Canadian delegation had expressed the hope that the countries concerned might be able to agree on some periodic limit on the volume of radio-activity, and one of the recommendations of the proposed draft resolution previously mentioned would be that the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee should give prompt attention to the problem of the cessation or limitation of nuclear test explosions.

11. However, a further draft resolution, that of Canada, Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162), dealt only with the question of advance registration of nuclear test explosions. Even a modest proposal might make it possible to break the deadlock. The Secretary-General and the Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation were to co-operate with the States concerned in the operation of such a system.

12. The Canadian delegation hoped that all the proposals submitted to the Committee would be referred for early and effective action to the Disarmament Commission. There was no need to emphasize the gravity of the problem: man had created weapons so terrible that, if he did not bring them under control, they might cause his complete destruction.

13. Mr. TANS (Netherlands) noted that the failure to reach agreement on disarmament had revealed the

illusory nature of the "spirit of Geneva"; that conclusion, already foreseeable in December 1955, had been confirmed by the statement, devoid of any spirit of conciliation and co-operation, which had marked the first day of the debate in progress.

14. While the report of the Sub-Committee to the Disarmament Commission (DC/83), submitted in May 1956, made important proposals, which had received more than the usual amount of attention on the part of the Disarmament Commission, the Sub-Committee had not met again and so had not been able to carry out the request of the Disarmament Commission.

15. Under the circumstances, it was impossible for the General Assembly to find any concrete solutions; however regrettable that state of affairs, an agreement on disarmament, as the representative of Belgium had said at the 822nd meeting, must be based only on deeds and not on words.

16. But it was a fact that some progress had been made in recent years, as the General Assembly and the Disarmament Commission had noted in their resolutions of 16 December 1955 [resolution 914 (X)] and of 16 July 1956 (DC/97) respectively. The United Kingdom representative had given some details on the subject in his statement at the 822nd meeting.

17. Consequently, persevering efforts must be made to achieve some beginning of agreement which would strengthen mutual confidence. The road was long and difficult, but the new proposals put forward by the United States had increased the chances of success, and it was to be hoped that the Sub-Committee would soon be able to resume its work, and give consideration to all pending proposals.

18. The plans drawn up by Mr. Eisenhower and Mr. Bulganin, which were designed to prevent surprise attacks, would help to create a favourable atmosphere; the fact that mutual aerial inspection and the establishment of control posts at strategic points, as well as the exchange of military blueprints, would largely remove existing distrust was a reason for giving priority to those plans. Furthermore, experiments with a limited system of inspection would be valuable for the preparation of control machinery for a complete disarmament programme. A control system must be the keystone of any such programme, so true was the United States representative's comment (821st meeting) that a bad agreement would be worse than no agreement at all. That was why, despite encouraging appearances, unilateral reduction of armaments could not be considered as a real contribution to disarmament, so long as it was not carried out under effective international control within the framework of a binding agreement.

19. In the field of nuclear weapons, the cessation of production and the destruction of stockpiles might at the present stage be not only ineffective but dangerous, while, unless some degree of agreement could be reached on disarmament as a whole, nuclear test explosions could not be banned or even limited. That was a fact, despite the dangerous consequences of increased radio-activity in the world, and the increasingly destructive potential of the weapons, as a result of the continuation of those experiments.

20. The real danger for the moment came from the test explosions, which already brought with them some of the dangers of nuclear war. For that reason, his delegation hoped that the system of registration proposed in the draft resolution submitted by Canada,

Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162) might prove a first step on a difficult road.

21. His delegation considered the prevention of surprise attacks as an important element. It endorsed the view that the continuation of the debates in the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee was a useful factor in bringing about an atmosphere of mutual trust. In the third place, his delegation thought that any progress in disarmament would have to be accompanied by solutions to political problems, as the representatives of the United Kingdom and the United States had said. Although the representative of the Soviet Union was opposed to the idea that there was any connexion between the various problems, it was true that peace and security could not be achieved by disarmament alone; the political problems must be solved as well.

