CONFERENCE OF THE TEN NATION COMMITTEE
ON DISARMAMENT

FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWENTY-SECOND MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 13 April 1960, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. TARARANOV (Bulgaria)
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<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Mr. M. TARABANOV</td>
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<td>Col. K. SAVOV</td>
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<td>Mr. Z. TRHLIK</td>
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<td>France</td>
<td>Mr. J. MOCH</td>
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<td>Mr. M; LEGENDE</td>
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<td>Romania</td>
<td>Mr. E. MEZINCESCU</td>
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<td>Mr. C. BOTEAN</td>
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<td>Col.C. POCENA</td>
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<td>Union of Soviet Socialist Republics</td>
<td>Mr. V. A. ZÖRIN</td>
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<td>Col.-Gen. A. A. GRYZLOV</td>
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<td>Mr. A. A. ROBCHIN</td>
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**Present at the Table (cont'd)**

**United Kingdom:**
- Rt. Hon. D. ORMSBY-GORE
- Miss E. SALT
- Maj.-Gen. RIDDELL

**United States of America:**
- Mr. F.M. EATON
- Mr. C.C. STELLE
- Rear-Admiral P.L. DUDLEY

**Representative of the Secretary-General:**
- Dr. D. PROTITCH

**Deputy Representative of the Secretary-General:**
- Mr. W. EPSTEIN
The CHAIRMAN (Bulgaria) (translation from French): I declare the twenty-second meeting of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament open.

The first speaker on the list is the representative of Romania, and I now call on him to speak.

Mr. MEZINCESCU (Romania) (translation from French): After quoting Mr. Zorin's statement that "it would also be extremely important if we were now to agree upon some concrete measure which would show to the whole world ... our goodwill in averting the threat of a nuclear war", Mr. Ormsby-Gore said:

"These remarks sound much nearer to the Western position than anything which I have yet heard in this conference." (TNCD/PV.20, page 8)

In view of this rapprochement of our positions, which the United Kingdom representative noted, we were expecting him also to comment on the concrete measure which the socialist countries propose should be adopted together with the basic principles of general and complete disarmament they have submitted to the Committee for consideration. However, we have not yet had an opportunity of hearing the opinion of the United Kingdom delegation and other delegations on the measure we have proposed.

The last paragraph of the document relating to the basic principles of general and complete disarmament, which was submitted to the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament by the socialist countries on 8 April 1960, reads as follows:

"As an act of goodwill for the purpose of creating appropriate conditions for the early conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament, those States participating in the Committee that possess nuclear weapons solemnly declare that they will not be the first to use such weapons". (TNCD/4)

The solemn undertaking by States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons is a concrete measure which would reduce the threat of a nuclear war and show the world that all the great Powers wish to eliminate that threat in the near future. This measure could be adopted and put into effect without delay, and certainly without waiting for the conclusion of a treaty on general and complete disarmament.
If the view that "no human stake can justify blasting humanity" (TNOD/PV.1, page 16), expressed by Mr. Moch at our opening meeting, is really shared by the Western nuclear Powers, the solemn undertaking by the nuclear Powers not to be the first to use nuclear weapons should be its necessary complement, more particularly because, in spite of the terrible dangers of a nuclear attack and its futility as a means of attaining political ends, there are still influential persons – both civil and military – in the Western countries, who are preaching the strategy of the first blow and of aggressive warfare with nuclear weapons. This strategic concept could have an influence, difficult to assess, on those whose miscalculations or misinterpretations might be fatal to mankind.

The undertaking by States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons would be a first step towards replacing the precarious "balance of terror", which cannot form the foundation of a lasting peace – but is, on the contrary, the source of incalculable risks – by a balance based on reason and law.

The measure we are proposing does not impair the security of any State. It does not in any way affect the right and the capacity of States to defend themselves. It is a measure directed exclusively against nuclear aggression and, as such, it can be to the disadvantage only of those preparing a nuclear attack. We admit that openly. But, for that very reason, such a solemn undertaking would considerably increase international security. For all the States which do not possess nuclear weapons, and the many States which do not belong to any military bloc, there would be less risk of being drawn into, or becoming the victims of, a nuclear war, the destructive effects of which cannot be halted by the frontiers of the States which are not taking part in it.

A solemn undertaking by the nuclear Powers not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, as proposed by the socialist countries, would be the best proof of the sincerity of their peaceful intentions.

The measure we propose does not require lengthy legal and technical discussions before being adopted and put into effect, as it is an undertaking to be solemnly given and respected by each nuclear Power on its own account. All that is required for such an agreement to take immediate effect is the goodwill of the Western nuclear Powers. The legal form of the undertaking should not present any difficulty. The essential point is that the Western nuclear Powers should agree to back up their statements that aggressive warfare is not the object of their policy and their military programme, by the undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons.
(Mr. Miezicescu, Romania)

We have on several occasions heard the representatives of the Western countries express their doubt of the value of moral and legal prohibitions. My delegation believes in the value of solemn undertakings; it believes in the efficacy of moral and legal prohibitions based on international agreements; but at this stage in our discussions I do not wish to dwell on the point.

