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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) (*continued*)

1. Mr. BRUCAN (Romania) observed that the achievement of an agreement on the vital issue of disarmament must not be made dependent on the settlement of other outstanding international issues. The international situation was of such a nature that an agreement on disarmament might lead to the settlement of other issues, thus contributing substantially to the lessening of tension between States. Nations would be relieved of the unbearable burden of military expenditure and of the atmosphere created in order to justify them.

2. The fact that the Romanian People's Republic was engaged in the building up of a new economy and culture which required the mobilization of all its resources and energies demonstrated its attitude toward the disarmament question. Romania welcomed any practical proposal that would pave the way towards disarmament.

3. The Committee had before it the proposals of the USSR on disarmament and the lessening of international tension (A/3366), as well as a memorandum of the United States (A/C.1/783). It was obvious that real possibilities had been created for progress toward disarmament. Disarmament required, above all, an agreement between those two countries, although other States could play significant roles in that connexion. Romania fully supported the proposals made by the Soviet Union. Through their constructive and concrete nature and their sincere desire to meet the other parties' position half-way, those proposals constituted a sound basis for fruitful negotiations and agreement. His Government would examine and give due attention to the United States memorandum.

4. There was a close correlation between a nation's position on disarmament and its other actions in

relation to foreign policy. Indeed, actions of its foreign policy which inevitably involved new incitements to an armaments race and new efforts to set up naval and air bases on foreign territories were incompatible with the cause of disarmament.

5. The concrete aspects of disarmament were complex and included the question of the prohibition of atomic and hydrogen weapons, the question of banning nuclear weapons tests, the question of the reduction of the armed forces of the great Powers and of the corresponding reduction of the armed forces of the other Powers, the question of the liquidation of air and naval bases on foreign territories, and the question of international control. To those problems had been added that of controlling earth satellites and intercontinental missiles as insisted upon by the United States. The practical and efficient way to break the present deadlock and to avoid the complications and the delays which led to it would be to avoid linking the settlement of one aspect of the disarmament question with an overall settlement. By choosing, as a starting point, a question that was relatively less complicated and nearer to settlement, it would be possible to effect an agreement on that particular question. Such a procedure would undoubtedly exert a positive influence on the settlement of other questions. Past experience of negotiations on disarmament had demonstrated the futility of making the settlement of one question dependent on that of other questions or on over-all settlement.

6. Under the circumstances the easiest and least complicated starting point would be the banning of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests, since such a ban would not involve any form of inspection or control and since there was nothing that might hinder or delay an agreement on the question. Moreover, there already existed a partial consensus of opinion in that regard. Nor was there any reason why such prohibition should be linked to the settlement of any complex question such as the production and use of atomic and hydrogen weapons. The decision to stop the tests immediately would be the first step towards the banning of nuclear weapons, including the prohibition of their production and the complete destruction of existing stockpiles.

7. He realized that such an agreement should include the establishment of a strict and effective system of international control. What puzzled him, however, was the fact that the United States memorandum did not mention, even as a distant target, the banning of nuclear weapons.

8. His delegation considered that there was a certain vista of hope with regard to the reduction of the armed forces of the great Powers. Naturally it was necessary to reduce armaments accordingly. Although modern military techniques had altered the effectiveness of armed forces, the fact was that wars were waged first of all by armed forces. By the same token, the effectiveness of armed forces might influence the heavy burden weighing on the economies of various countries.

His Government had in 1955 and 1956 reduced its armed forces by 60,000 men, thereby making available manpower and money for housing projects and other social and economic activities. It was desirable that other countries should follow suit. His delegation supported the principle of limiting the armed forces of all countries.

9. Some representatives had raised the question of earth satellites and outerspace weapons. The existence of military bases on foreign territories, however, constituted a much more immediate and direct threat. It was necessary that due importance should be attached to the liquidation of such bases.

10. The Romanian People's Republic was particularly interested in the achievement of a European collective security system. While European security would be considerably strengthened by the conclusion of an international agreement regarding the reduction of armaments, the creation of a European collective security system would constitute great progress towards a successful solution of the disarmament problem. The Warsaw Treaty was a conditional treaty, which would be liquidated as soon as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) had been disbanded. However, since the Western Powers had no such intention, a practical starting point would be the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the NATO and Warsaw Treaty countries.

11. The foregoing was meant to emphasize the necessity for creating an appropriate framework for the pending negotiations. The special bodies of the United Nations in the field of disarmament had obviously been inefficient. He felt that one of the causes of the past failures had been the restricted membership of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, which did not reflect even the main positions and interests in that field. Since it was impossible to achieve disarmament without the co-operation of all countries, it was essential to widen the membership of those organs.

