de Gaulle of France at a Press conference on 10 November 1959, pointed out that they confirmed that France's adherence to an agreement on the cessation of nuclear tests was contingent upon the attainment of world-wide, total, internationally controlled disarmament in the field of nuclear weapons.

5. In opposing the French position, the United Arab Republic was not arbitrarily singing France out for attack. As a State which had consistently sought the prohibition of nuclear tests and nuclear weapons and the destruction of stockpiles of atomic armaments, it was rather pointing out the international implications of France's decision to explode an atomic bomb in the Sahara, particularly in the light of United Nations responsibilities.

6. The remarks of President de Gaulle confirmed that France's purpose in testing an atomic bomb was to equip itself with political power and prestige to be used as a bargaining weapon in great-Power negotiations on questions of so vast a scope as the arms race, the condition of the under-developed countries, the future of Germany and the dangerous situations in the East and in Africa and Asia. While questions such as those of disarmament and Germany were legitimately the sole concern of the great Powers, the other questions enumerated by President de Gaulle were of direct concern to other countries and those countries should enjoy full participation in any negotiations affecting them from the outset.

7. A further alleged purpose of the proposed French test was to create equality in the possession of the atomic bomb, thus shattering the prevailing atomic monopoly. Setting aside the physical consequences of an atomic explosion—on which scientific findings were not conclusive and towards which the Powers which had already tested bombs had adopted different approaches—one of the major political effects would be to encourage other States to develop weapons of mass destruction and, ultimately, to use them. In that connexion, it was paradoxical to find that, while France had been an eloquent proponent of disarmament, its approach to the specific, practical question of developing a bomb was very different; it was arguing feebly that the bomb was inoffensive despite the legitimate anxiety concerning its effects and that France should therefore be permitted to explode it. The danger of the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons raised by the French decision to become an atomic Power was twofold. On the one hand, there were at present twenty-three States which could potentially possess the bomb; an addition of only one more Power to the "nuclear club" would immeasurably increase the chances that the bomb would be used. On the other hand, States with no prospect of possessing atomic weapons would find it difficult to resist the temptation of aligning themselves with nuclear Powers. The United Arab Republic, as an unaligned State, was particularly concerned because the cold war alliances and alignments were becoming in-
creasingly weaker, and the prospect of dissolving the blocs of States into which the world was divided and creating a world community of co-operating nations dedicated to peaceful coexistence had never been better.

8. In that connection, he would point out to the French representative that Arab solidarity arose from the fact that the several Arab sovereign States constituted a single Arab nation bound by ties of history, culture, religion and thought. While there might be differences among them, they were all striving to serve the cause of peace by upholding the right of peoples to self-determination and by weighing the international implications of all problems. In their approach to these problems, they formed a connecting link between Asia and Africa.

9. The proposed French test could not be dissociated from the vestiges of colonial influence in Africa. The very fact that the bomb was to be exploded in the Sahara demonstrated the continuing power of colonialism. The persistence of colonial influences could be seen in the way France had patronizingly dismissed as "emotion and propaganda" the protests of the independent African States and of dependent populations for whom the United Nations bore special responsibility.

10. The present efforts to reach agreement on a cessation of nuclear tests and to work constructively towards the ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament would be seriously affected by the French decision to test a nuclear bomb. It was particularly disheartening when the three nuclear Powers at Geneva had already agreed on articles providing for the prohibition and prevention of tests on territory under their control or jurisdiction, and had further pledged themselves not to undertake, participate in or encourage tests anywhere in the world. Even more dismaying was the danger that the French test might provoke a resumption of tests by the non-nuclear Powers. The Soviet Union, it would be recalled, had stated that it would regard itself as released from its self-imposed pledge to suspend tests if the Western Powers resumed testing (1047th meeting). In the Soviet view, the French intention could not contribute to the major problem of the discontinuance of nuclear testing. It was reasonable to fear that, if France was not prepared to accede to an agreement on cessation, other European Powers might also refuse to sign such an agreement.

11. The United Arab Republic could not support the three-Power draft resolution (A/C.1/L.239 and Add.1) because it failed to make the clear-cut recommendation to France to refrain from testing the bomb which the situation demanded. The United Nations should not content itself with simply taking the various views expressed into account. The United Arab Republic also could not support the Latin-American amendments (A/C.1/L.240) because they did not go far enough; a reconsideration by the French might not alter their position.

