Thirteenth Session
FIRST COMMITTEE
POLITICAL AND SECURITY COUNCIL AFFAIRS

VERBATIM RECORD OF THE NINE HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 17 October 1958, at 3 p.m.

Chairman:
Mr. OSMAN (Vice-Chairman) (Sudan)

1. Question of disarmament (continued)
2. The discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests (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 (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.953. Delegations may submit corrections to the summary record for incorporation in the final version which will appear in a printed volume.

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AGENDA ITEMS 64, 70 and 72

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

The CHAIRMAN: Before I call upon the first speaker on my list, I wish to advise the Committee that, in addition to the draft resolutions already circulated, there are two further documents circulated by the delegation of Ireland. One is document A/C.1/L.206 containing a draft resolution, and the other is document A/C.1/L.207 containing amendments to the draft resolution submitted by the seventeen Powers.

Mr. AIKEN (Ireland): Mr. Chairman, I wish to congratulate our Chairman on his election to preside over this Committee. I trust that our deliberations under his Chairmanship and under your Vice-Chairmanship will be fruitful. I hope that our Rapporteur will be able to inform the Assembly that the First Committee has agreed upon solutions of some of the most pressing dangers that hang over mankind.
I have followed with careful deliberation the statements made here on the important question relating to disarmament. It is encouraging that the tone of our discussions, despite the many different points of view expressed, has usually been calm and thoughtful and that the debate has, on the whole, generated more light than heat. This atmosphere encourages us to hope that the work of the Geneva experts will soon be turned into a political reality, thus laying a firm foundation for further progress towards the total prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction.

We have several draft resolutions before us and, to my mind, what is really important, is not the differences between them so much as the considerable measure of agreement which they represent. My delegation does not consider the distance between the draft resolutions proposed by Argentina and sixteen other States (A/C.1/L.205), that of Afghanistan and eleven other States (A/C.1/L.202/Rev.1) and the Soviet draft resolution (A/C.1/L.204) on the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests to be unbridgeable. While I am also submitting to the Committee for discussion some specific proposals, I wish to emphasize that my delegation hopes that this Committee will finally produce a single, unanimous resolution. In this I wholeheartedly agree with the Foreign Minister of Sweden. These United Nations, like other international institutions, has long been accustomed to expect wise interventions from Mr. Undén. Like him, we would prefer the passage of such a unanimous resolution to voting on a series of separate resolutions -- voting which would necessarily emphasize the points of difference which remain rather than the measure of agreements which has been reached.

On the question of testing of nuclear weapons, I think we would concentrate on that which we can quickly and certainly obtain. I am sure that we all hope for a permanent suspension "for all time" to use the phrase of the representative of the Soviet Union. My delegation considers, however, that it would be more constructive to attain a short-term agreement -- even for only a year, but with the prospect of renewal -- as the United States and sixteen other States have proposed, rather than to refuse to be satisfied with anything less than a permanent agreement while, in the meantime, nuclear explosions occur from the Arctic Ocean to the South Pacific. My delegation therefore regards the United States draft resolution as a constructive measure representing a very real step forward in the field of nuclear disarmament.
In proposing draft resolution A/C.1/L.205 the representative of the United States drew attention to the evolution in the policies of his Government as evidenced in the various clauses of the draft resolution. Such a statement is, I think, very welcome to most members of this Committee. It is, in the highest degree, the common interest of us all that the policy of so great a country should constantly evolve to meet the demand of a continually changing world situation.

An important factor in this changing world situation today -- a factor to which I referred in my speech in the general debate in the Assembly and to which several speakers, including the representative of India, have also referred -- is the imminent danger that more and more States will come to possess nuclear weapons. In his interesting and eloquent speech this morning, Mr. Menon alluded many times to this danger. My delegation considers it necessary to focus attention on this problem.

With this in mind we have submitted certain amendments to the draft resolution of the seventeen Powers. We have also tabled a draft resolution. The amendments and the draft resolution are in the hands of the Committee as A/C.1/L.206 and A/C.1/L.207. The amendments, if accepted, would urge the non-nuclear Powers, during a specific period, to refrain from manufacturing or acquiring nuclear weapons and would urge the nuclear Powers to refrain from supplying such weapons to States which do not now possess them. We have specified a period of time in order to co-ordinate our proposals with those in the seventeen-Power draft resolution, and in the hope of attracting the widest possible measure of acceptance. But we have no wish to conceal the fact that we regard the proposed temporary measure of nuclear restriction as only a step towards a permanent ban on the further dissemination of nuclear weapons -- permanent in the sense that it should remain in being until the total abolition of nuclear weapons renders it superfluous. Similarly, in the case of our draft resolution which proposes an ad hoc commission to study the problem of the dissemination of nuclear weapons, it is our hope and belief that this study would lead to a permanent ban on such dissemination. Both our amendments and our draft resolution, therefore, are conceived as steps towards the restriction of nuclear weapons -- a restriction which in its turn would be a step towards their abolition.
The first point I wish to stress is that, as this Assembly and the great Powers represented in it are unable speedily to abolish nuclear weapons completely, they ought at least, in our opinion, to take steps aimed at preventing the threat from becoming even greater. It is, in our opinion, a great tragedy that the Baruch proposals for the international control of nuclear weapons and nuclear development were not accepted and implemented twelve years ago. If we do not soon succeed in limiting the number of States making or possessing nuclear weapons, the problem of saving the world from nuclear destruction may well have passed beyond the power of men to solve long before another twelve years have passed.

The danger of nuclear weapons to humanity, it seems to us, does not merely increase in direct ratio to the number of those possessing them. It seems likely to increase in geometric progression. Those who now possess nuclear weapons are a few great and highly developed States, with great urban populations, with much to lose and little to gain in a nuclear war. Their potential adversaries are in the same case and have the power to retaliate. As in the case of every other military invention, however, the harnessing of nuclear energy for military purposes is bound to become simpler and cheaper with the passing of time. The representative of the Soviet Union stressed this aspect of the problem in his intervention a few days ago. Sooner or later, therefore, unless this Organization takes urgent preventive steps, this weapon will pass into the hands of States with much less to lose. Furthermore, as it comes into their hands, it may give them a temporary but enormous advantage over their adversaries, an advantage which they will be sorely tempted to exploit.

