Verbatim Record of the Ninth Hundred and Fiftieth Meeting

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Thursday, 15 October 1958, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. URQUIA (El Salvador)

1. Question of disarmament [64] (continued)
2. The discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests [70] (continued)
3. The reduction of the military budgets of the USSR, the United States, the United Kingdom and France by 10 - 15 per cent and the use of part of the savings so effected for assistance to the under-developed countries [72] (continued)

Note: The Official Record of this meeting, i.e., the summary record, will appear in mimeographed form under the symbol A/C.1/SR.950. Delegations may submit corrections to the summary record for incorporation in the final version which will appear in a printed volume.
AGENDA ITEMS 64, 70 and 72

1. QUESTION OF DISARMAMENT (continued)
2. THE DISCONTINUANCE OF ATOMIC AND HYDROGEN WEAPONS TESTS (continued)

Mr. ERUCAN (Romania): Before stating the position of the Romanian delegation on the issue under debate, I wish to dwell briefly on a matter of principle which arises before us. I refer to the role of the General Assembly in the disarmament question -- the right and the duty of this Assembly to take a stand and to reach decisions on the most acute and vital aspects of disarmament.

Two different approaches to this matter have taken shape in the Committee. According to one of these, the General Assembly has that right and that duty and, consequently, is called upon to declare its viewpoint on certain items and draft resolutions relating to the very substance of disarmament. Needless to say, that position logically originates from the principles and aims of the Charter. There is, however, an opposite position stated in the Committee maintaining that the Assembly should not deal with the subject matter of the disarmament items on the agenda, and that the only thing for the Assembly to do is to limit itself to encouraging and wishing success to the two meetings in Geneva. This position has been clearly stated by Mr. Lodge in the following words:

"We believe that the constructive thing for the General Assembly to do at this point is to encourage the forthcoming talks." (A/C.1/PV.945, p. 17)

Why is it constructive for the General Assembly to refrain from declaring its stand on the problem, which is so vitally important to the whole world, and why would it not be constructive for the Assembly to declare itself in favour of the immediate and unconditional cessation of nuclear tests? This kind of reasoning reveals a strange logic, the significance of which we shall try to spell out later on. For the time being, we note the restriction politely recommended to the General Assembly not to make decisions on the most acute aspects of disarmament.
One may ask, indeed, what is the use of debating the substance of disarmament when, from the very beginning, we are told that the only thing required of the General Assembly is an expression of its good wishes to the participants in the forthcoming talks. It is no accident that, in these conditions, very few delegations find it necessary to take the floor. We are confronted with a matter of principle for the United Nations. This is an attempt to minimize the role of the General Assembly in the disarmament question and to prevent it from discharging its responsibility on a matter which has been considered by all speakers to be the most important before this session. Such an attempt cannot be viewed with indifference by any of the United Nations Members.
I turn now to the substance of disarmament. The new and important element which makes disarmament today appear basically different from any previous historical period is the tremendous progress of contemporary science and technology. Never before in history has mankind attained the capability of destroying the whole civilization and annihilating life on our planet. This appalling reality confronts mankind with the paramount problem of its very survival. Whereas, in the past, disarmament involved chiefly the opposing parties, nowadays, as the result of the colossal destructive power which man possesses, a new element has appeared binding all peoples, all human beings in the same common, vital interest of survival, the same goal of saving human civilization. This is the new feature of disarmament.

The most outstanding scientists and technologists, aware of their high responsibility, have warned mankind that the existing stockpiles of modern weapons which are being continually perfected already possess the capacity to cause a catastrophe of such magnitude that one can scarcely foresee what, if anything would be left. Peoples have never before been faced with such a problem, either on the eve of the First World War or of the Second World War.

We all proclaim, with legitimate pride, that we are living in the atomic era and that we have stepped into outer space. However, these great discoveries on the part of human genius, while opening unlimited vistas for progress, at the same time confront us with the horrible prospect of a major catastrophe; for it is the nuclear bomb and the modern means of delivering and launching it at great distances that gives enormous dimensions to the question under debate, dimensions without precedent in the history of our planet. Frightened of such a hideous prospect, men of common sense ask themselves: why build and stockpile new and dreadful weapons? Why continue this frantic armaments race since there already exists a sufficient quantity of such material to destroy our planet? The only reason why the champions of the armaments race continue in this way is in order to contemplate the possibility of destroying other planets as well.

An end must be put to this mad race. We have to start somewhere. Whether the cessation of nuclear test explosions is considered to be real disarmament or not -- a controversy which is meaningless -- what actually counts is that the decision to do so would put an end to this madness and give our troubled world an opportunity to think and to reason.
It has been said here that we should not "look back in anger". The important thing is not to give reason for people to "look forward in anger". In this connexion the present session of the General Assembly is more than ever focussing the attention of world public opinion, which expects the United Nations to pass from disarmament in words to disarmament in deeds. The Romanian delegation, therefore, welcomes the possibility of adopting at this session such a concrete measure.

No doubt, the very first measure is the cessation of nuclear tests. The unanimity of world public opinion on this matter is so evident and so vigorously expressed that one can scarcely dare to oppose it openly. The position on the cessation of nuclear tests has become the cornerstone of the world's judgement on disarmament. To oppose the cessation of test explosions is to oppose the road leading to disarmament. It should not be a matter of wonder to anyone if this criterion is applied at this very time to the debate taking place in this Committee and if people expect to have our clear-cut answer to the question of test explosions.
If those who bear the principal responsibility for the solution of this problem have a real concern for public opinion -- and the debates prove the existence of such concern -- they should know one thing, namely that public opinion will judge their position neither by the rules of procedure which they might take advantage of, nor by their assurances in the lobbies, but by their decision in favour of or against the cessation of nuclear tests. If attempts were made to prevent such an expression of opinion, urgently demanded and expected by the whole world, nobody should nurture the illusion that public opinion would not be able to draw the right conclusion.

The cessation of nuclear tests, although it practically concerns only three atomic Powers, is, from any point of view, a world issue. If we were to note the mere fact that tests with atomic and hydrogen bombs poison the air, the water and the food and are harmful for future generations throughout the world, this would suffice to prove that all United Nations Members have the right and the duty to state their position in this respect.

