FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE THIRTY-FOURTH MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 8 June 1960, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: MR. NOSEK (Czechoslovakia)
Present at the Table

Bulgaria:
Mr. M. TARABANOV
Mr. K. CHRISTOV
Mr. G. GUELEV

Canada:
Mr. E.L. M. BURNS
Mr. A.G. CAMPBELL
W/Cdr. R.J. MITCHELL

Czechoslovakia:
Mr. J. NOSEK
L/Out.-Gen. J. HEČKO
Mr. Z. TRHLIK

France:
Mr. J. MOCH
Mr. M. LEGENDRE
Col. L. CONVERT

Italy:
Mr. G. MARTINO
Mr. F. CAVALLETTI
Mr. L. DAINELLI

Poland:
Mr. M. NASZKOWSKI
Mr. M. BLUSZTAJN
Brig.-Gen. J. SLIWINSKI

Romania:
Mr. E. MEZINCESCU
Mr. C. BOGDAN
Col. C. POPA

Union of Soviet Socialist Republics:
Mr. V.A. ZORIN
Col.-Gen. A.A. GRZYLOV
Mr. A.A. ROSECHIN
PRESENT AT THE TABLE (cont'd)

United Kingdom:

Rt. Hon. D. ORMSBY-GORE
Sir Michael WRIGHT
Miss B. SALIT

United States of America:

Mr. F.M. EATON
Mr. C.C. STELLE
Rear-Admiral P.L. DUDLEY

Representative of the Secretary-General:

Dr. D. PROITCH

Deputy Representative of the Secretary-General:

Mr. W. EPSTEIN
The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia): The thirty-fourth meeting of the Conference of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament is called to order. Does any representative wish to speak?

Mr. NASZKOWSKI (Poland) (translation from French): It can be said that there is no more important or more urgent problem in the world today than that of general and complete disarmament. Consequently, it was quite understandable that all nations — including the Polish nation — should base their hopes of seeing that problem speedily and radically solved on the unanimous acceptance by the United Nations General Assembly of the resolution on general and complete disarmament. However, our first series of meetings did not produce the results expected. We all know the reasons. The socialist States came to our Committee with a concrete programme of general and complete disarmament. The Western States represented on the Committee rejected it, however, and put forward proposals which did not provide for carrying out general and complete disarmament and were essentially measures of control over existing armaments.

The idea of general and complete disarmament nevertheless gained wide and solid support from public opinion in all countries. There is universal conviction that, in the present situation, bold and radical overall solutions are essential in the sphere of disarmament and that they alone can really free mankind from the nightmare of nuclear war and create the necessary conditions for lasting peaceful co-existence.

That is why the question still requires urgent settlement. That is why, conscious of the gravity of the problem and of the responsibility they share for the fate of peace, the socialist delegations are continuing, in spite of the difficulties, in their endeavours to steer our debates on a constructive course.

That is no empty statement, as is shown by the proposals relating to the basic provisions of a treaty on general and complete disarmament presented on 2 June by the Soviet Government, by agreement with the Governments of the other socialist States. These proposals develop the Soviet programme of 18 September 1959, though that programme is right in its initial version and, but for the opposition of the Western States, could be used to carry out general and complete disarmament.
The new Soviet proposals are the result of a thorough analysis of the seven weeks of discussion we have had so far, and, as the Western representatives must certainly have noticed, they take into account, in large measure, the opinions expressed by those delegations both in this room and elsewhere. We have not of course been able to take note of opinions which, in practice, merely amounted to abandoning the very principle of general and complete disarmament and the conditions necessary for its implementation.

The Soviet proposals do, however, take into consideration all the concrete comments consistent with the concept of general and complete disarmament. I should like to illustrate this by a few examples. The objections made by the Western Powers to the proposal of 18 September 1959 were concentrated among other things, on the approach to the various disarmament measures, on their order, on the time-limits for their implementation, and on control. In the new proposals of the socialist States, the order of the measures, within the framework of the disarmament process, has been changed to come closer to the requirements postulated by the Western States, particularly in the matter of priority for the liquidation of all means of delivering nuclear weapons. The Soviet proposals provide, in the first stage, for elimination, from the armaments of the armed forces of States, of all means of delivering nuclear weapons, for cessation of their manufacture and for their destruction. That is an important and concrete step towards bringing the positions of the two parties closer together.

