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Opening of the general debate

[Agenda item 9]

SPEECH BY MR. DULLES (UNITED STATES OF AMERICA)

1. Mr. DULLES (United States of America): It is an honour for me to be with you again. As one of the founding group at San Francisco, I shared in the hopes and labours which brought this Organization into existence. I have served at most of the previous sessions of the General Assembly and, at this new session, I am fortified by the fellowship of many of you who are veterans in the battle for peace.

2. The United States comes to this eighth session of the General Assembly with renewed determination to use for peace and justice the opportunities which this Organization provides. President Eisenhower has a deep and abiding faith in the United Nations. He has often said so and he has asked me to say it to you again. He wants the United Nations to become an increasingly effective instrument of peace.

3. The United States delegation will work here in that spirit. We shall state as clearly as possible what we deem to be the just and the right solutions to the problems which we here encounter, for we do not think that the United States ought to be ambiguous about the problems of our time. But we also adhere to the basic United States belief, expressed in our Declaration of Independence, that we owe "a decent respect to the opinions of mankind". We are ready to learn from others and we also recognize that our views may not always prevail. When that happens, we shall no doubt regret it but we shall not sulk. We shall try to accept the results philosophically, recognizing that we have no monopoly of wisdom or virtue and also that sometimes the passage of time alone provides the final verdict.

4. We shall have in mind the Charter mandate to this Organization "to be a centre for harmonizing the actions of nations". Never was the need for such harmony more urgent. Never were the consequences of disharmony so menacing. Yet the fact of tension cannot be ignored. That would be dangerously unrealistic. Also, the causes of that tension will have to be explored. Otherwise there can be no cure. But, in whatever it does here, the United States will seek to avoid any word or deed which might needlessly aggravate the present state of dangerous tension.

5. The primary purpose of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. Yet for over three years there was a war in Korea. A war in Indo-China still goes on and nowhere is there a sense of security. Because of these things, some say that the United Nations has failed.

6. We must admit that the United Nations has not realized all the hopes held for it. That is largely because many of those hopes were unrealistic. They arose from underestimating the profound difficulties which lie in the way of establishing an international order of peace and justice. The United Nations was built largely on the expectation that the leaders of the grand alliance, who had worked together for victory, would continue voluntarily to work together for peace. That expectation proved ill-founded. The alliance which was the product of fascist aggression disappeared and, when that aggression was battered down, allied unity vanished, to be replaced by new division and new fears. These reached a peak when the Korean aggression occurred.

7. It is to the eternal credit of the United Nations that it was not then indifferent. The Security Council promptly called upon its members to help the victim of aggression and almost every free nation responded in one form or another. Sixteen sent troops to Korea to fight to repel the aggression and the result is now signalized by the armistice which ends the aggression and ends the killing.

8. Korea has become the place where, for the first time in history, an international organization was instrumental in actually repelling armed aggression. That fact may have profound consequences. It may open new avenues to peace. We must hope so and try to make it so. Never was the need so great.

9. Physical scientists have now found means which, if they are developed, can wipe life off the surface of this planet. Those words that I speak are words that can be taken literally. It is indeed a destructive power inherent in matter which must be controlled by the idealism of man's spirit and the wisdom of his mind. They alone stand between us and a lifeless planet. There are plenty of problems in the world, many of them interconnected. But there is no problem which compares with this central, universal problem of saving the human race from extinction.

10. The nations are groping for the spirit and the institutions which will enable man to dominate matter. So far, unhappily, it has been impossible to provide either the spirit or the institutions on a universal basis. Therefore some of the nations have developed their own community measures to deter aggression and to give protection to moral values that they cherish. These counter-measures have, by common consent, involved the sharing of facilities, and sometimes the placing of military forces from one country in another country.

