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**FIRST COMMITTEE, 827th
MEETING**

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

In the absence of the Chairman, Mr. Gunewardene (Ceylon), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

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. ZABIGAILO (Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republics) stated that the consideration of the most important problem of present international life—the question of disarmament—was a matter of deep concern to all the peoples of the world and had exceptional significance. The peoples of the world were concerned about putting an end to the armaments race and creating the conditions which would prevent the recurrence of a new world war. The Second World War had visited tremendous destruction, the loss of millions of lives, and innumerable hardships on the Ukrainian people, and indeed on all Soviet citizens. But the imperialist forces which were hostile to the cause of peace were hatching plans for the restoration of capitalism in the socialist countries and for the restoration of colonial rule over the countries of the East. He was reminded in particular of that situation by the latest events, such as the attack by the United Kingdom, France and Israel on Egypt, as well as the message of President Eisenhower to the United States Congress in which he had called for a so-called “Middle East programme”. Thus, new military conflicts were looming again because of the plans for the use of United States armed forces for the so-called defence of the national independence of Arab countries.

2. His Government was concerned over the future security of the Ukrainian people and had always sought effective ways and means which would prevent the repetition of the untold hardships of two world wars. For that reason, his Government had always attributed special significance to the question of the practical solution of the problem of disarmament, considering it

one of the most fundamental problems before the United Nations.

3. The proposals submitted by the Soviet Union on 17 November 1956 (A/3366), had been prompted by a spirit of good will and a desire to achieve success in the negotiations. The proposals served the interests of all the peoples of the world, but some countries attempted to belittle their significance by arguing that the Soviet Union tried to avoid any agreement on an effective system of control and inspection.

4. Representatives of the Western Powers had called international control the crux and the fundamental issue of the problem of disarmament, and viewed it as the keystone of any disarmament programme. In the opinion of his delegation, the fundamental problem of control was to ensure that States which had assumed obligations under the disarmament agreement should carry them out promptly and unconditionally. The first real prerequisite of effective control of disarmament was its close adaptation to the measures of disarmament previously agreed upon. The system of control must be closely related to them; otherwise, it became a mere fiction. Furthermore, control activities should not go beyond the powers required to supervise strictly the implementation of the measures of disarmament agreed upon. The functions and powers of the control agency should be clearly defined and strictly limited to supervision of the full implementation by States parties to the disarmament agreement of the obligations which they had assumed. Only in that manner could there be a strict system of international control.

5. Referring to recent statements made by the representative of the United Kingdom, he recalled that in 1946, at the first session of the General Assembly, the Soviet Union had proposed (A/C.1/87) the establishment, within the framework of the Security Council, of a system of international control whose function would be to supervise the fulfilment by States of the agreement on the reduction of armed forces and armaments and the prohibition of atomic weapons. He pointed out that in all its subsequent proposals the Soviet Union had paid a great deal of attention to international control as a means of ensuring the fulfilment by States of the obligations which they would have assumed in the field of the reduction of armaments and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons. In particular he referred to the USSR proposals of 10 May 1955 (DC/71, annex 15), 27 March 1956 (DC/83, annex 5) and 17 November 1956 (A/3366). In its proposals, the Soviet Union had suggested for the first time a practical solution for preventing a surprise attack or an atomic war. His delegation believed that the establishment of that kind of control would be an important initial step towards the creation of conditions which would ensure a peaceful life for all the peoples of the world. The Soviet proposals on control were not limited to the problem of preventing surprise attack however; they provided also for the establishment of control over all

measures for the reduction of armaments and armed forces and for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen bombs which would be provided for in the disarmament agreement.

6. The proposed international control agency envisaged in the Soviet proposals would call for a wide-ranging network of institutions. Apart from its central board, it would have special branches in the capitals of countries parties to the disarmament agreement and would have in each of those countries a staff of inspectors selected on an international basis. He emphasized the importance of the activities of the agency and pointed out that it should have a very clear-cut sphere of competence. With regard to the powers of the control agency, it should be given full and free access to data on budget appropriations for military purposes, as well as the right to go into details with regard to the manner in which the executive branch of the government allocated those funds to the various branches of the military establishment. The agency would also include an inspectorate which would keep a constant check on all the ways in which the Governments parties to the disarmament agreement fulfilled the obligations they had assumed.

7. He dwelt at some length on the powers of the inspectors of the agency and their free access at any time to any facilities subject to control. An inspector of the international control agency would be an official sent to perform official duties on the territory of a given State; his functions would essentially be those of supervision.