We will not take up again all the arguments in favour of this measure. The Romanian delegation wishes to stress only one argument, which abundantly and clearly demonstrates the pressing urgency of adopting such a measure. I refer to the danger of having additional Powers which will reach the stage of producing atomic and hydrogen weapons. Mention has been made here of France and Western Germany. The grave danger of the possession of nuclear weapons of mass destruction by the German militarists and revanchards, who have unleashed two world wars, has been pointed out.

Romania, as a European State, which has been subject to German aggression in both wars, is particularly entitled to be concerned with such a worrying perspective for the peace of Europe and of the world. But who can say at present how many other countries, having the adequate industrial, technical and scientific capacity, will follow through? The situation would then be a thousand times more dangerous, and its solution a thousand times more difficult. Now the chance is at hand for solving the problem, as long as there are only three atomic Powers.
As far as the Soviet Union is concerned, its stand is clearly and categorically in favour of the immediate and unconditional cessation of nuclear tests. This year again, the Soviet delegation has submitted a draft resolution (A/C.1/L.204) which unequivocally meets the aspirations of mankind.

What is the position of the United States? The Chairman of the Special Sub-Committee on Radiation of the House of Representatives of the United States of America wrote in January 1958:

"A national policy clearly stated and vigorously advocated would, in my opinion, regain for the United States the initiative it has lost in presenting to the world the true situation regarding atomic-hydrogen weapons tests."

Does the statement made by the United States representative in this Committee meet these requirements? Did we have a chance to hear a clearly stated and vigorously advocated policy on the true situation regarding atomic-hydrogen weapons tests? One could scarcely give a positive answer to this question.

Mr. Lodge, in his statement on 10 October, in the afternoon, had this to say:

"The United States position on suspension of nuclear weapons tests is not conditional on the existence of an entire disarmament plan. I say it is not conditional." (A/C.1/PV.945, p. 51).

In his statement which was made somewhat earlier in the morning of the same meeting, Mr. Lodge said the following with regard to point four, concerning the suspension of nuclear weapons tests:

"...if the United States is to give up its ability to improve its defensive weapons, then there must be corresponding limitations on the ability of other states to increase their weapons stocks, and to maintain large armed forces." (Ibid., p. 16)

In other words, in the afternoon we are told that the position is not conditional, while in the morning this position is conditioned by other disarmament measures.

What is the position of the United States on the indefinite cessation of nuclear tests? The position of Mr. Lodge on this question, which he has more than once reiterated before this Committee, is that for the time being the United States is ready to suspend tests for one year. I will quote from Mr. Lodge's statement:
"We are ready to extend our suspension indefinitely as long as each year we know that the inspection system is working and we are making reasonable progress on other aspects of disarmament."

(Ibid., p. 51)

Whereas in the first instance we are faced with a position which tends to be unconditional, but lays down conditions, in the second instance we are told of an indefinite suspension, which however has to be decided each year. One must recognize that we are faced with a difficult choice: the word "indefinitely", as we all know, means having no prescribed limit or known limits, and the words "each year" is a very precise limit of time. This lack of clarity shows once again why the General Assembly should take up the matter and make recommendations of substance on the test explosions.
What about the United Kingdom?

Like the United States representative, the United Kingdom representative, although he stated that "here, in the United Nations, is vested the main responsibility for disarmament", would rather prefer the United Nations to relieve itself of this responsibility as to the subject matter of the Geneva talks.

The representative of the United Kingdom has this to say:

"It would be unrealistic to try to commit the nuclear Powers to a particular course of action before they have had full opportunity for negotiation amongst themselves". (A/C.1/PV.988, pps. 27, 28-30)

The particular course of action which the Assembly is fully entitled to be concerned with is actually the cessation of test explosions. Now one of the nuclear Powers, namely the Soviet Union, not only does not object to being committed to such a course of action, but finds it necessary to do so. Why are the two Western Powers so reluctant to do the same since, as Mr. Noble puts it, an agreement for the suspension of nuclear tests under effective international control is the "desired goal"?

Why is it that he does not want to be committed to a course of action which would make it easier for him to reach the "desired goal"?

Mr. Noble told us that the Geneva talks are extremely important. He went on to say that the negotiations are bound to involve complex and perhaps contentious issues of a practical kind and that while scientists have agreed on the technical feasibility of control, agreement has yet to be reached on their practical organization and application.

As far as I know, and I am sure that everybody here will confirm it, none of the proposals or draft resolutions submitted to this Committee has ever dealt with these matters. It goes without saying that nobody has tried to commit the nuclear Powers to that kind of matter. What those who strive to have the General Assembly take a stand on the substance of the matter are actually seeking is a declaration regarding the cessation of test explosions and not its practical implementation aspect.

Everybody realizes that the practical organization and application of such a control has to be left to the atomic Powers.
In consequence, there is no ground for confusing the problems before us. No issue does and can exist between the principle of discontinuing test explosions and the practical organization and application of a control system, however complex these might be.

As we see it, while the General Assembly is duty bound and rightfully entitled to deal with the political principle of discontinuing test explosions and to make its recommendations on this matter, the practical organization and application of a control system is up to the atomic Powers.

We have heard many brief statements during the debate made by the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom, some of which brought important enlightenment on their position concerning the technical aspects of control.

What still puzzles everybody is one single question: if these delegations are actually so anxious to see the Geneva talks succeed, why are they afraid to have the General Assembly take a decision on the test explosions? Why?

The Romanian delegation strongly supports such a decision made by the General Assembly. Moral and political duty and the responsibility for the destiny of mankind demand that the First Committee and the General Assembly unequivocally pronounce themselves for the immediate and unconditional cessation of nuclear tests.

In so far as the talks in Geneva are concerned, the only constructive thing the General Assembly can do for their success is the adoption of a clear-cut decision in this respect, recommending the cessation of nuclear tests.

The Romanian delegation firmly supports the draft resolution submitted by the Soviet Union and considers that it fully corresponds to this requirement.

With regard to the reduction of military budgets, the Romanian delegation reserves its right to speak at a later stage of the debate.