We can all think of several regions of the world where fierce antagonism exist, held in suspense only by a kind of truce or deadlock. That truce, that deadlock, could be broken all too easily if one side or the other possessed nuclear weapons. In short, the nuclear stalemate ceases to apply once nuclear weapons begin to come into the hands of the smaller countries. Furthermore, nothing, except international measures to prevent the dissemination of such weapons, can prevent them from coming, ultimately, not merely to small and poor States but also to revolutionary organizations. All through history portable weapons which are the monopoly of the great Powers today become the weapons of
smaller Powers and revolutionary groups tomorrow. And since local wars and revolutions almost always involve some degree of great Power patronage and rivalry, the use of nuclear weapons by a small State or revolutionary group could lead, only too easily, to the outbreak of general war. One obsolete, Hiroshima-type bomb, used by a small and desperate country to settle a local quarrel, could be the detonator for a world-wide thermonuclear war, involving the destruction of our whole civilization.

I do not think it is necessary to emphasize further the dangers which will arise if nuclear weapons become more widespread. No one is likely to dispute the existence or the gravity of these dangers. Differences of opinion are likely to concern, not the reality of the danger, but the adequacy and appropriateness of the measures with which we propose to combat it.

We are conscious of the objections which can be urged, with varying degrees of validity, against our proposals. Apart from the objection, with which I have already dealt, that the proposals are not sufficiently comprehensive, the main objections are, I believe, four in number.

The first is that, by establishing, even temporarily, two categories of Member States, nuclear "have" and "have not", the amendments we propose infringe in theory the principle of the sovereign equality of nations and reduce in practice the prestige of the "have-not" nations.

The second is that by limiting freedom of action in the disposal of nuclear weapons, the proposals might impair the effectiveness of the various systems of defence alliances to which many nations belong.

The third objection is that agreement on the suspension of testing itself renders the measures we propose superfluous.

The fourth objection is that, since the presence of nuclear weapons is virtually impossible to detect, it would be impossible to control compliance with the obligations here envisaged, and particularly compliance with the requirement that States which possess nuclear weapons should not hand them over to non-nuclear States.

I propose to consider these objections in order.

As regards the first objection, I cannot see that a voluntary decision not to manufacture or accept any given type of weapon infringes in any way the principle
of the equality of sovereign States. We are not seeking to establish any
principle to the effect that some States shall have the right to these weapons
and other States shall not. We are suggesting that the Assembly should ask
certain States to refrain, over a given period, from the exercise of a right
which they indubitably possess — the right to manufacture or acquire nuclear
weapons. In such a voluntary abnegation no limitation of sovereignty is involved,
any more than limitation of sovereignty is involved in any of the innumerable
international conventions, the signatories of which bind themselves to do, or to
refrain from doing, certain things. Similarly, we are asking other States to
refrain also, and also without any impairment of sovereignty, from the exercise
of a right which they possess, the right to supply these weapons to others.

There remains the argument, seldom actually stated, that for a country
to abjure these weapons while others possess them involves a sacrifice of
prestige. We think that argument is based on a false idea of how prestige —
the good opinion of mankind — is likely to be won today. True prestige, it
seems to us, will now be won, not by those who may press their way into the
nuclear club, but by those countries which possess the skill and resources
necessary to produce nuclear weapons, but which, by deliberate choice and in the
interests of peace, refrain from producing them. Such nations will win the
admiration of mankind, and their influence will be greater, not less, by reason
of their wise example.
The second objection concerns the supposed impairment of the effective working of alliances. This is more a hypothetical than an actual objection. No nuclear Power has in fact yet found it necessary for the effective working of an alliance to place its nuclear weapons in the control of a non-nuclear ally. The reasons why they have not done so are plain. Military pacts cannot in their nature be absolute and permanent. They are ad hoc groupings designed to meet a given historical situation, and change is the law of all historical situations. It is easy to believe that that has seemed a good and sufficient reason, hitherto, for not handing over nuclear weapons. We hope it will continue to seem so in the future.

But the objection to these proposals which I am now considering -- the objection that they might impair the effective functioning of military alliances -- does imply that, in certain circumstances, and to secure some military advantage, nuclear Powers would consider handing these weapons over to non-nuclear allies. That very possibility seems to us to represent a danger against which we should provide by international agreement, and provide now. Let us grant that it may at some time appear militarily advantageous to give these weapons outright to allied forces, rather than keep them stored in the control of military units belonging to the nuclear Power itself. Is not the sacrifice of that hypothetical future military advantage well worthwhile if it can secure the actual and enormous collective advantage of checking the dissemination of nuclear weapons?

I have referred already to the dangers which the dissemination of these weapons involves. I do so again only to reduce this objection to its proper proportions. Our problem is that the dissemination of nuclear weapons, if it takes place, will increase the risks of war and render nuclear disarmament more difficult. Can we allow ourselves to be deterred from any serious effort to diminish those risks by consideration of hypothetical military advantage-- advantage in a struggle which, if it occurs, will be so indiscriminately destructive that the whole concept of a military advantage will probably become destitute of meaning?

As regards the third objection, we -- like all other members of the Committee, I am sure -- would warmly welcome a suspension and eventual cessation of nuclear weapons testing. But we cannot agree that such a suspension or cessation of tests would automatically put a stop to the wider dissemination of the weapons themselves. If a State has the scientific skill and resources to make nuclear weapons, it can
proceed to build up a stockpile even without testing, with practical certainty that the weapons will be effective. Furthermore, any State could obtain such weapons from an existing nuclear State, without tests. It is therefore not correct to say that a cessation of tests would render the measures we propose superfluous.

