



ORGANISATION DU TRAITÉ DE L'ATLANTIQUE NORD  
NORTH ATLANTIC TREATY ORGANIZATION

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PALAIS DE CHAILLOT  
PARIS-XVI  
Tél. : KLEber 50-20

*M. de L.*  
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To: Permanent Representatives

From: Secretary General

Recent developments in the field of disarmament

The attached note on certain recent developments in the field of disarmament was prepared for me by the Political Division. I am sending it to you as I think you may find that it contains useful information.

(Signed) P.-H. SPAAK

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Recent Developments in the Field of Disarmament

The quadripartite Anglo-American-Franco-Soviet plan, providing for resumption of the disarmament negotiations outside the United Nations by a new Committee representing ten countries, was submitted on 10th September to the United Nations Disarmament Committee which, the following day, approved it unanimously. This new Committee consisting of the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Canada, Italy, the USSR, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Rumania and Bulgaria is to hold its first meeting in Geneva early in 1960.

As a result of the creation of this Committee, it was not expected that disarmament would be discussed in detail before the General Assembly of the United Nations. The address by Mr. Khrushchev on 18th September and the new proposals of the Soviets will no doubt upset this calculation.

The provisional agenda for the Fourteenth Session of the General Assembly contained the following items relating to disarmament:

1. Measures to prevent increased dissemination of nuclear weapons (question raised by Ireland);
2. French nuclear tests in the Sahara (question raised by Morocco);
3. Suspension of nuclear and thermo-nuclear tests (question raised by India).

To the above items had to be added the report of the Disarmament Commission which, in reality, could only contain an account of the meetings of 10th and 11th September since the Commission had not met before then. However, the ensuing discussion could have been the occasion for tackling the substance of the disarmament problem.

It seems certain that before Khrushchev delivered his speech before the General Assembly, several Western delegations had thought, if not of grouping together the various items concerned with disarmament, at least of proposing a single resolution which, by seeking to conciliate the views of all would, in fact, have left it to the Committee of ten to find solutions for the problems involved.

It is now apparent that disarmament will be one of the principal subjects for discussion by the General Assembly. The latter has already decided to examine as separate items of the agenda, each question relating to disarmament. Furthermore

it has accepted the Soviet proposal to place on the agenda a new item: "Complete general disarmament".

However, when this great discussion on disarmament opens, the Soviet proposals will not be the only ones that will be dealt with. Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, during the general discussion on 17th September, put forward a plan for controlled disarmament in three stages, and it seems probable that it will be supported by the Western powers.

It is interesting to note that in their recent statements, the Western statesmen have laid particular stress on the need for any disarmament plan to make provision for control and inspection, whereas the Soviets, in their new proposals, continue to speak of control in terms as ambiguous as before.

The aim of the plan presented by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd is to achieve in three stages the abolition of all nuclear weapons and of all means of mass destruction, as well as the reduction of other weapons and of the armed forces to levels sufficiently low to make a war of aggression impossible.

The first stage would be mainly preparatory and would involve the following operations:

- (a) an agreement on the suspension of nuclear tests would require acceptance by all countries;
- (b) a technical conference to study control of the suspension of the use of fissionable material for the manufacture of weapons;
- (c) an agreement between the Great Powers to restrict the numerical strength of their forces; the setting-up of an international body for the collection of information on the present levels of forces and conventional weapons;
- (d) a study on the transfer of given quantities of certain types of weapons to an international control organization for safe-keeping;
- (e) a conference for the study of the political and technical aspects of the measures to prevent surprise attacks;
- (f) a study on problems in connection with the use of outer space for peaceful purposes;

- (g) a study on the character and functions of an international control body responsible not only for controlling disarmament measures but also to an increasing extent for the maintenance of peace while armaments are in the course of reduction.

With the second stage, the implementary phase opens:

- (a) progressive reduction under control of conventional weapons and the numerical strength of armed forces;
- (b) cessation of the production of fissionable material for the manufacture of arms;
- (c) start of the reduction in the level of stockpiles of atomic weapons by means of the transfer to non-military purposes of certain stocks of fissionable materials held by the military;
- (d) setting-up of a system of inspection to prevent surprise attacks;
- (e) agreement on a system guaranteeing the use of outer space for peaceful purposes;
- (f) start of measures for extending the scope of the international control body with a view to enabling it to ensure the maintenance of peace.

The third and final stage, would lead to the large-scale disarmament, under international control, of all countries. It would comprise the following measures:

- (a) prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons and of all weapons of mass destruction;
- (b) prohibition of the use of such weapons;
- (c) prohibition of the use of outer space for military purposes;
- (d) study of the possibility of controlling and later destroying, the remaining stocks of nuclear weapons;
- (e) establishment of international control of military budgets;
- (f) final reduction of conventional weapons and the numerical strength of forces to the levels required for internal security;

- (g) expansion of the international control body to enable it fully to carry out its task of maintaining peace.

It will thus be seen that the plan proposed by Mr. Selwyn Lloyd establishes at each stage a balance between nuclear disarmament and conventional disarmament, and lays special stress on control. It follows the general line of the West's previous proposals.

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