Mr. PALAMAS (Greece): I wish to present a few observations bearing on the problem of disarmament and on some specific aspects of it.
In expressing the considered interest of my Government in the promotion of the peace, the security and the welfare of the world through disarmament, I wish to stress in particular the following points:

My delegation regrets that the United Nations machinery for continued negotiations on disarmament was blocked. Such negotiations have been practically suspended since the end of the last session of the General Assembly. The fact that the action of the Disarmament Commission and of its Sub-Committee did not yield the expected results cannot, in our opinion, justify the discontinuance of the efforts of the United Nations in this field. Disarmament, affecting the vital point of national and international security, is not an easy problem to solve. So far, the only efficient answer to the problem of security was military might and armaments. This cannot be changed overnight. It needs persistent and strenuous efforts and time, much longer than one can foresee.

Negotiations between the big Powers and in close co-operation with all the Member States must be resumed and continued even if they are to remain inconclusive for some more years to come.

Disarmament is a complex of political, psychological and technical factors linked nowadays to scientific progress. To discuss in good faith the various aspects of such a problem is progress in itself. The least benefit we could reap from such efforts is an improvement of the general political climate, a more thorough investigation of the whole issue and even the training of an enlarged negotiating international team composed of experts and specialists from the nations mainly concerned. The United Nations should have at its disposal a number of highly-qualified specialists on disarmament. But to win the battle of disarmament the United Nations should go on fighting this battle and not stop fighting.

As we believe that the discussions on the general problem of disarmament should be resumed, we think that efforts must be made in order to overcome the difficulties we faced last year.
In this respect we highly value the suggestion made by the Foreign Minister of Mexico, whose experience and advice could be of the greatest help to the parties more directly concerned. If the great Powers, in agreeing to discuss this problem once again, were inspired by a sincere desire not only to serve their own interests but also to respond to the desires and expectations of the Committee, there is every reason to believe that they would find a way out of the present deadlock.

If we recall the conditions in which this stalemate was created, we may find it difficult to understand why the Soviet Union refused to participate in the Commission of the twenty-five members. Its composition was -- in terms of voting -- much more favourable to the Soviet Union than that of the standing body of eighty-one members initially proposed by it. But one may also wonder why the majority of the General Assembly, which rejected this proposed standing body, consented to the enlargement of the Commission in a way which did not reflect the political physiognomy of the Assembly. The argument that a body of eighty-one members was too heavy a machinery and that it could be used as a sounding board for propaganda purposes is not convincing. A committee of twenty-five members could be as noisy a sounding board as any, if such were the underlying intentions and trends. But we do not think that we should approach this issue in a spirit of suspicion and distrust.

In any case, as we believe that any organ entrusted with the task of restarting negotiations on disarmament should, to a certain extent, reflect the political characteristics of the General Assembly, we would be more inclined to accept even a standing body composed of eighty-one members than to subscribe to any other more or less artificial formula.

By delegation, while considering as indispensable the continuation of the discussions on the problem of disarmament as a whole, does not exclude the possibility of singling out certain specific points on which limited agreement could be reached. Such individual steps might lead to partial achievements beneficial to the international community. They might also pave the way towards major accomplishments and serve as pilot projects to explore and test the existing possibilities in other fields of disarmament as well.

It is in this sense that the establishment by common agreement of the great Powers of a system of international control for the detection of
nuclear tests would not only guarantee the enforcement of the suspension of nuclear tests but would also open new prospects for the extension of measures of disarmament through practicable international control in other fields. However, in our view, even when adopting a "piece-meal" approach, we should never lose sight of the comprehensive nature of the problem.

On the point of the suspension of nuclear and thermomuclear tests, let me say the following.

This problem presents, in our opinion, two different aspects. One is related to the military potentialities of the countries already producing nuclear weapons. Indirectly it also affects the military power of countries which have not yet reached the stage of production of such weapons but are well on the way to it. Furthermore, it has a bearing even on the status of countries which, for various reasons, do not envisage, or lack the possibility of, producing nuclear weapons. These countries, too, are in fact relying on the existing balance of power for their own security and for the preservation of world peace. Nuclear armaments, their improvement, their increase, or their abolition are indissolubly linked to the issue of national and international security and peace. Therefore, any measure affecting nuclear armaments must also be considered and weighed in the light of its implications and consequences in the field of the ability of defence of all States. No government on earth will ever agree to measures destined to break, to its detriment, the balance of its defensive potentialities. In the field of disarmament all must win; no one should lose. We believe that this is the only realistic approach to any measure related to disarmament.

Considering, under this aspect, the possibility of a general and unconditional suspension of nuclear tests and, even more, their eventual cessation, we are bound to note: that in the case of such a suspension, the production and stockpiling of nuclear weapons -- if not their continued improvement -- would be continued by the three great nuclear Powers; that in this situation there would be the risk of the creation of a kind of monopoly in the production of these weapons. Many countries might object to such a situation; for the Powers belonging to this nuclear club the question would arise of their right or even of their obligation to share with other countries the technical data they possess for the production of nuclear weapons.
I mention a few only of the many points arising from the suspension of nuclear tests in order to illustrate the complexity of a problem which at first sight seems to be very simple indeed.

My delegation is gratified at the success of the Conference of Experts on the Suspension of Nuclear Tests, held in Geneva. This will facilitate the work of the conference between the United States, the Soviet Union and the United Kingdom, scheduled to convene in Geneva on 31 October.

But even with the prospect of an agreed suspension of nuclear tests on the basis of efficient international control, we do not underestimate the underlying political and other difficulties of the problem. This is not a reason for discouragement. On the contrary, it is better to see things as they are instead of being induced to complacency by over-simplifications inconsistent with realities.

The second aspect of the suspension of tests concerns the potential victims of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons. In this respect, all the peoples of the world are potential victims. Not only do they run the risk of being destroyed in time of war by atom and hydrogen bombs, but their health is also threatened in time of peace by the radiation released from experimental explosions. As the representative of India, Mr. Krishna Menon, put it, epigrammatically, the victim is not national but international, and its natural reaction is an imperative demand for the cessation of tests.

