Twentieth Session

FIRST COMMITTEE

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTEEN HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York, on Friday, 15 October 1965, at 3.30 p.m.

Chairman: Mr. Csatortay (Hungary)

Organization of the Committee's work.

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e. the summary record, will appear in mimeographed form under the symbol A/C.1/38.1554. Delegations may submit corrections to the summary record for incorporation in the final version which will appear in a printed volume.
ORGANIZATION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK (A/C.1/896 and Add.1)

The CHAIRMAN: The Committee will address itself to the consideration of the organization of the Committee's work.

Members will recall that at our 1353rd meeting on 6 October, we had a lengthy exchange of views concerning our programme of work. Unfortunately, we could not at that meeting arrive at any agreed order of priorities for dealing with the twelve items allocated to our Committee, as contained in documents A/C.1/896 and Add.1. In the circumstances, the Committee adjourned as it was felt that more time was required for consultations. Led by a sincere desire to facilitate the work of the Committee, I have during the past several days conducted informal consultations with many delegations, with the chairmen of various geographical and political groups and numerous representatives, including those who had expressed views or made suggestions at our last meeting.

I am aware of the different views expressed by a number of delegations at our previous meeting and during our consultations, but I am happy to inform the Committee that it has been possible to arrive at a solution with regard to one-half of our agenda items which seemed to be generally acceptable. I should like to add that this was possible only because of the spirit of compromise and mutual accommodation shown by all concerned, and I wish to place on record my deep appreciation and gratitude to all those delegations which have helped me in this.

It is my understanding that there is general agreement that the following six items should first be discussed in our Committee in this order:

1. Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons;
2. Question of convening a World Disarmament Conference;
3. Declaration on the denuclearization of Africa
4. Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests; reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament;
5. Question of convening a conference for the purpose of signing a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons; reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament;
6. Question of general and complete disarmament: reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament."
Thus, each of these items will be separately discussed, together with all relevant proposals and draft resolutions which will be put to the vote at the end of the consideration of each item in order that we may adopt appropriate decisions.

This is the result of our consultations, and I would now ask the Committee whether this proposal with regard to the order in which we will discuss the six items on our agenda is acceptable. If I do not hear any objections about this schedule of work, it will be so decided.

Mr. VINCI (Italy): As this is the first time I have spoken in this Committee, before expressing my views on the organization of the work of the First Committee, I should like to extend to you, Mr. Chairman, the sincere congratulations of the Italian delegation, and my own sincere congratulations, on your unanimous election to the office of Chairman of the First Committee. Your eminent personal and professional qualities have been known to your colleagues since the beginning of your high mission to the United Nations. My delegation is glad to have been among those which favoured your election to this office. We are very pleased, furthermore, that our Chairman is a representative of an ancient and noble European nation. We wish you all success in your present high responsibilities. Your success will also mean the success of the Committee as a whole.

Let me also extend our congratulations to the representative of Ecuador who has just been elected to the office of Vice-Chairman of the First Committee. Mr. Benites is a man of wide political and diplomatic experience and of great culture, whom we all respect and admire.
Our congratulations go also to the Rapporteur, Mr. Fahmi, of the United Arab Republic. His long association with the problems of disarmament will be an invaluable asset to the work of our Committee.

Now let me turn my attention to the organization of the work of the Committee, a matter to which most of our first meeting, on 6 October, was devoted.

I shall confine my remarks, for the moment, to the six items connected with disarmament, for we believe that everyone agrees that the matter ought to have top priority over the other items on the agenda.

We, for our part, listened with great attention to the various speakers who intervened in the procedural debates in this Committee last week and, if we are not mistaken, we noticed two tendencies emerging from the discussions. One is based on the correct assumption that disarmament, although it has many faces, is but one problem and therefore must be considered in its entirety before seeking any solution. The other tendency favoured the immediate consideration by the First Committee of a world disarmament conference, in the opinion that the gathering of nations might provide a panacea, a universal remedy for all the ills that have paved the road so far to general and complete disarmament.

After a long and -- may I submit with all respect for every delegation's view -- rather inconclusive debate we parted, hoping that a few days would be enough to solve our differences in the approach to the problems of disarmament.

Now we learn that you, Mr. Chairman, have worked out a compromise formula as a result of your consultations with a number of delegations. While we appreciate the effort you have made in the hope of facilitating the reaching of an agreement amongst the various delegations which are members of this Committee, may I point out, Mr. Chairman, that the Italian delegation -- certainly due to an oversight -- has not been in any way consulted on the matter under consideration and therefore does not feel bound by any agreement of compromise reached thereon.

We are particularly unhappy about this development because, as is well known, the Italian delegation has always played a very active role in the field of disarmament here and elsewhere. I shall not recall the several initiatives taken by my Government in the past, which have contributed to one of the few agreements reached in this field. For will I mention more recent
suggestions which have aroused some interest. Moreover, we are among those who had signified their intention to speak before our last meeting was adjourned, and we thought that we might have made a contribution.