The fourth objection I acknowledge to be of more substance than the other three, and indeed in an altogether different category from them. Here we come up against the central difficulty which is encountered by all far-reaching disarmament proposals -- the problem of detecting the presence of unexploded nuclear weapons. In the case of any proposed comprehensive disarmament agreement, the difficulty, as we know, concerns possible breaches of an undertaking to destroy stocks. One country, in good faith, may destroy all its stocks only to find later that another country, in bad faith, has held some back. So far as we know, there is as yet no certain means of detection which would safeguard against that. Similarly in the case of the present proposals, there is probably no sure means of detecting certain kinds of non-compliance -- for example, the secret delivery of the weapon by a nuclear to a non-nuclear Power. It is hard to imagine, however, what advantage any nuclear Power could derive from a breach of the suggested engagement which would be commensurate with the potential disadvantages. These disadvantages include -- if the measures we propose are adopted and followed -- the risk of being exposed as the violator of an engagement to this Assembly. If such a breach were detected -- and it would be detected if the ally supplied made any use of the weapon -- the supplying Power would be exposed as an enemy of peace and of humanity. It may be said that some Powers are more sensitive to such exposure than are others. True, but at the lowest all great Powers are conscious of the propaganda effects of their actions, and a detected breach of this agreement would be a propaganda defeat of the first magnitude.

The second disadvantage is the basic and inherent one that no Power can part with these weapons without parting with a measure of its own power and influence. It is hard to imagine any Power running risks of exposure and obloquy only to arrive at a result which might prove gravely prejudicial to its own vital interests.

In conclusion, may I say that our aim must be to foster the gradual evolution of the United Nations towards a system of world government in which disputes between nations will be settled by law based on justice rather than by force. The
"new approach", as Ambassador Lodge has termed it, of clearing the way for political agreements by technical discussions of the technical problems involved is, we all hope, the great discovery in the political field which will break the long deadlock on disarmament. Our hope is that the end of that deadlock is at hand and that a comprehensive agreement on disarmament may at last be within sight. But, while we await that comprehensive agreement, we must remain alert to what is happening in a changing world. The old dangers, which we know so well, are still with us, but while we are still discussing them new dangers, which may prove fatal, are beginning to arise. It is on those dangers, and the urgent necessity of taking measures to avert them, that my delegation has wished to focus the attention of the Committee.
Mr. Winiiewicz (Poland): It was the atom bombs which fell on two Japanese cities that first revealed to the world the greatest achievement of science and technology of our time. The splitting of the atom has confronted mankind with the basic question: will the immense possibilities of that greatest of scientific exploits be utilized to advance the well-being of man all over the world, or will they continue to be applied mainly for destroying life? This dilemma remains unsolved so far. Here in the United Nations it constitutes the very essence of all our discussions on the question of disarmament.

From year to year, from day to day, the impact of this problem is increasing the responsibility of the United Nations for reaching an agreement on its proper solution. So far the United Nations has not discharged this historic responsibility in spite of the well-known unanimous resolution of 1946, and in spite of many other resolutions and of verbal battles waged here during all subsequent sessions of the General Assembly. The armaments race continues, nuclear weapons are rapidly assuming conventional character and tendencies are growing to introduce them into the arsenals of armies other than those of the atomic Powers.

During the twelve years of our discussions here the representatives of Western Powers have always tried to explain that their countries must go on with armaments because the world is split by ideological differences and many unsolved political problems. We, for our part, have never denied the existence of political differences dividing the world, nor the importance of unsolved international problems. It is, however, our considered view that the solution of international contentions should be sought not on the military but on the political plane.

We deplore the present division of the world into opposing military groupings. We should also like to hasten the solution of many controversial international problems. However, in our view the road towards this goal leads only through negotiations with strict observance of the principles of peaceful coexistence of nations regardless of their political and social systems. That is how we conceive the foreign policy of all socialist States with which we are linked by close co-operation.
We see no justification whatsoever for the continuation of the present armaments race. At the same time it should be stressed that the armaments race, because of the dimensions it has reached and because of its dangerous implications, has itself become one of the major political problems in international life. The armaments race aggravates other contentious problems, and renders their solution ever more difficult. It dies down for unproductive armament expenditure large sums of money which could be used for the advancement of under-developed countries. It deepens the feeling of insecurity among the peoples. What is more, it gives rise to new problems such as, for instance, that of foreign military bases on the territories of other States on all continents, a problem which has long since become ripe for a radical solution.

A proper grasp of the consequences of the policy of armaments is of paramount importance. An answer must be given to the question which torments mankind today: is the world to live in peace irrespective of political and social differences between nations, or must military decisions be accepted from the outset as the exclusive means of solving the existing disagreements?

Let no one delude himself that world public opinion is prepared to support the armaments race for ever. You cannot fool all the people all the time. True, not everyone understands the whole complexity of the international problems which stem not only from social and political differences but also from differing traditions, a different history and different customs and cultural patterns. But the man in the street in every geographical latitude is guided by common sense. He reasons -- not without justification may I say -- that if bombs, missiles and guns are being manufactured and stockpiled there is the danger that they are going to be used. Therefore, only a halt to the armaments race can bring about the feeling of real security which the broad masses cannot find in stockpiles of nuclear bombs, in growing armaments expenditure and in possibilities for destruction which today have become equal for all. For people want to live in peace.

We are therefore concerned here with restoring the proper place to political thinking and diplomatic initiative in international relations. More and more frequently voices of reason are being raised in the West indicating that peace
tendencies are growing. From this we should like to draw the following conclusion: that the conviction is gaining ground that the future of the world depends not only on the strategic and tactical demands of military commanders, and that the particular way of thinking prevalent in certain circles -- which one is almost tempted to call "Pentagonism" -- will become outdated. I use the term "Pentagonism" with all due respect and with no derogatory meaning. It seems to me to be the best description of the fallacious, one-sided opinion that the problems of the world have to be considered only from the military viewpoint, as if there were no other approach but a show of force. We hope, therefore, that the United Nations will eventually play a decisive role in solving the disarmament problem.

