UNGA Resolution 77/55, Submission by Austria

Austria welcomes the opportunity to submit its views for consideration by the United Nations Secretary-General, pursuant to UNGA resolution 77/55 “Women, disarmament, non-proliferation and arms control”.

- Austria reaffirms its commitment to gender equality and the meaningful participation of all women in all their diversity in disarmament efforts. Austria wants to emphasize women’s invaluable essential role in promoting peace and security and advancing disarmament objectives.
- Austria strongly calls for the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women in all their diversity in all peace and security processes and at all levels. This includes the participation in the design, development and implementation disarmament, arms control and non-proliferation efforts as well mainstreaming a gender perspective into all arms control and disarmament forums.
- Austria regularly provides reports on the implementation of its relevant commitments, in particular within the frameworks of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW), the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention (BTWC), the Oslo Convention, the Anti-Personnel Landmines Convention (APLC) and the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT).
- Austria is at the forefront of global efforts in the field of humanitarian disarmament. This includes Austria’s leading role in the process on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons. The disproportionate effect of radiation on women and girls was an important element in both Vienna Conferences in 2014 and 2022, as well as the resulting chair’s summaries.
- In the framework of focusing on the catastrophic humanitarian consequences and risks of nuclear weapons, the Austrian Foreign Ministry commissioned an overview of new studies in this field, which was published in July 2023. The goal was to increase the understanding these complex consequences and risks to support diplomatic work on nuclear disarmament. In the resulting brochure by Dr. Nick Ritchie and Mikhail Kupriyanov of the University of York, namely in the chapter “Women, girls and radiation”, scientists show that females are more harmed by radiation, particularly when exposed as young girls.
- Austria was equally a driving force behind the creation of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) – also serving as its first chair. The Treaty contains a clear recognition of the disproportionate effects of nuclear weapons on women and girls and contains provisions to adequately provide age- and gender-sensitive assistance, without discrimination.
- The “Political Declaration on Strengthening the Protection of Civilians from the Humanitarian Consequences Arising from the Use of Explosive Weapons in Populated Areas” was initiated by Austria and adopted on 18 November 2022. The EWIPA political declaration states: „We also welcome work to empower, amplify, and integrate the voices of all those affected, including women and girls, and we encourage further research into the gendered impacts of the use of explosive weapons.” Austria is actively continuing its commitment to the universalization and implementation of the Political Declaration including its gender sensitive approach, e.g. through the Vienna Military Workshop on the implementation of the EWIPA Political Declaration, organized by Austria, which took place in Vienna on 24 and 25 January 2024.
- Austria is committed to the international regulation of autonomous weapons systems (AWS) and proactively engaged, including on the gendered impact of such systems. It is important to take gender perspectives into account when dealing with the issue of AWS, including related
to the nexus of gender and new technologies. Recently, Austria organized the international conference “Humanity at the Crossroads: Autonomous Weapons Systems and the Challenge of Regulation” in order to discuss legal, ethical, humanitarian and security perspectives on AWS and its regulation. Gender perspectives were highlighted during the Conference.

- Concerning arms deliveries, Austria is committed to apply the provisions of the ATT relating to international humanitarian law without restrictions. The Arms Trade Treaty explicitly requires States Parties to duly take into account the risks of gender-based violence in arms export assessments, which in turn contributes to the prevention of CRSV. Austria has fully incorporated these provisions into its national export control regulations. The Federal Ministry of Defence in cooperation with the Office of Disarmament Affairs and the Ammunition Management Team is in process of implementing an annual training course for women ammunition technical experts from 2023-2025 focused on the International Ammunition Technical Guidelines and related international standards, aiming at strengthening knowledge and skills of women working in technical ammunition management roles within the WoMA-Network. The first course took place in Vienna from 23 October-3 November 2023.