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DISARMAMENT COMMISSION

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS AND
DECISIONS OF THE TENTH SPECIAL SESSION

Report of the Secretary-General

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AUSTRIA

/Original: English/

/29 May 1979/

Austria does not participate in any of the current disarmament negotiations. At the same time, however, Austria attaches the utmost importance to efforts to produce through such negotiations significant results, which would strengthen international peace and security. Austria therefore welcomes the possibility to host important disarmament negotiations, such as the Vienna negotiations on a Mutual Reduction of Forces and Armaments and Associated Measures in Central Europe as well as other negotiations.

In view of the very slow progress in disarmament negotiations on all levels Austria attaches great importance to parallel efforts aimed at elaborating agreements for the strengthening of mutual confidence among States in the military field. Confidence building measures cannot replace concrete results of disarmament negotiations. If it will not be possible to obtain such results over a longer period of time and should the arms race continue unabated, confidence building measures by themselves will not be sufficient to balance the distrust created by the continuous arms race.

Nevertheless, importance has to be attached to the building of confidence as referred to in paragraph 94 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly, because such measures can influence in a positive direction the subjective estimations, fears and expectations of a negotiating partner vis-à-vis the aims and expectations of the other negotiating partner(s).

Austria therefore advocated, within the framework of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, together with other neutral and non-aligned States, the inclusion of confidence building measures in the Final Act of the Conference and continues to exert efforts for the full implementation and further expansion of these measures.

Austria, in view of the level of her armaments, usually does not hold manoeuvres of a larger category. Austria has therefore in the past years, as a sign of her goodwill, announced two smaller manoeuvres on a scale of 5,000 and 12,000 men respectively, although there was no commitment to do so under the Final Act of the Conference. Austria hopes that at the Madrid follow-up to the Conference meeting further relevant decisions and measures which could contribute to a further stabilization of the military situation in Europe, will become possible.

Austria is furthermore of the opinion that adequate and effective measures of verification (paras. 31, 91 and 92 of the Final Document of the tenth special session of the General Assembly) can contribute to a significant extent to the building of mutual confidence in connexion with the negotiation and implementation of disarmament and arms control agreements. In view of these considerations Austria has nominated an expert for participation in the Ad Hoc Group of Scientific Experts of the Committee on Disarmament to Consider International Co-operative Measures to Detect and Identify Seismic Events (and seeks also through this channel to make a contribution towards disarmament).