12. In conclusion, he reiterated that he would support all efforts aimed at promoting the cause of disarmament.

13. Mr. BRILEJ (Yugoslavia) said that it was scarcely necessary to emphasize the importance of the disarmament problem and the increasing sense of urgency concerning it. As the United Kingdom representative had stated at the tenth session (801st meeting), the world could not afford to allow the problems of disarmament to continue to pile up while ways and means were sought to break down the political and scientific barriers in the way of a comprehensive disarmament agreement; it was neither safe nor wise any longer to delay all action. Indeed, it had almost become a truism to say that the present scale of armaments, the armaments race and the constant introduction of new and more formidable means of mass destruction not only reflected, and arose from, world tensions, but were a major contributing factor to those tensions. The recent international crisis had made it disturbingly evident that a world divided into two heavily armed camps was constantly on the brink of a general conflagration and that local military action could easily touch off a conflict of unforeseeable proportions. The economic burden involved and the emergence of new weapons which rendered the problem still more complicated every day were further proof of the truly dramatic need for practical steps. The lack of such steps to date was one of the more distressing

aspects of the world situation. Despite the work of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee and the significant *rapprochement* of views on some aspects of the problem, no practical achievements had taken place.

14. The causes of that lack of progress could not be sought solely in the unpropitious general international climate. It was increasingly recognized that some measure of progress in disarmament was essential for a decrease in world tension and a solution of other major problems. His delegation felt very strongly that efforts should be made in both directions and that both sets of problems should be tackled as they presented themselves. The fully justified caution displayed by the Powers in regard to the problem of disarmament did not warrant a tendency to view international issues, including that problem, in the light of considerations from which the possibility of war had not been excluded. Such an approach obscured the vistas of progress.

15. Another obstacle to practical achievement in disarmament had been the tendency to consider the problem solely in terms of comprehensive plans. Although efforts in that direction should be pursued, sweeping answers had tended to make the problem even more complex. Such efforts had not only impeded more modest progress, but had imparted a kind of unreality to many of the debates on disarmament. Comprehensive plans in a way reflected the time when the problem had been dealt with more on the plane of the struggle for world public opinion than on that of practical realization. It was to be hoped that those times were past, although the atmosphere in the Committee had not been altogether encouraging in that respect. Of course, a basic pre-condition for any progress was to do away, once and for all, with the propaganda paraphernalia which had too long attended the discussions on the subject.

16. There appeared to be general agreement that further and determined efforts were in order. The representatives of the United States and the USSR appeared to agree that such efforts would lead to tangible results if made in the right direction. Partial initial agreements, he thought, had been made possible by the *rapprochement* achieved with regard to certain aspects of the disarmament problem. Such agreements could be put into effect without being made dependent on subsequent ones. They would be more than confidence-building measures in that they would be expected gradually to lead to general disarmament. In that connexion, he recalled the proposal made by his delegation in the Disarmament Commission in July 1956 (DC/92) which envisaged, in particular, early agreement on and implementation of such initial disarmament measures as were feasible and such forms and degrees of control as those measures required, with regard to (a) reduction of conventional armaments and armed forces; (b) the cessation of experimental explosions of nuclear weapons, as well as other practical measures in the field of nuclear armaments; and (c) a reduction of military expenditures. The principal advantage of such an approach was that it sought to do no more than was feasible in the existing circumstances and did not make that dependent upon future contingencies. Such measures would be bound to improve the international atmosphere and facilitate the solution of other problems, which would in turn create more propitious conditions for further steps in the field of disarmament. The application of such initial

measures would also make it possible to acquire valuable technical experience. Such measures could be so devised as not to alter the existing balance of forces and would thereby avoid one of the major difficulties attendant upon more comprehensive plans. A further advantage was that it should be less difficult to find acceptable forms and degrees of control over implementation.

17. Several members of the Disarmament Commission had drawn attention to the advantages of such an approach, and their statements seemed to confirm the importance of directing efforts towards initial steps in those areas where the existing measure of agreement was the most substantial. One such area was that of conventional armaments and armed forces, where there no longer appeared to be real disagreement on the question of initial levels. The same was true of the closely related question of the reduction of military expenditure. With regard to certain extremely important initial measures in the field of nuclear armaments, there appeared to be some possibility of agreement regarding the cessation, or at least the limitation and regulation, of experimental explosions of nuclear weapons. His delegation felt strongly that greater efforts should be made to ensure that all production of fissionable materials was used only for non-military purposes. Although many issues remained to be resolved in connexion with inspection and control, it should not prove too difficult to reach agreement on the degrees and forms of control required for partial initial measures.

18. As the United Nations endeavoured to move the problem on to the level of practical achievement, certain questions would of course become even more insistent. One such question, of the greatest importance, was that the disarmament problem, which was principally one concerning the armaments of the great Powers, was being dealt with in the absence of the People's Republic of China, which had not so far been in a position to make its vital contribution to a matter directly affecting its interests. The question was one of simple realism.

19. In conclusion, he reiterated the responsibility of the members of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission and, indeed, of the United Nations as a whole to advance to the stage of practical achievement. They must make a determined effort to free mankind from the nightmare of an atomic holocaust.

20. Mr. SAWADA (Japan) said that disarmament was undoubtedly one of the most important general problems in the quest for enduring peace. His Government was convinced that the United Nations should not be discouraged at the lack of success achieved by the work accomplished. Paying tribute to the wisdom and untiring efforts of the members of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee, he observed that the fact that progress had been slow was a proof of the difficulties involved.