Fortunately, I think that the Committee has not yet arrived at any final decision on this matter and we still have the time to organize our work in a rational and practical way, on the basis of the facts and data at our disposal.

We believe that the First Committee has before it a double task: first, to make a dispassionate assessment of the present status of the disarmament negotiations from a substantive point of view, to study its outlook and to find out whether there are any specific problems which need urgent attention or lend themselves to separate solutions. Only by doing so, we believe sincerely, can we fulfill our main duty which is to discuss the substance of disarmament under all its aspects.

On the basis of this assessment, and only after we have gained a sufficient knowledge of all the problems involved -- through a comprehensive study of the report of the Geneva Conference -- we may devote our attention to the second task, namely, to consider whether the present machinery for disarmament negotiations is in working order or whether we need something new or more suitable to this end. In other words, we feel that it would be illogical and time-wasting for the Committee to devote its attention to the task of setting up a world disarmament conference if we have not found out in advance what is wrong with the present negotiations and whether the difficulties they encounter could be overcome in a different context.

For these reasons, and on the basis of what has emerged from the debates in the United Nations Disarmament Committee last spring and from the general debate in the Plenary, we feel that it would be only fair and proper to start our work with the consideration of items 1, 2 and 5. Thereafter we ought to consider item 11, namely, the Soviet proposal of non-proliferation which would become item 5 (a). The consideration of these four items would give the First Committee a comprehensive picture of the results of the work accomplished by the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee.

Our Committee could draw two different conclusions from a study of these four items: either that the result is positive and the way is clear for further progress or no development is in sight. In this case the possibility
and the usefulness of the world disarmament conference would be confirmed, either with a view to completing what has been done by the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee -- that would be the first hypothesis -- or by realizing that the Geneva Conference is unable to do any more useful work -- that would be the second hypothesis. In both cases the extent to which the world disarmament conference may be useful would be defined and its limits and scope would appear more clearly.

At any rate, by this procedure, namely, by examining the Geneva Conference Report and the Soviet proposal, the First Committee would achieve the following results:

a) it would not belie the decisions of the United Nations Disarmament Commission which, having emphasized the main problems of disarmament, had given clear guidelines for the work of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee and had urged this body to report back;

b) it would not ignore the result of the work of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee at Geneva;

c) it would draw up an inventory -- positive or negative -- of the debates and of the work accomplished to date, of the possibilities that are open to us and of the problems to be faced. From this inventory, the Committee would be able to decide whether the world disarmament conference is advisable and practicable.
In conclusion, we do not exclude a priori that at some stage a world conference might prove to be a useful instrument for solving the problems of disarmament. We cannot, however, share the view of those who believe, as an act of faith, that a world disarmament conference will succeed where other negotiating bodies have failed. It would begin by seeking the form instead of the substance, giving thought to the methods of procedure before the actual substance of disarmament, which should be our primary concern, almost as though we were seeking a magic wand -- which, as far back as man can recall, has never been found in the world of political reality.

We said a few minutes ago that one of the responsibilities of this Committee is to find out whether, among the many aspects of disarmament, there are problems that require urgent attention or are possibly open to separate solutions without waiting for a general agreement on disarmament. I am referring, of course, to the subject of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, the great unfinished business of the Geneva Conference. I need not spend many words on emphasizing the anxiety with which the world expects us to take urgent measures to hold back the spread of nuclear weapons. I would refer only to the many speakers who have taken the floor in the general debate in the plenary meetings. Almost without exception, they have touched on this point, stating that the twentieth General Assembly is called upon to stop nuclear proliferation before it is too late, and that this responsibility must be faced as a matter of urgency before agreement on general and complete disarmament is reached in either the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee or elsewhere.

May I also quote the operative paragraph of the United Nations Disarmament Commission resolution DC/225 of 15 June 1965, which decided to

"... accord special priority to the consideration of a treaty or convention to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons giving close attention to the various suggestions that agreement could be facilitated by adopting a programme of certain related measures". (DC/225, paragraph 2 (c))
I submit that we are not entitled to reverse a clear trend that has emerged from the words of our Foreign Ministers and our heads of delegations who spoke in the general debate, as well as from the deliberations of the United Nations Disarmament Committee last spring, and later in the Geneva Conference. I believe it is our duty to be a faithful mirror reflecting the views that have emerged from the General Assembly, of which we are a part, not a separate body.

I submit that to give priority to items other than non-proliferation in the organization of our work would be, to use the words of the Foreign Minister of the Soviet Union, Mr. Gromyko, unforgivable laissez-faire.

I am ready to admit that the so-called compromise which was read out by you, Mr. Chairman, recognizes to a certain extent this point of view, in that it indicates, as the first item, the problem of non-proliferation.

The Italian delegation would therefore be prepared to accept this point of the compromise, on the condition that the context of non-proliferation were sufficiently enlarged to make it possible to take advantage of all the work done in Geneva and all the contributions offered by the various delegations represented in that Committee.

We would therefore suggest that item No. 1 in your compromise read as follows: "Non-proliferation of nuclear weapons: relevant sections of the report of the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Conference and former point 1C6".