We think that this demand should find its way of expression through the authority of the General Assembly and be conveyed to the nuclear Powers. If the nuclear Powers have to face the difficulties inherent in the aspect relating to national defence and security, they should also constantly bear in mind that all the peoples of the world, including their own peoples, are anxious to see the nuclear tests discontinued by common understanding and agreement.
But, on the other hand, the peoples should also be informed about the intricacies of the problem. They must be aware of the fact that the aspect related to the dangers from radiation is linked to the aspect concerning their national security as well as international peace. They should also bear in mind that the suspension of tests prevents the threat from radiation but not that of mass destruction, as the production of nuclear and thermonuclear weapons will continue. Furthermore, they should realize that even if the stage of the banning, under control, of all nuclear weapons is ever reached -- as we hope will be the case in the years to come -- the problem of conventional armaments and their evaluation in accordance with the requirements of international security will then emerge and should be solved, in connexion with, if not as a prerequisite to, the abolition of nuclear and thermonuclear war devices. All then will realize that disarmament is a vast problem which should be dealt with both in a comprehensive way and by individual steps on specific points. Any one-sided approach carries the risk of being inconclusive.

In the light of these observations, my delegation will evaluate the three draft resolutions submitted to the Committee. We consider that the draft resolution sponsored by the seventeen countries is realistic and contains constructive elements. As other draft resolutions, and in this connexion I wish to mention particularly that submitted by the thirteen countries, also contain useful ideas and suggestions, we wonder if an effort should not be made to bring closer the respective views and have all the constructive points agreed upon through one decision which could be unanimous. Unanimity, especially among the great Powers, as past experience has proved, is indispensable in matters of disarmament, on which only an agreed solution can be recognized as a solution.

On the question of the reduction of military budgets, on which a draft resolution has been circulated by the Soviet delegation, my delegation, being in agreement with the basic idea contained in that draft resolution, thinks that the way of ensuring its thorough and sincere implementation should be studied on the level of experts.

Mr. SUBASINGHE, (Ceylon): Let me join with the other representatives in congratulating you, Mr. Chairman, and your colleagues, Dr. Osman and Dr. Natsch, on your election to this high office. We hope that under your wise guidance the Committee will achieve very tangible results which will benefit all humanity.
One of the greatest disappointments of the last generation was the failure of the world to disarm in the period between the two wars. We remember too well the tragedy which befell the world after this failure. Let us hope that a similar failure and a tragedy will not overtake our generation.

Disarmament has engaged the attention of the world again during the past decade. Proposals have been made. Discussions have taken place. Negotiations have been set in motion. But the results have been negligible.

Every day that passes makes the problem graver. While everybody talks of disarmament and peace, the piling up of armaments and the preparations for war continue. The technical developments that have been achieved during the past year and intensified tension between the nations today make the problem of disarmament all the more important to the United Nations sitting in its thirteenth session.

We are a small country with no military ambitions. We have no quarrel with any other nation, and we are rather fortunate that we have no need to divert our meagre resources to wasteful expenditure on armaments. Need the bigger and richer nations so waste their resources? The nations engaged in the armaments race are ones that have contributed in large measure to the economic and cultural advancement of not only their people, but also the people all the world over. The fields for constructive achievement are many, both inside their national boundaries and outside. The knowledge and the other means available to them are so great as to achieve these ends. However, we seem to be moving inexorably toward self-destruction. One wonders whether the dividing line between barbarism and civilization is so thin that we should move in this destructive direction.

I am fully aware that when I touch on armament and disarmament I am touching on aspects of national policy that are very important. They are closely linked with the national security and integrity of States. In fact, here I wish to refer to a statement made by Mr. Gromyko in one of his interventions in the General Assembly. To quote his words: "Disarmament is a complex and many-sided problem and any step planned in this field affects the most sensitive interests of States". Very true, and, therefore, we cannot all too readily advise the nations that are directly engaged in the armaments race as to what they must and must not do.

However, when national policy impinges on the interests of other States and the execution of those policies endangers their existence, then we have a right
to intervene, whether we are big or small countries. Actually what has been happening in the recent past has been causing danger not only to themselves but to everybody, whether the States are big or small. We are happy that the participants in the armaments race themselves recognize the dangerous impasse that has been reached. We are glad that disarmament has become a United Nations matter.

Today we see the sad spectacle of countries that united together to rid the world of the oppressive rule of fascism are now opposed to each other. This hostility has resulted in their economic and technical skills being geared to war production on a gigantic scale. Their foreign policies are influenced by the over-riding need to gain one side's advantage over the other. In this process all of us are in danger of being involved in one way or another in the conflict.

There is not only a race to have more arms, better arms and bigger arms, but one also sees the creation of regional pacts and the establishment of military bases all over the world thousands of miles away from the frontiers of the direct participants in the "cold war". Fleets rush from ocean to ocean. Planes with atomic and nuclear equipment take the air all the twenty-four hours of the day.

Armaments are being piled up in remote regions. Regional pacts, whatever their effectiveness against the alleged enemy may be, have certainly tended to increase tension in those regions. Economic policies of the contending parties towards the countries in the areas of the regional pacts have in no small measure been influenced by strategic considerations.

In the face of these developments, those of us who have just emerged from colonial subjugation do get a little anxious to say the least. With all our deficiencies and weaknesses, our Governments are striving hard to provide our poverty-stricken people with at least some of the basic amenities of life. What we need most for the pursuit of these objectives is peace and good relations with all countries of the world. We want to benefit from the economic, scientific and cultural achievements of the more advanced countries without placing ourselves under the patronage of any one of them. Hence when the actions and policies of the great Powers threaten the peace of the world, we have to call a halt if we possibly can.
It has often been stated that disarmament is a complex and complicated problem, and my delegation fully agrees with this view. There are both technical and political aspects to it. In the opinion of my delegation, it would be unwise to concentrate on the technical aspect of disarmament while postponing the political aspects to a later stage. The conference of scientists, in August this year, unanimously agreed on the technical measures necessary for detecting possible violations of a ban on test explosions. This successful outcome gratified millions throughout the world. This unravelling of one of the complex knots of disarmament is incomplete without the political decisions for the cessation of atomic and hydrogen tests. Cessation is a necessary political concomitant, and a decision by the General Assembly will indicate to the forthcoming Geneva talks the voice not only of the big nations but of the small nations and their peoples. Experience of the disarmament negotiations after the two world wars of this century shows that, although wide agreements on technical solutions were reached, there was no disarmament. The reason, I venture to submit, was the political obstacles. We consider that technical and political discussions must proceed pari passu.

