When the German Government rejected the draft Convention at the last session of the Preparatory Disarmament Commission, they made it clear that, at the Conference itself, they would do their utmost, in co-operation with the other countries, to help finding the right way to disarmament. It is in this spirit that the German delegation submit the following proposals to the Conference.

In drafting these proposals the German delegation started from the fact that Germany and three other countries have already carried through disarmament for some years past under a regulation which was set up by the same Powers that drafted Article 8 of the Covenant and declared at the same time that the disarmament of the above-mentioned four countries was to be the first step towards general disarmament as provided for in the Covenant. Germany therefore considers her own disarmament as indicative of the course which the disarmament of all Members of the League will have to follow, having regard to the fundamental equality of rights of all Members of the League which excludes all discrimination in regard to any of them. The principles governing the general reduction and limitation of armaments, which the Conference is called upon to lay down, must be equally applicable to all Members of the League and to all countries associating themselves with the League’s action for disarmament.

The defects and omissions of the draft Convention, which have made it unacceptable to the German Government, can be seen from the reservations incorporated in the report of the Preparatory Commission. A few examples will be sufficient.

One of the chief defects of the draft Convention is the insufficient limitation of land material. A mere reduction of expenditure, as provided for in the draft, does neither affect the existing material in service or on stock, nor does it provide a reliable basis for the future limitation of fresh material. The draft Convention enables the countries generally to keep, and even to increase, their heavy offensive armaments. The air armament as such, in particular, is allowed to subsist in the draft. By exempting from reduction and limitation the main part of reserve aircraft and reserve airplane engines the draft even creates the possibility of a competition between the signatory States in the development of these instruments of aggression. As to personnel, the draft Convention allows the various systems of recruitment to be maintained, but in the case of conscript armies it does not include in its provisions the trained reserves on which the strength of such armies rests. Finally, by departing in almost every decisive point from the rules of disarmament imposed upon Germany at the end of the war, while expressly maintaining these same rules for Germany in its general provisions, the draft Convention makes it impossible to reach an acceptable solution of the problem of disarmament.

The following proposals, which are not exhaustive but reproduce the opinion of the German Government in its general outline, are intended to carry through an effective reduction and limitation of armaments extending to all important factors of armaments. They include, in particular, measures of fundamental importance in regard to the prevention of an aggression. The proposals are based upon the principle that there can be only one system of disarmament in future which must be equally applicable to all countries; such a system would produce an equitable and effective solution of the problem of disarmament if armament figures to be incorporated in it for all countries were fixed at the lowest possible level. These proposals are furthermore taking into account the necessity to safeguard the national safety of nations as provided for in Article 8 of the Covenant.
In submitting these proposals to the Conference, the German delegation wish to make it clear that the German Government cannot accept a Convention unless its provisions are equally applicable to Germany and to other signatory countries.

I. LAND FORCES.

A. Personnel.

1. The personnel of the land forces shall generally be recruited only by means of voluntary enlistment.

2. Should this solution prove to be unacceptable to the Conference, and should, in consequence, the choice of their military system be left to the decision of the countries themselves, it will be necessary, in the case of conscript armies, to make adequate allowance for trained reserves, which are known to constitute the main part of armies in case of war and to include these trained reserves in the general reduction.

3. Due regard must be had in any case to the special circumstances of States having a militia system.

4. The number of officers should be fixed at the lowest possible figure for all countries alike in terms of a percentage of the total effective strength of the armies, and that figure must not be exceeded.

5. Police forces, gendarmerie and similar organisations must be limited and subjected to provisions excluding their utilisation for military purposes.

B. Material.

6. It shall be generally and absolutely forbidden to maintain and utilise the following categories of arms:

   (a) Outside fortresses and field works: guns of more than 77-mm. and howitzers of more than 105-mm.;
   (b) In fortresses and field works: guns of more than 150-mm. and howitzers of more than 210-mm.;
   (c) Mortars and trench-mortars of every kind of a calibre of more than 150-mm.;
   (d) Tanks of every kind.

7. The armaments allowed under the above regulation shall be fixed for each State both as regards categories and quantities, together with a uniform allowance for replacements. Countries which do not possess armament factories and work-shops of their own can furthermore be authorised to retain certain reserve stocks. Armaments existing beyond the authorised limit must be destroyed.

C. Fortifications.

8. The construction and maintenance of fortresses, field works and works which, owing to their proximity to the frontier constitute a direct menace to the neighbouring country and might possibly obstruct measures taken for the prevention of war, shall be prohibited. (As regards coast-defence works, see II.C.)