This is not the proper time to go into the history, only too well known to all of us, of the failure of disarmament discussions up till now. However, the following three conclusions can, I submit, be drawn from these experiences.
First; all attempts to impose solutions from the position of strength are unrealistic. The West tried to apply this method at the time when it seemed that the United States had a monopoly in the nuclear field. At a later stage certain circles in the West counted upon maintaining their superiority in thermonuclear bombs and missiles. This illusion was quickly shaken and finally dispelled after the launching by the Soviet Union of the first space satellite.

Secondly; the situation in which only one side shows readiness for compromise and settlement cannot be continued. This has been so in the past and it is this that the United Kingdom statesman, Mr. Noel Baker, has it in mind to stress in his recent book The Arms Race:

"Two events of overriding importance stand out from the history of the United Nations work on disarmament since 1952; the Russian acceptance of a great part of the West's proposals on May 10, 1955; and the United States suspension of those proposals four months after Russia had accepted them -- a suspension for which the United States received the very reluctant, but in the end complete, support of Britain, France and Canada."

Mr. Noel Baker stresses further in his book that, as far as inspection is concerned, the Soviet Union:

"... in recent months" -- the book was published in 1958 -- "has gone far beyond the Western Governments in declaring its readiness to accept whatever measures of inspection are required to ensure that a disarmament treaty is faithfully observed."

I prefer to quote here from Mr. Noel Baker's book rather than to put the same opinion in my own words. For obvious reasons, I do not wish to jump into recrimination. The problem is a serious one and must be considered in a quiet, composed atmosphere.

Thirdly; the events of the past few years and the disarmament discussions held so far have demonstrated that the reaching of an over-all agreement on all disarmament problems at one stroke encounters great difficulties. Hence the conception of partial solutions and of gradual implementation of the disarmament measures bringing us step by step towards complete disarmament. This concept is gaining more and more adherents. The prerequisite condition for its success, as well as for the success of all other disarmament methods, is that the tactics of putting forward ever new preconditions aimed at preventing the final agreement should be discontinued.
This latter conclusion, of course, in no way changes our basic attitude that it would be better to strive for speedy, all-embracing and radical solutions. Thus, for instance, we in Poland support a complete and immediate ban on nuclear weapons and a speedy substantial reduction of all armaments. But time is running short and necessity and political realism dictate our preference for partial solutions.

We see, therefore, several ways of implementing them: unilateral disarmament steps taken by Governments, regional disarmament agreements, and partial disarmament agreements on a world-wide scale. The current discussion in our Committee shows that we are by no means isolated in our opinion.

We believe that disarmament can be accelerated by unilateral acts concerning either the reduction of armed forces and armaments, or the withdrawal of troops from foreign territories. Such steps have been taken by States members of the Warsaw Pact. As has been said here already, they have also carried out the reduction of their military budgets. Those steps were meant as a manifestation of good will and of the importance which is attached to the disarmament problem by all States members of the Warsaw Pact.

However, such decisions can seriously influence the whole of the disarmament problem only when this example is followed by other States forming part of other military groupings. Reciprocity is the pre-condition for the continuity and effectiveness of this form of partial disarmament; for it alone can assure a certain measure of continuous action, and thereby a decrease in armaments and armed forces within opposing military blocs and outside them.

Thus, for instance, an opportunity to achieve results along this road, concerning the cessation of nuclear tests, was wasted when the very important, well known Soviet initiative was not followed up for six months by the Western Powers.

Among unilateral steps aimed at arresting the armaments race, one could also wish that States which do not as yet possess nuclear weapons would refrain from "nuclearizing" their armies. Therefore, the Polish delegation cannot but wholeheartedly welcome the position to this effect of the Swedish Government, as presented here by the Foreign Minister of Sweden, our Baltic neighbour.
We should like to direct an earnest appeal to nations which do not as yet possess the most modern types of weapons not to contribute to the spreading of nuclear armaments. The consequences of such a step could but complicate further disarmament discussions and render the necessary agreement on this matter more difficult to achieve. Of course, it is also an action which has to meet with reciprocity in some form, as I stressed a few moments ago.

Another possibility of partial solutions is, in our opinion, regional arrangements.

It is understandable that as far as Poland is concerned, its interests are centred above all on the situation in Europe. The Polish plan mentioned here this morning by Mr. Krishna Menon, to set up a demilitarized zone in Europe aims precisely at reducing tension in this, one of the most sensitive regions of the world. This plan -- may I be excused for recalling here -- envisages the withholding of nuclear weapons from an area covering the territories of Poland, Czechoslovakia and both German States. It also provides safeguards that nuclear weapons would not be used against the zone.

The advantages of our proposition seem obvious: its implementation would greatly diminish the strategic importance of the exposed and neuralgic borderline between the two opposing political and military groupings. Thus the first step on a regional scale would be made towards general disarmament. The system of control set up in the zone could serve as a pattern to be applied to other disarmament measures. May I stress, in order to dispel any misunderstanding in this respect, that Poland is in favour of control -- control not as an end in itself but in relation to specific measures.
The proposed denuclearized zone might become a pattern for a system which could later be applied on a different scale to other solutions; the experience gained should undoubtedly become a valuable contribution to further work in this field.

May I also add here that the Polish plan is based on the principle of equal concessions by the parties concerned and does not aim at changing the relationship of forces at the expense of either side.

The Polish proposition is not static. It envisages that the implementation of its provisions would be but a starting point for further measures, and that the elimination of nuclear weapons from Central Europe should make it also possible to reduce conventional armaments and armed forces in this zone. It could contribute to a marked improvement in the political atmosphere, thus facilitating not only further progress in the general disarmament field, but the solution of controversial political problems in Europe as well.

We conceive our plan as only the first step towards general disarmament which still remains our basic aim. That is why we intend to continue the discussion on this subject through diplomatic channels, taking under careful consideration all suggestions advanced in connexion with our plan.

