

Convinced that the conclusion of a treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof would constitute a step towards the exclusion of the sea-bed, the ocean floor and the subsoil thereof from the arms race,

1. *Welcomes* the submission to the General Assembly at its present session of the draft Treaty on the Prohibition of the Emplacement of Nuclear Weapons and Other Weapons of Mass Destruction on the Sea-Bed and the Ocean Floor and in the Subsoil Thereof, annexed to the report of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, and the various proposals and suggestions made in regard to the draft Treaty;

2. *Calls upon* the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to take into account all the proposals and suggestions that have been made at the present session of the General Assembly and to continue its work on this subject so that the text of a draft treaty can be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration.

*1836th plenary meeting,
16 December 1969.*

2603 (XXIV). Question of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons

A

The General Assembly,

Considering that chemical and biological methods of warfare have always been viewed with horror and been justly condemned by the international community,

Considering that these methods of warfare are inherently reprehensible because their effects are often uncontrollable and unpredictable and may be injurious without distinction to combatants and non-combatants, and because any use of such methods would entail a serious risk of escalation,

Recalling that successive international instruments have prohibited or sought to prevent the use of such methods of warfare,

Noting specifically in this regard that:

(a) The majority of States then in existence adhered to the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925,²⁵

(b) Since then, further States have become parties to that Protocol,

(c) Still other States have declared that they will abide by its principles and objectives,

(d) These principles and objectives have commanded broad respect in the practice of States,

(e) The General Assembly, without any dissenting vote, has called for the strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives of the Geneva Protocol,²⁶

Recognizing therefore, in the light of all the above circumstances, that the Geneva Protocol embodies the generally recognized rules of international law prohibiting the use in international armed conflicts of all biological and chemical methods of warfare, regardless of any technical developments,

Mindful of the report of the Secretary-General, prepared with the assistance of the Group of Consultant

²⁵ League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV (1929), No. 2138.

²⁶ See resolution 2162 B (XXI) of 5 December 1966, para. 1.

Experts appointed by him under General Assembly resolution 2454 A (XXIII) of 20 December 1968, and entitled *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*,²⁷

Considering that this report and the foreword to it by the Secretary-General add further urgency for an affirmation of these rules and for dispelling, for the future, any uncertainty as to their scope and, by such affirmation, to assure the effectiveness of the rules and to enable all States to demonstrate their determination to comply with them,

Declares as contrary to the generally recognized rules of international law, as embodied in the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925, the use in international armed conflicts of:

(a) Any chemical agents of warfare—chemical substances, whether gaseous, liquid or solid—which might be employed because of their direct toxic effects on man, animals or plants;

(b) Any biological agents of warfare—living organisms, whatever their nature, or infective material derived from them—which are intended to cause disease or death in man, animals or plants, and which depend for their effects on their ability to multiply in the person, animal or plant attacked.

*1836th plenary meeting,
16 December 1969.*

B

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 2454 A (XXIII) of 20 December 1968,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General entitled *Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and the Effects of Their Possible Use*,²⁷

Noting the conclusions of the report of the Secretary-General and the recommendations contained in the foreword to the report,

Noting also the discussion of the report of the Secretary-General at the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament and during the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly,

Mindful of the conclusion of the report that the prospects for general and complete disarmament under effective international control and hence for peace throughout the world would brighten significantly if the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) agents intended for purposes of war were to end and if they were eliminated from all military arsenals,

Recognizing the importance of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925,²⁸

Conscious of the need to maintain inviolate the Geneva Protocol and to ensure its universal applicability,

Emphasizing the urgency of the need for achieving the earliest elimination of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons,

²⁷ United Nations publication, Sales No.: E.69.I.24.

²⁸ League of Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. XCIV (1929), No. 2138.