11. Soviet leaders have complained of these arrangements. But they should know, and probably they do know, that community arrangements are the least likely to be aggressive. Military force which is with a single nation can be used offensively at the dictation of one government alone, sometimes of one man alone. Military force which is distributed throughout several countries cannot be used effectively unless all of the countries concerned are in agreement. Such agreement would be totally unattainable except for operations responsive to the clear menace of aggression.

12. A community defence system has two great merits. It makes it possible for even the small and the weak to get real security. Also it ensures that even the strong and the great cannot, practically, pervert the system by using it for aggression. That way is the enlightened way. By that way the goals of our Charter are advanced by means which none has cause to fear.

13. It may be asked, why do we fear? I could speak of that at length. But in order to avoid what might seem provocative, I confine myself to a single summarizing fact: since 1939, some 600 million people of some fifteen nations have been brought into the Soviet camp of dictatorships, and in no case has this come about by the voluntary action of the peoples and nations concerned. History records no more frightening fact.

14. In his address of 8 August of this year, the new Soviet Premier twice spoke of the peaceful coexistence of the communist system with that of the non-communist world. Such expressions are welcome. But as against the background that I mention, mere words do not instantly or totally reassure us. We have heard them before and we know that Soviet communist doctrine prescribes the use of such words as guile. If the Soviet leaders are honest, they must recognize that, if there is to be a new world climate, they must contribute to it more than they have yet contributed.

15. The United States is quite prepared to explore ways to end the present tension. President Eisenhower has already made that clear. We shall, I hope, never grow weary or discouraged in our quest for peace. But what the United States does cannot achieve the desired goal unless there is an equivalent response.

16. Occasions are now imminent which permit, indeed require, the Soviet leaders to show more authentically their present intentions. The Korean armistice evokes a heartfelt welcome. The United States is glad that it was able to contribute to it as it did. But the armistice of itself is inconclusive as a test of the communist will to peace, because there was by then an effective military barrier to aggression. The Korean political conference, if the Communists come to it, will afford a better test.

17. Korea has been for many generations a victim of big Power politics. Russia, Japan and China have successively sought to use Korea to advance their aggressive purposes. It has been a long time since the Koreans have truly been masters of their own destiny. Now we seek the opportunity to determine whether any one of the great Powers wants to use Korea again for its own purposes or whether we all will renounce such ambitions so that there can at last be a united Korea for free Koreans.

18. The United States itself seeks no pretext for using Korea as a place for building up a military outpost on the Asian mainland. We are eager to bring our troops home. The Republic of Korea has no

ambitions which run beyond Korea. Japan has loyally undertaken to refrain from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any other country.

19. If the Soviet Union and communist China are willing to renounce ambitions which would be served by the control of North Korea, then it should be possible to unite Korea under conditions which will enable the Koreans freely to manage their own affairs.

20. So far, it seems to us that the communist side is pursuing dilatory tactics. The United States, pursuant to the General Assembly resolution [711 (VII)] of 28 August 1953, after consultation among the seventeen nations nominated to represent the United Nations side, proposed a specific time and a specific place for the meeting of the political conference. This proposal was received by the Chinese Communists on 5 September. A response was made on 15 September, a response, however, which merely made reference to a proposal which the Chinese Communists had made to the members of this Assembly asking the Assembly to reopen its past decision and to renew its ten-day debate of last month with reference to the composition of the conference. Meanwhile, 28 October, the last day for the opening of the conference as recommended by the Armistice Agreement, is rapidly approaching, without any possibility of making the necessary time-consuming preparations. One is forced to question whether the communist side really wants to comply with the Armistice Agreement and face up to the problem of withdrawing their forces from Korea and creating a united and independent Korea.

21. Let me turn to Indo-China. There, the fighting continues. Communist forces are seeking to gain political power by military violence. Their military strength comes from the steady flow of military supplies from communist China and the Soviet Union and from the Soviet-controlled Skoda munition works. The pretext, until now, has been that the Associated States of Indo-China were mere colonies, and that the communist war was designed to promote "independence" rather than to expand by violence the Soviet camp.