We are convinced that implementation of these measures would provide, from the outset, a complete solution of the problem of preventing surprise attack, to which, incidentally, certain Western representatives referred yesterday. The characteristic of rockets is their lightning speed of action. Furthermore, we know that large quantities of atomic weapons and rockets have been stock-piled in different parts of the world. The total elimination, under effective control, of the means of launching a lightning attack can remove the threat of a nuclear war entirely, once for all. It must of course be accompanied by the abolition of military bases on foreign territory. For it is known that the only object of the bases on the territory of countries adjacent to the socialist States is to serve as arsenals for means of swift attack, which can be used from positions near the target.
The demand for liquidation of all means of delivering nuclear weapons and for
the liquidation of foreign bases is in conformity with the principle that the
process of disarmament must at no moment give a particular State or group of States
any military advantage over others. Let us recall that that is a principle
repeatedly enunciated by the Western States.

It must also be emphasized that the abolition of rockets and other means of
delivering nuclear weapons, together with the liquidation of bases, is a measure
which can be easily and effectively controlled, and thus increases the real
chances of quickly removing the danger of surprise attack.

Once the vehicles capable of delivering the weapon of mass destruction are
destroyed, this weapon itself will lose its importance. Prohibition of
the use and manufacture of nuclear weapons, and the destruction of existing stocks,
will thus be facilitated. The Soviet Union has always attached great importance
to prohibiting the use of outer space for military purposes; this idea found
expression in the proposals submitted in March 1958. The present proposals
provide for prohibition of the placing in orbit or stationing in outer space of
special devices capable of carrying weapons of mass destruction, from the
beginning of the first stage, until all such devices have been destroyed. This,
as we know, is a subject in which keen interest has been expressed by certain
Western States. For instance, it may be recalled that at the fourteenth and
nineteenth meetings of our Committee, the representative of the United States
strongly emphasized that "if the world continues and we have above it vehicles
of mass destruction it will be a very unhappy place." (TNCD/PV.19, page 13).

He also said:

"This is not a remote or a hypothetical danger but one which science will
bring closer every day as a by-product of man's conquest of space unless
measures are taken promptly to ensure against placing weapons of mass
destruction into orbit above the earth". (TNCD/PV.14, page 5).

The logical consequence of our agreeing to give priority to disarmament in
the field of modern weapons of mass destruction is the prohibition, provided for
in the first stage, of the transfer of nuclear weapons, and the transmission of
information necessary for their manufacture, to countries which do not yet
possess them, and the prohibition of the manufacture of nuclear weapons by States
which do not possess them. This question is particularly important, because of the continued ambition of the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany to equip the Bundeswehr with nuclear weapons, which threatens a resurgence of the adventurous tendencies of the militaristic circles of Federal Germany, whose activities are directed against peace in Europe and against the present frontiers.

In several other matters too, the new Soviet proposals take into consideration, in a constructive manner, the conclusions following from our previous discussions. That is shown, for instance, by the fact that the reduction of conventional forces has been transferred from the first stage to the second, and that the complete disbandment of such forces has been transferred to the third and last stage of the process of general and complete disarmament, because the Western Powers were opposed to any reduction of these forces in the first stage of disarmament.

We have been criticized, hitherto, for having proposed too short a period when we set a time-limit of four years for carrying out complete disarmament. We consider -- as we have often said -- that the disarmament treaty should specify the time-limits for fulfilling undertakings. We still think the four-year period entirely realistic; but we are nevertheless prepared to consider Western proposals on the matter and if possible to agree on a time-limit acceptable to all of us.

As regards control, we have, as you know, always been in favour of strict and effective verification of disarmament measures. The development of our proposals, and the more precise and detailed definition of the functions and character of the control organ, as well as of the scope of control itself at each stage, provide fresh proof of the good intentions of the socialist States and should put an end, once for all, to the attempts to misrepresent our position in this matter. We are in favour of effective and rigorous international control over disarmament; but we shall not agree to control applying to armaments, that is to say control which would countenance spying. Such control -- for example, aerial control -- at a time when there is no disarmament, could only increase the danger of a surprise attack by legalizing the gathering, for the aggressive forces, of important data on the defensive strength of the other party.
The Polish delegation considers that the proposals concerning the basic provisions of a treaty on general and complete disarmament put forward on 2 June 1960 meet the requirements of the present time. It must be noted that certain Western circles are endeavouring to promote the view that, in the present period of increased international tension, disarmament negotiations have no chance of success. We must say that such an attitude is the height of dishonesty. First of all, it is the very circles which provoked this tension by their activities against peace which are now advancing this view. Secondly, it is, precisely, the tenseness of the situation and our awareness, increased by recent events, of the imminence of the danger to peace constituted by modern technical developments, which demand all the more speedy and decisive action to achieve disarmament. We are therefore entitled to expect that the Western Powers will, without delay, begin the specific discussion of our new proposals, which go so far to meet the requirements they themselves have previously stated.