We are strengthened in this belief by the experience of disarmament negotiations in recent years also. There have been occasions when the gulf between the proposals made by the two sides has been narrowed down and converged in areas where there had been no agreement before. The history of the Disarmament Commission's Sub-Committee discussions show this. We cannot escape the conclusion that suspicions arising out of political causes create the deadlocks. Hence the importance we attach to political negotiations along with the technical.

It is impossible to embody in one resolution all that the Assembly would wish to recommend on disarmament. Rather than adopting an omnibus resolution, my delegation considers it better to have a resolution on each of the questions that have been brought up here. Further, we do not wish to give the impression that, because disarmament in all its spheres and stages is a connected whole, therefore all stages must be considered at one given time. The huge edifice of armaments can be dismantled only in stages. In this Committee we can agree on the broad principles. In dismantling the edifice, we wish to take the first things first.
To us, the most immediate question is the banning of nuclear and thermonuclear tests. Because we attach paramount importance to this matter, we have co-sponsored a draft resolution in association with twelve other countries. The explosion of the atom bomb over the city of Hiroshima opened the minds of scientists and thinkers in particular, and of the people in general, to the far-reaching possibilities and the grave dangers involved in the scientific advance that had just been made. Since then, we have moved much further. One aspect of the uses to which nuclear fission is put has brought the world to the point of complete self-destruction.

Many scientists, philosophers and leaders -- among others, Dr. Linus Pauling, Albert Schweitzer, Bertrand Russell and, from our own region, C.R. Rajagopalachari -- have warned mankind of the dangers of continued explosions of this deadly atom. Although the mass of mankind has been awakened by the warnings, certain circles, obsessed by the determination for armed superiority, have tended to minimize the dangers.

While the dangers have been minimized, the explosions have continued and more potent atomic and hydrogen weapons have been developed. The demand for banning explosions has continued with redoubled vigour. In the face of that demand, efforts were made to develop a so-called "clean bomb". The promise of a clean bomb, however, has not lulled mankind. The peoples of the world persisted in the demand for the ban. Arguments then began to be advanced that, since detection of explosions is difficult, banning is impracticable. In view of the Geneva conclusions, this argument is no longer valid.

Of course, there remains the question of the production of nuclear weapons. This is an important question. We should spare no pains to stop production and turn over the fissionable material in atomic piles to peaceful uses. This must be part of the negotiations for the prevention of atomic and hydrogen weapons. It is quite true that the radiation from the armouries of nuclear Powers is a hazard to mankind, and the destruction of these stockpiles is presupposed by the term "thoroughgoing disarmament". But is it necessary to add to the radiation from the stockpiles by continuing test explosions?
The more immediate danger to humanity is not so much the existing stockpiles as the continuing nuclear and thermonuclear explosions to produce more powerful weapons. We know that, despite protests from the four corners of the earth, explosions continue according to programmes worked out by the three nuclear Powers. Information is available that other States are about to begin nuclear explosions.

No matter how much interested parties may attempt to minimize the dangers of radiation, the considered opinion of impartial and qualified students of the problem is that atomic radiation has already affected vegetation, animal life and, of course, human life itself. This cannot be denied any longer by any kind of propaganda. Therefore, we the Members of the United Nations, representing mankind, have a duty to call upon the nations that are endangering the future of the human race to stop this race's progress. Therefore, my delegation demands that, irrespective of the concepts of "balanced disarmament", "massive retaliation", "bargaining from positions of strength", "atomic deterrents" and so forth, nuclear and thermonuclear explosions be brought to an end forthwith.

I should like to touch on some of the "concepts" I have referred to in the previous sentence. If nations had the courage to pursue policies of unilateral disarmament, we would be very happy. That would bring a new meaning into relations between nations. To expect such a development is to be idealistic. Therefore, we think that balanced disarmament is the practical approach. Our acceptance of balanced disarmament, however, does not mean that the realization of one stage of disarmament must depend on the possibility of realization of all the other stages that come later. We also do not believe that a perfect balance is possible in disarmament. For instance, if one party insists on maintaining a ring of bases around the territory of the other party in the name of balanced disarmament, we cannot see how agreement can be reached. Unchangeable geographical and political factors make it difficult to obtain a perfect balance in disarmament. These difficulties need not stop us from trying. We must attempt to reach an agreement without, of course, placing one side at a marked disadvantage in relation to the other.

Bargaining from positions of strength has led to greater suspicion and more unrest and increased tension than any other factor. You aim at establishing economic, strategic and political advantages over your assumed antagonist. To
attain that end, you have to shape not only your domestic policies to suit the purpose, but also your foreign policies. Reluctant nations are drawn into the orbit of war preparations, thereby disorganizing their national economies. Your antagonist does not remain unperturbed. He will not remain static. He will not accept a position of inferiority. He will naturally try and succeed in overtaking your strength. Thus you have an ever rising spiral which makes the world live constantly on the verge of collapse.

We are constantly being told that nuclear weapons are a deterrent. In the opinion of my delegation, they are no longer a deterrent. They cannot be used to prevent or limit war. Nor can they make war clean. If our reading of the history of the last few years is correct, the possession of nuclear weapons by certain Powers has not deterred small and comparatively weak countries from asserting their national rights when they felt that those rights were either denied them or interfered with by others. A great Power will not hesitate to defend itself by whatever means is available to it, despite the possibility of nuclear attacks, when it decides that its security is gravely threatened. It is our firm belief that the factor that more than anything else has prevented a major war is the overwhelming desire of mankind for peace and not the nuclear deterrent. World opinion, however, is too slow a preventative in a situation where a small miscalculation or an incorrect interpretation of an order can start a holocaust.