22. It is no longer possible to support such a pretext. The French Government, by its declaration of 3 July 1953, has announced its intention of completing the process of transferring to the governments of the three Associated States all the remaining powers that are needed to perfect their independence to their own satisfaction. The communist-dominated armies in Indo-China have no shadow of a claim to be regarded as the champions of an independent movement. If the Soviet bloc countries outside Indo-China persist in promoting war in Indo-China, they cannot be surprised if their conduct is taken as proof that they adhere to the design of extending their rule by methods of violence.

23. South-east Asia affords the Soviet leaders a chance to give substance to their peaceful words, and we anxiously await their verdict.

24. Germany is another place where the present purposes of the great Powers face an inescapable testing.

25. When Germany surrendered over eight years ago, four zones of occupation were created, one each for the United Kingdom, France, the United States and the Soviet Union. This was deemed a convenient way for the Allies to administer the first phases of the surrender terms. It was never intended that Germany should be permanently partitioned. Over four years

ago, the United Kingdom, France and the United States put their zones together and enabled the Germans there to have free elections and to build their own political community. The Germans in the Soviet zone have been denied that unity and that opportunity. This division of Germany cannot be perpetuated without grave risks, for no great people will calmly accept mutilation.

26. Since the Foreign Ministers Conference held in Moscow in 1947, many efforts have been made to unite Germany and to establish through free elections an all-German government with which peace could be dependably negotiated. The task has proved to be one of immense difficulty. The people of the Soviet Union, like the French people, have not forgotten what their nation suffered from Hitlerite Germany during the Second World War. They expect, and they are entitled to expect, assurances against a repetition of such events. And that is also the ardent wish of the German people themselves. And that is, indeed, the large purpose of the European Defence Community. It will merge German military strength into the structure of a non-aggressive European community. No single member of that community will have the national military strength to serve national ambitions. That is a result which the Soviet leaders should welcome if they honestly want peace. So the three Western Powers have again sought a meeting with the Soviet Union to accomplish the unification of Germany. So far, our proposals have met with no response.

27. Austria presents another test case. At the Foreign Ministers meeting held in Moscow in 1943, the Governments of the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States declared their purpose to restore the independence of Austria. That declaration remains to be honoured. An Austrian State treaty was virtually completed six-and-one-half years ago, and today there is no substantial item of disagreement. The Soviet Union has now said that it prefers not to continue to deal with this matter through the deputies of the Foreign Ministers. The three Western occupying Powers have offered to conclude an Austrian treaty at a meeting of the Foreign Ministers which has been proposed. So far that proposal has met with no response.

28. The entire situation in Eastern and Central Europe is bound to be a cause of deep concern. The people there are essentially a religious people, and they are essentially a patriotic people. They have a spiritual faith that is enduring and great traditions that will never be forgotten. It is not in the interest of peace or of the other goals of our Charter that the once independent peoples of Europe should feel that they can no longer live by their traditions and by their faith.

29. It is charged that unrest exists among them only as it is artificially stimulated from without. That is true only in the sense that faith is a contagious thing which penetrates even curtains of iron. The American people, like many others, hold to the belief which our founders expressed in the Declaration of Independence, that governments derive their just powers from the consent of the governed. Also, we believe, as Abraham Lincoln put it, that there is "something in that Declaration giving liberty not alone to the people of this country but hope to the world for all future time". No peace can be enduring which repudiates the concept that government should rest on free consent,

or which denies to others the opportunity to embrace that concept. We do not conceal that conviction and no United States government could, if it would, contain it.

30. But our creed does not call for exporting revolution or inciting others to violence. Let me make that emphatic. We believe that violent change usually destroys what it would gain. We put our hopes upon the vast possibilities of peaceful change.

31. Our hope is that the Soviet leaders, before it is too late, will recognize that love of God, love of country and the sense of human dignity always survive. Repressive measures inevitably lead to resentment and bitterness and perhaps something more. That does not come about by artificial stimulation; it comes about because the Creator has endowed all human beings with the spark of spiritual life.