Of course, I have to add that the Polish plan has a special significance in view of the particular situation existing in Germany. The German Democratic Republic, through its peaceful policy, makes a most constructive contribution to the further development of the European situation, to the proper solution of the whole German problem and to relations with its neighbours. On the other hand, the developments in Western Germany, aimed at equipping the newly created West-German army with the most up-to-date nuclear weapons, are fraught with dangers.

One has to understand that we cannot forget that our own country was more than once invaded by forces of Prussian and Nazi militarism seeking new areas of conquest in Eastern Europe. We feel alarmed by the activities in Western Germany of circles bent upon revision of the existing frontiers in Europe, and not only of the Polish frontiers, and by the fact that Western Germany is being transformed
into an arsenal of weapons which could be used against many European countries. As a matter of fact, the role which Germany, as place d'armes, played in the recent events and operations in the Middle East only confirms our alarm and our great anxiety.

On this matter we think that Poland's interest fully coincides with the interests of all the countries of Europe.

I would now like to pass to the third category of disarmament steps, those of world-wide scope, measures which we should take here in the United Nations. There cannot be any doubt whatsoever that among the disarmament problems the one which stands in the forefront is the problem of nuclear weapons. For the past twelve years the Soviet Union and other socialist States have been supporting a complete ban on those weapons. So far, however, the Western Powers have rejected basic proposals in this matter, making a complete ban on nuclear weapons dependent upon the fulfilment of many preconditions of a political and other nature. At the same time new nuclear weapons have been developed and perfected. This has brought upon the world and sustained a nuclear armaments race with ever-new testings of more effective means of destruction. This vicious circle of causes and effects has to be broken. It seems that the best first step in this direction should be the cessation of nuclear test explosions.

The experiments with nuclear arms cannot be considered as a matter concerning exclusively those States which carry out such experiments. Nuclear testing constitutes a peril not only to all of us, but also to future generations. That is why people of different political opinions, from different social strata, representing both small and great Powers, demand the cessation of such tests. The broad international campaign by millions of people brings the question of cessation of nuclear tests to the forefront of the whole disarmament problem. This question has become today the most pressing task confronting our Organization.

Only a year ago we were listening here to statements questioning the harmful effects of radiation resulting from nuclear tests. Technical possibilities of control and inspection of test explosions were also considered doubtful if not entirely denied. Today two valuable documents, prepared and adopted by the most
prominent experts, both from the East and the West, completely dispell all such doubts and contentions. I am referring to the reports of the United Nations Scientific Committee on Radiation and of the Geneva Conference of Experts on the detection of nuclear explosions.

The first of these reports contains a clear conclusion on the harmful effects of radiation on the life of our generation and the health of the future ones. The latter report irrefutably confirms the possibility of detecting and controlling nuclear explosions.

The first report makes inevitable the conclusion that in the interest of humanity the tests with new nuclear weapons should be abandoned as soon as possible. The second report provides the basis for a system of control and inspection which should make it possible to enforce the cessation of testing. Therefore, any measures taken in this respect could in no way affect the undeniable right of the atomic Powers to safeguard their own security.

In the history of the United Nations we do not know of any other problem which would be as thoroughly prepared and ready for political decision as that of the final and unconditional cessation of nuclear testing. All the stronger therefore are our reservations as regards those arguments in the debate which -- as indicated in the statements of the representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom, for instance -- seemed to push this problem back to its starting point. Should we again be persuaded into a retreat from immediate partial solutions by making the cessation of testing dependent on other disarmament measures? Should we be faced with a limitation of the period of the proposed suspension on nuclear tests? This time the period of one year is being mentioned, although at the London meeting of the Disarmament Sub-Committee the period of two years was already considered. To accept such proposals could only mean evasion.

Our concern is all the greater and all the more justified because the draft resolution (A/C.1/L.205) of seventeen States avoids clear cut decisions on these questions. It is but a list of "good-wishing" recommendations worded, I respectfully submit, in much more ambiguous and unspecific terms than many similar resolutions unanimously adopted by the United Nations in the past. I submit that this is not the proper way to approach these problems after twelve years of discussion here in the United Nations, after several serious exchanges of opinions on this matter and after such important conclusions drawn by the experts.
The Polish delegation would like the results of the Conference of Experts on testing and the present discussion here to pave the way to an agreement among the nuclear Powers at their meeting scheduled to begin in Geneva on 31 October. The purpose of this meeting should be precisely to put the results of the discussion by experts into the form of a binding agreement among the nuclear Powers.

That is why the United Nations cannot fail to raise a firm voice in this matter. What is required is a clear resolution of the United Nations on the necessity of the cessation of nuclear tests, and only such a resolution would be in the spirit of all the discussions that we had in previous years, and in the spirit of the experts' discussions at the recent Geneva meeting.

At the same time I should like to say that we in Poland cannot share the opinion of those who disregard or question the value of the cessation of testing as a disarmament measure -- a partial measure, but a disarmament measure.

The final cessation of tests can put an end to the further perfectioning of nuclear weapons both from the point of view of increasing their destructive power as well as manufacturing smaller, so-called tactical weapons. Both these trends in nuclear armaments are equally dangerous for mankind.

Bigger, more powerful nuclear bombs bring the foreboding of instant death of millions of people. Their deadly effects spread over the area of many square miles, destroying all forms of life for decades to come. On the other hand, the so-called tactical nuclear weapons, although their effects are so far -- I say "so far" -- limited, threaten, if used, to transform even a local armed conflict into a war in which all kinds of nuclear weapons would be immediately introduced. Besides, with the continuous technical progress in this field, who can draw the line between tactical and strategic nuclear weapons?

The cessation of nuclear tests should also prevent further enlargement of what is called the "atomic club". That was also the concern of the representative of Ireland here. The prospect of the number of nuclear Powers being increased gives rise to serious fears. It would only cause further difficulties in solving the disarmament problem -- and we all know that. I hardly need to elaborate on this point.