Therefore, we must proceed with disarmament urgently. Our suggestion is that the banning of nuclear and thermonuclear explosions must be effected immediately. Agreements must be entered into for the removal of atomic and hydrogen weapons. Disarmament in conventional weapons must be attained at the earliest possible moment.
Because of the complexity of disarmament, one must not insist that all these problems be resolved together at once. Simultaneous with disarmament discussions, talks at the highest level must take place to find political solutions to the many issues that cause tension and motivate the race in armaments. We are strongly of the opinion that the United Nations needs to play a leading role in disarmament negotiations. We also think that regardless of which United Nations body is entrusted with the responsibility, it must have equal representation for the various political trends represented in the United Nations.

I say so after due consideration. First, as I have pointed out earlier, disarmament is not a matter that concerns the parties in the arms race alone. Secondly, in the context of the present composition of the United Nations and the alignment of forces, there is a section of opinion in this Organization which can make a substantial contribution. I refer to the group that is usually described as the non-aligned countries. It is our firm belief that these countries must be better represented on any United Nations disarmament body.

Mr. Chairman, I have not touched on the question of the reduction of military budgets in these remarks. I propose to intervene on the subject at an appropriate moment later.

**Mr. HERRERA RAEZ (Dominican Republic) (interpretation from Spanish):**

Mr. Chairman, I should like first of all to reiterate the happiness with which our delegation welcomed your election as Chairman of the First Committee. We feel that this election is a true recognition of your eminent qualities as a jurist, and your vast experience in the work of this Organization. At the same time I should like to extend the most cordial welcome of my delegation to our Vice-Chairman and to our Rapporteur who are to share your tasks in the Committee.

For no human generation of the past, not even the generation that saw the horrors of the wars of religion that were finally ended in the Congress of Münster and Westphalia, was the alternative between war and peace considered as urgently as our own. Our generation, in the Conference at San Francisco in 1945, gave words to the concern through which it was living and put these words in the first paragraph of the Charter of the United Nations wherein it consigned the hope and the determination of mankind "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind..."
Firm in the conviction that except in the cases of legitimate self-defence, armed force would only be used, and then only in the service of the commonweal, the plenipotentiaries, within the new concept of collective security, tried to draft some way of solving the problems of regulation of armaments and disarmament. That is why they gave the plenary body of the Organization the powers to consider among the main principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, the principles that should guide disarmament and the regulation of arms; besides, they recognized the right of the General Assembly to have the power of making recommendations, regarding these principles, to Member States or to the Security Council, or to both, if necessary. The paradox or the contradiction between an international Organization based on the use of force for collective security, for the maintenance of international security and the promotion of disarmament as one of the specific objectives of the organization, are rather apparent than real and can be reconciled within the basic concept of collective security.

There can be no doubt that the increasing attention that the General Assembly has given to this question of disarmament justifies the wisdom of those who drafted the Charter, and it also convinces our Organization that we are acting on behalf of humanity when we raise this question of disarmament. The efforts of the General Assembly to fulfill this mandate of Article 11 of the Charter, culminated in the resolution adopted during the twelfth regular session of the General Assembly which approved five general principles that are a balanced expression of the postulate that must be the basis of any international body for disarmament and regulation of armaments under the aegis of the United Nations. Not only were these fundamental principles contained in that resolution but also an organic structure was set up and a special appeal was made to States, particularly those most directly concerned in the question of disarmament, to utilize their budgets instead to improve the conditions of life in the world, and especially in the under-developed areas, and not to use such funds for armaments.

Although we entirely share the concern shown by the Secretary-General in his memorandum of 30 September 1958 on the question of disarmament wherein he deplores the fact that the specific machinery set up is as yet not functioning, we, nevertheless, are happy at the results achieved at the conference of experts at
Geneva this summer; we agree with the Secretary-General in asking that the question of disarmament be included in the agenda of the thirteenth regular session of the General Assembly. All this shows that the problem is alive. It shows too how humanity's desires require us to overcome the obstacles to a progressive achievement of disarmament. This is a matter of such great importance for the peace of the world that we cannot but use every constructive measure that will bring together the differing points of view and positions that separate the great Powers.

That is why the delegation of the Dominican Republic considers of great interest the suggestions proposed the other day by the Foreign Minister of Mexico that despite the constructive opportunities offered by the conference at Geneva which is to meet in the near future in order to negotiate an agreement on the suspension of weapons tests and the setting up of an international control system to guarantee observance of such an agreement, we, nevertheless, should take steps not only to show the direct interest of the United Nations in the problem of disarmament but also to avoid the continuation of the interruption of negotiations between the great Powers.

The principle of an international community, which was superbly embodied by the Spanish classicists of international law, is today suffering its most acute crisis. It is also conditioned by the ideological separation that exists in the world. If at times the difference between the ideological views of the world seems to be insurmountable, the United Nations must, nevertheless, be the bridge between them. We must, however, agree on ways and means that will bring back the principle of an international community and especially make it valid for the question of disarmament. This may be pragmatic but it is no less useful and it will obviously bear abundant fruit in the future.
However urgent the question of disarmament may appear because of the terrifying spectre of atomic and nuclear weapons, the peoples of the world do not want just any solution. They do not want either this or nothing. Everything seems to counsel a careful search for reasonable solutions rather than the setting forth of inflexible dilemmas. We must admit that we are facing questions of great complexity. Therefore, we must turn down what may appear to be simple solutions which at first might appear feasible. We will achieve nothing permanent unless we consider these matters progressively.

International experience in similar problems must surely teach us something. Suffice it to recall, for example, the problem of international control of narcotic and other dangerous drugs. At present, there is a statute in force which took about forty years to draft. Therefore, we realize that despite the singular urgency of the problem of disarmament there can be a total and satisfactory solution since the question of narcotic drugs was almost as frightening and widespread as the armaments race.