22. If the awareness of danger was not enough to induce the great Powers to continue with their efforts, they might perhaps consider what a world freed from the burden of armaments would be like.

23. Mr. WALDHEIM (Austria) expressed the view that an agreement between the great Powers would greatly simplify the solution of the problem.

24. Austria was the only country which, in an international treaty, had accepted an obligation with regard to its armaments corresponding to a level envisaged as the ultimate ceiling in the disarmament proposals of the Western Powers as well as of the Soviet Union. According to article 13 of the Austrian State Treaty of 15 May 1955, Austria had renounced the use of a wide variety of armaments, including weapons of mass destruction. Austria would be prepared to accept a system of control measures established in the course of the disarmament action in the United Nations, provided that such a system also included other States.

25. An agreement originating with the great Powers—even if it was only a fragmentary one, providing, for example, a limitation in the armaments race or partial control measures—would have a great moral effect, and the United Nations should as soon as possible take the first real steps in that direction.

26. For the first time in ten years, the views of the great Powers had drawn noticeably closer to each other. However, since their agreement applied only to ultimate aims and not to the methods to be used, those aims could be realized only step by step. Austria believed that tests of weapons of mass destruction should be completely prohibited. Such a measure was contemplated in both the Soviet plan of 17 November 1956 (A/3366) and the United States proposals submitted on 14 January 1957 (A/C.1/783). The use of atomic energy held such promise for the future that the declared intention of the great Powers to use it exclusively for peaceful purposes should be realized as soon as possible.

27. As a small, neutral country, Austria appealed to all States, especially to the Powers directly involved, to work for the cause of peace, in accordance with the desire of the peoples of the world.

28. Mr. ENTEZAM (Iran) pointed out that the small Powers, which were the most vulnerable ones, had for the time being no decisive part to play.

29. Despite the tenor of some speeches, a certain degree of progress had been achieved in 1956, as noted by the representative of Canada. Unfortunately, the events of October had intervened. As soon as possible after the present session, the Sub-Committee of the

Disarmament Commission should meet in an effort to draw up a plan specifying the functions of a control body.

30. With regard to nuclear tests explosions, if considerations of security made it impossible to prohibit them, the tests should be announced beforehand, limited and controlled, in accordance with the views expressed by the Japanese representative at the 823rd meeting. The dangers of nuclear tests had in fact exceeded the expectations of the experts. Iran was the neighbour of a State that conducted such tests on its own territory. The Iranian delegation therefore had a particular interest in the matter and felt that, as a minimum, notification should be given of the date and place of such tests, and that measures should be taken to safeguard the populations concerned. The suggestion made by the United States delegation (821st meeting) did not go far enough in that direction.

31. The Iranian delegation, which had thought that the suggestions made in the statement of the representative of Japan (823rd meeting) might serve to bring the points of view of the United States and the Soviet Union closer together, could only welcome the submission of the draft resolution of the three Powers (A/C.1/L.162).

32. The composition of the Disarmament Commission no longer met present-day needs. No sooner had the non-permanent members familiarized themselves with the highly technical problems involved in the Commission's work than they had to leave it, following the expiration of their country's term in the Security Council. Nevertheless, the Iranian delegation did not intend to present any proposal on the subject during the present year, in view of the late date at which the current session would terminate.

33. Paragraph 3 of the Soviet Union draft resolution (A/C.1/L.161) proposed the convening of a special session of the Assembly on matters of disarmament. A general conference on disarmament might be contemplated in the future, but it would have to be preceded by an agreement in the Sub-Committee, a review of the problem by the Disarmament Commission or a more representative body and a meeting of a kind of preparatory commission to draw up a draft international convention.

34. Since it was impossible to work out a solution of the problem in a matter of days, the great Powers should at least reach agreement on a joint preliminary text which would serve as a work programme for the Sub-Committee.

35. Mr. WINIEWICZ (Poland) noted that the extensive documentation produced by the Sub-Committee was evidence of the efforts that had been made, though until now no international agreement had resulted. What would matter in the present debate would be not the arguments but the practical results; the world expected sober decisions rather than impassioned discussion from the United Nations. Accordingly, areas of agreement should be used as starting points in an effort to remove existing difficulties.