12. Mr. QUASON-SACKEY (Ghana), exercising his right of reply, once again pointed out that analogies drawn between the proposed French test and tests previously carried out by the nuclear Powers were irrelevant and invalid from a scientific point of view. They did, however, pose the question of sovereignty over the Sahara. The Sahara did not belong to France; France did not exercise sovereignty over any African territory, including the Sahara. The question of the proposed French nuclear test had been brought before the Assembly, not only because of its moral implications, but because it was to take place on territory belonging to Africa and Africans. Because of that fact, his country's position with respect to the French atomic test necessarily differed from its views on previous tests carried out by the great Powers. The nineteenth-century imperialist concept of sovereignty over extra-national territory had been discredited; the actions of the United Nations with respect to dependent territories were ample evidence of that fact. While persons who were not citizens of the Soviet Union or of the United States might regret the tests carried out by those States in their own territory, they were not in a position to oppose them. Those Governments were answerable to their own citizens and to their own electorates. However, the populations of Africa had no recourse against France in respect of damage done them by the French atomic explosion in the Sahara. Ghana therefore rejected the argument of sovereignty as justifying the French test.

13. Mr. MOCH (France), speaking on a point of order, pointed out that the Sahara, consisting as it did of two French Departments, could not be described as contested territory.

14. Mr. ZEINEDDINE (United Arab Republic) emphasized that the site of the proposed French test was in territory which many did not regard as belonging to France. The remarks of the representative of Ghana were therefore relevant and his position justified.

15. Mr. MOCH (France) said that the scientific data on the projected French nuclear test which he had presented in his initial statement (1043rd meeting) remained valid in the face of what had been said during the debate in the Committee; moreover, the representatives of the United Kingdom (1044th meeting) and the United States (1046th meeting) had confirmed his assertion that the tests carried out in Australia and Nevada had caused no harm to human beings and that the French test, which was to be of the same or lesser magnitude in terms of the energy released and was to be conducted at a more favorable site, would be equally free of harmful effects. The information presented by his delegation should allay the legitimate concern of the countries adjoining the Sahara; his Government was prepared to offer any further information and to take any further precautionary measures which they might desire.

16. A number of speakers who had stressed the long-term danger of an increase in world-wide radioactivity, as distinct from the local effects of the test explosion, had confused the atomic with the hydrogen bomb: it should be recalled that a single hydrogen bomb produced more than 1,000 times as much radio-activity as an atomic bomb like that to be exploded by France and that hydrogen bombs, rather than atomic bombs, were responsible for virtually all the artificial radiation in the world at the present time. Moreover, no parallel could be drawn between the devastation that would be produced by dropping an atomic bomb in a populated area in time of war and the effects of a peacetime test explosion in a restricted desert area.

17. Some speakers had contended that it was harmful to add any artificial radiation whatever to the natural radiation to which people were accustomed.
and had emphasized that the effects of radiation were still largely unknown. However, scientists always proceeded from the most pessimistic possible assumptions in calculating hypothetical radiation effects and thus postulated the maximum possible effects. Much remained unknown concerning the effects of small-scale artificial radiation simply because those effects were so slight that they could not be measured. With regard to the possible genetic effects referred to by some speakers, those produced by the French test would be equivalent, for a human being, to the effect of an increase in altitude of approximately twenty centimetres; the carbon-14 produced by the test would have the same effect as an increase in altitude of one-tenth of a millimetre. Strontium-90 caused purely somatic, not genetic effects; the strontium-90 generated by all previous tests had produced an effect equivalent to a very slight rise in altitude, which the French test would increase by less than one one-thousandth.

18. Some speakers had confused the so-called permissible radiation dose, which represented a degree of exposure involving a negligible possibility of significant damage, with the so-called dangerous dose; the radiation resulting from the proposed French test would be less than one one-thousandth of the permissible dose.

19. As to the problem of winds, it was true that long-range weather forecasting was not altogether accurate. However, winds could be forecast eight hours in advance, which was quite sufficient in the Sahara; if wind conditions required it, the test could be postponed at the last minute. The population density of the Saharan region was one of the lowest in the world; the inhabited Toulat oasis, to which one representative had referred, were situated to the north of the test site in an area where the winds would not reach.

20. It was specious to argue that because precautions were being taken a risk must be present; no one denied that precautions were necessary in dealing with radio-active materials, but it was precisely because of those precautions that the atomic industry had a lower accident rate than any other industry. In his scientific presentation, he had relied exclusively on specialists in radio-activity and radiobiology, regardless of their nationality; some of the authorities quoted by other representatives had been scientists active in other fields who were not experts in the subject under discussion and some had been individuals motivated by political conviction rather than scientific fact.

