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PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE FIFTEENTH REGULAR SESSION OF
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY: ITEM PROPOSED BY THE UNION OF
SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

DISARMAMENT AND THE SITUATION WITH REGARD TO THE FULFILMENT
OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION OF 20 NOVEMBER 1959 ON
THE QUESTION OF DISARMAMENT

Letter dated 27 June from the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, addressed to the
Secretary-General

On the instructions of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, I have the honour to request the inclusion in the agenda of the fifteenth regular session of the General Assembly, as an item of an important and urgent character, of the following: "Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of the General Assembly resolution of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament."

In accordance with rule 20 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I attach an explanatory memorandum.

(Signed) A. GROMYKO
Minister for Foreign Affairs of the
Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

EXPLANATORY MEMORANDUM

The Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics considers it desirable that the General Assembly should consider as an item of an important and urgent character, the following: "Disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of the General Assembly resolution of 20 November 1959 on the question of disarmament".

In September 1959 the Soviet Union presented to the United Nations a programme of disarmament the implementation of which would have meant the liquidation of all means of waging war and would thereby have ensured inviolable peace on earth.

After consideration of the Soviet proposals, the General Assembly, on 20 November 1959, unanimously approved a resolution calling upon Governments to make every effort to achieve a constructive solution of the problem of general and complete disarmament, thus giving ground for the hope that concrete results would at long last be achieved in the sphere of disarmament.

The Soviet Union not only put forward a plan which showed clearly the way to the final solution of the disarmament problem, but also made a substantial and practical contribution to the cause of disarmament. Without awaiting the conclusion of an international agreement on disarmament, the Soviet Union decided early in 1960 to make a further major unilateral reduction in its armed forces, amounting to one-third. This decision is at present being put into effect. Thus the Soviet Union, for its part, has done everything possible to help to carry into effect the General Assembly resolution on disarmament and to create a more favourable atmosphere for successful negotiation in the ten-nation Disarmament Committee.

Unfortunately, however, the negotiations in the ten-nation Disarmament Committee have not justified the hopes placed on them by the peoples. What is the reason for this situation?

The reason is that, as the entire course of the negotiations shows, the Governments of the United States of America and the other Western Powers, acting in concert, showed no desire to come to agreement on the implementation of any real measures of disarmament. Instead, they drew the Committee into a discussion of their own proposals on control and inspection without disarmament. What the Western Powers represented in the ten-nation Committee thus sought to achieve was not disarmament under international control, as proposed by the USSR and many other countries, but control over armaments.

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In order to break the deadlock reached in the solution of the disarmament problem, the Soviet Government, in line with the programme it presented in the United Nations General Assembly in September 1959, prepared for the Paris Summit meeting a new series of proposals on general and complete disarmament.

The Soviet Union endeavoured to meet the desires of the Western Powers on a number of important points. In particular, it unreservedly accepted France's view that the means of delivering nuclear weapons should be prohibited and destroyed first. Although the Soviet Union has an advantage in possessing the most up-to-date and effective means of delivering nuclear weapons, it declared itself willing to prohibit and destroy all means of delivering nuclear weapons, including intercontinental ballistic missiles, at the very first stage of disarmament.

In its desire to meet the wishes of the Western Powers, the Soviet Union set forth in detail in its new proposals provisions relating to the organization of effective international control over disarmament measures. The Soviet Government also took into account the ideas put forward by other parties in the negotiations on the subject of measures for the preservation of peace and security in conditions of general and complete disarmament.

What was the answer of the Western Powers represented in the ten-nation Committee to the Soviet Union's new proposals?

The United States and the other Western Powers not only failed to take a single step to meet the Soviet Union's position, but did everything in their power to prevent any practical discussion of the new Soviet proposals, which in great measure meet the desires of the Western Powers themselves. What is more, by resorting to endless procrastination and evading any discussion of the substance of disarmament problems, they made it clear that their intention was to torpedo the negotiations in the Committee.

Experience of the work of the ten-nation Committee has shown that the United States of America and the other Western Powers participating in the negotiations in the Committee manifestly have no desire for the prohibition and destruction of nuclear weapons, the liquidation of armies or the liquidation of military bases on foreign territory.

Thus, the position of the Western Powers doomed the work of the ten-nation Committee to complete futility.

In these circumstances Mr. N.S. Krushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, addressed to the Heads of Government of the United Kingdom, France, the United States of America, Italy and Canada personal messages urgently appealing for the most serious examination of the situation in the ten-nation Committee.

It is intolerable, the Soviet Government feels compelled to point out, that a Committee instructed to examine the paramount and most urgent problem of contemporary international relations should have worked for a considerable period to no purpose and should be unable to agree on a single practical issue of disarmament.

Quite obviously, the Soviet Government could not allow participation in the ten-nation Committee by the Soviet Union, whose sincere desire for disarmament is universally known, to be used as a screen to conceal from the peoples the real concerns of the Western Powers, which have nothing to do with disarmament.

The Soviet Union and the other socialist countries participating in the work of the ten-nation Committee were brought face to face with the fact that the Western participants in the committee plainly did not desire to solve the problems of disarmament. They were brought face to face with the fact that the Western Powers did not wish to conduct serious negotiations on disarmament. The question arose: could it be tolerated that negotiations - or, to be more accurate, the appearance of negotiations - on a problem so important to all peoples as disarmament should be used as a screen to conceal the policy of military preparations and intensified rearmament pursued by militaristic circles in some Western countries? The Soviet Government could not reconcile itself to the use of the ten-nation Committee for such purposes. Accordingly, the Soviet Government has broken off its participation in the fruitless discussion in the ten-nation Committee, and requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations to place the question of disarmament and the situation with regard to the fulfilment of the General Assembly resolution on disarmament of 20 November 1959 before the United Nations General Assembly for consideration at its regular session.

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The Soviet Union has been and remains a consistent advocate of negotiations between States on disarmament and is still prepared to participate in negotiations. But it stands for negotiations of such a kind as to promote the practical and fruitful examination of the disarmament problem, and not for mere idle debate.

The Soviet Government expresses the hope that discussion of the problem of disarmament at the regular session of the United Nations General Assembly, the forum in which the resolution on general and complete disarmament was adopted, will help the noble and profoundly humane idea of disarmament to bear fruit at last in the form of specific deeds.