As to the order of the other items, I can only reaffirm what I said earlier in my statement, namely, that consideration of a world disarmament conference must follow and not precede consideration of the substantive items, in the same way as the prescription given by a doctor follows, and does not precede the examination of the patient. I would like to make it quite clear that I am not trying to delay the discussion on a world disarmament conference in order to diminish possibilities for its realization. On the contrary, since we are amongst those delegations which, in principle, spoke in favour of the convocation of such a conference, and since we are well aware of the obstacles standing in its way, I deem it my duty to say that by keeping our feet well planted on the ground we are facilitating its coming-about. To reverse the methods of procedure would be like building the roof of a house before the foundations have been laid.
This I wish to state above all to all the representatives who have asked that priority be given to a world disarmament conference, and to request them to consider the views expressed by the Italian delegation as a gesture of sincere collaboration. I am precisely convinced that by proceeding with this realistic, objective, logical and constructive method, we shall be fulfilling the task entrusted to us and rendering a useful service to the same idea of a world disarmament conference.

Mr. MBEAH (Nigeria): Mr. Chairman, before commenting briefly on the procedural statement you have just made, I should like first of all to offer to you and your distinguished colleagues on the Bureau the most heartfelt congratulations of my delegation. You are, of course, aware of the special regard that our permanent representative and our Permanent Mission have always had for you personally. Fortunately for our proceedings, you have sat on this Committee for some time, not only as a member of it but also on the Bureau. We recall how well you carried out the difficult duties of Rapporteur at our seventeenth session. Your colleagues, Mr. Penites and Mr. El-Bahhui, have an equally long and illustrious record of service, either in this Committee or in other committees of the Organization. We have no doubt, therefore, that under your wise guidance the Committee will make headway on its formidable agenda.

My delegation has listened with very close attention to the statement you have just made, Mr. Chairman, concerning the agenda to be followed by this Committee. Although we see no serious objection to the programme you have mapped out, we would have been much happier if the question of a world disarmament conference had been accorded precedence over all other questions, the subject of non-proliferation not excluded. This is because considerable work has been done on the subject of a world disarmament conference and because a great many delegations, including my own, attach the utmost importance to the widest possible forum for deliberations on disarmament questions. Furthermore, the question of convening a world disarmament conference is in a sense procedural, the working-out of the mechanics involved, since the Disarmament Commission, which met earlier this year, has called for such a conference by an overwhelming majority. It therefore seems to us to be more logical to dispose first of this question before coming to the other items on our agenda, which are more concrete in nature and deal with the very substance of disarmament.
However, we would not object to the programme which the Chairman has outlined, as it is the result of hard work on his part as well as of a compromise solution. But in agreeing to go along with this apparent consensus, we venture to hope that the question of non-proliferation will be disposed of as speedily as possible and that we shall soon take up the question of a world disarmament conference, in which such universal interest has been aroused and to which we attach the utmost importance.

**Mr. ALARCON (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish):** As this is the first time that I am speaking in this Committee, allow me first to greet the officers of the Committee, especially the Chairman, who represents a socialist country, a sister nation to ours; Mr. Fahmy, the representative of the United Arab Republic, a nation and a Government which is linked to ours by many ties of friendship and fraternity; and Mr. Benites, the representative of Ecuador, whose outstanding qualities have been stressed by other delegations, qualities which no doubt will enable him to carry out fruitful work in the Committee.

With respect to the suggestion put forward by the Chairman to solve the question of the organization of the work of the First Committee, the Cuban delegation had requested to speak at our previous meeting in order to express its substantive views on the priority to be given the items of the agenda. For us, the place to be given to an item in the order of priority almost implies, from the formal point of view, the position to be taken by delegations. For this reason, we wish to clarify the views of the Cuban delegation concerning the order of priority of the items.

The general view of the Committee, according to the suggestion put before us, seems to be that priority should be given to the questions relating to disarmament. In connexion with these questions, different views have been expressed as to the order in which each should be discussed. Except for the statements made at our previous meeting by the representatives of the Soviet Union and Chile -- if I am not mistaken -- we have heard no other views in favour of giving preferential treatment to the Soviet Union proposal on the question of the inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States and the protection of their independence and sovereignty.
In this connexion, my delegation wishes to begin by saying that we believe this item should be taken up first by the Committee. The questions related to disarmament are of great importance, of course, as are all problems related to world peace. The avoidance of a possible world conflict is basically a thermonuclear problem. The danger involved in the threat of a general war, nevertheless must not allow us to forget the realities of the world today. While the representatives of the First Committee meet here to speak of peace and disarmament, present day reality reveals that, in fact, we do not have peace in the world today for all peoples. We cannot say that the threat of war is not possible or is only a potential threat because, unfortunately, it is an every day reality in many places and for many peoples.