That is why certain remarks made yesterday by the representative of the United States struck a strange and disquieting note. I believe Mr. Eaton again referred to the Western plan, and alluded to measures which are alleged to be concrete, but are in fact only partial and isolated measures. Can that be the response to the fresh effort of the socialist States finally to guide our Committee's work towards the path of general and complete disarmament? The United States representative affirmed that the Soviet proposals were being carefully studied by the West. It would be difficult to reconcile that statement with the attempt to revert to those familiar concepts which offer no solution to the problem before our Committee.

Nor can we agree with Mr. Martino's comment that the Soviet proposals can be justly described as "all or nothing". In the existing situation, when military techniques are developing extremely fast and the arms race is threatening the world with a destructive war, it is our duty to strive for "all" i.e. for general and complete disarmament. If the Western Powers recognize that our task is to strive for such disarmament and to achieve it as rapidly as possible, they must, logically, envisage "all", engage in constructive negotiations and give a carefully considered opinion on the new proposals of the socialist States.
Mr. CHURCHILL-GOPE (United Kingdom): I listened to the speech of the representative of Poland, and I am sorry that in the course of it he did seem to cast some doubt upon the motives of the Western Powers in these negotiations here in Geneva. Speaking, therefore, for the first time since our recess, I wish to start by saying on behalf of the Government of the United Kingdom that we are more convinced than ever that this question of disarmament is one of paramount importance, and we are more determined than ever to find a way of making practical progress toward the final goal of general and complete disarmament.

Thinking over our previous discussions up to the point at which they were adjourned in April, and rereading the more important speeches on either side, I am inclined to share the view expressed by Mr. Zorin on 28 April to the effect that our discussions, though not as concrete or as fruitful as some of us would have wished, have already served a useful purpose. The field of our work in this Committee is vast; but we have at least cleared the ground a little and made it easier to see where each side stands. Although we failed in our initial meetings to come down to solid negotiations of practical steps towards our goal, certain areas of possible agreement seem to have emerged and, having listened to the representative of the Soviet Union's speech yesterday, I welcome the indication that some at least of our arguments were judged worthy of consideration by the Soviet Union.

In this connexion I should like to refer to the "Principles and Conditions for General and Complete Disarmament under Effective International Control", submitted by the five Western delegations on 26 April in Conference document TNC/5. That document sets out four simple criteria which my colleagues and I believe must be satisfied by any realistic plan for general and complete disarmament: a document which, at our last meeting before we adjourned, Mr. Zorin said he did not reject. We find therein the concept of disarmament by stages; of military balance between States and between nuclear and conventional disarmament; of effective and continuing international control; of prevention of evasion; and of the building of international confidence. I would also draw the Committee's attention to point (d) of the first operative paragraph which states:

"disarmament measures must be negotiated progressively according to the possibility of their early implementation and effective control". (TNC/5)
It is with those fundamental principles very much in mind that we are studying the latest changes put forward by the Soviet Union and which were introduced to us here by Mr. Zorin yesterday.

I should like particularly to emphasize the importance we attach to a continuing balance between conventional and nuclear disarmament. Quite apart from the need to prevent any State from gaining a military advantage by unbalanced disarmament—a point to which our Soviet colleague also attaches importance—any attempt to hurry through a programme of nuclear disarmament, while leaving conventional forces to be dealt with later, would be to create false hopes. Nuclear disarmament by itself is a dangerous delusion. You can destroy the bombs and their carriers; you can inspect and destroy the factories; but you cannot destroy human knowledge. If disarmament stops there, and I am not saying that anyone suggests that it should, and if in an unstable world a so-called conventional war then starts, nuclear weapons will certainly reappear within one year. The so-called abolition of nuclear war will be shown to have been a fraud with appalling consequences for the whole world. This is why disarmament must be progressive, comprehensive and balanced: it must destroy not this or that type of weapon alone but the possibility of war itself.