The Polish Government gave its support to the Conference of Experts on nuclear tests. We also attach great importance to the Conference of Technical Experts on the prevention of surprise attack, the Conference which is scheduled to
open in Geneva on 10 November. One can only hope that these negotiations will also be successful and will result in proposals the implementation of which could contribute to the increased feeling of real security among nations.

Nevertheless, the Polish delegation wishes to stress that conferences of experts should not and cannot be an end in themselves. They can fulfill their role only when their results become a basis for speedy decisions by the United Nations and by the Governments concerned.

The method of technical discussions in various fields of disarmament is nowadays being suggested more and more frequently. The problem was also one of the main concerns of the representative of Peru, to whom we listened with the greatest attention here the other day. But there is, however, the danger that they may be used as a pretext to put off political decisions on disarmament, decisions of a concrete and practical nature, if only partial. After years of inconclusive disarmament discussions in the United Nations we should beware lest the solutions of the important problem be again protracted by new, lengthy deliberations. And I have already emphasized previously that time is running short.

World public opinion as well as existing conditions call for a successful outcome of the coming three-Power Conference in Geneva. It should reach a final agreement on the unconditional cessation of tests with all types of nuclear weapons on the basis of the recommendations of the Conference of Experts, and I think that is about the most important mandate world public opinion is giving to this Conference. As for the Assembly and the United Nations, we consider it its duty to adopt a resolution which would define the position of the United Nations on this matter in unequivocal terms. This would be in line with the final conclusions formulated by the Secretary-General in his latest Memorandum as follows:

"While the attainment of balanced, world-wide disarmament through the United Nations must remain a primary objective of the Organization, it must welcome and be associated with all real progress in disarmament in whatever forum it is achieved". (A/3936, para.8)

We have to act on the cessation of nuclear tests.
In the past twelve years much has been said here about the absurdity of the arms race and about the possibility of reaching disarmament solutions. Let all those words now be followed by action if only in the form of partial but specific disarmament solutions. The Soviet Memorandum (A/3929) submitted on 22 September of this year gives a most convincing review of partial measures other than those we just have enumerated, measures which could be explored by the United Nations applied in practice and result in preventing further growth of armaments and lead the world towards disarmament.

This is my final but very important argument. One should not forget that every specific decision and every partial solution leading towards disarmament will immediately be reflected in an improvement of the international atmosphere, create conditions for strengthening international confidence -- and that is what I intend to stress -- and pave the way towards further agreements. These would be achievements of a great dynamic impact creating wider possibilities for further steps towards complete disarmament and for a full implementation of the principle of constructive peaceful co-existence. On the other hand, and we should have this warning in our minds, any opportunity wasted to reach a partial agreement on a matter as ripe for a positive decision as, for instance, the question of cessation of tests, would necessarily bring about an aggravation in the international situation. And that is about the measure of our responsibility here.

There are countries which by reason of their war experiences are particularly interested in successful disarmament. Poland is one of them. That is why I have taken the liberty of presenting at some length the principles which will guide the Polish delegation during the deliberations on the proposals before us, and I hope you will give me the opportunity, Mr. Chairman, to speak on another occasion on the substance of the draft resolutions before us after we have studied them carefully.
Mr. SCOA RODRIGUEZ (Venezuela) (interpretation from Spanish): After having carefully examined all the points of view that have been made known and the arguments that have so far been submitted to the Committee on the three subjects now being debated -- disarmament, the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests and a reduction by 10 - 15 per cent in the military budgets of the Soviet Union, the United States, the United Kingdom and France, the Venezuelan delegation believes that the situation now faced by this Committee and the problems that the Committee must endeavour satisfactorily to solve are that: there are points upon which we can see there is unanimous agreement; on the other hand, there are points on which there seems to be absolute disagreement between the Western Powers on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other.

The points upon which my delegation feels there is agreement are the following: (1) the need for disarmament, because this would reduce international tension and the danger of war; (2) the possibility of using part of the savings thus effected in the military budgets of countries for assistance to under-developed countries. Another question on which we all agree is the need for the discontinuance of atomic and hydrogen weapons tests, and for the same reasons as those I have just given with, over and above these, the danger that radiation from such tests offers to humanity. On these two points there appears to be no discrepancy whatever.

The disagreement, however, begins when we start discussing the ways and means. The Western Powers consider that the prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear weapons cannot be undertaken without a relative reduction in conventional armaments and also that some kind of control system will have to be arrived at before there can be any agreement on the discontinuance of testing. The Soviet Union feels that since this discontinuance is the most urgent of all problems, it, and it alone, must be solved in isolation and before any of the other problems are dealt with.

In support of the ideas held by the Western Powers, the argument has been put forward that the prohibition of the manufacture and possession of nuclear weapons without a corresponding reduction in conventional armaments, or a cessation of nuclear tests without a previously established system of control, might create an imbalance between Powers which, instead of reducing would increase the danger of war.
On the other hand, the Soviet Union, in support of its ideas, contends that since atomic explosions are an ever-increasing danger to humanity, the cessation of such tests could not be made contingent upon the lengthy and interminable discussion that would surround the question of disarmament.

In the sense that these points of view seem to be diametrically opposed, it does not seem possible to reach an agreement unless concessions are made on both sides, and it is here and precisely here that the United Nations must play its great part. We, the nations represented here, would achieve nothing if we divided ourselves into two groups and adamantly rejected the other's point of view. In this way we might be able to get one more resolution adopted by a majority, one more resolution to be filed and forgotten, a resolution that would probably defeat the very purposes for which it was originally presented. We have to try to find some kind of compromise solution, a solution which perhaps to a large extent could not be satisfactory to everyone, but at least we must avoid going backwards. Such a compromise definitely would be constructive and most to be desired.

We all know that the United Nations General Assembly can only recommend and that the strength of these recommendations is purely a moral strength. Therefore, these recommendations must be a true reflection of the desires of the peoples and, at the same time, must be a sure guide towards the achievement of the ends for which this Organization was originally founded.

