

DOCUMENT A/3470

Letter dated 20 December 1956 from the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission, addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original text : English]
[20 December 1956]

1. I have the honour to inform you that, at its 62nd meeting on 20 December 1956, the Disarmament Commission decided to take note of the third report of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission (DC/83) and to transmit it, together with the records and the relevant documents of the meetings of the Disarmament Commission, to the General Assembly and the Security Council for their consideration.
2. Accordingly, I have the honour to forward herewith the third report of the Sub-Committee, together with :
- | | | | |
|-------------------------|--|-------|---|
| DC/PV.51
to DC/PV.62 | Verbatim records of the meetings of the Disarmament Commission held in July and December 1956 | DC/90 | Australia : amendments to document DC/87 |
| DC/84 | Letter dated 19 May 1956 from the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the statement of 14 May 1956 of the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics on the disarmament problem | DC/91 | Australia, Canada, France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America : amendment to document DC/87 |
| DC/86 | Note verbale dated 27 June 1956 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General | DC/92 | Yugoslavia : draft resolution |
| DC/87 | Canada, France, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America : draft resolution | DC/95 | Note verbale dated 13 July 1956 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, addressed to the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission |
| DC/88 | Union of Soviet Socialist Republics : draft declaration of States regarding measures to strengthen universal peace and the security of peoples | DC/96 | Peru : draft resolution |
| | | DC/97 | Resolution adopted by the Disarmament Commission at its 61st meeting, on 16 July 1956 |
| | | DC/98 | Note verbale date 25 July 1956 from the Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations, addressed to the Chairman of the Disarmament Commission |
3. I would request that you be good enough to transmit them¹ to the General Assembly and to the Security Council for their consideration.

(Signed) Pierson Dixon
Chairman
Disarmament Commission

¹ All the above documents have been circulated as documents of the Disarmament Commission.

DOCUMENT A/C.1/783

United States of America : memorandum of the proposals submitted in the statement made by the representative of the United States at the 821st meeting of the First Committee on 14 January 1957

[Original text : English]
[12 January 1957]

1. The United States makes the following proposals, in broad outline. Specific details will, of course, be developed in the negotiations in the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission.

2. *First*: The United States proposes that an agreement be reached under which at an early date under effective international inspection, all future production of fissionable materials shall be used or stockpiled exclusively for non-weapons purposes under international supervision. The Members of the General Assembly and scientists throughout the world know that it is impossible to account with essential certainty, or to discover through any known scientific means of inspection, all of the fissionable materials produced in the past, or all of the existing accumulation of nuclear weapons. It is not possible to turn backward the clock of nuclear discovery and development, nor to repeal the "nuclear

age". One thing which can be done and which, for the sake of humanity, the United States proposes should be done, is to establish effective international control of future production of fissionable materials and to exchange firm commitments to use all future production exclusively for non-weapons purposes.

3. When such commitments are executed, it would then be possible to move reliably toward the reduction of existing stockpiles. When future production is controlled it should be easier than with information now available to establish, within a reasonable range of accuracy, the approximate amount of fissionable materials previously produced, so that equitable and proportionate transfers in successive increments could be made from past production over to the internationally supervised national or international non-weapons use of such material

4. The Members of the Assembly will recognize that this proposal is the logical projection and follow-through of the concept emphasized by President Eisenhower in his message to this body on 8 December 1953 [470th plenary meeting] when he proposed the "Atoms-for-Peace" programme. It is inspired by the same motives which led to the establishment of the International Atomic Energy Agency through the co-operation of nations of the world.

5. Under this programme the United States, for its part, would make generous, progressive transfers of fissionable material to peaceful uses, just as it has previously announced its intention to contribute to the International Atomic Energy Agency. It will continue to encourage nations to make their full contributions to the constructive uses of atomic energy.

6. Under such a programme, the whole future trend may be changed. The course of atomic development will move in a benign direction rather than toward some evil end.