As regards the latest modifications to the Soviet plan, I can promise the Soviet representative that these proposals are already receiving the most careful and thorough examination by my Government.

I naturally listened with great interest to the speech in which Mr. Zorin introduced the new Soviet document to us, and also to the speech of the representative of Poland this morning. Mr. Zorin has already cleared up some points which seemed to me rather obscure when I first read this document. One difficulty—and one which I am sure there will be no trouble in resolving—concerns the accuracy of the texts which we have before us. There are in circulation a number of unofficial, or perhaps even official, translations of the original Russian text, and these by no means agree precisely with each other. The first paragraph under the heading "First stage" of the plan is a case in point where an important difference in meaning exists between the various texts. I refer now to the text which we received from the United Nations in New York—document A/4374 of 2 June—to the other English text which was circulated to us by the Soviet delegation yesterday, admittedly as an unofficial translation, and to the French text at which I have glanced and which contains a meaning for the first paragraph to which I have referred that is different from both of the English texts—and both of the English texts
have a different meaning from each other. This is rather a confusing situation and could lead to unnecessary misunderstandings, and I am sure my colleagues will agree that it is a simple matter which should and can be cleared up quite quickly. Perhaps the Soviet delegation would get in touch with the United Nations Secretariat with a view to the publication of an official text in both French and English which has been agreed to by the Soviet representative as being an accurate reflection of the original Russian text. There may be other examples to which I have not referred. I have not had a chance to compare all three documents very carefully against each other, but I have in fact noted another discrepancy in the third paragraph of the first stage, where there is a reference to the crossing by naval vessels of the limits of their territorial waters. This is a phrase which is quite different from that in the United Nations text which we received from New York.

As regards the substance of the proposals, these we are considering with the care and attention due to them and we shall of course wish to ask the Soviet representative a number of questions with a view to obtaining clarification. I am sure, however, it would be a mistake for any of us to embark upon such an exchange in a haphazard manner. I hope therefore that our Eastern colleagues will forgive me if I do not commence this task today. I can assure them that we realize the need to explore fully the precise meaning and intention of this new document and we wish to start on this process in the days ahead. Meanwhile we shall be grateful for any further elaboration which the Soviet Union or their allies can provide for us. Our sole desire is to proceed with serious negotiations on this subject which is of such vital importance to all nations and all peoples. It is in this spirit that we are prepared to address ourselves to all the disarmament proposals before us.

Mr. ZORIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): The remarks which the United Kingdom representative, Mr. Ormsby-Gore, has made today cause me, personally, some surprise. Mr. Ormsby-Gore has just said quite a lot about the inaccuracy of the translation and, as I understood him, about certain difficulties which the United Kingdom delegation in particular is having in understanding the new proposals put forward by the Soviet Government and transmitted to all Governments of the world on 2 June. The reason why I am surprised is that I know that in the United Kingdom, as well as in all other countries, there are plenty of people with a good knowledge of Russian and of English too, of course, who could, with the Russian original before them, clear up
all obscure points if, in fact, there are any. I should like to draw your attention to the fact that the proposals were distributed on 2 June. Today is 8 June. Therefore it seems to me that what I would describe as technical matters should not stand in our way after almost a week has elapsed since these documents appeared. Furthermore, as I see it, the main purport, the contents of the document itself are already clear enough. This is not the first time that we have discussed questions of general and complete disarmament, and it is not even the first time that we have dealt with a whole plan for general and complete disarmament. We spent seven weeks dealing with this problem before our recess, and what has now been submitted by the Soviet Government is based, to some extent, on material familiar to all of us — not only to us — that is the Soviet Union — but to all other countries taking part in these discussions. It seems to me, therefore, that the remarks made today by Mr. Ormsby-Gore are somewhat artificial.

