QUESTION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS TESTS

Note verbale dated 7 November 1958 from the Representative of the United States to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

New York, 7 November 1958

The Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to transmit the attached texts of statements released on 7 November by the President and the Atomic Energy Commission concerning continued testing of nuclear weapons by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics since the opening of the Geneva conference on 31 October 1958.

The Representative of the United States of America has the honour to request that the Secretary-General arrange to circulate these statements as a document of the United Nations.
STATEMENT BY THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

The Atomic Energy Commission today announced detection of two nuclear weapons tests which occurred in the USSR on 1 November and 3 November, respectively. Both explosions were of relatively low yield. They were conducted at a test site in the southern part of the USSR rather than at the Novaya Zemlya test site north of the Arctic Circle where most of the tests in recent weeks were held.

STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT

The Atomic Energy Commission has announced that the Soviet Union is continuing the testing of nuclear weapons. This continued testing by the Soviet Union has occurred despite the fact that negotiations for the suspension of testing of nuclear weapons have since 31 October been underway at Geneva. On 22 August 1958, I announced that, "in order to facilitate the detailed negotiations, the United States is prepared, unless testing is resumed by the Soviet Union, to withhold further testing on its part of atomic and hydrogen weapons for a period of one year from the beginning of the negotiations".

In conformity with this declaration the United States suspended on 31 October 1958, its testing of nuclear weapons, although the series then underway had not been completed. The United Kingdom also has suspended testing. The Soviet Union, which had been testing intensively at its Arctic proving ground from the latter part of September to the end of October, has however, continued to test at another location.

The Soviet Union is continuing its nuclear testing in the face of a resolution voted by the United Nations General Assembly urging the parties in the Geneva negotiations not to undertake further testing of nuclear weapons while these negotiations are in progress.1/

This action by the Soviet Union relieves the United States from any obligation under its offer to suspend nuclear weapons tests. However, we shall continue suspension of such tests for the time being, and we understand that

1/ A/RES/1252A (XIII).
the United Kingdom will do likewise. We hope that the Soviet Union will also do so.

If there is not shortly a corresponding renunciation by the Soviet Union, the United States will be obliged to reconsider its position.

The United States will, of course, persevere in the negotiations at Geneva to reach sound agreement for controlled suspension of nuclear testing.