7. *Second*: If such an arrangement to control the future production of fissionable material can be negotiated and put into effect it would then be possible, in a secure manner, to limit, and ultimately to eliminate, all nuclear test explosions. The United States proposes that this be done. Pending the negotiation of such an agreement, the United States is also willing to work out promptly methods for advance notice and registration of all nuclear tests and to provide for limited international observation of such tests. This could be an effective forerunner of far-reaching agreement affecting both the nuclear threat itself and testing, in particular.

8. *Third*: The United States proposes that States move ahead toward the realization of a first stage reduction, under adequate inspection, of conventional armaments and armed forces, using as a basis of measurement the figures 2.5 million for the USSR and the United States, and 750,000 for France and the United Kingdom, upon which the countries represented on the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission seem to agree. The United States proposes this forward step would be achieved through the progressive establishment of an effective inspection system concurrent with such reductions. An effective inspection system would require an appropriate aerial inspection component, as well as ground units. The United States accepts the principle of establishing observers at key ground locations, as generally proposed by Mr. Bulganin, Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, in addition to air inspection. The proposed first stage of reductions can be fulfilled provided there is good faith on all sides in establishing a system of inspection that can in fact verify the commitments.

9. It would seem appropriate, also, for other nations to begin to consider the relation between their own armed forces and the projected first-stage force levels, in the event the fulfilment of such first-stage reductions can be assured in the coming negotiations of the Sub-Committee.

10. The United States does not believe that deeper reductions than those agreed for the first stage can be made unless some progress is made in settlement of the major political issues now dividing the world. But the fulfilment of a first-stage reduction would certainly improve the climate for the negotiation of such political settlements.

11. *Fourth*: Scientists in many nations are now proceeding with efforts to propel objects through outer

space and to travel in the distant areas beyond the earth's atmospheric envelope. The scope of these programmes is variously indicated in the terms "earth satellites", "inter-continental missiles", "long-range unmanned weapons" and "space platforms". No one can now predict with certainty what will develop from man's excursion into this new field. But it is clear that if this advance into the unknown is to be a blessing rather than a curse the efforts of all nations in this field need to be brought within the purview of a reliable armaments control system. The United States proposes that the first step toward the objective of assuring that future developments in outer space would be devoted exclusively to peaceful and scientific purposes would be to bring the testing of such objects under international inspection and participation. In this matter, as in other matters, the United States are ready to participate in fair, balanced, reliable systems of control.

12. *Fifth*: The United States continues to emphasize the importance of providing against the possibility of great surprise attack. This is not a minor or peripheral proposal. The nature of modern weapons is such that if all nations are safeguarded against great surprise attack there is much less likelihood that a calculated major war would be initiated in the nuclear age. Likewise, such mutual assurances against great surprise attack would do much to prevent miscalculation by any nation regarding the intention of another. The greater the speed of potential attack and the more devastating the blows that could be struck, the greater is the danger that anxious apprehension, feeding on ignorance of the dispositions and intentions of others, would adversely and dangerously affect the decisions of nations.

13. It is in the interest of each nation not only that it have sure knowledge that other nations are not preparing a great surprise attack upon it, but also that these other nations should have sure knowledge that it is not planning a great surprise attack upon them. Today many nations have knowledge of the location of key centres, of the areas of strategic importance, and of the concentration of the military power of other nations. This information would be adequate for the waging of a devastating war. But unless a reliable inspection system is established with open skies, open ports, open centres, each nation will possess something less than the regular, dependable information necessary to form a stable basis for a durable peace. The United States proposes, therefore, the progressive installation of inspection systems which will provide against the possibility of great surprise attack. The United States is willing to execute, either as an opening step or a later step, the complete proposal made by President Eisenhower at the Conference of the Heads of Government of the four great Powers, held at Geneva in 1955 [DC/71, annex 17].

14. It is clear that whatever the first steps may be, a method of control, an organization of supervision, and a mechanism for regulation will be needed. The United States proposes that such an international agency for the regulation of armaments should be installed concurrently with the beginning of the programme. It can constitute a nucleus of hope at the centre of the grim implications which radiate from the destructive power of modern armament.

15. In making these new proposals the United States continues to stand back of the proposals and suggestions made by it at the Conference of the Heads of Government and in the meetings of the Sub-Committee of the Disarmament Commission since that time.