

AN INFORMATIONAL OUTLINE OF THE FIRST NINE MONTHS OF NEGOTIATIONS

by Dr. Homer A. Jack*

Introduction

The Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament convened in Geneva on March 14, 1962.

So far there have been three sessions: March 14 to June 13, July 16 to September 7, and November 26 to December 20. During the September to November recess, the test-ban subcommittee met in Geneva.

The fourth session is scheduled to reconvene in Geneva on January 15.

Background

The U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have been negotiating on disarmament since the end of World War II. The Geneva Conference on the Discontinuances of Nuclear Weapons Tests, begun on October 31, 1958, ended in failure after 353 sessions in January, 1962.

The Ten-Nation Committee on Disarmament (5 Western states, 5 Communist states) met from March to June, 1960, when the U.S.S.R. walked out, charging that the West refused to talk about general disarmament.

Not until December, 1961, did the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. agree on a new disarmament conference: an 18-nation committee meeting in Geneva beginning March 14, 1962.

Initial Hopes for Success of the Geneva Conference

1. A Joint Statement on Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations was approved by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. on September 20, 1961.
2. Eight non-aligned states were invited for the first time to participate in the disarmament conference.
3. The U.S. released its unanimous report on the Economic and Social Consequences of Disarmament, asserting that there need be no major dislocation under complete disarmament if governments make plans in advance.
4. Governmental pressures for disarmament increased:
 - a. U.S.S.R. in 1959 proposed general and complete disarmament.
 - b. Commonwealth Prime Ministers in April, 1961, urged general and complete disarmament.
 - c. President Kennedy in September, 1961, endorsed general and complete disarmament in a speech before the U.N.
 - d. U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency established in September, 1961.
 - e. U.N. General Assembly enthusiastically endorsed 18-Nation Committee on December 20, 1961.
5. Non-Governmental pressures for disarmament increased:
 - a. Increased arms race, and increased nuclear testing (and resultant fallout) caused deep alarm in many countries.
 - b. Peace and disarmament movements in many countries increased their activity and influence.
 - c. Peace research gained momentum in many university centers.

Initial Factors for Doubts about the Geneva Conference

1. Deep tensions between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. continued. The general mistrust led each country to keep ahead or get ahead in the arms race. Tensions arose over Berlin and in Southeast Asia.
2. The People's Republic of China not invited to participate in the Conference.

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Organization of the Geneva Conference

Member States

Western bloc: U.S., U.K., Italy, and Canada.

Communist bloc: U.S.S.R., Poland, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria, Rumania.

"Neutral" or non-aligned states: Mexico, Brazil, Ethiopia, Nigeria, U.A.R., Sweden, India, and Burma.

France is the 18th nation, but so far she has refused to participate.

U.N. Assistance

Meets in Palais des Nations of the U.N. in Geneva.

U.N. secretariat staffs the meetings, which cost U.N. \$141,000 per month.

Verbatim transcripts are made of each session and published in each of the official languages. The provisional verbatim reports are available to delegates on the following morning, but the final verbatim records are not available to press and NGOs until three weeks after each meeting.

All meetings are private.

Conference Co-Chairman. The chief negotiators of the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have been named Conference Co-Chairmen. They met frequently for a number of purposes. Many of the off-the-record negotiations occur under the rubric of the meeting of the co-chairmen. The actual chairmanship of each session is rotated in alphabetical order amongst the 17 heads of delegations. There is no secretary or recorder--and this circumstance has been criticized in that there is, therefore, no arbiter between the two co-chairmen or the two blocs. Official languages are English, Russian, French, and Spanish.

Three Separate Negotiations

1. Subcommittee on a Treaty for the Discontinuance of Nuclear Weapons Tests. This consists of the U.S., U.S.S.R., and U.K. and is in effect a continuation of the Geneva Conference on the Discontinuation of Nuclear Weapons Tests.
2. Plenary Session. This is negotiating a treaty on general and complete disarmament, although it also discusses issues before the test-ban subcommittee and the Committee of the Whole.
3. Committee of the Whole. This is negotiating conventions on collateral or partial disarmament measures.

Frequency of Meetings

Until the recess on December 20th, the following sessions were held: 95 plenary meetings, 9 meetings of the Committee of the Whole (none since July 19th), and 50 meetings of the test-ban subcommittee.