In our view, the cause of peace can be served only through respect for the rights of all peoples and nations, no matter how weak or small they may be. For this reason, my delegation would have preferred as the first item the item proposed by the Soviet Union. This approach would encompass the possibility of facing present day realities, which implies the absence of peace for many peoples of the world. It would be most unpleasant for us to hear long statements in many meetings in favour of peace, the spirit of conciliation, of settling disputes and of co-existence while, at the same time, bombs were falling on the people of Viet-Nam, on military and civilian installations, while foreign invading forces remained in the Dominican Republic and while the Government of the United States, through its Congress, made statements denying the principle of non-intervention, that same Government whose country is the seat of our own discussions. While all this takes place in the world, it seems to us that we place ourselves outside contemporary reality when we begin our discussions with items which are obviously of importance to all men but which are not those that are closest to everyday reality.

However, we would accept the Chairman's suggestion, if that is the majority view of the Committee. We would be doing so while formulating grave reservations unless, immediately following the six items related to disarmament, the Committee discussed the item on the inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States and the protection of their independence and sovereignty. In addition, we wish to stress that of the six items related to disarmament, priority should be
given to the question of convening a world disarmament conference. I recall the words spoken by the representative of Chile when he said that perhaps many of the representatives here had attended former debates on disarmament at which little progress had been made. In our view, a world disarmament conference today would be the only appropriate framework in which to arrive at effective solutions of such problems. If there is a genuine desire to make progress along the road to disarmament and if we truly seek to arrive at meaningful agreements, we should begin with the convening of a world conference at which all countries of the world would participate, including, of course, the People's Republic of China. In that way the peoples of the world could truly sit and discuss concrete solutions of the disarmament problem.

The Cuban delegation, having expressed its views on the priority that should have been given to the various items, reiterates its position that it would accept a solution acceptable to the majority of the Committee, such as the one suggested by the Chairman. We do wish to record our own views and to ask that priority after the disarmament items should be given to the Soviet proposal.

Inacio CARVALHO SILVA (Brazil): When my delegation spoke at the last meeting, we tried to convey to the Committee some arguments for priority to be given to the question of disarmament. The same arguments were referred to and endorsed by the great majority of the delegations at the past sessions of the General Assembly.

We understand the difficulties faced by the Chairman in trying to accommodate the different views in the organization of our work. Fortunately, all the delegations consulted have demonstrated a high degree of flexibility, which paved the way for an agreement.

I wish to state, however, the position of the Brazilian delegation on the Chairman's suggestion. Indeed, in discussing each of the items, my delegation would feel free to consider all aspects of disarmament directly related to the item under discussion. This would be applied to the particular case of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In our view, this issue should be discussed in the broad context of disarmament, before going into the consideration of each concrete proposal and draft resolution. It goes without saying that, in following the suggestion presented by the Chairman, my delegation might also examine all the reports and relevant documents directly connected with the issue under consideration.
Dr. GEBRE-IGLE (Ethiopia): First, let me say that we accept your statement, Mr. Chairman, containing the consensus with respect to the first six items, because we believe that that has been brought about by a very wide consultation among delegations. I suppose that since we are, of course, many delegations, it was perhaps not possible for you to see each one of us. Secondly, if the consensus had been adopted -- and we still hope it will be adopted as it is -- we would not have taken the floor. But we feel obliged to take the floor at this stage because there seems to be a new proposal and we must give our opinion on it. I refer to the proposal of the representative of Italy.

The arguments of the representative of Italy are that the problems of disarmament are one and therefore we should discuss all of them together. I think that there is no quarrel with this, except that in a technical way and in a procedural way, and also in terms of the history of the items, they have been presented separately. In order to avoid confusion, we have to discuss them separately. Otherwise, I think it would be difficult later on to know what item is being discussed and what item is being decided upon, and how we are to dispose of it. Therefore, from this point of view we have to adhere to the procedure we have followed throughout the years now. It would be rather difficult to devise a new procedure.

The argument that we should first examine the substance of disarmament before we consider the machinery is really not a fair one, if I may put it that way, because questions of disarmament have been examined over the years. If it were a new thing, then we could properly say that before the Committee decides on the machinery, it must decide on the substance. But this is not the case. All these items on disarmament have been discussed here in the First Committee and in Geneva, and although we hope for a change in position, we doubt very much whether such a radical change would take place at one session as to make us accept the logic of the representative of Italy.

The same goes for the argument which says that one must first examine the patient before one prescribes the medicine. I think that when a doctor has examined a patient time and again, the point can be made that perhaps he should give him the same medicine or make a change. Of course he already knows what the disease is.
That being the case, we would rather appeal to the representative of Italy to be kind enough to let us proceed with the consensus, because in the way you have outlined it, Mr. Chairman, it does not really do any damage to the position of the representative of Italy. I do not think that any of the authors of the procedure adopted at our previous session said that once we discuss the question of a world conference, we are going to stop considering the others. We have not said that and there is no intention on the part of the delegations to say that once the procedure on a world disarmament conference is decided upon, we would then abandon the Committee and simply try to go to that conference. We have not said that.