I

1. *Reaffirms* its resolution 2162 B (XXI) of 5 December 1966 and calls anew for strict observance by all States of the principles and objectives of the Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, signed at Geneva on 17 June 1925;

2. *Invites* all States which have not yet done so to accede to or ratify the Geneva Protocol in the course of 1970 in commemoration of the forty-fifth anniversary of its signing and the twenty-fifth anniversary of the United Nations;

II

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Secretary-General as an authoritative statement on chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and the effects of their possible use, and expresses its appreciation to the Secretary-General and to the consultant experts who assisted him;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to publicize the report in as many languages as is considered desirable and practicable, making use of the facilities of the United Nations Office of Public Information;

3. *Recommends* to all Governments the wide distribution of the report so as to acquaint public opinion with its contents, and invites the specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and national and international non-governmental organizations to use their facilities to make the report widely known;

4. *Recommends* the report of the Secretary-General to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament as a basis for its further consideration of the elimination of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons;

III

1. *Takes note* of the draft Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production and Stockpiling of Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons and on the Destruction of such Weapons submitted to the General Assembly by the delegations of Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics²⁹ and of the draft Convention for the Prohibition of Biological Methods of Warfare submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament by the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland,³⁰ as well as other proposals;

2. *Requests* the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to give urgent consideration to reaching agreement on the prohibitions and other measures referred to in the draft conventions mentioned in the preceding paragraph and other relevant proposals;

3. *Requests* the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to submit a report on progress on all aspects of the problem of the elimination of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons to the General Assembly at its twenty-fifth session;

²⁹ See *Official Records of the General Assembly, Twenty-fourth Session, Annexes*, agenda items 29, 30, 31 and 104, document A/7655.

³⁰ See *Official Records of the Disarmament Commission, Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232, annex C, section 20.

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament all documents and records of the First Committee relating to questions connected with the problem of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons.

*1836th plenary meeting,
16 December 1969.*

2604 (XXIV). Urgent need for suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear tests

A

The General Assembly,

Recognizing the urgent need for the suspension of nuclear and thermonuclear weapon tests,

Recalling its resolutions 2163 (XXI) of 5 December 1966, 2343 (XXII) of 19 December 1967 and 2455 (XXIII) of 20 December 1968,

Recalling further that the above-mentioned resolutions expressed the hope that States would contribute to an effective international exchange of seismic data,

Having considered the report of 3 November 1969 submitted by the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament,³¹ and in particular those portions of it concerned with facilitating the achievement of a comprehensive test ban through the international exchange of seismic data, as well as other relevant proposals made in the Conference,

Noting the joint memoranda on a comprehensive test ban treaty submitted on 15 September 1965,³² 17 August 1966³³ and 26 August 1968³⁴ by Brazil, Burma, Ethiopia, India, Mexico, Nigeria, Sweden and the United Arab Republic, which have been annexed to reports of the Conference of the Eighteen-Nation Committee on Disarmament, and all of which have suggested that the improvement of the international exchange of seismic data would facilitate the solution of the problem of verifying a comprehensive test ban,

Having studied the proposal submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament concerning the provision of information by Governments in connexion with the creation of a world-wide exchange of seismological data to facilitate the achievement of a comprehensive test ban,³⁵

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to transmit to the Governments of all States Members of the United Nations or members of any of the specialized agencies or of the International Atomic Energy Agency, or parties to the Statute of the International Court of Justice, the request for information annexed to the present resolution;

2. *Invites* those Governments to co-operate with the Secretary-General in providing the information requested as soon as possible but not later than 1 May 1970;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to circulate forthwith, upon receipt, all responses to those Governments mentioned in paragraph 1 above and to mem-

³¹ *Ibid.*, document DC/232.

³² *Ibid.*, *Supplement for January to December 1965*, document DC/227, annex 1, section F.

³³ *Ibid.*, *Supplement for 1966*, document DC/228, annex 1, section O.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, *Supplement for 1967 and 1968*, document DC/231, annex I, section 10.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, *Supplement for 1969*, document DC/232, annex C, section 15.