Progress at the Geneva Conference

1. Test-Ban Agreement

- a. Eight neutral nations in mid-April submitted a compromise proposal which emphasized national means of detection and invitational, on-site inspection.
- b. U.S. began atmospheric tests on April 25th and the U.S.S.R. began a new series of atmospheric tests on August 5th.
- c. U.S. on August 27th submitted drafts of two treaties:
 1. Prohibiting tests in outer space, the atmosphere, and under water without on-site inspection.
 2. Prohibiting tests in all environments, including underground, with internationally-supervised national control posts and obligatory on-site inspection.
- d. U.S.S.R. early in September submitted a draft treaty which would prohibit tests in outer space, the atmosphere, and under water without on-site inspection and would provide for a moratorium on underground tests until an agreement could be made including them in the treaty.

- e. Mexico proposed a cut-off of all further tests after December 31, 1961.
- f. Sweden, Burma, Mexico, and U.A.R. proposed that the International Control Commission of Scientists be set up immediately, even before a treaty is signed.
- g. Several nations have proposed that a group of scientists be convened to analyze the latest devices to detect small underground tests.

2. Disarmament Agreement

a. U.S.S.R. presented the text of a general and complete disarmament treaty on March 15th. In the first stage all means of delivering nuclear weapons would be destroyed (revised to allow a limited number of global missiles to be retained), all foreign bases would be destroyed, and armed forces would be cut by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to 1.7 million (revised to 1.9 million). In the second stage all chemical-radiological-biological weapons would be destroyed, all nuclear weapons would be destroyed, and U.S. and U.S.S.R. armies would be reduced to 1 million men each. In the third stage all military production would be ended except for use to maintain internal order, war ministries and general staffs would be abolished, and all scientific research in military fields would be discontinued. All states would agree to make armed forces available to Security Council which would command forces by a troika with a veto. The third stage would be terminated in four years (later revised to five years).

b. U.S. presented the text of a general and complete disarmament treaty on April 18th. In the first stage armaments would be reduced ten per cent a year for three years, armed forces of U.S. and U.S.S.R. would be reduced to 2.1 million men each, and peace observation corps would be established. In the second stage armaments would be reduced another 50 percent, production of chemical-radiological-biological weapons would be stopped and their stockpiles reduced 50 percent, U.S. and U.S.S.R. armies would be reduced to 1.55 million men each, fissionable materials would be inventoried and transferred to peaceful uses, military bases would be converted to peaceful uses, and the U.N. Peace Force would be established. In the third stage all arms would be eliminated except small non-nuclear arms for maintenance of internal order, all research and production of armaments would be discontinued, reduction of armies completed and military conscription would be halted, all nuclear weapons would be eliminated or converted to peaceful uses, and the U.N. Police Force would be strengthened. The third stage would be terminated no sooner from eight years from the beginning of the process and perhaps longer. Transition to the second stage would not be possible unless all militarily significant states (meaning the People's Republic of China and France) became party to the treaty.

c. Features Common to U.S. and U.S.S.R. Plans.

A three-stage plan.

In first stage nuclear weapons would not be transferred to new states, nuclear tests would be prohibited (if not already halted), nuclear weapons would be prohibited from outer space, and methods would be put into effect to reduce risks of war. International Disarmament Organization established within U.N. framework upon entry into force of treaty.

d. A working draft Preamble of a treaty has been accepted for reference to governments, with only minor variations in agreed wording by the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

e. A working draft of Part I of a treaty on treaty obligations has been debated as has a working draft of Part II, Article 4.

f. On July 24th the Conference agreed to discuss 12 topics consecutively in an attempt to bring positions of the two sides closer together on the first stage:

1-Basic obligations and time limits; 2-Nuclear weapons delivery vehicles; 3-Conventional armaments; 4-Nuclear disarmament; 5-Military bases; 6-Armed forces; 7-Military expenditures; 8-Use of outer space for peaceful purposes only; 9-Ensuring the security of states; 10-Reducing the risks of war; 11-Transition from first to second stage; and 12-Establishment of the International Disarmament Organization.

g. Both sides have modified their earlier texts.