8. The Ukrainian delegation was convinced that the Soviet formula in the matter was indispensable, because it fully met the aims of control. The Soviet proposal of 27 March 1956 (DC/83, annex 5) had clearly indicated the objects which should be controlled: military units; stores of military equipment and ammunition; land, naval and air bases; factories manufacturing conventional armaments and ammunition. Replying to some statements made by certain representatives of the Western Powers that the Soviet proposals had not gone far enough, he declared that those representatives were concerned not so much with control as with something quite different—with a form of supervision having little in common with genuine disarmament. He supported the proposals of the Soviet Union because they pointed out the way to an effective and strict system of international control over disarmament. From the documents of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee it was clear that the Soviet proposals took into account the position of the other Powers participating in the discussions and made allowance for the views of the Western countries. In its statement of 17 November 1956, the Soviet Union expressed its willingness to consider the question of aerial inspection in a zone on both sides of the line separating the armed forces of the countries participating in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) from those of the Warsaw Treaty countries.

9. He summed up the Soviet proposals in the following manner: they viewed the establishment of international control as a matter closely connected with the implementation of all measures agreed upon for the reduction of armaments and armed forces and the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons; they ensured the initiation and establishment of control measures before the first disarmament measures were carried out; they ensured the establishment of an effective system designed to prevent any surprise attacks by one State upon another; and lastly, they clearly defined the functions

of the control organ and conferred upon it wide powers which would enable it smoothly to discharge all its functions.

10. The Western Powers' proposals were far removed from the establishment of a true system of international control. They were characterized by a complete refusal to take any concrete measures for the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons and for effective cuts in armaments and armed forces. With regard to the international control agency, the Western Powers had conferred upon it functions which went far beyond genuine questions of disarmament. The control organ would create obstacles to the implementation of the disarmament measures agreed upon, and would be called upon to gather military information as a first step. The United States proposals of 3 April 1956 (DC/83, annex 6) would call upon the control agency to collect information about the military establishment of the countries which were parties to the agreements, as well as information about factories, plants, industrial centres, means of communications and transport. As far as concrete disarmament itself was concerned, that would be postponed to the indefinite future. He charged that the United States proposals did not aim at attempting to narrow the gap between the different positions in order to find a speedy solution to the disarmament problem. He expressed the hope that Soviet proposals would find support.

11. Sir Leslie MUNRO (New Zealand) stated that he wished to be brief since his country's representative had made a lengthy statement during the debate on the item at the tenth session (802nd meeting). He noted, however, that since then the international atmosphere had deteriorated and that the optimism widely shared following the Conference of the Heads of Government of the four great Powers at Geneva in 1955 had contained an element of wishful thinking. It was unfortunate that the great Powers could not take advantage of the better atmosphere engendered by the Geneva Conference to make greater progress in disarmament. It had become clear that disarmament would not come about until the Powers principally concerned were satisfied that an agreement on disarmament was in their long-term interests.

12. The Western Powers had always felt that a disarmament agreement without a fool-proof system of control and inspection was unacceptable. New Zealand agreed with their view that an attempt to put into effect an uncontrolled programme of disarmament would tend to increase tension and thus defeat its purpose. The Soviet Union had consistently rejected practical proposals designed to ensure that the control was in fact effective. He was inclined to think, perhaps optimistically, that the Soviet Union was gradually coming around to the view that an international programme of disarmament was worth having, even if it entailed the subjection of all Powers concerned to an effective system of inspection and control. The Soviet counter-proposal on aerial inspection was perhaps a step in that direction although, as the representative of Belgium (822nd meeting) and others had pointed out, it was a timid step. He was pleased to note that the Soviet Union had apparently abandoned the argument that aerial inspection was bad in principle and that it could actually increase tension.

13. In his opinion, an effectively controlled, balanced and comprehensive system of disarmament, universally applied, would automatically increase the security of all countries. That was not necessarily the case with

schemes of partial disarmament. To be acceptable, such schemes must be subject to effective control and must not accentuate existing imbalances or create new ones.

14. The "first step" towards disarmament which had the widest public appeal and which would be the easiest to police was the limitation of nuclear weapons tests and early action along those lines would be responsive to a world-wide consensus of public opinion, which was satisfied, rightly or wrongly, that such hazards existed, and demanded, therefore, that a limit be put to the release of new radio-active material into the atmosphere. His delegation agreed with the United Kingdom view that, in the absence of a comprehensive disarmament agreement, consideration should be given to the possibility of limiting tests outside the context of such an agreement. The useful proposal of Canada, Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162), together with the more radical proposal, submitted by the Soviet Union, should be referred to the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee with a view to seeking an agreement on practical steps within the coming few months.