36. It was the unanimous view that disarmament should be implemented in stages. Similarly, since March 1955 various delegations had expressed the opinion that, in the initial stage, armed forces and military budgets should be kept on the level existing at the time agreement was reached. The Franco-British document and the Soviet document, as well as the United States

working paper of 3 April 1956 (DC/83, annex 6), could be regarded as steps in the same direction.

37. As to the reduction of armed forces, in its proposals of 17 November 1956 (A/3366), the Soviet Union had accepted the figures suggested by the United States for the first stage. Regarding the People's Republic of China, in particular, the Soviet Union and the United States had suggested identical levels of armed forces. The importance of participation by the People's Republic of China in the debate on disarmament was obvious in the present connexion, as had been pointed out by the representative of Yugoslavia (823rd meeting) and the representative of Sweden (824th meeting). For the second stage, the Soviet Union had accepted the figures suggested by the Western Powers in their proposals of 11 June 1954 (DC/53, annex 9). All proposals presented during 1956 provided for reductions in arms production and military budgets. On the other hand, the Soviet Union had suggested the fixing of time-limits for passing from one stage to another, while the Western Powers made such passage conditional on the degree to which the previous phase had been fulfilled and on the effectiveness of the control organ. The contradiction was more apparent than real, since the next stage of disarmament could begin only when the previous one had been completed. But that did not mean that no provision should be made for time-limits intended to prevent delays or refusals to take further steps.

38. The experience of Poland, which in less than a year had reduced its armed forces by 97,000 men, confirmed that the two-year period suggested by the Soviet Union was perfectly feasible. Moreover, the passage from one stage to another should not be subjected to excessively complex control conditions, since the international character of the control body would provide the necessary guarantees.

39. A much more important question was the limitation by the United States of its proposals of 3 April 1956 (DC/83, annex 6) only to the first stage of disarmament and its view that simultaneous progress had to be made in the solution of international issues. That point of view was unjustified. Some progress had in fact been made during the recent years in the questions of Korea, Indo-China, Austria, Tunisia and Morocco. A peace treaty had been concluded between the Soviet Union and Japan; contacts had been resumed between the four great Powers; the East and West had developed their cultural and economic relations; and a number of States had normalized their relations on the basis of the principles of sovereignty, equality and non-interference. The relaxation of tension, however, had not brought international agreement any closer, even on partial disarmament. Some socialist countries had reduced their armed forces, but other States had not halted the armaments race, and the United States had not reduced its armaments expenditure.

40. International problems of every description still existed between States with different political and economic systems, yet how much more easily those problems would be solved if it was not for intensive armaments programmes and the existence of foreign military bases on the territory of many States. The Suez Canal problem would have taken a very different course had not the existence of military bases and powerful armies provided an incentive to certain quarters for solving an international dispute by force.

41. Therefore, the reduction of armaments should not be subject to preliminary conditions, as envisaged in the United States proposals of April 1956. On the contrary, progress in the sphere of disarmament would advance the solution of other problems. The League of Nations' formula, "security first and then disarmament" had failed utterly and had led to the Second World War. Thus, the interdependence between the two factors was different from that conceived by the United States; disarmament would deepen mutual trust and strengthen the principle of peaceful coexistence, whereas an armaments race could only aggravate the international situation. It was therefore to be hoped that the latest statement of the United States delegation (821st meeting), to the effect that one of the aims of the disarmament programme should be to facilitate the settlement of political issues, marked a change of attitude on its part.

42. Another issue on which agreement had been reached in 1956 had to do with the allocation of funds obtained as a result of armaments reductions for the economic development of and for assistance to underdeveloped countries. Armaments were a heavy burden for small nations and for States with a low national income. Poland, faithful to the principles of socialism, allowed no group to profit from the armaments race. Although the defence budget had already been reduced, improvement of the international situation should permit a further reduction of the burden.