21. France had voted for the Indian amendment to the conclusions of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (A/3838, p. 41, footnote), to which reference had been made at the 1046th meeting, because it had felt that the problem of radiation called for serious examination and that it was unthinkable to continue nuclear testing at the rate at which such tests had been conducted in 1958, with the accompanying increase in the level of radio-activity. France would limit its aerial test explosions to a number that would involve no risk and would move on to underground explosions as soon as possible.

22. Since the projected French nuclear test posed no danger to anyone, it was clearly not a matter within the competence of the United Nations. He intended to continue his efforts to bring about nuclear disarmament within the framework of phased general disarmament under international control; in the meantime, it would constitute discrimination if France were forbidden to possess nuclear weapons while other Powers were not. For nearly ten years, France had entrusted its atomic industry with an exclusively peaceful mission; it had reluctantly abandoned that policy only after other Powers had failed to follow the example thus set.

23. An examination of the disarmament proposals which France had made in the past would show that the conditions it laid down for giving up its nuclear weapons did not represent a subterfuge. As to the question of whether France would continue nuclear testing if the existing nuclear Powers reached an agreement on the discontinuance of tests, he noted that President de Gaulle had stated on 10 November that France would not renounce nuclear weapons so long as other Powers remained in possession of them and produced them in large numbers, but that it would adhere to any United Nations scheme for placing such weapons under international control. So long as the United Nations was unable to accomplish the task of instituting controlled disarmament, it could not permit some States to maintain a monopoly in nuclear weapons and prevent others from providing for their defence.

24. Since, as a number of representatives had pointed out, France's glory had always lain in its devotion to justice and freedom rather than in its armed might, it was unjust to accuse it of seeking nuclear weapons for purposes of prestige. Issues of national prestige were, in any event, outside the competence of the United Nations. Surely, however, no one wished to deny France the prestige deriving from scientific achievement; both aerial and underground tests were essential to the exploitation of the economic and industrial potentialities of nuclear explosions.

25. His delegation did not accept the thesis that France should refrain from conducting a nuclear test because negotiations were in progress at Geneva on the discontinuance of such testing; the Geneva negotiations were not dealing with the real problem, that of halting the manufacture of nuclear weapons, and they seemed to be aiming at obtaining tacit recognition of a de facto nuclear monopoly.

26. Efforts were being made to exploit for partisan purposes the legitimate concern of some Governments over the proposed French nuclear test; that was evident from the intemperate statements being made by the State-controlled information media of certain countries. His statements in the First Committee would demonstrate to future observers that France had sought to direct the forthcoming disarmament negotiations towards the goal of nuclear disarmament within the framework of general disarmament under international control.

27. Mr. BENHIMA (Morocco), exercising his right of reply, observed that on two occasions the representative of France had referred to a distinguished person from Madagascar in order to show that the French Community, to whom the projected atomic bomb would belong, had given its consent to the tests through its representatives. While Morocco entertained strong feelings of friendship for Madagascar and was prepared to listen to Mr. Tsitrana with all due respect as a spokesman of the Community, it could not accept his being represented in the Com-
mittee as the President of a republic. The members of the Committee comprised only the representatives of sovereign States and not of States which still belonged to an association valid only under French constitutional law.

28. As to France's claim that Madagascar was a territory within the Community and that the bomb belonged to the Community, it could only be pointed out that Madagascar was not an African territory. The fact that the majority of the Community was composed of African territories did not authorize Madagascar to consent to the tests on behalf of the African members of the Community. Moreover, even if the entire Community had given its consent to the explosion, it would have to concede that it did not represent the African continent as a whole and that it had neighbours who were keenly aware of the dangers of such an explosion. French law reflected the concept of respecting the rights of a neighbour, even in trivial matters. In a recent statement, the French Minister for the Armed Forces had stated that the French Government would consult its neighbours concerning the proposed explosion and, he had added, "particularly Tunisia and Morocco". Even though it had not been consulted, Morocco could not consider entering into negotiations aimed at securing its consent. The French Government would surely be the last to expect it to volunteer to commit collective suicide.

29. The Moroccan delegation still maintained that the region in which proposed tests were to be conducted was not as barren as Mr. Moch contended. When the French delegation had submitted comparative maps of the areas surrounding the Soviet or United States testing sites, he had been at some pains to point out towns near to or far from the sites. However, in submitting a map of the areas in the vicinity of the Sahara test, he had not gone to the same lengths. Possibly as the result of an oversight, only four populated centres were marked within a radius established on the same scale, whereas it was a fact that within that radius there were hundreds of villages and centres which were sometimes separated by not more than fifteen or twenty kilometres (9 or 12 miles). Mr. Moch had mentioned Marrakech as the first Moroccan point beyond the radio-active limit. However, a large area of Moroccan territory lay between Reggane and Marrakech.

