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**Extract from Memo. for Govt. dated 13/11/1964,
19th Session of U.N. General Assembly: 'III.
Non-Dissemination of Nuclear Weapons'**

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Summary:

This memorandum for Cabinet succinctly summarizes Aiken's approach after 1961. He supported the negotiations of the Eighteen Nation Disarmament Committee (ENDC) but recognized and held to the position that Resolution 1665 (XIV) provided the basic roadmap for an eventual agreement of a global non-proliferation treaty. More specifically, he maintained that 1665 provided the basis by which NATO nuclear sharing could be accommodated. Aiken was skeptical of Soviet contentions that a non-proliferation pact would prevent the proposed Multilateral Force (MLF). The Irish position was that it would not engage in the detailed ENDC discussions as it was for that body and the nuclear powers to broker the detailed provisions for an NPT owing to their knowledge of, and interests in, nuclear energy.

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III Non-dissemination of nuclear weapons

1. The Minister for External Affairs has drawn the attention of the General Assembly each year since its 13th session in 1958, to the dangers to world peace involved in the spread of nuclear weapons and to the urgent need for an international agreement, as a separate disarmament measure, to prevent the spread of such weapons. The Minister had the question inscribed as a separate item on the Assembly's agenda from the 14th to the 16th sessions inclusive. Resolutions sponsored by Ireland at each of these three sessions attracted increasing support and at the 16th session the strongest Irish resolution thus far introduced was unanimously adopted by the Assembly. The text of the resolution is annexed to this note.
2. The question was discussed at the Conference of the 18-Nation Disarmament Committee at Geneva in 1962 and 1963 but no real progress was made on the conclusion of the international agreement called for in Irish Resolution No. 1665 (XVI) unanimously adopted by the General Assembly, whereas with continuing technical and political development, the odds on the rise of new nuclear powers, including the advent of China as the 5th nuclear power, have increased. In his speech in the general debate at the 18th session of the General Assembly, the Minister for External Affairs, while welcoming the conclusion of the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty stated that, though valuable in itself, the Treaty presents no insurmountable barrier to the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons. The Minister appealed for immediate steps inside and outside the Geneva Conference, to promote the agreement required to restrict the spread of nuclear weapons and indicated that, now that the Test Ban Treaty had been concluded, the Geneva Conference, which did so much to prepare the ground for that agreement, would crown its valuable work by giving special priority to the problem of preventing any wider dissemination of nuclear weapons. In the disarmament debate, the Communist countries argued that the U.S. by

promoting the setting up of a NATO nuclear multilateral force in which the Federal Republic of Germany would participate, was intent on proliferating the spread of nuclear weapons by being prepared to allow ultimate control of nuclear weapons to get into West German hands.

3. This year an important series of debates was held in the 18-Nation Committee on the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons. The Irish Resolution No. 1665 (XVI) was taken as the point of departure for debates. A non-dissemination agreement, it was argued, would be a logical step to follow the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty and one of intrinsically great importance. The U.S. and British Governments took the position that if the M.L.F. were set up they were satisfied that it could be done under control arrangements that would be consistent with the Irish Resolution. The reaffirmation of the Irish Resolution, therefore, by a formal international agreement would ensure for the U.S.S.R. that its provisions were binding on the M.L.F. The U.S.S.R. argued, however, that a non-dissemination agreement and the M.L.F. were inconsistent. If the U.S.S.R. wanted an assurance on this point, their best safeguard would be a formal non-dissemination agreement. Meanwhile it seems that their primary object was not to reach an understanding on what constitutes "dissemination" but to raise obstacles to the M.L.F. concept in the hope that it would be dropped.

4. In these debates India argued strongly for a non-dissemination agreement on the basis of the Swedish and Irish Resolutions Nos. 1664 and 1665 respectively adopted by the General Assembly at its 16th session. The reference to the Swedish resolution, based on the concept of a "non-nuclear club", raises a most difficult point as that resolution raised the question of the conditions under which, inter alia, countries not possessing nuclear weapons might refuse to receive such weapons on their territories on behalf of any other country, whereas the Irish

resolution was carefully restricted to the transference or acceptance of control only to or by non-nuclear States and did not, therefore, imply any interference on the existing alliance arrangements.

5. The Members of the Organisation of African Unity at their meeting in Cairo on 19th July, 1964, on the proposal of the UAR adopted a Declaration calling for an international conference to conclude a non-dissemination agreement. It is felt, however, that rather than call an international conference for the purpose, it would be better to leave the initiative to the nuclear powers and the 18-Nation Committee at Geneva. Another relevant development has been the view expressed by Romanian and Polish representatives that an interpretation of the Irish Resolution is called for to determine whether the M.L.F. concept would be compatible with its terms.

6. In the course of the recent British election campaign, the then Prime Minister, Sir Alec Douglas Home, announced that the U.S. and Britain had drafted the lines of a treaty to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons, a statement which was confirmed by the U.S. Department of State and that the draft was based on the Irish Resolution. This statement was then used as a basis for attack on President Johnson by Senator Goldwater who, misunderstanding what the British Prime Minister had said, charged that China was a party to the Treaty and that this would "finally give Red China the status, security and recognition for which she has slaughtered millions".

7. The next development was a proposal by India early in October to inscribe on the agenda of the 19th session of the General Assembly the item "non-proliferation of nuclear weapons". India requested Ireland, Sweden and other countries to join in inscription but we, as well as the other countries approached, declined to do so on the grounds that the text of the draft resolution which India had in mind had not been disclosed.

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subsequently India inscribed the item on the Assembly's agenda without co-sponsorship. While India has been actively promoting the conclusion of a non-dissemination agreement at the 18-Nation Committee this year, it is thought, nevertheless, that their inscription of the item on the Assembly's agenda, was prompted by an imminence of the Chinese nuclear test which occurred on 16th October, 1964.

8. The Minister for External Affairs does not wish to be drawn into a debate at the General Assembly on the compatibility of the M.L.F. project with the terms of the Irish Resolution but he considers that the terms of his resolution are quite clear and that arrangements between allies should not be such as would involve a breach of the resolution. The M.L.F. project is still a hypothetical proposition which has not been implemented and the United States position, with control of nuclear weapons vested by law in their President, has to be accepted until abrogated. The Minister is of the view that the best procedure for all States to follow in regard to the non-dissemination of nuclear weapons is to press for an international agreement at once which would bind both the nuclear and the non-nuclear powers, on the lines of the Irish Resolution of 4th December, 1961, rather than to delay action now because of a future possible contingency.

9. The Indian inscription of the item "non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" on the agenda of the 19th session of the General Assembly, the recent Chinese nuclear test and moves towards a decision on the M.L.F. project by the end of the year, indicate that there will be an important debate on this question at the forthcoming session of the General Assembly. The Minister for External Affairs will pursue the policy outlined in paragraph 8 above in the debates at the General Assembly and will, as before, press strongly for the conclusion of the international agreement called for in Irish Resolution 1665 (XVI) to prevent the wider dissemination of nuclear weapons.