43. Regarding weapons of mass destruction, the various proposals contained in the report of the Subcommittee of the Disarmament Commission and later documents had not been reconciled. Those proposals ranged from the limitation of tests to the total prohibition of production of weapons of mass destruction. Yet everyone agreed that a start had to be made. Thus, the United States statement (821st meeting) calling for a reduction of the future nuclear threat and for provision against great surprise attack should logically lead, within a reasonably short period of time, to agreement on a comprehensive programme for disarmament.

44. Weapons of mass destruction were of such a character that, over and above any question of quantity, their very existence was a threat to peace and humanity. The delegation of Poland was therefore in favour of the Soviet proposal calling for rapid and complete elimination of nuclear weapons and for a ban on their use (A/3366). On the other hand, the proposals of the Western Powers were inadequate. Atomic war would save neither Western civilization nor socialism.

45. As to the problem of control, there was a certain measure of agreement on the principle that disarmament and control were inseparable. Nevertheless, States Parties to the Warsaw Treaty had recently reduced their armed forces by more than 2 million men, thereby making a contribution to the cause of disarmament and setting an example which deserved to be followed without waiting for a formal agreement.

46. So far as inspection was concerned, there was agreement that inspectors should be on hand with free access to installations subject to control, as well as on numerous other points. Aerial inspection was a controversial matter; it should be borne in mind that inspection must necessarily be linked to a specific disarmament programme and could only exist as determined by it. In its proposals of 17 November 1956, however, the Soviet Union had agreed to aerial inspection in a zone

800 kilometres east and west of the dividing line between the principal armed forces of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and those of the Warsaw Treaty Powers; as the advisability of the full application of an aerial inspection system was still in question, it seemed proper to apply it with the concurrence of the interested States, within a limited area.

47. The rapid remilitarization of West Germany constituted a problem that was vital to Poland, which had not been unaffected by the news that Nazi General Hans Speidel had been appointed to a NATO command. Moreover, the arrival of weapons of mass destruction in West Germany was encouraging ideas of revenge and conquest against Eastern Europe.

48. The Polish delegation opposed the remilitarization of West Germany and supported, within the framework of an over-all disarmament programme or as a first step, the establishment of an area of limited armaments in Europe including, among other regions, the whole of Germany. In that area, under the inspection system envisaged in the plans proposed by Mr. Bulganin and Mr. Eisenhower, there should be an immediate cessation of further armament, and weapons of mass destruction should be removed, foreign military bases gradually eliminated, foreign units gradually withdrawn and other steps taken to limit armaments. Such a plan, which would constitute an important precedent, could include a treaty of non-aggression between the countries parties to the Warsaw Treaty and the countries members of NATO that might serve as a basis for a European security system permitting ultimately the dissolution of "blocs", as provided for in the Warsaw Treaty itself. The quantitative reduction of armaments was not enough; it should be followed by the elimination of military bases and aggressive blocs. In that connexion, the particularly dangerous areas called for special treatment within an over-all disarmament programme.

49. The United States proposals (A/C.1/783) were drafted in very general terms. For example, they left open the question when and on what conditions the agreement on the peaceful use of the future production of fissionable materials would be reached. There was also the question whether that clause amounted to outlawing the production of nuclear weapons. If it did, the fact could only be welcomed. However, in that case, what was the purpose of postponing the ban on tests to a later stage? If the two bans did not enter into force simultaneously, the ban on tests should come first. In reality, the banning of tests did not require much further discussion, since the problem of control was solved automatically by scientific detection.

50. It was true that the prohibition of tests could not of itself reduce the level of armaments, but a partial success would facilitate more far-reaching measures. The Soviet proposal to prohibit tests offered an opportunity to take specific action of the kind called for by the representative of Japan at the 823rd meeting, and would help to prevent intensification of the nuclear armaments race.

51. To put it briefly, the United Nations should adopt the following general programme.

52. First, it should define and list the problems on which there was agreement. It could then see what decisions could now be taken and whether they could become an initial step towards an over-all agreement. Future discussions would deal with reconciling the still-divergent points of view.