Today we fortunately stand at the threshold of tremendous events. I refer, of course, to the forthcoming conference at Geneva, the importance of which lies in the fact that there the stage of preliminary technical studies is to be left behind and a new era in the history of disarmament is to begin. In contrast with the era of the League of Nations, we might call this new era the era of the United Nations -- that is to say, the era of positive agreements and effective realization and solution of the problem. At this conference, the suspension of tests of nuclear weapons and the setting up of effective international control are to be considered. It is precisely this idea of international control that places the problem of disarmament within the framework of the international community. This seems to be called for not only by the desires of statesmen but also by the testimony of scientists who are fully conscious of their responsibility and who have constantly studied the viability of methods of control as a guarantee for any honest and practical system of disarmament. There is, I know, a tremendous bibliography on the question, but there is one book which we consider important. It was edited by Professor Welman and is entitled "Inspection for Disarmament". This systematically analyses the liability of technical procedures for international control that would be effective and proves that the entire gamut of modern weapons can go under this control.
The seventeen-Power draft resolution lays stress on the question of effective control based on the report of the experts, whose conclusions were that technically it was possible to set up a viable system of control to detect violations of any agreement on the cessation of nuclear and hydrogen weapons tests. This stress is obvious both in the preambular and the operative parts of the draft resolution. Therefore, there can be no doubt whatever that the Powers sponsoring it have tried to show with all good will the need for efficient international control. This idea of international control is not only explicitly obtained from the text of the draft resolution but it is also supported by the statements made by the delegations who are its co-sponsors. There can be no doubt that in the statements other matters have been touched upon. There were the question of international control and the cessation of tests of atomic and hydrogen weapons, which is one of the sine qua non conditions for progress in the question of disarmament. Of particular interest was the statement of the representative of the United Kingdom. He spoke of this last condition of the cessation of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests. He told us that the Government of the United Kingdom would be quite willing to give a reasonable meaning to the forthcoming negotiations and would take into account the factor of time as well as the difficulties inherent in the problem.

The delegation of the Dominican Republic has carefully studied the draft resolutions that have been distributed so far in the Committee. We find that although the seventeen-Power draft resolution may be improved it is better to respond not only to one of the specific items on the agenda regarding disarmament but also to some of the provisions of the resolution on disarmament adopted by the General Assembly at its twelfth session. This draft resolution, we maintain, does focus the problem in a balanced way, especially the question of the suspension of tests and other specific measures. At the same time, by means of the provisions of paragraphs 5, 6 and 7 of the operative part, it links the United Nations with the new negotiations that are to begin outside our Organization.

This being the case and although we reserve our right to vote as we think necessary on the different parts of the seventeen-Power draft resolution we tend to vote for it. In taking this position, we do so with full cognizance of our
responsibility towards our own people. If, so far, there has been a monopoly in the possession of nuclear weapons, the dangers are certainly not the monopoly of any people, but are feared by all. The arms race and the threat that hangs over the world can be obviously seen in the austere yet clear language of the report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation, which states:

"Experimental work on many organisms has shown that ionizing radiation can cause mutations, which are permanent, and for the most part deleterious, changes in the inherited characters. It therefore cannot be doubted that exposure of the germ cells of human beings to such radiations will occasionally cause similar changes and so, over many generations, affect individual descendants in populations yet unborn and never themselves exposed." (A/3858, p. 30)

Although the experts themselves are in agreement regarding the tentative character of these investigations on the effects of atomic radiation, we cannot doubt the gravity of the problem confronting us. We must decide between the atomic suicide of humanity and the unconditional surrender to the fears of atomic war, and thereby come to a practical solution, to practical negotiations, to agreements on disarmament based on the impartial advice of science. The third solution is the only one -- the exclusively peaceful use of atomic energy to promote, as the preamble to our Charter says, "social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom".
Prince Wan WaiThAYAKON (Thailand): Mr. Chairman, may I, on behalf of my delegation, join with previous speakers in offering our cordial congratulations to you and to the Vice-Chairman and the Rapporteur on your assumption of high responsibilities in this Political Committee, which is the First Committee in order and in importance. The discussions so far have already shown the crucial importance, to mankind and to the United Nations, of the question of disarmament and the related questions. The Chairman's responsibilities are heavy indeed, and I am afraid that, more than ever before, demands will be made for your assistance, Mr. Chairman, in a conciliatory role. Already, the other day, the representative of Mexico suggested that you should endeavour to bring together the representatives of the great Powers concerned and see whether agreement could not be secured on the composition of the Disarmament Commission.

It would, of course, be most desirable to have the Disarmament Commission function again, and there would appear to be many possibilities of a compromise solution which could still be explored. For instance, instead of conceiving of the Disarmament Commission and its Sub-Committee as being either a consultative or a negotiating body, the Disarmament Commission might be so composed as to constitute a consultative body, in which case it would not so much matter how large its membership might be, while the Sub-Committee might be composed as a negotiating body, whether on the basis of parity or otherwise, as appropriate to the nature of the question to be agreed upon in each case. If such an agreement could be secured, the forthcoming conference at Geneva, beginning on 31 October, to negotiate an agreement on the suspension of nuclear weapons tests, and the actual establishment of an international control system to ensure its observance, would be within the framework of the United Nations instead of being outside it.

Therefore, every attempt, in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter, must be made to secure agreement, for that is the essential task of the United Nations -- to secure agreement in the matter of disarmament. And it should be a continuous task, to be carried out with flexibility of machinery and procedure, so that the matter of disarmament should remain constantly under the auspices of the United Nations. If, for reasons of expediency, it is sometimes found necessary to adopt a procedure outside the framework of the United Nations, there should be facilities for bringing the matter back to the United Nations, if need be, without having to wait for a regular session of the General Assembly.
It is the view of my delegation, therefore, that attention should be drawn to the consideration of the composition of the Disarmament Commission in this light.

I have stated that it is the essential task of the United Nations to secure agreement in the matter of disarmament. I might more correctly have said that it is the essential task of the United Nations to secure an agreed disarmament. For unilateral declarations of disarmament, or even unilateral acts of disarmament however welcome they may be -- and they are certainly most welcome -- are liable to unilateral modification and unilateral cancellation. It is an agreement on disarmament that we want and the peoples of the world want and, in the opinion of my delegation, it is an agreed disarmament that is sought and required by our Charter. The first purpose of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security. This is the end to be sought, and disarmament is a means to this end, as is indicated by the provisions of Article 26 of the Charter, which reads:

"In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments."