That being the case, we would appeal very strongly to the representative of Italy to accept what I think is acceptable to the Committee and let us proceed to the substance of the matter. At any rate, I think I am bound to say, on behalf of my delegation, that we could not accept linking two or three items on disarmament and discussing them as one. Secondly, we could not accept the idea of placing the item of the world conference almost at the end of the six items. That we cannot do. If we are compelled to reach that point -- I hope not -- we would be bound to ask for a vote on the consensus.

Mr. Ladies (Japan): At the outset of my very brief remarks, may I offer to you, Mr. Chairman, and to our colleagues Mr. Benites and Mr. Pahmy, a very warm congratulations on your respective elections as Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur. I am very hopeful and indeed confident that under your distinguished and impartial leadership, we shall accomplish many fruitful results.

May I also add a word of welcome to our new Under-Secretary, Mr. Nesterenko.

I have listened with close attention to the statement you have made, Mr. Chairman, on the organization of this Committee’s work and I am glad to note that a consensus seems to have been reached as to how we should proceed. Let me congratulate you for your part, which I am sure must have been very large in this achievement. At the same time, I am obliged to say that valuable time should not be consumed in this Committee by debates of a procedural nature, because the questions that are on our agenda are vital issues of war or peace, life or death.
While my delegation has no serious objection to your statement, Mr. Chairman, since as you say it represents a general agreement, I have to state a few observations of my delegation.

It is very difficult to say with any real assurance that one aspect of disarmament is more or less important than some other aspect. But when it comes down to the question of the order in which the specific items within the wide framework of disarmament should be discussed, the Japanese delegation would have preferred that first priority should be given to the item that is concerned with the urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests.

We are of this view, first, because of the importance we attach to the suspension of tests, although we fully recognize the importance of other aspects -- non-proliferation, for example, or the holding of a world conference -- and second, because we feel that a large stride forward in the field of disarmament was taken with the coming into effect of the Partial Test Ban Treaty, and that we should not lose this momentum towards its further positive accomplishment. I cannot stress too strongly the very urgent necessity, as we see it, of further positive accomplishments in this field.

We are gratified, Mr. Chairman, to hear your statement to the effect that while discussing a specific item, all relevant proposals could be made, thus not preventing any delegation from introducing relevant aspects of the question when it deems appropriate.

With this understanding, my delegation is quite ready to go along with the order of business that you have suggested, Mr. Chairman.
DR. HEMBRA (India): Apart from suggesting its adjournment, my delegation did not intervene at our last meeting on the substance of the question before us. We felt that the organization of the work of the Committee was moving along right lines, and all that was needed was more time to smooth out the rough edges. My delegation is gratified that the time intervening between the last meeting and our meeting today has been fully utilized and that you have arrived at a solution which is acceptable to us.

On this question of organization of work I can do no better than to quote from the statement of the Foreign Minister of India in the plenary on 12 October:

"In particular, the Committee" — the Foreign Minister was referring to the Eighteen-Nation Disarmament Committee — "devoted its concentrated attention to the questions of a comprehensive test ban treaty and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. India took an active part in these discussions and along with the other non-aligned members submitted joint memoranda containing proposals, which could form the basis of agreements on these two most important issues in the field of disarmament today." (A/7454, page 27 and 36)

In a later passage, the Foreign Minister said:

"My delegation also feels that the question of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons should be accorded high priority. It was at India’s request that an item on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons had been included in the agenda of the last session of the General Assembly and we welcome the initiative of the Soviet Union in this matter at the current session. Even though my country has possessed the capacity for quite some time now to manufacture nuclear weapons, we have refrained from doing so. We believe that not only any further proliferation of nuclear weapon capabilities should be checked but the existing proliferation should be reversed." (Ibid., page 39-40)
The Foreign Minister went on to say:

"My country has made certain specific proposals in this regard at the conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, and I would not like to repeat them here." (Ibid., page 41)

In a final passage the Foreign Minister said, and I beg your leave to quote again:

"The Disarmament Commission, to which I referred earlier, has recommended to the Assembly, vide its resolution DC/224, to consider urgently the proposal made by the Second Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in Cairo in October 1964, for the convening of a World Disarmament Conference to which all countries would be invited. My delegation was a co-sponsor of the resolution approved by the Disarmament Commission. We consider it important that the World Disarmament Conference should take place as early as possible and that France and the People's Republic of China should take part in it.

"My delegation earnestly hopes that the discussion on disarmament in the First Committee will be fruitful, so that, when the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament reconvenes in Geneva soon after the debate here, it may be able to reach agreements on a comprehensive test ban and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and thereby make possible more agreements in the field of disarmament." (Ibid.)

My delegation feels that the priorities we had in mind have been given due consideration. We therefore support the adoption of the proposal you, Mr. Chairman, read out at the beginning of this meeting.