53. Secondly, it should transmit the records of the discussions in the General Assembly to the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee with the recommendation that they should speed up their work on the basis of the views expressed at the eleventh session.

54. Thirdly, it should consider whether it would not be advisable to bring a larger number of States into the active work of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee.

55. Fourthly, it should consider whether a special session of the General Assembly should not be called to take up specific proposals submitted by the Disarmament Commission.

56. Poland, with a thousand years of history behind it, was now engaged in an effort to create a better future for its people and, by the same token, to strengthen peaceful coexistence. How much easier that task would be without the burden of armaments and without international tension. After the Conference of the Heads of Government of the four great Powers held at Geneva in July 1955, there had been an improvement in the international climate; today, when tension had again increased, new steps should be taken to put an end to the policy of armaments and alliances and to ensure the settlement of international disputes by negotiation only. Those were the goals which could be achieved by carrying out a constructive disarmament programme.

57. Mr. SHAHA (Nepal), after noting that that was the first time his delegation was participating in disarmament discussions, said that he had listened with great interest to the speakers in the debate and especially to the members of the Disarmament Commission. It was obvious that in the present debate the small countries could play only a limited part and that the main responsibility lay with the great Powers.

58. Nepal had never engaged in a war of aggression. Nevertheless, it had become involved in two world wars during the twentieth century and was therefore fully alive to the fact that its destiny was linked to that of the rest of mankind. Its losses and sufferings in those two conflicts gave Nepal a sincere desire for lasting peace. That was what prompted him to appeal to the great Powers.

59. A number of representatives had expressed disappointment at the little progress made by the Disarmament Commission. It was evident that during the past year the state of relations between the USSR and the Western Powers had not been helpful to progress. Nevertheless, there were certain encouraging signs which should not be overlooked. First, some agreement now appeared to have been reached on the level to which the great Powers' armed forces would be reduced during the first phase of disarmament. Again, everyone recognized that one of the objectives of nuclear disarmament was to protect the health of present and future generations from the ill-effects of atomic radiation. It was also agreed that the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes would contribute considerably to the general prosperity of mankind.

60. The hazards of atomic radiation were known to all. The International Congress of Human Geneticists, held at Copenhagen in autumn 1956, had stated that the damage produced by radiation on the hereditary material was real and should be taken into consideration in both the peaceful and the military use of nuclear energy. Recent experiments at the University of Colorado indicated that human cells were more vulner-

able to radiation than had previously been imagined. It was to be hoped that the great Powers would be able to come to an early agreement on a programme for the use and control of fissionable materials.

61. It also appeared that the differences of opinion concerning the elaboration of an effective international control system had been narrowed. President Eisenhower's suggestion for aerial inspection had, to some extent, been accepted by the USSR, and Prime Minister Bulganin's proposal for ground control posts had been partially accepted by the Western Powers. The combination of the two systems might well reduce the danger of surprise attack. Nevertheless, effective international control could be established only when an international agency had full access to the manufacture of nuclear weapons and products. In that connexion, the Franco-British plan of 19 March 1956 (DC/83, annex 2) deserved careful study by the Disarmament Commission. It was self-evident that a comprehensive disarmament plan was preferable to any partial agreement. If, however, under existing circumstances no agreement could be reached on a comprehensive plan, consideration should be given to the possibility of concluding a partial agreement, including an adequate system of control. No system of control could be effective if it did not take into account intercontinental ballistic missiles. The United States proposals of 14 January 1956 (A/C.1/783), which touched on that question, should be carefully examined. The Disarmament Commission should study the possibility of controlling all weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, guided missiles, interplanetary rockets and long-range submarines.

62. In short, the Disarmament Commission should give immediate consideration to the following points: (1) the reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments, and the limitation and prohibition of nuclear weapons; (2) the production of fissionable material, under international control, for peaceful uses, which could ultimately lead to the reduction of existing stockpiles; (3) the establishment of a control system for the purpose of preventing surprise attack; and (4) the new problems created by modern offensive weapons and interplanetary projectiles.