II. NAVAL FORCES.

A. Material.

9. The maximum tonnage of the various types of vessels shall be reduced simultaneously with a proportional reduction of the total tonnage. No vessel of war shall, in future, exceed 10,000 tons or carry guns of a calibre of more than 280-mm.

10. The maintenance of both naval and land air forces being prohibited under Chapter III, the maintenance of aircraft carriers is likewise generally forbidden.

11. Submarines shall be abolished and forbidden.

12. The following “definitions” shall apply to all vessels except special ships or vessels exempt from limitation:

   (a) Capital ships: vessels of war whose displacement exceeds 6,000 tons standard displacement or which carry a gun with a calibre exceeding 150-mm.;
(b) **Cruisers**: vessels of war exceeding 800 tons of standard displacement or the calibre of whose guns exceeds 105-mm.;

(c) **Destroyers**: vessels of war whose standard displacement does not exceed 800 tons and the calibre of whose guns does not exceed 105-mm.

13. *The non-floating* material shall be fixed for each country both as regards categories and quantities.

### B. Personnel.

14. The naval personnel shall only be recruited by way of voluntary enlistment. The system of limitation, however, should be adapted to the system to be applied to the personnel of land forces.

15. As regards officers and warrant officers, a percentage of the total strength shall be fixed as maximum limit.

### C. Fortifications.

16. Coast-defence fortifications may, in principle, be maintained in their present extent. Fortifications, however, which control natural waterways between two open seas shall be forbidden, in order to secure to all nations free and unhampered passage through these waterways.

### III. AIR FORCES.

17. The maintenance of air forces of any kind is forbidden. The total air force material which has so far been either in service or in reserve or on stock shall be destroyed, except those armaments which are to be incorporated in the quantities allowed for land and naval forces.

18. The dropping of bombs or any other objects or materials serving military purposes from aircraft, as well as all preparations to this effect shall be forbidden without any exception.

19. With a view to strictly enforcing the prohibition of any military aviation, the following shall, *inter alia*, be forbidden.

(a) Any instruction and training of any person in aviation having a military character or a military purpose.

(b) Any instruction or training of members of the army or navy in civil aviation.

(c) The construction, maintenance, importation or putting into commission of aircraft which is in any way armoured or protected or supplied with devices for the reception of warlike armaments of any kind, such as guns, machine-guns, torpedoes, bombs, or which are supplied with gunsights or devices for the dropping of bombs and with similar warlike instruments.

(d) The maintenance of any relations between the military or naval administration and civil aviation for any military purpose.

### IV. GENERAL CLAUSES.

#### A. Chemical Arms.

20. The prohibition of the military utilisation of asphyxiating, poisonous or similar gases and all similar liquids, matters or processes as well as of all other means of bacteriological warfare shall be extended to the preparation of the utilisation of these weapons.

#### B. Traffic in Arms and Manufacture of Arms.

21. The export and import of war armaments and their ammunition as well as of war material shall be strictly prohibited. Countries, however, which are not in a position to manufacture the quantities of arms, war materials and munitions allotted to them shall be given the possibility of importing the necessary quantities from abroad.

22. The manufacture of war armaments and munitions as well as of war material shall only be carried out in a limited number of private or State factories or workshops which shall be made public. The Governments undertake to ensure by appropriate measures that the production does not exceed the quantities allowed for their own use and for export to countries without an armament industry.

#### C. Expenditure.

23. In conformity with the obligations of the Members of the League embodied in Article 8 of the Covenant, to exchange full and frank information as to the scale of their armaments, this exchange must also extend to expenditure for armaments.

*Observation.* — The German delegation are of opinion that the numerous deviations from the solid basis of the gold standard which have recently occurred are going to bring about such a decisive and unforeseen change in purchasing power that, for the time being, the method of financial limitation cannot be used as an effective measure of disarmament. Under the present economic and monetary circumstances, the application of this method would give rise to continual derogations which would seriously interfere with the steady advance of the process of
contractual disarmament. Moreover, the establishment of a common plan for the financial limitation would be connected with extraordinary difficulties owing to the great differences which are at present existing in the various countries as to the stocks of material in hand. On the other hand, regard must be had to the fact that any really effective direct disarmament would be automatically accompanied by the indispensable decrease of the heavy financial burdens under which the nations are suffering owing to the exaggerated level of armaments.

**D. Control.**

24. The carrying through and the observation of the disarmament clauses shall be secured by a procedure of control equally applicable to all countries.

**V. Transitory Provisions.**

25. In so far as the realisation of the present proposals necessitates measures of a technical nature or measures of organisation, the Conference shall have to lay down provisions regarding the procedure and the periods which the various States shall have to observe in adjusting their present armaments to the level fixed by the Convention.