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REPORT OF THE ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL

Note verbale dated 22 September 1982 from the Permanent Representative
of Austria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations presents his compliments to the Secretary-General of the United Nations and, with reference to resolution 36/67 of 30 November 1981 concerning the International Year of Peace and the International Day of Peace, has the honour to transmit herewith the declaration of the Federal President of the Republic of Austria, Mr. Rudolf Kirchschlaeger, on the occasion of the first observance of the International Day of Peace on 21 September 1982.

The Permanent Representative of Austria to the United Nations has the honour to request that this declaration be circulated as a document of the General Assembly under agenda item 12.

ANNEX

Declaration by the Federal President of Austria
on the occasion of the International Day of Peace
21 September 1982

The United Nations have designated the opening day of the General Assembly as International Day of Peace with the intention to strengthen the ideal of peace, not only among but also within the nations and peoples. The International Day of Peace is observed today worldwide.

I sincerely welcome this decision by the United Nations. Apart from the World Peace Day on January 1, which is commemorated every year by a solemn message of His Holiness, the Pope, the world has now a second universal occasion to promote and strengthen the idea of peace on all levels and in all different cultures.

The foreign policy of neutral Austria is by its very nature a policy of peace. This becomes manifest in Austria's permanent commitment to understanding, negotiation and dialogue. Austria believes that peace can not be based on force, but can only evolve from understanding. War and threat of war are no way to solve problems. Now as ever, there is only one way which also happens to be the most difficult one: to talk with one another. To talk, however, does not mean to make unworthy concessions or to compromise principles.

In view of the wide variety of states, peoples and cultures on our earth we are convinced that a global peace order can only be a pluralistic one: a peace order of tolerance. To be durable it must be based on justice. The old principle of living together that nobody should do to another what he does not wish to be done to himself, has also to apply to nations.

Peace is not only a moral obligation of states, but also a personal duty of all people. Peace begins at home. World peace begins in the internal peace of states.

To secure the peace does not mean to talk of it, but rather to work for it every day. It is the personal example that counts: to transmit through the character of one's life the conviction that peace is possible, to unite firmness on principles with understanding for the different values of others and to try constantly to serve justice. Without a peaceful attitude of people there cannot be peace among peoples.

In a world full of war and tension, division and injustice and against the background of an escalating arms race, all states and people with good faith have to make a personal contribution to achieve a break-through for the principles and objectives of the United Nations. Let us, therefore, commit ourselves once again, according to the unforgettable opening words of the Charter of the United Nations of 26 June 1945: "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind".