21. One of the points on which he wished to comment was what he understood to be the recognition by the General Assembly of the inseparable relationship between conventional armaments and nuclear weapons. His Government and people, being the first and only victim of atomic bombing, were probably more aware than others of the disasters which nuclear weapons could bring upon mankind. It was their ardent hope that any production and use of such weapons could be prohibited forthwith, but they recognized that such immediate prohibition was impracticable in the absence

of a scientific method of detecting those weapons and while mutual confidence among nations was not yet mature. Moreover, such prohibition would have to be preceded by an acceptance by all parties concerned of an effective system of inspection, which had unfortunately proved to be one of the major points at issue.

22. As long as the use of nuclear weapons was permitted, conventional armaments would naturally play a secondary role, although they were by no means entirely obsolete. It was important that all nations should pursue ways and means to control and reduce their conventional armaments. However, it was difficult to see how any nation could reduce such weapons while the more powerful ones possessed by a certain number of nations were left unfettered. Indeed, it was not logical to separate the two, and his Government believed that any scheme for disarmament should cover conventional armaments and nuclear weapons simultaneously.

23. While immediate prohibition of the production and use of nuclear weapons might not be practicable in the absence of a scientific method of detection and of an effective system of inspection, mankind could not afford to wait forever. Human beings ought to be the masters of science, and not *vice versa*. The United Nations should make every effort to encourage and promote scientific study and research in that field, so that at least one of the difficulties in the way of eventual prohibition could be promptly removed.

24. With regard to the matter of the importance of the political climate, the United Nations should proceed with whatever measures of disarmament were deemed to be permissible under the existing climate and to be conducive to the securing of world peace, which was the purpose of disarmament. No agreement on the subject could have any foundation if the existing political situation did not substantiate it. Any agreement on disarmament without a sufficient guarantee of compliance would betray, rather than promote, the cause of peace. Progress on disarmament depended essentially on full agreement and mutual confidence among a very small number of major Powers. The leaders of such Powers, and in particular of the Powers possessing nuclear weapons, should talk more frankly and constructively than ever. If a measure of agreement was secured at such a level, the rest could very well be left to the relevant organs of the United Nations. No useful purpose could be served by convening a special international meeting on disarmament in addition to the organs already established within the United Nations.

25. Unfortunately, recent events did not facilitate the efforts toward disarmament. However, the USSR proposals made in November (A/3366) seemed to indicate an additional step towards a possible meeting of minds. He was also encouraged by President Eisenhower's reaffirmation of the readiness of the United States for an agreement which would reverse the trend toward even more devastating nuclear weapons. In the circumstances, his delegation strongly favoured continuation of the tasks of the Disarmament Commission in the light of the discussion in the First Committee.

26. The problem of test explosions of nuclear weapons was of serious concern to his Government and people for reasons which were well known. They were particularly concerned that such tests were currently being made by unilateral decision of a country, with or without prior notification and precautionary measures. The psychological effect alone of any agreement for

international control of test explosions for military purposes would be tremendous. Although there had been no known damage to human health from such explosions since the tragic event in connexion with the Bikini tests because the countries concerned had not failed to take sufficient precautionary measures, medical experts and scientists were not quite satisfied with the assertion that the current scale of test explosions would not cause damage to human bodies. Aside from the danger to human health, one should not lose sight of possible economic losses to the fishing and other industries which no precautionary measure could prevent. Moreover, as long as such tests were permitted, the march of inventions of vicious weapons would never be halted.

27. He renewed the appeal for the cessation of such tests at the earliest possible date. His delegation had been encouraged by the emphasis placed on the importance of that problem and on the role it could play in the general progress toward disarmament. It believed that the time had come for the United Nations to take some practical steps in that direction. Since the matter was currently affecting not only human health and welfare but also the economic and industrial life of nations, the General Assembly itself should take up the matter and seek an agreement in general outline, rather than transfer it to the Disarmament Commission or the Sub-Committee, which were primarily concerned with the problem of disarmament. It was the strong hope of his Government and people that all kinds of

test explosions, large or small, should cease forthwith. His delegation sought a practical and reliable arrangement by which every Member would abide and from which progress could be made. He urged the Committee to agree, as a minimum, to establish procedures for prior notification of all kinds of test explosions to a competent organ of the United Nations, to provide absolute safety for human health under international supervision, and to ensure that no economic losses would be inflicted upon other parties. Such a step should not only be practicable, but would also pave the way for the eventual elimination of nuclear warfare, a universally supported objective.

28. Mr. BIOY (Argentina), emphasizing the peaceful tradition of his country, said that in international disputes Argentina had always endeavoured to avoid the danger of conflict by proposing arbitration or other ways of reaching understanding. His delegation was ready to support any measures which, through disarmament, could promote peace. It did not want measures that would lead to war. Certain recommendations, if carried out, might expose nations to attack by an aggressor. While he did not wish to be discouraging, he could not conceal his feeling that the most efficient course would be to disarm certain persons of their desire for conquest and conflict.

29. The CHAIRMAN, in the absence of any objection, declared that the list of speakers would be closed at 6 p.m. on Friday, 18 January.

The meeting rose at 4.25 p.m.