Considering the specific point before us in the light of what I have just said, and also in the light of the statements that have so far been made before this Committee -- and I refer specifically to the statements of the Great Powers -- my delegation feels that it is not utterly impossible to come to some agreement regarding a draft resolution that in its preamble could clearly express the desire of all the peoples of the world that conventional armaments be reduced, that measures be taken to prevent the possibility of surprise attack, and that, once and for all, the production and testing of nuclear weapons shall cease forthwith. In its operative part, the draft resolution could deal with effective international control so that such a suspension of testing might ultimately be made definitive.
In this type of resolution the General Assembly would clearly state in its preamble, with all the moral force of the United Nations behind it, exactly how all the Members of the United Nations, and therefore the world as a whole, feel about the wild arms race. It would also state that the world wants the testing, stockpiling and production of nuclear weapons to cease. In the practical field, the Assembly would recommend the necessary measures that would be agreed to immediately by all the States. This obviously would be a first constructive step towards the achievement of the aims in the minds of all delegations.

The CHAIRMAN: I call upon the representative of the Soviet Union, who wishes to speak in exercising his right of reply.

Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I wish to thank the Chairman for affording me this opportunity to exercise my right of reply.

I do not intend today to dwell on the broad ambit of questions touched upon in yesterday's and today's discussions. I simply wish to draw the Committee's attention to one important question, though it is of limited scope, which was touched upon yesterday in the statement by the Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Unden. I shall not even touch on the whole ambit of questions dealt with yesterday by Mr. Unden. That, in turn, would require special consideration. I shall concern myself now merely with one issue of his statement.

Mr. Unden spoke of a semantic dispute concerning two words which are now used in connexion with the discussions on atomic and hydrogen explosions, namely, "cessation" and "suspension". According to Mr. Unden, those who speak of "suspension" and those who speak of "cessation" have the same thing in mind, an actual stopping of the tests, because, according to Mr. Unden, everyone seeks to attain that goal. Mr. Unden even said in so many words that this controversy might well be solved on the basis of using the word "cessation" or "discontinuance".
I wholeheartedly agree with this statement, but I am very much afraid that Mr. Unden is taking the wish for reality. The fact of the matter is that the words "suspension" and "cessation" are different in all languages of the world, not just in Russian. A suspension is always bound to something temporary, whereas a cessation is something that is permanent.

Mr. Unden drew attention to the fact that in the Soviet draft resolution we do not add the words "for all time" to the word "cessation", even though we use the phrase "for all time" in our statements. I should like to make it clear that if one has in mind the exact meaning of the word "cessation", then the phrase "for all time" does not have to be added to it. The phrase is superfluous. The word "cessation" requires no further elaboration as to the time span involved, because it implies a permanent and definitive solution of the question. That is why we do not add the phrase "for all time" to the draft resolution.

On the other hand, those who use the word "suspension" do not, in our opinion, do so accidentally. The United States draft resolution makes specific and repeated reference to suspension. The word "cessation" does not even occur. In the clarifications that were given here by Mr. Noble and Mr. Lodge, we were told that what they had in mind was a suspension, not just a suspension but a temporary suspension, not just a temporary suspension but one for merely one year. The seventeen-Power draft resolution states in part A, paragraph 2 that there should be no further testing of nuclear weapons while these negotiations -- presumably the Geneva negotiations -- are in progress. When the purpose of the Geneva conference is referred to in the preamble of the draft resolution, the sponsors state that the negotiations will be on the suspension of nuclear weapons tests, and not negotiations on the cessation of such tests. Why is it that the sponsors do not even set cessation as an ultimate goal? It is because they do not think in terms of a definitive solution of the question. They only think in terms of a temporary solution of the question for a certain time span, which they specify, namely, one year. This is a time span which many speakers, including Mr. Unden and some of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution, have described as inadequate and unsatisfactory.
However, regardless of the time span involved, there is a specific time
span implicit in the use of the word "suspension". If the word "cessation" is
used, no time limit is implied. What is implied is a definitive and radical
solution of the problem, which is what the Soviet delegation advocates. The
United States and the United Kingdom favour a temporary solution subject to
a certain time-limit, a time span which they need in order to prepare the next
series of tests. This is the way in which we understand them. But when the
conversation touches upon definitive cessation, then the United States and the
United Kingdom interpose prior conditions which bespeak their unwillingness
to solve this question definitively at this stage.
Consequently, the difference in words is no mere semantic quibble. It faithfully reflects a substantive difference between the positions of the parties. This is comprehensible because words are wont to express thoughts; thoughts are wont to express ideas; and ideas are the verbal embodiment of the material positions of States. Consequently, distinctions in words reflect the actual positions of the parties.

As far as Mr. Undén is concerned, the expression "cessation of tests" may be permissible because, as far as the Swedish delegation, is concerned, there can be no alternative goal to a complete and definitive cessation of tests. But I should like to add that, notwithstanding the professed disregard of semantics, I did nevertheless notice, in studying Mr. Undén's text, that in selecting from the words that mean "cessation" -- in English there is the word "cessation" and the word "discontinuance" -- he consistently used the word "discontinuance" and not "cessation", despite his professed disregard for semantic differences. "Discontinuance" is obviously weaker and milder than "cessation". Therefore, Mr. Undén does not find the selection of words altogether a matter of indifference, although he is a professed foe of semantic quibbles.

Even though all this is so, I still think it is an accepted point that Sweden, as Mr. Undén has made clear, is in favour of a definitive solution of cessation and is in favour of the complete cessation of tests. I suppose that this is still the case even though Mr. Undén's statement seems to imply that he would favour a somewhat softer wording. However, this, of course, may be said to be a matter of taste.

It is obvious that other States -- and this applies in particular to small countries which do not possess atomic weapons -- stand four-square in favour of an immediate, complete and unconditional cessation of tests because it is surely in the interests of these countries that there be no more atomic and hydrogen weapons tests and that the atomic Powers bring about a quietus to this question once and for all. This is to the interests of all countries, especially the small ones, which may undeservedly be harmed by the continued existence and testing of atomic and hydrogen weapons.

