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ANNEX to
C-R(66)42
Limited Distribution

Annex (limited distribution) to the summary record
of the meeting of the Council held on Wednesday,
24th August, 1966 at 10.15 a.m.

DISARMAMENT

1. The CHAIRMAN said he was happy to welcome Ambassador Cavaletti who was to brief the Council on the proceedings of the Geneva Disarmament Conference. His report would be particularly important, since it followed on the conclusion of the work of the Eighteen Nation Committee and preceded the meeting of the United Nations General Assembly. The Council would probably meet on 9th September to discuss the items on the Agenda of the General Assembly which were of interest to the Alliance in general. He thought that Ambassador Cavaletti's report would provide the basis for a more fruitful discussion on the crucial subject of disarmament.

2. Mr. CAVALETTI (Italy) recalled that Lord CHALFONT had reported to the Council on this subject about a month previously; he would therefore confine himself to the ensuing period with special emphasis on the final meetings of the Eighteen Nation Committee which would be adjourning on the following day. He would briefly review the discussions, list the documents submitted to the conference, and conclude with a few general remarks.

3. As regards the discussions, the Western delegations had been particularly active and had co-ordinated more closely. On the proposal of Canada, they had set up a working group to study a United Kingdom document on the Kosygin guarantee. This Working Group had met three times and there was a possibility that agreement on a text would be reached before the end of the session. As for the Eastern Bloc, the smaller delegations had done no more than to echo the main themes set by the Soviet Delegation. The non-aligned delegations, for their part, had participated more actively than hitherto in the discussions. The latter had produced nothing new; as usual the lack of concrete results had been deplored and each side had striven to place the responsibility for failure on to the other side.

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4. As to the subjects discussed, general and complete disarmament, which remained the ultimate aim, had been somewhat neglected; it had only been mentioned by a few delegations at the very last meetings. Certain of the proposals for collateral measures deserved special mention. For example, the Swedish Delegation, in a move to associate cut-off and non-dissemination had suggested that the production of fissionable material should cease as from 1st July, 1967 and that in the intervening period reactors for military purposes should be closed down in successive stages. In this connection, the United States Delegation had proposed a somewhat ingenious system for avoiding recourse to over-zealous inspection: this consisted of inserting into the reactor a sort of cork containing a wire which became radioactive if the reactor was working; a special device made it possible to ensure that the cork had not been removed during the period in question.

5. The main question had been that of non-dissemination; three or four meetings ago, the United Kingdom Delegation had called attention to Soviet reticence on certain points which might have permitted further headway to be made. The Soviet Representative had replied in a manner frequently adopted by delegations of the Eastern Bloc, maintaining that the United States proposal was not in the character of a non-dissemination treaty; he had drawn a very pessimistic picture of the work of the conference without however ruling out all hope for the future. The United States Representative had replied, on the previous day, with a balanced, conciliatory and optimistic statement, stressing his country's willingness to compromise. If the Soviet Union was using intransigence as a tactic in the negotiations, then he would earnestly request it to abandon this method. The Italian Delegation had made a relatively optimistic statement and considered that the conference contributed towards a détente despite the absence of concrete results; it had submitted a document to which he would refer later.

6. A number of delegations, even from non-aligned countries, had drawn attention to the great problem of anti-missile missiles, the development of which could start an extremely grave nuclear armaments race.

7. Another point had been raised by Italy which, last year, had launched the idea of a unilateral nuclear moratorium as a subsidiary solution, the conclusion of a treaty remaining the chief aim; on the previous day, it had referred to the possibility of rewording this proposal.

8. Mr. Cavaletti then listed the documents which had been presented during the present session. The Eighteen Nation report to the United Nations had been formally approved by the two co-chairmen and would be submitted that day or the next day to the conference. It was not fundamentally different from the preceding reports and comprised a list of the documents addressed to the conference besides mentioning two basic questions: it indicated that the Eighteen Nation Committee had decided to resume its work after the United Nations debate on disarmament and expressed the hope that the discussions held would contribute to agreement in the future.