15. He agreed with the representative of Poland (825th meeting) that the new proposals advanced by the United States (A/C.1/783) were worded in very general terms, but he differed from him in that he regarded that as a merit. Not only had they been presented in a notably moderate and non-polemical speech, but also they were remarkably flexible. In short, it seemed to him they offered a serious basis for negotiation. He hoped those proposals would be accepted as such by the Soviet Union.

16. He agreed with the suggestions advanced by the representative of the United Kingdom for a study of the problems involved in the reduction of the so-called conventional armaments. In all the long debates of the Committee remarkably little attention had been paid to the conventional armaments—ships, planes and artillery. To study their reduction would be timely.

17. Referring to the formal proposal which had been advanced by the Soviet Union for a special session of the Assembly to take up the question of disarmament (A/C.1/L.161), he considered that nothing had more clearly emerged from the debate than the recognition of the need for further serious negotiations among the relatively small group of countries which were sometimes described as those principally concerned. He suggested that if the small group of countries which could make or break the chances of a disarmament agreement negotiated freely, preferably in private, the regular session of the Assembly in September would be ready to put aside its other business in order to translate the success of that group into a general agreement. It was, therefore, not the time for the Soviet proposal.

18. Referring to the role and composition of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, he could not share the views of several speakers that the Commission should have a substantially larger membership than the Security Council. He pointed out that if an increase in the membership of the Council were effected, the Commission would be enlarged automatically. As far as the Sub-Committee was concerned, his delegation regarded its composition as correct in present circumstances. In his delegation's view the private meetings of that small body still offered the best hope of real progress.

19. With the exception of the statement made by the representative of the Soviet Union (821st meeting), most of the speeches had been constructive and respon-

sible including the statement of the Polish representative, although he was far from accepting all of his arguments. 20. Despite feelings of frustration accentuated by speeches like that of the Soviet Union representative, he detected no slackening in the Assembly's determination to press on towards agreement. The struggle for disarmament was an essential part of the struggle to preserve human civilization and, to use an understatement, was worth continuing.

21. Mr. BERNARDES (Brazil) stated that the fact that ten years had been spent in tackling the problem of disarmament was a proof of its difficult and challenging nature. The question now was whether disarmament on a world-wide basis was a possibility at all. Disarmament was indeed a possibility, but only on a limited scale. The United Nations perhaps had been too ambitious in planning ahead for total disarmament. No country could commit itself in detail with respect to such vital matters as disarmament five or ten years in advance. No nation or group of nations possessed the necessary power to ensure that world events would move in conformity with disarmament plans. How, for example, could one devise a tight system of control for nuclear weapons when nuclear science itself was in the process of rapid development? Day by day scientific discoveries rendered current methods obsolete. It had also been ascertained that no control was possible over stockpiles of fissionable materials produced in the past. That was an insurmountable barrier to an effective system of control and therefore to a total disarmament plan.

22. In that connexion he suggested aiming at total disarmament, but planning for limited disarmament. That principle could apply both to nuclear weapons and to conventional armaments. The next step would be to concentrate on nuclear rather than on conventional weapons, since nuclear weapons presented the most acute danger to the very existence of the civilized world and since only a few nations were in a position at present to manufacture such weapons. Hence it might prove easier to establish, as a preliminary step, some system of control and inspection while the production of nuclear weapons was still restricted to a few countries. A tight system of control, tested and found effective, would have to be in existence before a beginning was made in reducing, restricting or prohibiting the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons. The same principle applied also to conventional armaments.

23. He urged that all efforts be mobilized to put the International Atomic Energy Agency into operation as soon as possible with a view to observing closely how its systems of control and inspection functioned. If it functioned efficiently, a great step would have been taken on the road towards disarmament. It was necessary to go step by step without trying to foresee exactly what the next phase in the disarmament problem would be. The second phase would depend largely on how the first—the testing of the system of controls envisaged for the agency—would be carried out. One should avoid the temptation to plan every detail in advance and to attempt to predict every possible loophole in an international system of control and inspection.

24. The first phase of disarmament should comprise three parts: first, to test the system of controls of the International Atomic Energy Agency; secondly, to apply it to the wider field of disarmament; and, thirdly, to divert to peaceful uses all future production of fissionable materials. The second phase would follow in due course, but should not be planned at the present time. The argument might be advanced that, by dealing only

with nuclear weapons in the first phase, the situation concerning conventional armaments might upset the existing balance of power in the world. He would refute such an argument on the ground that conventional weapons were bound to be used only in local wars and that the great Powers, in the event of a war among themselves, would employ nuclear weapons. If the necessity was felt to couple certain restrictions in the nuclear field with corresponding measures in the field of conventional armaments, he would suggest that the first phase include a ban on the export of conventional arms. Such a ban would render the waging of local wars more difficult or less deadly.