Mr. Other Alladi (Uganda): Mr. Chairman, I must first of all congratulate you on your unceasing effort to find a consensus among the representatives in the First Committee. My delegation believes that the time has come when we cannot afford to restrict ourselves to mere generalities on the question of comprehensive disarmament. Concrete proposals, globally binding are necessary prerequisites for arriving at total disarmament. We all know that unless our recommendations at the United Nations are supported by all the nuclear Powers, as well as potential nuclear Powers, we cannot expect to achieve much.
It is with the foregoing in view that my delegation considers it imperative that at this session of the First Committee the question of the convening of a world conference on disarmament should come first on the agenda. My delegation believes that the extent to which the item will receive a favourable response will be the yardstick with which we can measure the relative success of our consideration of the other items. We also believe that the other items on the agenda, which deal with disarmament, really hinge on this one factor: whether or not we can bring the nations of the world to agree on the necessity of eliminating destructive weapons.

My delegation is not saying, however, that the other items are not important or that we should withhold discussion on them until a world conference on disarmament has been convened. What in effect we are saying is that in this session of the First Committee the question of the convening of the world conference on disarmament should have come first. In the opinion of my delegation, the question of convening a world disarmament conference should have taken priority and then the rest would have followed exactly in the way you, Mr. Chairman, have enumerated.

As you may have observed, this is the view of the delegation of Uganda, as I have expressed. But at the same time when you were making your statement this afternoon, Mr. Chairman, you hinted on very important criteria which, I think, have been guiding the discussions in many conferences of an international nature, that is, the spirit of compromise and mutual accommodation. My delegation will certainly, by following this spirit of compromise and mutual accommodation, be prepared to accept the order of business which you have just enumerated in your statement.

Mr. COULIBALY (Mali) (interpretation from French): Mr. Chairman, this is the first time that I have spoken in the First Committee, and, before coming to the item under discussion, I should like to address to you the congratulations of the delegation of Mali on the occasion of your election to the Chair of this Committee.
We have the privilege of knowing you personally, and on many occasions we have been able to appreciate your qualities as a diplomat and your constant efforts in the search for solutions to problems confronting our Organization. Deeply attached to the policy of non-alignment and to the principle of the sovereign equality of all nations, the delegation of Mali is very happy to see you preside over the deliberations of this important Committee.

I would also like to congratulate the Vice-Chairman, Ambassador Benites, and the Rapporteur, my friend Mr. Fahmy, of the United Arab Republic.
When the Chairman made his proposal, I understood that that was the result of consultations undertaken by him since our last meeting. I therefore thought that it was a compromise acceptable to other delegations. My delegation therefore did not intend to intervene in the discussion. But, since I see that this is not the case, I should like to say that the delegation of Mali fully supports the proposal made by the Chairman. The delegation of Mali thinks that, in order to ensure adoption of our agenda and discussion of the matters on that agenda, it is absolutely necessary that all delegations make concessions and abandon some of their original views. All the items on our agenda are important -- indeed, very important -- since they all concern the maintenance of peace, which is the fundamental objective of the United Nations. My delegation is therefore of the view that it would be wise to accept the proposal of the Chairman and, without further ado, begin our discussion on the substance of all the items on our agenda.

It is an incontrovertible fact that the calling of a World Disarmament Conference is a most important question. In the present political context, it is impossible to consider that various aspects of the question of general and complete disarmament could move ahead without the convening of a World Disarmament Conference. I think we are all agreed on that.

All of us have regretted the absence of progress in the field of disarmament despite the efforts made by the Eighteen-Nation Committee in Geneva for the past few years. We know that some nuclear Powers are not taking part in the work at Geneva. It is unrealistic to think that the Geneva Conference will be able to solve the complex problems of disarmament in the absence of the two Powers that I have in mind.

Let us therefore work as proposed by the Chairman and, once a decision is taken to convene a World Disarmament Conference, efforts will be made to see to it that the conditions necessary for the convening of such a conference are fulfilled. We believe that long and serious negotiations must be undertaken if we wish to ensure the success of the World Disarmament Conference, which is our common goal. I think that, in adopting resolution DC/224 of 15 June 1965, the Disarmament Commission, of which we are all members, stressed the need and
urgency to convene a World Disarmament Conference. This priority, this urgency, which we recognized in June remains a fact. Indeed, the matter is even more urgent now.

On condition that our Committee will devote the same attention to all the items on our agenda, my delegation fully supports the proposal made by the Chairman at the beginning of this afternoon's meeting as concerns the order of priority of the various items on our agenda. I would therefore appeal to my colleagues not to waste too much time on this procedural question and to adopt the proposal of the Chairman.

Mr. OCHONO (Cameroon): I had not intended to take the floor at this time, but I do so because we in the African group heard the appeal of the Chairman when he asked us to consider the effort he had made to solve the difficulty which he had faced since the beginning of the debate in this Committee.

During our last meeting, I took the floor in order to try to introduce a compromise between what appeared to be the stiffening positions of those who favoured priority for the question of general and complete disarmament and those who felt that the convening of a World Disarmament Conference should be considered first. My delegation felt, as far back as the eighteenth session of the General Assembly, and it still believes, that related items of this sort can be discussed together. The Chairman has appealed to us to remember how much time is at our disposal and to make sure that the Committee can conclude its debate in time. That was the only reason that I suggested that those related items should be discussed together.