63. The solution of the disarmament problem should not be made dependent on the solution of other political problems. It was clear that progress made on one problem would facilitate the solution of others. Efforts should therefore be made to stop the armaments race as soon as possible. It was the earnest hope of his Government that a *rapprochement* between the Soviet Union and the Western Powers could be achieved in the light of the discussions at the present session of the General Assembly.

64. With regard to the draft resolution submitted by Canada, Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162), his delegation felt that any step towards ultimately banning nuclear weapons tests should be welcomed. The draft resolution was therefore a step in the right direction and deserved support.

65. Mr. KISELEV (Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic) observed that the question of disarmament was closely bound up with the settlement of all other important political problems. Many representatives had understandably expressed concern at the armaments race, the increase in military expenditure and the growing threat of a new war. The Byelorussian people, who had been the victims of aggression twice in a

single generation, were particularly desirous of having the question settled rapidly, the more so as the advent of weapons of unbelievable destructive power was an additional cause for anxiety.

66. The great Powers clearly had a particular responsibility in the matter. The failure so far to achieve results should be attributed to the United States and the countries supporting it, the NATO Powers, which were bent upon preventing an agreement. The obstructionist stand adopted by the Western Powers had been particularly noticeable ever since the USSR, desirous of saving mankind from the scourge of another war, had presented constructive proposals designed to meet the Western position half-way.

67. A few years previously, the Western Powers had been opposed to the prohibition of atomic weapons on the ground that the possession of such weapons offset their lag in the field of conventional armaments. They had therefore proposed in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission, as a first step, that the armed forces of the United States, the Soviet Union and China should be reduced to 1.5 million men each and those of France and the United Kingdom to 650,000 men each. When the Soviet Union, in its proposal of 10 May 1955 (DC/71, annex 15), had accepted those figures, the Western Powers had immediately abandoned their earlier proposals. In another field the Soviet Union, taking into account the great difficulties which the problem of the prohibition of atomic weapons entailed, and in the light of the statement made by Mr. Macmillan, United Kingdom Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, at the Conference of the Foreign Ministers of the four great Powers held at Geneva in October 1955, had proposed on 27 March 1956 (DC/83, annex 5) a reduction of armed forces and conventional armaments irrespective of any measures taken in the nuclear field. The United States had then proposed an increase in the levels of armed forces as follows: the United States, the USSR and China — 2.5 million men; France and the United Kingdom — 750,000 men. Moreover, the Western Powers had linked the settlement of the question to that of other political problems. Nevertheless, on 12 July 1956, the Soviet Union had accepted those figures as a first step.¹ Thereupon the Western Powers had again exerted themselves to prevent the agreement which had then been in sight, at the same time placing the blame for it upon the Soviet Union.

68. The obvious reason why the United States was reluctant to disarm was the fantastic profits which the armaments industry derived from the armaments race. According to United States experts, military output at present accounted for one-fifth of that country's total industrial production and, in the case of the United Kingdom, one-seventh. Mr. Charles E. Wilson, United States Secretary of Defense, had recently stated before a Senate Committee that during the fiscal year 1956-1957 the United States would be spending about \$100 million daily for military purposes. During the present fiscal year \$40,000 million would be appropriated for defence. For the fiscal year 1957-1958 over \$43,000 million would be allocated for military expenditure out of a total budget of \$73,600 million. Moreover, the thousands of millions of dollars allocated in the budget to the United States Atomic Energy Commission con-

¹ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission*, 57th meeting.

tributed to the atomic weapons race and constituted a serious danger to mankind.

69. The latest United States proposals (A/C.1/783) provided for a first-stage reduction of armed forces as part of the disarmament plan. However, the United States failed to mention a further reduction of armed forces in the second stage and made further reductions contingent upon a settlement of the major political problems. Moreover, the United States proposals did not provide for a total prohibition of nuclear weapons and relegated the question of a ban on nuclear test explosions and the destruction of existing stockpiles of nuclear weapons to an indefinite stage. They merely provided for a system of advance notice and registration of nuclear tests. Lastly, the programme for the peaceful uses of atomic energy was concerned with only a small portion of atomic energy, the major portion still being used for military purposes. In presenting its proposals, the United States apparently sought to divert attention from the real problems that had to be solved.

