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S-0885-0001-44-00001

Expanded Number **S-0885-0001-44-00001**

Title **Items-in-Conference of Inter-Parliamentary Union, New Delhi, 29
October 1969**

Date Created **29/10/1969**

Record Type **Archival Item**

Container **S-0885-0001: Operational Files of the Secretary-General: U Thant: Speeches, Messages,
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**MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
TO THE 57TH CONFERENCE OF THE
INTER-PARLIAMENTARY UNION**

I am very happy to be able to send a brief message, through my Chef de Cabinet, Mr. C.V. Narasimhan, who is also Deputy Administrator of UNDP, to the 57th Conference of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to be held in New Delhi.

Many of the items on your Agenda are of great importance to the United Nations. For example, I observe that you will be discussing "The Role and Responsibilities of Medium and Small Powers in the Maintenance of International Peace". I would like on this occasion to pay tribute to the outstanding contribution that the medium and small powers have made to the peacekeeping activities of the United Nations. However, as I observed recently at a press conference, when it comes to major international issues, which have been the subject of consideration by principal organs such as the Security Council, the most important element in the implementation of the resolutions that may result from such consideration is the unanimity of the big powers, a spirit of co-operation among the big powers, and their resoluteness in seeing that the resolutions are

implemented. I feel very strongly that the effectiveness of the Security Council can be increased only by greater co-operation among the permanent members of the Security Council.

I am very glad that you will be discussing "Social Progress as a Factor and Condition of Economic Development". For too long the importance of social development as part of the totality of development in a country has been somewhat neglected. Most recently there has been a growing awareness of the importance of social development. For example, at its recent meeting the Economic and Social Council reaffirmed its earlier decision to take into account, in formulating the goals and programmes of the Second United Nations Development Decade, the necessity for the progressive integration of social and economic goals and programmes in the context of the strategy of the Decade.

I am glad that you will also be discussing "Measures for the Prohibition of the Production and use of Chemical and Bacteriological (Biological) Weapons". I drew attention even more than a year ago to the importance of this subject and the General Assembly adopted a resolution 2454 A (XXIII) on 20 December 1968 requesting me to prepare a report on the subject. This report, which was prepared earlier this year with the assistance of consultant experts and contained some pretty unanimous conclusions on the subject, has been submitted to the

CCD meeting in Geneva, to the Security Council and to the General Assembly. As I mentioned in my recent Introduction to the Annual Report "The report has already been the subject of considerable discussion, and a number of proposals have been made in the Eighteen-Nation Committee for dealing further with the threat posed by chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, including an appeal to all States to sign and ratify 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, and a draft convention to prevent the development, production and stockpiling of biological weapons. I am confident that the report and the various proposals on this important subject will lead to specific decisions at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly that will facilitate political and legal action to eliminate these inhuman and barbarous weapons of war."

So far as measures for the prohibition of production and use of nuclear and thermomuclear weapons are concerned, which is a related item on your agenda, I feel that we have not made much progress during recent years. On the other hand the world seems poised on the verge of a massive new escalation in the field of nuclear weaponry.

Permit me to restate what I have already said on this subject in my recent Introduction to the Annual Report:

"Plans being discussed at present for anti-missile defensive systems and for missiles with multiple warheads generate a renewed sense of fear, insecurity and frustration. The product of the awful alphabet and arithmetic of ABMS (anti-ballistic missiles) and MIRVs (multiple independently-targetable re-entry vehicles) can only be the acceleration of what has been described as the "mad momentum" of the nuclear arms race. The development of such new weapons would greatly magnify and complicate the problems of verification and control of any measures to halt the nuclear arms race. The notion of "superiority" in such a race is an illusion, as that notion can only lead to an endless competition in which each side steps up its nuclear capabilities in an effort to match, or exceed, the other side until the race ends in unmitigated disaster for all. As the spiral of the nuclear arms race goes up, the spiral of security goes down.

"On the other hand the opportunities, as well as the need, for halting the nuclear arms race have never been greater than they are at the present time. There now exists a rough balance between the Soviet Union and the United States where each is capable of virtually destroying the other and neither is capable, if nuclear war should ever break out, of preventing or escaping the holocaust. The present situation of relative stability could disappear, even if only for a temporary period, if new generations of nuclear weapon systems were developed and deployed. This upsetting of the balance, or

"destablization", would create unknown temptations and pressures and greatly increase the danger of possible miscalculation. Hence there may never be a better time to put a stop to the nuclear arms race, nor a more favourable opportunity to take advantage of the possibilities."

I am also very happy indeed that the role of parliamentarians in the protection of the human environment and conservation of natural resources for future generations will be the subject of discussion. This is a most important problem, which has probably assumed more serious dimensions in the technologically advanced countries but is of equal interest to the developed countries as well. The United Nations and its relevant organs are giving serious consideration to this problem and they have decided to consider this question in great detail at a world conference on the problems of the human environment which will be convened in 1972 in Stockholm. However, it is clear to me that in addition to action that might be taken at the governmental level, it is essential to canvas the support of parliamentarians and other leaders of thought in the mobilisation of public opinion, without which governmental action in this field could not hope to succeed.

I know that you have a full agenda comprising many other interesting items. I am grateful to you for giving me this opportunity to share with you my thoughts on some of these items. Let me conclude by expressing the hope that you will have a most fruitful session. I wish you every success in your deliberations.