

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

planned to construct a new building at the Vienna International Centre or in its immediate neighbourhood to house it permanently. For this permanent headquarters Austria would also provide the land and bear the construction costs of the building.

Secondly, in order to place the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on an equal footing with the international organizations already in Vienna, Austria would grant the organization and its staff the same privileges and immunities as those enjoyed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Office at Vienna and other similar organizations.

Thirdly, in the event that the conferences of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were too large to be held at the organization's headquarters or at the Vienna International Centre, Austria would bear the cost of hiring appropriate conference rooms. In the course of the spring session of the Conference on Disarmament, Austria will submit a working paper containing details of this offer.

To highlight Austria's interest in an early solution to outstanding questions relating to the convention on chemical weapons, but also within the context of the possible establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in Vienna, the federal Government has adopted a programme of research on the verification and monitoring of the chemical weapons convention. Funding of 3 million schillings has been made available for this programme for the current budgetary year. This initiative will enable us, on the one hand, to set up a highly qualified group of experts in monitoring of chemical weapons and, on the other, to draw up proposed solutions in the negotiating areas that remain outstanding. These proposals could be submitted to the Committee on Chemical Weapons.

Austria makes this offer as a State observing permanent neutrality and in its capacity as a host country for organizations and international conferences. We seek in this way to contribute to closer co-operation between States. My country also sees this offer as the continuation and logical consequence of the tireless efforts that it has been pursuing for decades for peace and disarmament in the world. In this connection I should like to recall that 30 years ago Austria participated for the first time in United Nations peace-keeping operations. Thousands of Austrian soldiers have participated in such United Nations operations. In 1988 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to pay tribute to this United Nations commitment. Austria's policy in this field was confirmed at the international level by the establishment in Vienna of the third headquarters office of the United Nations. The new Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons could also benefit from the international profile of Vienna and the infrastructure built up in our capital over a period of more than 10 years. The organization would enjoy numerous advantages: the possibility of direct communications with the United Nations system; the possibility of pooling experience with IAEA, an organization established in Vienna since 1957, which has acquired a vast stock of knowledge regarding inspection missions; the possibility of realizing savings through the shared use of technical facilities; and work facilitated by long experience of international conferences and the requisite human and technical resources. The future staff will enjoy the professional and personal advantages that can be offered by a city which has been open to