30. Mr. Moch had asked that the territorial issue should not be raised in the Committee. Morocco had not yet raised that issue and hoped that it would never have to do so, but it could not exclude the possibility that, if that issue persisted too long, a body of the same kind as the Committee might eventually be called upon to consider it.

31. With regard to the scientists who had been quoted in the debate, he would say that Mr. Moch had selected his scientists, whereas Morocco considered that there was no need to choose between the sources quoted by the French delegation and those it had itself quoted. The scientists whose opinions Mr. Moch so summarily rejected were in many cases French, had not been actuated by political motives, and were experts on nuclear energy.

32. Mr. Moch had frequently stated that France would not be subject to discrimination. The Moroccan delegation had clearly stated its views concerning France's right to have means, or instruments, for supporting its policy in international affairs. But, at the same time, it had stated that France had no right to make use of Africa in order to advance its international status or achieve parity with other nuclear Powers. That stage in Africa's history had been passed.

33. Mr. Moch had spoken of France's prestige in connexion with its role in international affairs. Morocco had shared in France's heritage and had France's prestige very much at heart. However, Morocco's contribution to the prestige of its friends should be provided voluntarily.

34. In sending an ambassador of French culture, Mr. André Malraux, rather than a scientist or military figure, to South America, France had undoubtedly chosen the best means of evoking admiration and respect for its achievements. However, in pursuing that new policy of renaissance, France and its representatives abroad should not be unmindful of African interests. In referring to a remark made by an African friend, Mr. Moch had expressed the certainty that France's friendship with Africa would continue. Morocco would like to share that hope, but could not share Mr. Moch's certainty.

35. Far from indulging in threats, Morocco merely wished to point out that the time had passed when certain acts could be committed with impunity and that France could no longer count on a passive Africa, which would carry out France's every wish.

36. It had been stated that after the proposed explosion there would be no victims, but, the same might have been said in 1945 about Japan. Unfortunately, time could not obliterate the memory of the Japanese victims. It was to be hoped that France would reflect carefully before giving its assurance that there would be no victims; otherwise it might be sorry after the event.

37. In view of President de Gaulle's categorical statement that there was no longer any question that France would heed an appeal to reconsider its intention, the Committee now had to decide what position it would take in regard to that statement.

38. Mr. TOURÉ (Guinea), exercising his right of reply, pointed out that there was a contradiction between the two statements made by the representative of France concerning his country's decision to test an atomic bomb.

39. In his statement of 4 November (1043rd meeting), the representative of France had stated that in the present insecure state of the world, France, like other countries, had the right and the duty to ensure its protection. In support of the argument that the test was necessary for his country's defence, the French representative had said that France, after having directed its undertakings in the field of atomic energy to exclusively peaceful purposes for ten years and having failed to persuade other countries to follow its example, had been compelled to initiate a nuclear test in order to possess modern weapons.

40. In the statement he had just made, however, the French representative had maintained an entirely different, if not contradictory, view. Leaving aside the argument of defence, the French delegation now maintained that the test was to be carried out in the interests of scientific progress. He had stated that it was of immense interest for mankind in general and
for the desert regions in particular, to obtain experience in the peaceful harnessing of an atomic explosion. Furthermore, that knowledge could not be obtained without an aerial explosion. The French representative had upheld his country’s right to further its scientific prestige by that means.

41. That apparent contradiction prompted the question which position France proposed to abide by: namely, whether the test was necessary in the interests of scientific progress or whether it was to serve defence purposes.

42. If the test was to serve defence purposes, whom did France have to defend itself against? In that connexion, the question of the relative size of the enemy and of the protective device was of some interest.

43. Lastly, it would be interesting to know whether, according to scientific opinion, the peaceful uses of atomic energy could be furthered without exploding bombs. Did France consider that the first assignment given to its scientists to confine themselves exclusively to peaceful experiments with atomic energy had proved impracticable? That question was an important one since none of the representatives who supported the draft resolution wished to prevent France from using atomic energy for peaceful purposes.

44. Mr. MOCH (France), replying to the first question put by the representative of Guinea, pointed out that in his recent statement, he had referred both to the peaceful and to the military aspects of the problem. If the representative of Guinea had studied his statement carefully he would accordingly have found no such contradiction. Mr. Touré would also find the answer to his third question in the same statement. As to the supposed enemy against which France proposed to defend itself, he could give his assurance that it was not Guinea.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.