1. Major Soviet modifications:

a. In the first and second stages, conventional armaments would be reduced by 30 and 35 percent respectively, instead of all "released conventional armaments" destroyed.

b. An additional article has been introduced into the first stage consisting of four measures to reduce the danger of outbreak of war.

c. Commitment to lengthen from four to five years the period to complete general disarmament.

d. Commitment to lengthen from 21 to 24 months the period for the completion of the first stage of the treaty.

e. Commitment to set the level of the armed forces in the first stage for both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. from 1.7 million to 1.9 million men each.

f. Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko told the U.N. on September 21st that the U.S.S.R. would modify its first-stage proposals to allow the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. to retain a minimum deterrent consisting of "a strictly limited and agreed number of global missiles, anti-missile missiles, and anti-aircraft missiles of the ground-to-air type." These proposals were later incorporated in the Soviet draft treaty.

2. Major American modifications:

a. New restrictions on the production of existing armaments and the prohibition of production of new types in Stage I.

b. Eliminating the role of the U.N. Security Council in deciding whether circumstances exist at the termination of each stage for transition to the next stage. Instead of an appeal being made to the Security Council, the Control Council of the International Disarmament Organization would approve the transition by a two-thirds vote, including the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.

3. Partial Disarmament Agreement

a. The item on the cessation of war propaganda, suggested by the U.S.S.R., was debated from April 5th to May 25th. A compromise resolution was agreed upon by all states, but then on May 29th the U.S.S.R. rejected the resolution and proposed 5 amendments. No further debate has been held on this item.

b. The Committee of the Whole agreed to debate concurrently two items beginning on July 19th:

1. Measures to prevent further dissemination of nuclear weapons. (Proposed by the U.S.S.R.)

2. Reduction of the possibility of war by accident, miscalculation, or failure of communications. (Proposed by the U.S.)

Only one meeting was held to discuss these two items and no further progress has been announced.

c. Other items on the agenda of the Committee for eventual debate include the following:

1. Establishment of nuclear free zones in various parts of the globe.

2. Conclusion of a non-aggression pact between the NATO countries and the countries of the Warsaw Treaty.

3. Cut-off of production of fissionable materials for use in weapons.

4. Measures to ensure that outer space will be used for peaceful purposes only.

The 17th General Assembly (September-December 1962)

1. Test-ban agreement. Two resolutions were approved:

- a. 37-power resolution was approved 75 to 0, with 21 abstentions (including both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. and their close military and political allies). This resolution 1-condemned all nuclear weapons tests, 2-asked that such tests cease immediately and no later than 1 January 1963, 3-endorsed the eight-nation memorandum as a basis for negotiations; 4-recommended that if, against all hope, the parties could not reach a comprehensive agreement by 1 January 1963, they should enter into an immediate agreement prohibiting tests in three environments with a limited interim agreement banning all underground tests, such an agreement to include adequate assurances for effective detection and identification of seismic events by an international scientific commission; and 5-requested those parties to pursue the matter expeditiously and report to the General Assembly not later than 10 December 1962.
- b. Two-power resolution (U.S.-U.K.) was approved 51 to 10 (Soviet bloc), with 40 abstentions (including Burma, Cyprus, Ethiopia, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Nigeria, Tanganyika, U.A.R., and Yugoslavia). This called for a comprehensive, verified treaty.

2. Disarmament agreement.

Thirty-three-power resolution was approved 84 to 0, with one abstention (France). This resolution 1-reaffirmed the need for the conclusion at the earliest date of a general and complete disarmament agreement based on the Joint Statement of Agreed Principles, 2-called upon the Eighteen-Nation Committee to resume its negotiations expeditiously, 3-recommended that urgent attention be given to various collateral measures intended to decrease tension and facilitate general and complete disarmament, and 4-requested the Committee to report periodically to the General Assembly, but not later than the second week of April, 1963.

3. Collateral disarmament agreement.

- a. An agenda item on "condemnation of propaganda favoring preventive nuclear war" was introduced by the Soviet Union, but then withdrawn to be referred to the Geneva Conference.
- b. A resolution on a denuclearized Latin America was introduced by Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia, and Chile, but postponed until the 18th General Assembly after the Latin American states could not agree among themselves to support the measure.
- c. A resolution by 21-powers requested the Secretary-General to consult further with governments to ascertain their views on convening a special conference to sign a convention on the prohibition of the use of nuclear weapons for war purposes and to report on the results of his consultations to the 18th General Assembly. This was adopted 33 to 0, with 25 abstentions (including the U.S.).