25. The size of the armed forces of the great Powers was not relevant at the moment. The more the great Powers progressed in nuclear power, the more they would reduce the size of their armed forces of their own volition. No clear-cut directive was necessary now for that purpose. However, if an attempt were made to establish a maximum limit to the armed forces of the leading Powers, the risk would be run of creating the impression that they were abiding by the decisions taken in the United Nations, when in reality they would be just following their interests with no great advantage to world disarmament or to the lessening of international tension.

26. It would be impracticable at the present time to legislate in definite form on the question of nuclear tests. It was advisable to apply the principle of limited progress. The joint draft resolution of Canada, Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162) appeared to be sufficient for the present. With respect to the question of radioactive fall-out, he contended that the necessary measures to safeguard human life would be taken with the unanimous consent of all the nations once the effects of radiation were ascertained.

27. Mr. THORS (Iceland) stated that, having no armed forces, Iceland had nothing to disarm. However, it was deeply concerned about an armaments race which might lead to another world war. With the stockpiles of atomic and hydrogen bombs and all the other diabolic forms of modern weapons, it was all too evident what fate would then await mankind.

28. The United Nations had deliberated for the past ten years and had passed a great many high-sounding resolutions on disarmament. But while the production of peaceful resolutions went on, the production of armaments flowed on incessantly.

29. Referring to the development of most modern weapons, including the intercontinental ballistic missile, the earth satellite and the atomic submarine, he observed that all those almost supernatural inventions had been developed during the past ten years while the United Nations had been debating about disarmament. Who wanted the present wild arms race? The United Nations had been founded to save future generations from the scourge of war, yet it had done nothing positive regarding that vital matter. Tension remained in world affairs while the "cold war" lingered on. If the wall of armaments could be lowered and tranquillity and trust restored, enormous amounts of money could be allocated to material and social progress everywhere. Reduction of national armaments could also make possible, on a permanent basis, the continuation and strengthening of

the United Nations forces, which would become vigilant guards of peace and security all over the world.

30. The world had two alternative roads: one was the road of disputes and conflicts which was bound to lead to war and the extinction of civilization; the other road led to peaceful co-operation among all nations under the United Nations. There was practically no limit to the prosperity and progress that could become the share of humanity if its leaders would agree to live in peace and understanding.

31. Reviewing the recent discussions of the United Nations regarding disarmament, he felt that the international atmosphere had deteriorated considerably since December 1955, but temperatures went up and down. General Assembly resolution 914 (X) of 16 December 1955, full of good intentions and ideas, had been taken up by the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, without any concrete results. The current discussions in the First Committee, however, indicated that there seemed to be a few, but most important, aspects on which agreement might be reached. Those aspects included: first, some initial reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces limiting the forces of the United States, the USSR, the United Kingdom and France, with proportionate reduction by all other nations; secondly, the limitation of nuclear test explosions and their eventual registration as a preliminary step; thirdly, the control of fissionable materials and commitments to use all such material in the future for peaceful purposes exclusively.

32. Regarding all those points, the main obstacle was what kind of control was possible and acceptable. That point, on which the crucial question of mutual confidence revolved, could not be solved in the Committee. It had to come about gradually, as disarmament must come gradually.

33. He was prepared to vote for the draft resolution submitted by Canada, Japan and Norway (A/C.1/L.162). Under the present circumstances, it was the wisest procedure, and the one most likely to obtain some results, to leave the matter of nuclear test explosions in the hands of the great Powers in the Sub-Committee. Continued debate in the General Assembly might only lead to continued controversy and would hinder the realistic treatment of the problem. Hence a special session of the General Assembly on disarmament, as proposed by the USSR (A/C.1/L.161), would appear to be unwarranted. It would be best to let the Sub-Committee come forward with some positive and progressive proposals for consideration at the next regular session, where they would be given priority. The great Powers were the parties in the fantastic arms race which caused anxiety and fear to all the nations in the world.

34. The danger of war grew in proportion to the armaments race. He would ask the great Powers to get down to business and to take the first steps towards disarmament for which the world had been waiting. Theirs was the power. He hoped theirs would also be the glory.

35. In conclusion, he urged the States represented in the Committee to adopt, instead of many resolutions, the mental resolution: there shall be disarmament. He hoped that all the nations of the world were willing to pay the price of peace.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.