This well indicates that the problem of disarmament should be taken as a whole and should be the subject of an international agreement under the United Nations.

The same indication is contained in Article 11, concerning the functions and powers of the General Assembly in this matter of disarmament. For Article 11, paragraph 1, provides:

"The General Assembly may consider the general principles of co-operation in the maintenance of international peace and security, including the principles governing disarmament and the regulation of armaments, and may make recommendations with regard to such principles to the Members or to the Security Council or to both."
Thus, the General Assembly last year recommended certain comprehensive principles for an early disarmament agreement containing the following points:

"(a) The immediate suspension of testing of nuclear weapons with prompt installation of effective international control ...;

"(b) The cessation of the production of fissionable materials for weapons purposes... under effective international control;

"(c) The ...transfer ...under international supervision, of stocks of fissionable material from weapons uses to non-weapons uses;

"(d) The reduction of armed forces and armaments through adequate, safeguarded arrangements;

"(e) The progressive establishment of open inspection with ground and aerial components to guard against the possibility of surprise attack;

"(f) The joint study of an inspection system designed to ensure that the sending of objects through outer space shall be exclusively for peaceful and scientific purposes;". (General Assembly resolution 1148 (XII), para. 1)

In view, however, of the fact that certain delegations had declared a boycott of the Disarmament Commission, nothing could be done by the United Nations itself in the matter of disarmament during the past year. But it was fortunate that, owing to initiatives taken with the knowledge of the United Nations, a technical approach could be made -- and made with happy results -- to the question of control in connexion with a suspension of nuclear weapons tests. For the experts of both sides, meeting at Geneva, reached agreed conclusions on the possibility of detecting violations of a possible agreement on the suspension of nuclear tests, on the basis of the installation of a defined control system. As a result of this happy technical approach, the United Kingdom, the United States and the Soviet Union, which have made nuclear weapons tests, will meet at Geneva on 31 October in order to negotiate an agreement on the suspension of such tests under effective international control. All the world wants them to succeed and prays for their success.

Another technical approach will also be made at Geneva, on 10 November, to the problem of measures against the possibility of surprise attack. This new approach, too, has the ardent good wishes of the whole world.
Yet another item of a comprehensive programme of disarmament under General Assembly resolution 1148 (XII) will be dealt with separately, namely, the question of outer space.

I have already stated that the machinery and procedure for the consideration of each disarmament question should be flexible, so as to admit of appropriate adaptation to the requirements of the particular question to be agreed upon in each case. But, inasmuch as disarmament is an essential objective of the United Nations, as much as possible in the matter of disarmament should be done within the framework of the United Nations, and nothing should be done in this same matter without the knowledge of the United Nations.
That is why I have called attention to the desirability of re-examining the composition and organization of the Disarmament Commission, while at the same time my delegation has co-sponsored the joint draft resolution which is presented in document A/C.1/L.205. In that draft resolution the continuing interest and responsibility of the United Nations in the field of disarmament are made clear, and the forthcoming conferences on nuclear tests and on surprise attacks are invited to avail themselves of the assistance and services of the Secretary-General and are requested to keep the United Nations informed. The Secretary-General is, further, invited, in consultation with the Governments concerned, to render whatever advice and assistance may seem appropriate to facilitate current developments or any further initiatives related to the problems of disarmament.

I attach great importance to such participation by the Secretary-General, not only because of the unquestionable value of the participation itself but also because it is an evidence and a guarantee of a participation by the United Nations in all disarmament activities. In this way separate items of the disarmament complex may be taken up and dealt with in a manner which is best calculated to achieve successful results, but the complex whole must never be forgotten.

Then, in the draft resolution, it is stated that the trend of the recent encouraging initiatives including the technical approach, should continue with a view to contributing to a balanced and effectively controlled world-wide system of disarmament. With regard to the recommendations concerning the negotiations for the suspension of nuclear weapons tests and the study of the technical aspect of measures against the possibility of surprise attack, the latter calls for no comment because it is the wish and hope of us all that the experts should agree in this matter. With regard to the former, however, the Soviet Union would have the General Assembly call upon all States carrying out atomic and hydrogen weapons tests immediately to halt such tests, while the joint draft resolution urges that, in the negotiations between States that have tested nuclear weapons, the parties make every effort to reach early agreement on the suspension of nuclear weapons tests under effective international control, and urges the parties involved in these negotiations not to undertake further testing of nuclear weapons while these negotiations are in progress.
My delegation supports the joint draft resolution because it lays down correct principles, namely, that while negotiations are in progress there is to be a kind of truce or cease fire -- that is to say, no testing of nuclear weapons -- and that the object of the agreement would be the suspension of nuclear weapons tests and the actual establishment of an international control system to ensure its observance. It will be noted that the word "suspension" is used and not the word "cessation", but from the explanations given by the United Kingdom and the United States it may be taken that the period of suspension contemplated will be renewable as a matter of course, on condition that the control system is established and that there is satisfactory progress in the general field of disarmament.

These are reasonable conditions because the actual establishment of the control system is an essential requisite, and the problem of disarmament, as I have already pointed out, forms a complex whole. I have heard the Soviet Union representative state that his Government had accepted the control system agreed upon by the Conference of Experts, but that control system does not appear in the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.205) as a condition of the cessation of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests as it should, and so my delegation regrets that it cannot support the Soviet draft resolution.

My delegation regrets, also, that it cannot support the revised joint draft resolution contained in document A/C.1/L.202/Rev.1 because, although it contemplates an agreement in connexion with the technical arrangements and controls considered necessary to ensure the observance of the discontinuance of the tests, it does not indicate the situation in the event that no such agreement is reached.

Lastly, I wish to refer to the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.204) on the reduction of the military budgets of the four great Powers. Although Thailand, as a small Power and an under-developed country, is naturally desirous of receiving greater assistance for its economic and industrial development it would not like to do so out of funds released through the reduction of the military budgets of the great Powers unless they were agreed on it, for it is our sincere conviction that what is needed in the matter of disarmament is a solution resulting from an agreement and not from a recommendation.

The meeting rose at 12.30 p.m.