32. We can understand the desire of the people of the Soviet Union to have friends. The American people, in the past, have often shown, by generous deeds, their friendship with the people of the Soviet Union. We can understand the particular desire of the people of the Soviet Union to have close neighbours who are friendly. We sympathize also with that desire. The United States does not want to see the USSR encircled by hostile peoples. But we foresee that unless Soviet policies are changed, those policies will, in their actual operation, create precisely such surrounding animosity and hostility as Soviet policy, understandably, wants to avoid.

33. Policies which will permit Korea to be united and free, which will allow independence to come peacefully to Indo-China, which will unite Germany and free Austria, which will enable the neighbours of the USSR to enjoy national independence, and which will end the dedication of the Soviet Communist Party to the violent overthrow of independent governments—such are the policies which would go far to end the present tensions.

34. There are, of course, other ways to reduce tensions. I have by no means exhausted all the possibilities. I have, however, spoken of the major causes of present tension and have, I hope, made clear the willingness of the United States to discuss them all. So far the invitations in which we have joined with others of those represented here remain unanswered.

35. Governments which exert themselves without reserve to the creation of ever more powerful means of mass destruction, which tolerate no delay and spare no expense in these matters, and which, at the same time, are dilatory, evasive or negative towards curing the situations which could bring these destructive forces into play—such governments cannot but stand morally condemned.

36. The Soviet Union can make a great contribution towards the relaxing of these tensions which threaten to develop into major disasters. At the same time, let me make it clear that we recognize that the United States and others have their contributions to make and their obligations to fulfil. That is true both in relation to the USSR and in relation to what our Charter calls "Non-Self-Governing Territories".

37. I say, on behalf of the Government of the United States, that we are prepared to show in ourselves the spirit which we invoke in others. Such a spirit, if it is mutual, should make it possible to tackle hopefully what is perhaps the greatest problem—that of controlling the forces which could destroy us all.

38. On 16 April, President Eisenhower expressed eloquently and vividly the terrible danger to humanity from present weapons. Also he pointed out the desire of the United States to divert expenditures from destruction to construction which would particularly benefit the under-developed areas of the world. He recognized that it would be difficult to alter the armaments situation markedly while there existed the present measure of distrust. He called for deeds, such as those which I have outlined, which would relax the tension. Then he went on to say that "as progress in all of these areas strengthens world trust, we could proceed concurrently with the next great work—a reduction of the burden of armament now weighing upon the world". I emphasize this word "concurrently".

39. The United Nations here has, for some years, been dealing with the problem of armaments. We know that even as between nations of goodwill it is difficult to find a workable formula to do that. The task cannot, perhaps, be finally solved in the conditions of distrust which exist today, but that does not mean that the task should be abandoned, or even that it should be postponed. We believe, on the contrary, that there should be intensified study of the problem of limitation and control of all categories of armaments. There is a vast amount of technical work which needs to be done preparatory to any final solution, and without that preparatory work no final solution would be practicable.

40. We have faith that the time may come—it might come quickly and suddenly—when political leaders will be prepared to put into effect international agreements limiting armaments. When that moment comes the nations should be able to seize it. We must not let that moment escape because it might, perhaps, never be recaptured. But to seize that moment when it comes requires that the technical analysis of the problem should be before then have been advanced.

41. The United States has already put forward a series of proposals here which have attracted widespread support. Upon these we are not inflexible, except that we do insist that any proposals must meet one fundamental test—there must be effective safeguards to ensure the compliance of all nations and to give adequate warning of possible evasions or violations.

42. We do not believe that the studies which have been made up to now have involved a waste of time. On the contrary, we believe that they have laid the foundation for quick action once the general atmosphere makes this possible. But these studies need to be carried to a still higher state of completion. So far as the United States is concerned, we are prepared to dedicate ourselves with renewed vigour to this high task. Given a concrete demonstration of an equal desire on the part of the Soviet Union to negotiate honestly and sincerely on the substance of these matters, we are confident that the work can usefully go forward.