9. The non-aligned delegations had submitted two documents which had required protracted negotiations between the Eight and in which there were certain ambiguities. The first was on the subject of the nuclear test ban; it expressed concern over the non-adherence of certain countries to the Moscow Treaty and over the risks of nuclear testing. It also pointed to the fact that a test ban treaty would be tantamount to a non-dissemination treaty; the non-aligned countries therefore seemed to be willing to accept a test ban though fully conscious of the fact that access to nuclear armament would thus be closed to them. Under these circumstances their requests for guarantees within the framework of the non-dissemination treaty have little force. The document referred to the UAR proposal for a threshold tied to a moratorium; it also referred to the idea of inspection by challenge which had been supported, in particular, by Sweden; it mentioned the Mexican suggestion that scientists from the Third World should be asked to conduct the inspections, the main stumbling block to the conclusion of an agreement. The second document dealt with non-dissemination and listed some of the principles already expounded at the United Nations: there could be no evading this problem and, in this connection, a new phrase had been introduced, calling attention to the need to use clearly defined terms in order to avoid any error in interpretation; in addition, an acceptable balance must be reached between the obligations of nuclear countries and those of non-nuclear countries. The document contained a fairly long list of the conditions which must accompany a non-dissemination treaty; fissionable material cut-off, nuclear test ban, freezing and gradual liquidation of stock-piles of weapons, guarantees of security for countries not having nuclear weapons. The position of the non-aligned countries was nonetheless phrased on somewhat ambiguous terms: the document stated that these different measures could be incorporated into a treaty as part of its provisions or as a declaration of intent.

10. The Ethiopian Government had submitted a long document, the pessimistic terms of which were based on statistics: since 650 B.C., there had been over 1,600 armaments races of which only 1% had not ended in war. It suggested that, as a first step, the application of the Ethiopian proposal for the prohibition of the use of the bomb should be restricted to the denuclearised areas, of which Africa could be an example. This document had been strongly supported by India and Bulgaria.

11. The document submitted by the Italian Delegation drew attention to the fact that, while there remained a fundamental difference between the two draft non-dissemination treaties on the question of control, the gap had been narrowed down on other points, in particular the preamble, articles 1 and 2 (ban on production and on assistance in the production of nuclear weapons), articles 5 and 6 (general clauses on application and denunciation). It would therefore be possible, as a first stage, to reach agreement on a few articles which were generally acceptable, a procedure which had been supported by the Western delegations but rejected by the USSR.

12. Mr. Cavaletti ended with the following comments. The absence of concrete results was an undeniable fact bound up with the general political situation. However, the USSR had always proclaimed that it was prepared to conclude an agreement at Geneva on an acceptable basis and had done so in the face of Chinese criticism; the Soviet Delegation had abandoned all polemics towards the end of the session in order to create a more harmonious atmosphere. On the other hand, it had shown great reluctance to discuss general and complete disarmament, a subject of which it had previously made great use for propaganda purposes. All proposals had been examined by the Committee, but discussion had centred on the nuclear test ban - linked with the problem of inspection on which no progress had been made, the only new element in this field being the insistence of a number of delegations on inspection by challenge which seemed unacceptable to both the United States and the USSR - and on non-dissemination - the main obstacle to an agreement being the question of the control of nuclear weapons. The Western delegations had tried in vain to get the USSR to state whether its opposition to Atlantic nuclear co-operation also applied to simple consultation; the USSR had nevertheless indicated that it did not intend to use non-dissemination as an instrument for eliminating alliances.

13. As regards the non-aligned countries, the main difficulty lay in their request for certain compensation, which they referred to as the establishment of a balance between the obligations of the nuclear and non-nuclear countries. There was some indication that they would ultimately sign an agreement on non-dissemination but would stress the need to take account of the Kosygin proposal which greatly appealed to them; the USSR had adopted a reserved and cautious attitude on this point and had simply requested the inclusion of a relevant article in the treaty without, however, submitting a text.

14. As for the future of disarmament negotiations, despite a certain amount of discouragement due to the monotony of the discussions, there had been unanimous determination to continue with the work. The United Nations would probably invite the Eighteen Nation Committee to resume its deliberations for want of any alternative; it had been found that the convening of a world conference, which had been discussed at length at the previous session, would prove extremely difficult in practise and the subject had been dropped from this year's Agenda. Some countries might ask for changes in the composition of the Committee by the co-optation of new members, as Japan had already done; however, it would appear difficult to modify a Committee which had been sitting for so long.