But the position of the Western Powers on this question is altogether different. The United States and the United Kingdom have heretofore obdurately refused to use the word "cessation" because the word "cessation" is one which
obviously is at variance with their whole position. If the United States and the United Kingdom are in fact bent upon a complete, unconditional and permanent cessation of tests, they should find no insuperable difficulty in accepting Mr. Undén's proposal and putting in the small word "cessation" in lieu of "suspension". In that event, our differences would to a considerable degree have been composed, and the composing of differences would not have been semantic but rather political in nature. This is the brief qualification I deemed it essential to offer at this stage in connexion with the issue raised by Mr. Undén.

The CHAIRMAN: I understand that the Foreign Minister of Sweden wishes to take the floor in exercise of his right of reply.

Mr. UNDEN (Sweden): I thank Mr. Zorin for the clarification he has given of the terms of his draft resolution. I had no doubts about the real sense of Mr. Zorin's declaration during the discussion, but I did observe that the draft resolution presented by Mr. Zorin did not say expressly that he meant an agreement for an indefinite period. However, independently of the production of the draft resolution, I very much hope that Mr. Zorin is willing to discuss the possibility of a compromise which lies between an agreement for one year and an agreement for a period without termination.

Mr. BARCO (United States of America): The representative of the Soviet Union has made a number of assertions to which, because they are so short of the truth, I feel that I must reply.

He has said that what the United States has in mind is a temporary suspension only, and only for one year. He asks the question: why do not the sponsors of the draft resolution which we have sponsored set cessation as a goal? and he answers the question by saying, "Because they do not think in these terms, they do not think of cessation as a goal, but only in terms of a suspension for one year and not for a definitive solution."

Then he makes the totally outrageous assertion that the United States wants to suspend for only one year to give it time to prepare for another series of tests.
These assertions are totally wrong; they are totally upside-down; and I do not know what one can say here to convince Mr. Zorin of the opposite. The representative of the United States has made very clear what the goal is as far as we are concerned. He has made it very clear that we are working for an agreement that can lead to the cessation of tests. But none of this seems to affect the attitude of the Soviet representative. We have said that we would discontinue our tests for one year if the Soviet Union also does so, beginning 31 October. Mr. Lodge has asked Mr. Zorin the question: is the Soviet Union going to do the same? We have not had an answer to that question. I should like to have an answer to that question.
Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): It seems to me that the representative of the United States is trying to rush and break an open door. The answer to the question he has asked is contained in my first statement which I made on instructions from the Government of the Soviet Union, as early as 10 October. I would request the representative of the United States to read carefully the verbatim record of my statement.

As regards the question how the United States can persuade or convince the delegation of the Soviet Union, and I suppose not just ourselves but in fact the entire world, that the United States is bent on a complete cessation of tests, well, I can offer the representative of the United States some pertinent advice, and that is: put into your resolution the words "cessation of tests" -- that is all; that would do instead of "suspension".

Mr. MOORE (United Kingdom): I was struck, like the representative of the United States, by Mr. Zorin's suggestion that the United Kingdom and the United States Governments were going into the forthcoming negotiations in Geneva on the basis of an offer to suspend tests for a period of a year, because they were aware that they would require that period of time before they could embark upon a further series of tests.

In our statement of 22 August, Her Majesty's Government announced that they were prepared to enter into negotiations for the purpose of concluding an agreement for the suspension of nuclear weapons tests under effective international control. They further stated that they would be prepared to refrain from nuclear tests thereafter for further successive periods of one year. Now, it struck me as perilously close to a suggestion that Her Majesty's Government were going into these negotiations in bad faith, and I can only hope that I have misunderstood Mr. Zorin's intention.

Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (interpretation from Russian): I crave the indulgence of the Committee for again drawing attention to some questions. But the statement of the representative of the United Kingdom compels me to say just a few words.
The representative of the United Kingdom said that statements of the representatives of the United Kingdom -- to which he referred -- make it clear that the United Kingdom had said that the United Kingdom and the United States agreed to suspend for a year, and thereafter to prolong or renew this suspension for further years. But I suppose everyone here knows full well that the representative of the United Kingdom did not say everything that the other representative of the United Kingdom had said, when he made this statement in connexion with this question; he did not mention that after it had been said that the United States and the United Kingdom would agree to prolong for further periods of a year the suspensions, it was added that this was on condition, provided, and three provisos were added, with which the Committee is well acquainted. I am surprised at the forgetfulness of the representative of the United Kingdom who failed to mention some very important points. He omitted to mention those things which are actually the object of our controversy. We say "unconditional cessation of tests". The representatives of the United States and the United Kingdom say "conditional suspension of tests" or "conditional cessation of tests". And there lies the difference between us.

Mr. BARCO (United States of America): Mr. Chairman, I should like to remind the representative of the Soviet Union that the representative of the United States has also asked him the question whether he disagrees that there should be further progress on disarmament. I think that this is a matter which requires some clarification from him.

I should like to say one more thing about the use of the words "cessation", "suspension", "discontinuance" and so forth. We are not dealing here with slogans how ever much the representative of the Soviet Union would like us to. We are dealing with serious problems on how to achieve disarmament, and all the things that go with it. These slogans which he likes to foist upon us are not going to achieve that.

The CHAIRMAN: There are no further speakers for the remaining part of this afternoon. Although some members of this Committee are inscribed for the early part of next week, there is still room for further speakers if we are to
move forward with the work of this Committee and if we are to meet our target date as prescribed. I therefore appeal to the representatives, as the Chairman before me has appealed to you, to inscribe your names. It is the wish -- I must make this very clear -- of our Chairman, as I understand it, to consider whether to close the list of this general debate before Wednesday next. I hope that those who wish to participate in the general debate will be good enough to inform the Chair during the next few days.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.