I am convinced that the value of solemn undertakings and of moral and legal prohibitions, far from diminishing, increases as the control provided by public opinion becomes more widespread and more powerful. But in the case in point, the case of a solemn undertaking that would show the whole world the sincere desire of all the great Powers which are members of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament to remove the threat of nuclear war, the value of solemn undertakings and of moral and legal prohibitions would not present the same problem as in the case of known historical precedents and of the arguments advanced hitherto.

Distrust of the other side's intentions cannot prevent any particular Power from undertaking not to be the first to use nuclear weapons. It is not a question of being responsible for the intentions or actions of the other side, but of being responsible for one's own intentions and actions. Fulfilment of the undertaking by States possessing nuclear weapons that they will not be the first to use those weapons depends, first and last, only on the capacity of States to control their own actions and be responsible for them.

We have discussed the necessity for re-establishing confidence among States at some length. The measure we are proposing, namely, a solemn undertaking by States not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, is one of the measures which could do most to re-establish confidence. In essence, this measure is no more than a solemn declaration of the intentions of each nuclear Power.

Do the Western nuclear Powers intend to undertake not to be the first to use nuclear weapons, as the Soviet Union is prepared to undertake, or do they consider that such an undertaking would not be compatible with the objects of their policy and their military programme? This is a question to which we would like a reply. The sincere expression of the decision of each nuclear Power not to be the first to use nuclear weapons would be a most important factor in bringing about considerable progress towards re-establishing confidence and reducing anxiety and international tension.
Last week Mr. Eaton told us:

"... What the world wants and needs is not statements of intentions. Intentions may change or may be deliberately deceiving". (TNCJ/PV.19, page 10)

This may be true. But if Mr. Eaton has doubts about the intentions of the other party or parties to the undertaking, we should like to know what his own intentions are — the intentions of the Government he represents here.

The Western representatives who have spoken on the proposals submitted on 8 April by the socialist countries have not yet stated their views on this concrete measure, which we propose should be adopted without waiting until the end of the negotiations on general and complete disarmament. The representative of France only told the Committee that the proposal was not a new one. That was not an opinion; it was only evidence of memory. The fact that this proposal is not new does not necessarily mean that it is not opportune, that it would not be most useful for the progress of our work, that it would not help to reduce international tension and to consolidate peace.

The fact that a new idea does not gain ground at once, proves nothing against the idea itself. While the socialist countries' proposal is not entirely new, the circumstances in which it has been made and the new relationships which exist in the world today, give it a new significance which merits more attentive examination by the Western Powers. The matter is too important to be ignored. If the Western representatives need time to formulate their comments, we will patiently await the moment when they can tell us the position of their Governments on a matter so fraught with consequences.

Mr. MOCH (France) (translation from French): As I shall not be here tomorrow I should like, just before the holiday, to avoid polemics and take stock of our work.

First, I shall explain the position and ambitions of France.

I cannot describe them better than by recalling the address delivered by the President of the French Republic and Community, on 6 April, to the Lords and Commons of Parliament in Westminster Hall. As you know, the loftiness of the thoughts expressed, the fellowship of ideas and the magnificence of the occasion deeply moved the English and French peoples, who have been bound together for over half a century by that "Entente Cordiale" which they hope to make universal.
These nations, President de Gaulle said, "confident of their own worth, yet proof against the giddiness which leads giants astray, and from which they themselves have suffered in the past, are destined to act together to help build peace."

Those words vindicate a posteriori the persevering efforts which the French representative has pursued since 1953 with Mr. Selwyn Lloyd, Mr. Nutting and Mr. Noble, and is now pursuing with Mr. Ormsby-Gore, with a view to proposing moderate and realistic settlements. We are all the less liable to fail in this task because we know we can rely on the close collaboration of our American friends, who in the last ten years have so often added their signatures and their efforts to our own, on that of the Canadian representatives, likewise always devoted to the cause of peace, and, since the beginning of this session, on the new contribution of Italy, our Latin sister.

I shall now continue reading this address which confirms, while giving them the stamp of nobility, the statements which have frequently been made here:

"France believes that this peace can only be attained if the general fear of sudden annihilation is first removed, which entails the limitation and control of armaments in both camps. Above all, she wishes the stocks of nuclear weapons to be destroyed, the installations where they are made to be converted to other uses, and the missiles and aircraft capable of delivering them, as well as the fixed and floating bases from which these vehicles of death can be launched, to be placed under joint surveillance. She would, for her part, be very happy to give up the tests and projects she is undertaking in order to provide herself, in her turn, with the means possessed by others, as soon as those others cease to have them at their disposal."