Effects of the Cuban Crisis.

1. The exchange of letters between President Kennedy and Chairman Khrushchev on October 27-28 indicated that the resulting detente would effect disarmament issues.
2. The detente undoubtedly resulted in the earlier re-election of U Thant as Secretary-General and may have lead the Soviet Union to take the war propaganda item off the General Assembly agenda.
3. Until the Geneva Conference adjourned on December 20th, there was no visible effect of the Cuban crisis on that Conference.
4. Because the whole question of inspection including verification was raised by the Cuban crisis, the world, including the non-aligned states, may have a better appreciation of the necessity of some verification in disarmament agreements.
5. The General Assembly suggested more emphasis on partial, collateral disarmament measures, both because these were even more urgent and perhaps more obtainable.

The Post-Assembly Session in Geneva (Nov. 26 to Dec. 20).

Almost the entire attention of the Conference during November-December was paid to a test-ban treaty. On December 7th when the Conference had to draw up its report to the General Assembly, it could only report that "it has not proved possible to reach agreement on the cessation of nuclear weapon tests in the brief period of two weeks since the resumption of negotiations." The co-chairmen desired to release their letter to the General Assembly with an annex containing the verbatim reports of the seven meetings of the plenary and three meetings of the test-ban subcommittee. However, all eight independent member states insisted that summaries of their proposals on reaching a test-ban agreement be separated from the bulky verbatim annex. Finally, it was agreed that there would be a second annex transmitted to the General Assembly containing summaries of the positions of each of the eight states.

Brazil, Sweden, and the U.A.R. suggested that a treaty banning tests in three environments could take effect at once. This would be accompanied by a controlled moratorium on underground tests. Brazil and Sweden wanted a time limit to the moratorium. All eight states subscribed to the immediate establishment of an interim international scientific commission. Four nations plus Sweden endorsed the latter's proposal that the commission be appointed by some international scientific societies and not directly by governments. India, Nigeria, and the U.A.R. urged the establishment of such a commission, but did not specify its method of composition. The commission would police the moratorium on underground tests and gather and summarize scientific data on the permanent detection and identification of underground tests. The moratorium would be policed on the basis of the eight-power memorandum and any refusal of a state to invite on-site inspection would be considered a breach of the treaty and all parties would be free to abrogate the treaty. Other separate suggestions include one by Brazil for the determination of a threshold for underground tests, above which tests would be included in the permanent agreement and one by Ethiopia which would register the interim arrangement as a treaty with the U.N.

At the tenth Pugwash Conference in London in September, 1962, three U.S. and three Soviet scientists suggested that automated monitoring stations (black boxes) might be useful to lessen the amount of manned inspection necessary for a test-ban treaty. The Soviet Union journalistically supported this proposal and, in middle December, the Soviet delegate at Geneva proposed that the Soviet Union accept three black boxes in its territory with international personnel initially to service these stations. The U.S. responded that some on-site verification would still be necessary and that hundreds of black boxes would be needed even with some on-site verification. Thus a deadlock developed in this area also.

Achievements of the Geneva Conference

Positive

1. Neutral states have given leadership on the test-ban issue and also have raised searching questions about general disarmament.
2. The test-ban issue and general disarmament have been explored in depth.
3. Both the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. have made some compromises toward each other's positions.

Negative

1. The distance between the U.S. and the U.S.S.R. disarmament plans is still great, not only over some types of inspection, but also over phasing and balancing. Both have submitted initial plans which each alleges strengthen the other's military position at the expense of its own security.
2. Worldwide press coverage of the Conference has been inadequate, resulting in the public not following the Conference closely and not applying sufficient pressure on their governments to make compromises.

Does Either Side Really Want Progress at Geneva?