43. I note that the Argentine, Egyptian and Netherlands delegations have proposed agenda items dealing with Charter revision pursuant to Article 109. That Article provides that unless a review conference is held earlier, the tenth session of the General Assembly, to be held in 1955, shall have on its agenda the question of calling such a conference. I have no doubt that a review conference will be held. Article 109 was put into the Charter in an effort to allay the very large measure of dissatisfaction which was felt at San Francisco with many of the provisions of the Charter.

44. Many nations, particularly the smaller nations, objected strongly to what they thought was an excessive award of power to the permanent members of the Security Council. They feared that the Security Council would prove unworkable because of disagreements among the great Powers. Unhappily, these fears have in large measure materialized. There were other provisions of the Charter which were adopted with great reluctance and concern. It was possible to secure acceptance of the Charter at San Francisco only by means of a provision assuring that there would be an opportunity to review it in the light of experience. It is already apparent, after eight years, that this opportunity should be grasped.

45. In 1948, the United States Senate adopted a resolution calling for the elimination of the veto power from all questions involving the pacific settlement of international disputes under Chapter VI of the Charter and the admission of new Members. The resolution also called for a revision of the Charter under Article 109 of the Charter, if the United Nations should not otherwise have been strengthened. This year, the United States Senate adopted a resolution appointing a special committee, of which Senator Wiley is chairman, to study proposals for amending the Charter. Many private United States organizations have shown their desire for a Charter review, and they are preparing for it.

46. The review conference will not work miracles, but it can be of major importance. In order, however, to achieve the best results, the task should promptly engage the best thought and attention of all Member nations—not merely their governments, but also private organizations. The influence of private groups was not adequately felt in 1945, because the Second World War had not yet ended and normal communications were lacking in much of the world.

47. We should also welcome suggestions from those non-member nations which aspire to membership and are excluded by the veto in the Security Council. Today, the number and influence of those nations is so great that their views should not be excluded in considering the future of an organization designed to include all peace-loving nations able and willing to carry out the obligations of the Charter.

48. Surely it is possible to make this Organization more responsive to the needs of our peoples. Those peoples want only simple things. They want the opportunity to worship God in accordance with the dictates of their conscience. They want the opportunity to think in accordance with the dictates of their reason. They want the opportunity to exchange views with others and to persuade and be persuaded by what appeals to their reason and their conscience. They want the right to live in their homes without fear. They want the opportunity to draw together in the intimacy of family life, of community life, and to establish worthy and honourable traditions which they can pass on to their children and their children's children. They want to be able to work productively and creatively in congenial tasks of their own choosing and to enjoy the fruits of their labours. They want governments to which they consent. Surely it is not beyond the wit of man to make it possible to satisfy such wants and to put to rout the vast impersonal forces which seem imperiously to demand that humanity be bent and broken merely to produce the engines for its own destruction.

49. To a large extent, the simple wants of the people are denied them because of international tensions. Even these are not always within the direct competence of this Assembly. Some of the problems of which I have spoken are the primary responsibility of other international groupings. That, however, does not mean that these problems are beyond the influence of the members of this Assembly, and that is why I have spoken here of them. This Assembly is the only world forum where the attitudes of the world community make themselves felt. No one can take part in the deliberations of this Assembly without feeling the impact of moral forces. It is an impact which none can disdain.

50. In these coming days, we can—and I think we shall—set up influences which will move the nations nearer to the goal for which all the peoples yearn. That should be the overriding dedication of all the nations represented here. It is, I assure the Assembly, the dedication of the delegation and the nation for which I have the honour to speak.

51. The PRESIDENT: There are no other names on the list of speakers. Before this meeting is adjourned, I should like to urge representatives who intend to participate in the general debate to put their names on the list of speakers as soon as possible.

The meeting rose at 11.30 a.m.