70. The United Kingdom representative, in his statement at the 822nd meeting, had attempted to misrepresent the position taken by the Soviet Union with regard to disarmament. He had failed to mention, *inter alia*, the Soviet Union proposal for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons. Referring to the Franco-British plan of 19 March 1956, he had not pointed out that it no longer embodied some of the earlier Western proposals and postponed the prohibition of atomic weapons to the final stage. Moreover, the plan seemed to legalize recourse to nuclear weapons since it envisaged their use in certain cases. It therefore appeared to be directed towards the same ends as the United States plan by postponing any solution of the problem indefinitely.

71. The USSR had presented a realistic plan (A/3366) through which the deadlock could easily be broken. That plan provided for a considerable reduction of the armed forces of the five great Powers; a one-third reduction of the armed forces of the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France stationed in Germany; a considerable reduction of the armed forces of those countries on the territories of NATO States and of the signatories of the Warsaw Treaty; the liquidation of military bases abroad; a reduction of military expenditure corresponding to that of the armed forces and armaments; the establishment of strict and effective international control; and, lastly, the total prohibition of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons and the immediate prohibition of test explosions. Whereas the Soviet Union had already given up its military bases abroad, the United States continued to strengthen its network of bases which were a clear threat to international peace and security. The latest USSR proposals should receive the consideration they deserved and would be warmly supported by the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR.

72. The United Kingdom representative had admitted at the 822nd meeting that there was public anxiety about the possible effects on health of nuclear test explosions. However, he had referred to the reports of the United Kingdom Medical Research Council and the United States National Academy of Sciences and had

derived optimistic conclusions from them. Nevertheless, many scientists had stated that nuclear test explosions were clearly a danger to mankind. For example, Professor Frederick Soddy, an eminent British scientist, had said that nuclear test explosions had very definite effects on health. In February 1956, it should be recalled, the Japanese Parliament had appealed for a prohibition of such tests. The Federation of American Scientists had also stated that an agreement should be reached on the prohibition of nuclear weapons tests as a preliminary step towards controlled disarmament. Professor Hermann Muller had stated before the United States National Academy of Sciences that radiation resulting from thermo-nuclear tests could cause tens of thousands of mutations fraught with danger for the next generation. Professor Joseph Rotblat of London University had reached the same conclusion.

73. In sum, a large number of scientists in Western countries considered it essential that nuclear tests should be stopped. For those reasons, the delegation of the Byelorussian SSR considered that the draft resolution submitted by Canada, Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162) was inadequate.

74. On the other hand, the USSR proposals paved the way towards ending the armaments race, removing the threat of an atomic and thermo-nuclear war, and strengthening peace amongst men. The delegation of the Byelorussian SSR supported those proposals as an important contribution to the cause of peace. It also supported the USSR draft resolution (A/C.1/L.161) that the Disarmament Commission and its Subcommittee should examine the proposals on the question and that a special session of the General Assembly should be convened on matters of disarmament.

75. Mr. MOCH (France), speaking in reply to a specific point, said that inaccurate statements did not acquire truth by mere dint of repetition. In particular, the truth could not be concealed by the Byelorussian representative's tendentious and erroneous description of the Franco-British plan of 19 March 1956. On behalf of the United Kingdom and France, he therefore protested against the Byelorussian representative's inaccurate analysis of the plan and recalled the unremitting efforts the two delegations had made directed towards conciliation.

76. One could indeed agree with the Byelorussian representative that, with the presence of some military bases abroad, there was the hidden threat of terrible massacres, and in that connexion the name of a European State which was not represented in the present debate might be mentioned. In connexion with the reports of scientists, it might also be recalled that for some years so-called scientists had accused certain States of using poisoned flies to infect the territory of foreign countries, although it should be added that such charges had soon been consigned to oblivion. However, the French delegation did not propose to deal with the subject on the basis of that type of argument; it had simply deemed it necessary not to let such unwarranted assertions go unanswered.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.