15. The discussions on disarmament in the United Nations would not be easy for the Western powers since the Third World had shown greater sympathy for the Soviet attitude on the test ban, non-dissemination and Atlantic nuclear co-operation than for their own views; discussion of the Ethiopian proposal to prohibit the use of the bomb, either in its initial form or in the version restricted to the denuclearised zones would also prove difficult. However, the eight countries representing the non-aligned nations had shown a certain amount of moderation in their documents.

16. In conclusion, Mr. Cavaletti said that he would be glad to reply to any questions on points he had made in his statement.

17. The CHAIRMAN thanked Ambassador Cavaletti for his statement and for his optimistic conclusions as regards continuation of the work of the Eighteen Nation Committee after the United Nations debate on disarmament. These conclusions reflected the wishes of the members of the Alliance.

18. The UNITED STATES REPRESENTATIVE said that his Government had undertaken a revision of part of the draft treaty on non-dissemination which they had put forward, the purpose being to remedy the lack of concrete results to which Mr. Cavaletti had referred. If the current studies showed that a new text could be prepared, the Allies would be consulted.

19. Continuing he recalled that, according to Lord Chalfont, the convening of a world disarmament conference would probably be considered as an alternative to the present arrangements in view of the meagre results obtained by the Eighteen Nation Committee. Ambassador Cavaletti in his statement, however, seemed to have dismissed this possibility. He therefore wondered whether there had been any changes in the situation which could warrant a different view of future developments.

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20. Mr. CAVALETTI was unable to indicate the extent to which his views and those of Lord Chalfont differed in this respect, but remarked that the item dealing with a world disarmament conference had been withdrawn from the Agenda of the General Assembly and that the delegations which had come out most strongly in favour of such a conference had mentioned, in private conversations, that approaches to the Chinese had been fruitless and that this idea had now been shelved. In his opinion the Eighteen Nation Committee was the only possible solution at the present time.

21. The UNITED KINGDOM REPRESENTATIVE expressed his satisfaction that the United States should be making an effort to draw up a new version of a non-dissemination treaty; the meeting of disarmament experts which was to take place from 13th to 16th September, might provide an opportunity for examination of any progress made.

22. The GERMAN REPRESENTATIVE wished to have more details of the intentions of the Italian Government as regards the proposal for a unilateral moratorium previously made by Mr. Fanfani.

23. Mr. CAVALETTI recalled that the proposal in question had been submitted at the end of last year's session so as not to disrupt the progress of the discussions on the non-dissemination treaty and at a time when negotiations appeared to have come to a standstill; it had been very favourably received by the majority of non-aligned delegations on the Eighteen Nation Committee and with reserve but not negatively by the Eastern countries. It had then been examined by the First Committee of the United Nations, most of whose members had recognised the validity of the uneasiness which had led to it. This year, the Italian Delegation had mentioned this idea at the end of the session, still describing it as a subsidiary and temporary solution to be considered if the treaty negotiations ended in an impasse. It had also referred to the possibility of re-drafting its original proposal so that it specified, in particular, the duration of the moratorium, the system of control and the guarantees to be given to non-nuclear nations. However, it did not wish to press this proposal in order not to impede the negotiations for the conclusion of a treaty which remained the principal aim.

24. The GREEK REPRESENTATIVE thanked Mr. Cavaletti for his excellent report, the main conclusion of which was that the discussions would be continued. This was a favourable sign if there was any truth in the dictum: "more ink, less blood". He would be glad to have further information on item 29 of the provisional Agenda of the General Assembly which related to a world conference on an agreement to ban the bomb and for which an Eighteen Nation report seemed to be expected.

25. Mr. CVALETTI explained that two proposals for a world conference had been considered last year; one had been a long-standing proposal by Ethiopia and the other a recent proposal by Yugoslavia and the United Arab Republic. The second was to have had wider Terms of Reference and would therefore have made the first pointless. The idea of a world conference on disarmament having been abandoned during the present session, the Ethiopian proposal for a world conference to ban the bomb would have to be examined on the basis not of an Eighteen Nation report but of the document submitted by Ethiopia.

26. The CHAIRMAN again thanked Ambassador Cavaletti for his report and for the information he had given in reply to questions on the convening of a world conference and on the proposal for a unilateral moratorium in particular. With regard to the United States Representative's statement to the Council that his country was examining the possibility of drafting a new non-dissemination treaty, he recalled the suggestion which had been made by the Netherlands and by Belgium. He said he would make enquiries with a view to establishing the best possible procedure.

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