Reasons why the U.S. may want a test-ban treaty more than a disarmament treaty:

1. U.S. Administration hesitates to disarm in a world of tension.
2. U.S. Senate, which must ratify any treaty, is not eager about a test-ban treaty and is at present even more sceptical about general disarmament.
3. Military-industrial-scientific complex is resisting any great lessening of the arms race or any cut in military appropriations.

Reasons why the U.S.S.R. may want a disarmament treaty more than a test-ban treaty:

1. U.S.S.R. is afraid of a U.S. first-strike or preventive (preemptive) war.
2. U.S.S.R. is eager to stop spending on military race so it can give more consumer goods to its people. She cannot afford both guns and butter as apparently the U.S. economy at present can do.
3. U.S.S.R. is afraid that if a test-ban treaty were signed, the U.S. would be slow in agreeing to a disarmament treaty.
4. U.S.S.R. is obsessed with secrecy, especially in the area of a test-ban agreement, but she might open her country more under general disarmament.

What U.S. Citizens Can Do To Encourage Success at Geneva

1. Inform yourself of the Geneva negotiations. Disarmament is now a complex matter.
2. Stimulate all kinds of groups in your community to discuss disarmament and the Geneva Conference.
3. Sponsor a model Geneva disarmament conference in your community--as adult and college groups have put on model U.N. conferences in the past.
4. Request your local newspaper to print press association stories of the Geneva Conference, available to them daily while the Conference is in session.
5. Write to the President and to the Congress supporting the Geneva Conference in general and specific proposals as they are being debated.
6. Urge your senators to ratify any treaty that is made in Geneva.
7. Keep in touch with National SANE which, through SANE WORLD and special memoranda, is continuously interpreting the Geneva Conference.

Reading List and Documents

- *Joint Statement on Agreed Principles for Disarmament Negotiations. September 20, 1961. SANE/USA. October 1961. Reprinted. 2 pp. SANE. 5¢.
- Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament Under Strict International Control. March 15, 1962. Soviet proposal. Available from U.S.S.R. Embassy, Washington, D. C.
- *Outline of Basic Provisions of a Treaty on General and Complete Disarmament in a Peaceful World. April 18, 1962. U.S. proposal. Washington: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency. 35 pp. 35¢. Available in limited numbers through SANE.
- Comparison of U.S. and U.S.S.R. Plans. SANE WORLD. May 15, 1962. Reprinted. 3 pp. SANE. 5¢.
- U.S. and U.S.S.R. Modifications to Original Texts. 4 pp. SANE. 10¢.
- Eight-Power Compromise Proposal for a Test-Ban Treaty. 2 pp. SANE. 5¢. April 1962.
- *Breaking the Impasse at Geneva. A statement by a group of Americans. 6 pp. SANE. 10¢.
- The First Three Months of the Geneva Disarmament Conference, by Homer A. Jack. 5 pp. SANE. 25¢.
- The Geneva Disarmament Conference Begins its Second Series of Meetings: A Report from Geneva, by Homer A. Jack. 8 pp. SANE. 25¢.
- Library of Books presented to Member States of Geneva Conference. 2 pp. SANE. 5¢.
- *The Geneva Disarmament Conference: An Informational Outline of the First Nine Months of Negotiations, by Homer A. Jack. 8 pp. 1963. 10¢.
- *Disarmament at the 17th U.N. General Assembly, by Homer A. Jack. 16 pp. 1963. 25¢.
- Economic and Social Consequences of Disarmament. 66 pp. United Nations. 75¢. Available in limited quantities through SANE.
- Interim Progress Report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. A report to the U.N. Disarmament Commission. May 31, 1962. 4 pp. 11 annexes. U.N. Disarmament Commission. (Mimeographed).
- Second Interim Progress Report of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. A report to the U.N. Disarmament Commission and the 17th U.N. General Assembly. 6 pp. 16 annexes. U.N. General Assembly. (Mimeographed).
- Letter dated 7 December 1962 from the Co-Chairmen of the Conference Addressed to the President of the General Assembly. 2 pp. 2 annexes. U.N. General Assembly. (Mimeographed).
- Verbatim reports of plenary session, test-ban subcommittee, and Committee of the Whole, and miscellaneous documents. Geneva: Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament. (Mimeographed).
- Disarmament Packet. Contains all documents above with asterisk(*) and other items. SANE. \$1.00 postpaid.

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