Some brief comments will show the richness of the thought expressed.

In the first place, there is the will to disarm, with special emphasis on the destruction of stocks of nuclear weapons and elimination of the vehicles -- all vehicles -- for them. On his return to Moscow after his talks at Rambouillet, Mr. Krushchev said that he was in agreement with these aims, which had been explained to him. I do not think the two statesmen went into the question of means. In
our view, the means are controlled destruction and conversion. The aim is to make any nuclear attack physically impossible before proclaiming moral prohibitions not amenable to control or giving undertakings not to use nuclear weapons in certain circumstances. Such prohibitions can crown the work of disarmament, but cannot be its foundation.

Who would maintain that such a policy, based on realistic, concrete and controllable measures, would not bring us closer to general and complete disarmament, which we all equally desire, even if we still disagree on how to proceed towards it?

A second idea, in the last sentence of the quotation, also shows the continuity of our efforts. We shall not accept, I said in 1959, as also in previous years, any discrimination or any monopoly. "Nuclear disarmament for all: that is our precise, permanent and fundamental goal." It still is our goal today. If we are slow to attain that goal, we have to fear that in years to come the four atomic Powers, whose maturity obviates any danger of universal annihilation, will be joined by other Powers which are not factors for stability and peace. From the tests carried out without any help at all, let us learn the futility of military pseudo-secrets, however jealously guarded. Let us understand that no one can bind Prometheus for long. We have to make our choice: either nuclear disarmament associated with measures relating to conventional armaments, or the threat to peace and civilization that increasingly widespread possession of nuclear weapons will present.

After referring to a political problem outside our competence, the President of the French Republic and Community spoke of the problem of peaceful coexistence in terms I leave you to reflect upon. France, he said, hopes "that the future will enable Europe to lead its own life thanks to the balance established between the two parts of it which follow different systems. She does not despair of seeing the opposition between these two systems gradually diminished, in a peaceful atmosphere, through the process of development demanded, on the one hand, by human nature that aspires to liberty and, on the other hand, by the pursuit of progress that requires efficiency".

(Mr. Moch, France)
I make no comment on this passage concerning the desirable evolution of the two social blocs; I quote it only to pass on to the continuation, which relates to a fundamental problem we have, all of us, unduly neglected here and which France is proud to have raised at the 1955 Summit Conference:

"But", -- President de Gaulle added -- "whatever arrangements may one day be made for reducing the means of making war, for bringing peace to this Europe of ours or for reducing tension throughout the world, France is convinced that peace will remain precarious so long as two thousand million human beings remain in want, while their fellow men are well provided for. She believes that, finally, nothing is more important than to organize, above the level of differences in policy, the co-operation of those who lack nothing in helping those who lack everything."

What more noble mission could we have than to crown our work by establishing this generous co-operation of the rich nations in helping the ill-fed two-thirds of the world?

Why have I quoted these extracts? For flattery? No: I am a free and independent person, and I am not given to flattery. Because I am proud? Yes, as a Frenchman I am proud that the highest authority in my country should express ambitions that should have guided our common effort.

Yet instead of doing our utmost to translate these ambitions into an agreement, how have we spent this past month of debate?

We have come up against conflicting principles and propaganda moves. The Eastern countries have arrogated to themselves a monopoly in interpreting the United Nations resolution. We have been told, in substance: If you reject our measures and principles, you are rejecting general and complete disarmament; in that case, have the courage to repudiate the vote you cast in New York last November.

The Western countries, for their part, have drawn attention to everything they consider unrealistic, and often Utopian, in the Soviet plan. In New York we were already expressing our anxiety and our doubts. We maintained that four years' forced march towards total disarmament could not wipe out the traces of thousands of years of fighting or, in particular, the effect of decades of mutual distrust. To make progress we must take account of the harsh reality confronting us.

Let our Eastern colleagues understand our reaction at last.
Above all, let us all remind ourselves that our ten delegations are guided by an equal love of peace and a common will to make progress. We have brought the hopes of all the nations with us to Switzerland. They are not expecting us to achieve all the objectives of an ideal disarmament at one stroke; the United Nations debates prove this, both by the absence of any discussion of detail and by the comprehensive transmission to Geneva of all the drafts and suggestions. But they are counting on us at least to take the first step in this direction and not to spin out abstract and sterile discussions.

That we take this first step is also, as I have just reminded you, the wish of the President of the French republic and Community, which hopes it will have far-reaching results.

Let us promise ourselves to do everything in our power not to betray the hopes of the world.

The CHAIRMAN (Bulgaria) (translation from French): Does anyone else wish to speak? If not, I will read out the draft communiqué:

"The twenty-second meeting of the Conference of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament was held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 13 April 1960, under the chairmanship of the representative of Bulgaria.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 14 April 1960, at 10.30 a.m."

Are there any objections? The communiqué is approved.

The meeting rose at 11.5 a.m.