

AUSTRIA



PERMANENT MISSION OF AUSTRIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS

First Committee – 80th Session
Thematic Debate – Conventional Weapons

Statement by the Republic of Austria

delivered by

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Minister Plenipotentiary

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Mr. Chair,

Austria aligns with the EU statement.

The principles of the UN Charter, the rules of International Humanitarian Law and the legal norms of the humanitarian disarmament treaties protect civilians during and after armed conflict and preserve their dignity. Today, these legal norms built over 80 years are at risk of erosion. The result is civilians being exposed to unacceptable risk. We must reverse this trend.

The Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention and the Convention on Cluster Munitions have outlawed weapons that cause unacceptable suffering. States Parties have achieved a lot on the journey to a world free of anti-personnel mines and cluster munitions and we look forward to the Review Conference of the CCM in Lao PDR to celebrate its achievements. However, we are alarmed about the number of victims of these weapons being on the rise again. We find it unacceptable that these weapons are being produced, stockpiled, transferred and used. We call on all States to refrain from any such activity and abide to their legal obligations and to all states not yet party to join these instruments. We are deeply concerned about withdrawals of States from these treaties. Austria supports the UN Secretary General's Campaign on humanitarian disarmament and continues to support mine action, most recently in Uganda as well as Ukraine, the country most contaminated by mines in the world due to the Russian war of aggression.

Mr. Chair,

The Political Declaration on Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas and the framework for countering the trafficking and diversion of Small Arms and Light Weapons and their ammunition contribute significantly to prevent and mitigate civilian harm and fully take into account gender and diversity aspects. Austria looks

forward to the EWIPA Conference in Costa Rica in November. Austria is also a staunch supporter of the Arms Trade Treaty.

Mr. Chair,

The Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons is an important instrument that requires more constant review to ensure that the humanitarian concerns regarding the weapons regulated are addressed effectively, such as Protocol III on incendiary weapons. Austria welcomes the progress made in the Group of Governmental Experts on Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems and stresses the urgency to make progress on this issue. Establishing a legal framework to regulate autonomous weapons systems with clear red lines continues to be a priority for Austria.

Mr. Chair,

I have the pleasure in the name of Belgium, Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Guatemala, Ireland, Kazakhstan, Kiribati, Liechtenstein, Malta, Mexico, New Zealand, the Philippines, Republic of Moldova, San Marino, Sierra Leone, Sri Lanka, Switzerland, Tonga, Vanuatu, Venezuela and my own country Austria to introduce draft resolution L.41 “Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems”. Last year’s Resolution 79/62 was supported by 166 member states demonstrating the importance of the issue. This year’s draft resolution again stresses the urgent need to address the challenges and concerns posed by autonomous weapons systems and encourages the ongoing work of the GGE on LAWS to make progress on this issue. We hope again for broad support for this draft resolution.

I thank you.