I can understand, of course, the desire and the need for detailed study of our proposals and I can only welcome the statements made yesterday by Mr. Eaton and Mr. Martino, and this morning by Mr. Ormsby-Gore, to the effect that their Governments are making a careful study of this document. But I do believe that we should not delay consideration of these new proposals. The problems to which they relate have already been discussed by us to a certain extent, but now they are presented in a new manner, taking into account the positions of the Western Powers. This circumstance in itself gives us grounds for hoping that we shall soon be able to hear the views of the Western delegations on our new proposals. The Western delegations cannot fail to see in this document a number of ideas and proposals originally put forward by themselves, and should therefore find it easier now to assess these proposals, and to make constructive comments on the entire plan of general and complete disarmament which has now been submitted for the Committee's consideration.

It goes without saying that the Soviet delegation will not refuse to give technical help to our Secretariat, and to clarify particular terms and particular provisions, if this is called for. Of course we shall do this, but it still seems to me that this is not the crux of the matter.

The main purport of the contents of the document is sufficiently clear, and it seems to me that, on the main contents, we are already entitled to expect the Western delegations to give their views on the substance of the matter, so that we can pass on more rapidly to discuss concrete proposals and specific considerations
in regard to this plan of general and complete disarmament, particularly as all
Western delegations which have spoken so far have said that they believe it is
essential to speed up the work of drafting an agreement acceptable to all of us.

Those are the few remarks of a procedural nature, so to speak, which I felt
it necessary to make in connexion with the last statement by Mr. Ormsby-Gore.
We would very much like the Western delegations to proceed more rapidly to a
consideration of the concrete contents of the proposals which they have had in
their hands for almost a week, and naturally we should like to hear their concrete
criticisms and suggestions as to how we can make some progress in drafting a
treaty on general and complete disarmament.

Should any questions or doubts arise in connexion with particular proposals of
ours or some parts of our proposal, we shall naturally provide all the
clarifications needed, as we did yesterday and as the representative of Poland has
done this morning. We are prepared to give any additional clarification which may
prove necessary. But we would urge the Committee not to waste time and to get
down to business.

Mr. Ormsby-Gore (United Kingdom): In reply to what the representative of
the Soviet Union has just said, I can only repeat that we are giving the substance
of these proposals very careful study, and we are very anxious to get down to
serious discussion of them as soon as possible. However, we do bear very much in
mind the advice that Mr. Khrushchev gave last September that important matters of
this kind do require serious study and people should not make hasty judgments when
documents of this kind are first put before them.

As regards this admittedly minor matter of the translations, of course it is
true that we do have in the United Kingdom people who are very capable of
translating documents from Russian into English, but I think it is also true to
say that in the Soviet Union there are some extremely capable men who are able to
translate Russian documents into either English or French. As I say, we were
slightly confused by the fact that we had circulated to us a United Nations
document in these terms:

"On the instructions of the Government of the USSR I have the honour
to send you herewith the 'Proposals by the Soviet Government concerning the
basic clauses of a treaty on general and complete disarmament'.

Kindly circulate this text as an official United Nations document."

(A/4374, page 1)
Now, if we look at this document, the first sentence of the first stage of the plan reads as follows:

"Nuclear weapons shall be eliminated from the arsenals of States, their manufacture shall be discontinued and all means of delivering such weapons shall be destroyed ..." (ibid., page 9)

That is the text in the official document which we received from New York. Yesterday we received an unofficial document, which I understand is more accurate. I quote the same sentence, which reads:

"All means of delivering nuclear weapons shall be removed from the armed forces of States and destroyed ..."

That is a totally different meaning. We have also seen a copy of the French translation which introduces certain other words into this very same sentence which have a different meaning.

I did not wish in any way to criticize the Soviet representative in this regard, but I did say that, as a way of avoiding quite unnecessary difficulties and quite unnecessary misunderstandings, it would be as well if we all had before us a text which the Soviet delegation itself felt was a fair reflection of the original Russian text. That is the proposal I made. I admit it is not a matter of real substance but, perhaps, if we could get it cleared up in the next day or two it would help us to a limited extent in our work.

The CHAIRMAN (Czechoslovakia): If there is no other speaker, I shall now read out the draft communique:

"The thirty-fourth meeting of the Conference of the Ten Nation Committee on Disarmament was held at the Palais des Nations, Genova on 8 June 1960, under the Chairmanship of the representative of Czechoslovakia.

"The next meeting of the Conference will take place on Thursday, 9 June 1960, at 10.30 a.m."

The communique is adopted.

The meeting rose at 11:30 a.m.