It is nine days since we last met, and the Chairman has made great efforts to reconcile the various views. I would be willing to withdraw my suggestion if it will not be helpful to the work of the Committee. But I should like to say that it has always been the position of my delegation that we should try to avoid anything that can bring polemics into the discussion.
During our debate in 1963, I made a similar suggestion, asking representatives to consider together all items related to disarmament. That suggestion gained some support, and I think that something of the sort was done at that time.

My delegation was a co-sponsor of the move to call a World Disarmament Conference, and I could only recommend priority for that item. But I should like to join those who have preceded me in saying that the proposal submitted to us by the Chairman should be unanimously adopted, and that we should refrain from introducing polemics into this issue, so that we may carry out the Chairman's appeal to conclude our debate in time.

I merely wanted to place on record the position of my Government and to say that we have simply made a suggestion in order to help the Chairman to help us to conclude our work in time. We have no particular views on the issues to be debated, and we agree with the proposal that the Chairman has just submitted to us.
Mr. TABOR (Denmark): Mr. Chairman, may I, on behalf of the Danish delegation and myself, congratulate you sincerely on your unanimous election to preside over our work. I also wish to congratulate the other members of the Bureau who were elected on 6 October. If I do not extend my congratulations any further it is only because I feel sure that it is your wish that we should concentrate on the work which we have to perform and concerning which I wish you every success.

We have heard the different tendencies existing in this Committee with regard to the organization of our work. The Danish delegation finds that the formula which you have suggested, Mr. Chairman, constitutes a reasonable compromise which we can accept, and I should like to congratulate you upon this result. I know how much effort you have expended in working out this formula.

I should just like to add a few words. During the general debate in the General Assembly several speakers -- among them the Danish Minister for Foreign Affairs -- stressed the close link between the different aspects of disarmament and the question of non-proliferation. We in the Danish delegation are happy that it has proved possible for you, Mr. Chairman, to propose a compromise which will make it possible, during the discussion of suggestions and draft resolutions under a specific item, to take up all the other relevant problems.

Mr. PADILLA TOCÓS (Dominican Republic) (interpretation from Spanish):

Allow me to begin, Mr. Chairman, by congratulating you and the members of the Bureau on your unanimous election to the Chairmanship and other posts in the Bureau of this Committee.

Following its usual practice, the Dominican Republic will support the organization of the work of our Committee in accordance with the views expressed by the majority. In view of the fact that the Dominican Republic was mentioned in connexion with the question of the inadmissibility of intervention in the domestic affairs of States and the protection of their sovereignty and their independence, my delegation wishes to state that it does not attach great importance to the place given to this item in the work of the Committee, but rather to the fact that whatever time may be allotted for its consideration, the Dominican Republic may have occasion to express its views on this matter.
Mr. VINCI (Italy): In asking for the floor again, it is first of all to thank the representative of Ethiopia for having given some weight to the remarks which I felt it my duty to make a few moments ago. I was gratified to note that he thought that there was some consistency in what I said about discussing the substance of disarmament. Although the representative of Ethiopia is of the opinion that the machinery is as important -- and I share that view, of course -- I feel that the machinery is the instrument by means of which one tries to reach the objectives, and I remain deeply convinced that the subject of our discussions and the objective of our work should be disarmament. Of course, I would have been happier if the items had been separated and we had been able to discuss them separately. As a matter of fact, I suggested in my statement that we should discuss the items in the order in which they were set up in the special supplement to Journal No. 3749, with certain changes. The change which I suggested was that items 1, 2 and 3 should be discussed and that item 11, on non-proliferation of nuclear weapons -- proposed by the Soviet Union -- should become item 3 (b).

I have expressed this view because of my chief concern that we should not give the impression that we are abandoning any part of our task. I believe that this places on record the position of my delegation. I do not wish to make your already heavy task any heavier, Mr. Chairman. I feel that you have arrived at a most valuable formula and I am ready, in a spirit of accommodation, not to press for my former suggestion, but to accept the order of the items which you have proposed, with the understanding -- which was also expressed by the representatives of Japan, Brazil and Denmark -- that, in discussing the first item on the proliferation of nuclear weapons, that this is linked to the other relevant aspects of disarmament. Thus, each delegation will feel free, according to its own conscience and conviction, to put forward any suggestions which may be considered to be constructive and useful for the progress of our work.

I shall conclude by repeating that I am prepared not to press for my previous suggestion, but to suggest the order of items which you have indicated, Mr. Chairman, with the understanding that I have outlined.
Mr. RAHMÁN (Malaysia): In the first place, may I offer my felicitations, and those of my delegation, to you, Mr. Chairman, and the other members of the Bureau on your unanimous election to preside over the deliberations of this important Committee.

In view of the remarks just made by the representative of Italy, it is unnecessary for me to elaborate the reasons which I had intended to put before the Committee in asking members to accept the order of business which you, Sir, have suggested.

