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28 April 60

Statement by D.H. to the Conference
of the Ten-Nation Committee on Disar-
mament in Geneva.

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STATEMENT BY UN SECRETARY-GENERAL DAG HAMMARSKJOLD
TO THE CONFERENCE OF THE TEN-NATION COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT,
Geneva, 28 April 1960

I am happy that other duties have brought me to Geneva in time for me to attend personally a meeting of the Conference of Ten on Disarmament before the end of its first period of work. Through my representatives at the Conference and through the study of the records I have been able to follow closely the development of your discussions. This has been essential for me in view of the fact that, as the four powers which initiated these discussions themselves said in their communication to the United Nations, this Organization carries the primary responsibility for disarmament.

Indeed, its primary responsibility for disarmament is only one reason why the Organization has a special interest in and a special importance for your discussions. The other one is its specific responsibilities as laid down in the Charter for the pacific settlement of disputes and for action with respect to threats to the peace, breaches of the peace and acts of aggression. Obviously, these three aspects of the policy for the maintenance of peace -- that is disarmament, pacific settlement of disputes and action in view of breaches of peace -- are inseparable and integrated elements of the policies of member governments within the framework of and through the United Nations. Just as efforts toward preservation of peace through negotiation and similar means and through action, if necessary, in case of a breach of peace need the support of action in the field of disarmament, so disarmament must be integrated with effective machinery in the other two respects. These policies cannot be divided and responsibility in one of the fields, therefore, necessitates corresponding responsibility in the other fields.

In a search for an agreement on disarmament in which complete disarmament is approached through concrete measures, of which each one is consistently seen and considered as an integral part of the effort to achieve such disarmament, you are bound to reach a point where you will have to study the United Nations Organization

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(Note: The statement was released following a closed meeting of the Conference in Geneva.)

with a view to determining how its machinery can best be used or developed in support of disarmament. Your Conference, however, is not an organ of the United Nations, and the consideration of the functioning of the Organization, obviously, primarily belongs to the Organization itself and to all its member governments alike. I would, thus, assume that the study that at some stage will have to be made of those matters which are covered by Chapter VII of the Charter and which would become of crucial significance in case of progressive or complete disarmament, will be made by the United Nations with a view to such possible decisions by the Organization as may be indicated in order to give it the necessary efficiency.

Likewise, a question will arise for you how to fit the control activities which will be called for into the organizational framework of the United Nations. The technical nature of this question is bound to make it a subject of your study, but the relationship which links together the various elements of a policy for the preservation of peace to which I have already referred, and the specific experience and knowledge of the administrative and political problems arising for and within the United Nations, renders it necessary for the Organization to provide you in this connection with its full assistance, if we are to arrive at the best possible result. It would, in my view, be entirely premature at this stage to discuss this question. Be it enough to say that -- as shown by the 15 years of its history -- the Organization has such possibilities of development and such flexibility that I do not foresee any difficulties in fitting an activity of this type into the United Nations framework in a way which would fully safeguard all legitimate interests involved.

The United Nations, like other international organizations, of course reflects only the political realities of the moment. Important though organizational arrangements are, they are subordinated in the sense that they do not change realities; what at a given time politically is attainable on one organizational basis, is equally attainable on another one. Essential difficulties encountered within the United Nations are based on realities and not on the specific constitution of the Organization. In the work for achieving and maintaining disarmament they would not be experienced with less force, were an attempt to be made to start, so to say, all over again; time will be gained and better results achieved if our efforts are developed with respect

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for what has been achieved so far and for the necessity of organic adaptation of these achievements to new needs within the framework of new possibilities.

These brief observations are natural for me as Secretary-General of the United Nations as an attempt to indicate the width and range of the integration of your specific problems with those of 82 member governments grappling through the United Nations, as their main instrumentality, with the building of an organized world community based on law in which peace is preserved through controlled disarmament, the full use of peaceful means for the settlement of disputes and efficient arrangements permitting action in case of a breach of peace.

In ending I wish to express again the sincere good wishes with which your work is followed by all the member nations of the United Nations and by the peoples of the world. You have back of you a period of intense work. Is it too much to hope that when you resume your discussions after the recess, you will be able to do so encouraged by an improvement in the international situation and with new possibilities for agreement on the first steps in the direction of disarmament?

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