I understand that there has been a great deal of discussion before arriving at a consensus. The order which you mentioned at the opening of the meeting has been accepted, by and large, by a cross section of the various delegations in this Committee. That being so, I would merely say that the order which you have presented, Mr. Chairman, appears to my delegation to be perfectly logical and we are ready to support it.

As I said, I am grateful to the representative of Italy for his very helpful attitude and, therefore, it is not necessary for me to elaborate on the reasons which I had intended to put before the Committee.
Mr. CARUANA (Malta): The Maltese delegation wishes to be associated with the many tributes paid to you, Mr. Chairman, on your election as Chairman of this Committee. I would also take this opportunity to thank you warmly for the welcome you extended my country on the first appearance in this Committee of its representatives. I would also like to express sincere congratulations to Mr. Benites and Mr. Fahmi on their election to the important posts of Vice-Chairman and Rapporteur respectively. I am very happy that they enjoy with you the whole-hearted confidence of this Committee.

There has been almost unanimous support in the discussions that have taken place for the proposal to consider firstly and with urgency items connected with world disarmament, including that of the convening of a world disarmament conference. This delegation is in full accord with the stress that has been laid on the incontrovertible fact that problems of disarmament and allied subjects transcend all others in their importance to the whole human race.

We have therefore listened with particular attention to what the representatives had to say on the question of priorities. We are of the view that the general debate should precede consideration of the question of a world disarmament conference. We have no strong opposition to the suggestion that the items on disarmament be considered separately, but we do feel strongly that there are valid reasons for discussing them before discussing the question of a world disarmament conference. We are convinced that dealing with them beforehand will facilitate the work of the world disarmament conference. We shall, however, accept the order of business that you, Mr. Chairman, have worked out.

Mr. Diallo (Guinea) (interpretation from French): I would merely wish to state, Mr. Chairman, that I listened with much attention to the proposals made by you at the beginning of our meeting concerning the order of priority of the items on our agenda. This order of priority certainly will not be to the liking of all delegations, because it is, after all, a compromise. But this compromise was very difficult to work out, and it does require a modicum of sacrifice from all delegations. Therefore, it is quite obvious that this compromise, while it does not meet with the entire approval of all delegations, is, so far as my delegation is concerned, a compromise which is not only logical, but also reasonable.
On the other hand, this compromise is very useful since it has the advantage of solving the difficulties which have beset us for too long. That is why I should like to tell you, Mr. Chairman, of the support of my delegation so far as this proposal is concerned, and I should like to thank you for your patience and persistent efforts in recent days in arriving at this compromise.

The CHAIRMAN: From the general views which have been expressed here, I am happy to see that there is an understanding, and I take it that there is no formal objection to the order that I proposed at the beginning of this meeting. Since there has been no objection, I take it that the Committee decides to adopt the order of these six items on the agenda.

It was so decided.

The CHAIRMAN: I should like to express my gratitude to all the delegations who expressed their support for the proposals of the Chair and for the understanding that enabled us to reach this unanimous decision.

I should like to call the attention of the Committee to the fact that there are still six items on our agenda on which consultations with regard to their priority have not been successful until now, because of differences in approach. I heard proposals concerning the priorities of these items during our previous meeting, and also during our present meeting. Since we still have time left in our working day, I should like to invite members of the Committee to make suggestions with regard to the order in which these items could be dealt with, so that, if possible, we might agree on the priorities of further items.

Mr. BARNES (Liberia): In the past few days, Mr. Chairman, you have been engaged in very extensive and tedious consultations aimed at arriving at the order of priority to be accorded to the items referred to this Committee, and you were rewarded in these consultations by the acceptance by the Committee of an agreement concerning the six items on the agenda. You have also mentioned that you were unable to reach agreement concerning the remainder of the items on our agenda. Since we shall for some time be engaged in the consideration of the items on whose priority we have agreed this afternoon, it seems to me that we could well entrust you with the continuation of the consultations with the Committee concerning the remainder of the items on our agenda, and to report to
to the Committee at some future date. This is the proposal I wish to put forward for the consideration of the Committee.

Mr. MISHRA (India): May I be the first to support the proposal made by the representative of Liberia. We would be very happy, Mr. Chairman, to entrust this task to you.

The CHAIRMAN: If no other representative wishes to speak, I should like to express my gratitude to the representative of Liberia for his suggestion, supported by the representative of India, and for expressing his confidence in the Chair. I shall certainly do my utmost to consult the delegations as widely as possible in order to learn their views concerning the further priorities, but I would also like to apologize in advance; it may happen that I shall be unable to consult all 117 Members. One or two may not be consulted, but I will do my best to contact as many Members as possible. In due time, I will report to the Committee on the results of my consultations.

We have already agreed to discuss six items, and that, I think, will take a certain time.
We shall begin, according to the decision we have taken, with the substantive consideration of the first item, that is, the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, at our next meeting which will be held on Monday, 18 October, at 10.30 a.m. I would invite the members of the Committee who wish to participate in the debate on this item to inscribe their names on the list of speakers with the Committee Secretary.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.